

THE CROSSROAD

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH

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WOMEN'S MINISTRY

FAVORITE THINGS

LOVE GOD. LOVE OTHERS. SERVE THE WORLD.

BY JESSE ALESHIRE

Many things are changing here at Crossroads as we continue to grow and seek to align every part of our ministry with our mission to Love God. Love Others. Serve the World. In this edition of *The Crossroad*, I want to highlight two specific areas of change we're implementing in the coming year: technology and systems improvements and a restructured rhythm for Wednesday Nights at Crossroads. But before we talk about the what, it's important to remember the why.

One of the most distinctive parts of our church's culture happens at

the end of every worship service when we recite Matthew 28:19–20 together. If you've been at Crossroads for any length of time, you've probably noticed the joyful moment that follows—our children (and quite a few adults) proudly shouting “ESV!” with enthusiasm and unity. It's lighthearted, but it also reveals something profound: the Great Commission isn't just a passage we recite; it's part of our identity as a church. It shapes our mission, our values, and the way we think about discipleship and ministry.

The book *Simple Church* identifies

two key traits that distinguish healthy, thriving churches from declining ones: clarity and simplicity.

- Clarity means we know exactly what God has called us to do and we provide clear pathways for how people can grow in that mission.
- Simplicity means we resist clutter, cut out what distracts, and focus on the ministries that directly support our purpose.

I thank God that Crossroads is a healthy, growing, thriving church.

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Since moving into our new facility just a year and a half ago, we've seen an average attendance increase of nearly 100 people. With this growth comes a stewardship responsibility to continually evaluate, adapt, and refine how we operate so that we can remain faithful, pursue excellence, and stay on mission.

Our mission to love God, love others, and serve the world flows

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directly from the Great Commission and the Greatest Commandments. As we implement new systems, streamline processes, and adjust ministry structures, my desire is that this mission becomes so clear, so simple, and so ingrained in all we do that if someone were to ask, "What is Crossroads about, and how do you live it out?" we could respond with one unified voice, full of conviction and joy, "ESV!"

WHAT I LOVE ABOUT CAROLS, CANDLELIGHT, AND COMMUNION

BY DR. ROB SUMRALL

When I was growing up, Christmas Eves were reserved for Aunt Jane's family gathering. The kids would open gifts from aunts, uncles, and grandparents. We feasted on poboyos (think deep Alabama delicious sandwiches), Uncle Joe's ambrosia, and, if the humidity was low, Aunt Kathy's divinity (the candy, not her claim to be divine). Those memories are special to me, full of magical holiday expectations and sweet family memories.

Michelle and I have long since left lower Alabama and forged a life of our own that includes our own set of treasured holiday traditions. For the last 14 years, my family has gathered together with our Crossroads Family for an hour every Christmas Eve for a service we call Carols, Candlelight, and Communion. I can't imagine missing this time together with my faith family. This service may be my favorite one of the year. Many of you join in on your way to your own version of Aunt Jane's Christmas party - because, like me, you treasure this time together. I hope this tradition never fades. I love it so very much. And here are six reasons why.

1. *I love the holiday hymns.*
Some call them carols, but we

know better. The songs we sing are Gospel-rich, not the vapid sentimental alternative that forgets Jesus is the star of Christmas. The simple music is always beautiful, classic, and soul-nourishing.

2. *I love being with my faith family.*
We all know that Christmas is a family time. But for me, that includes you, my faith family. Sharing holidays with people that mean so much to me is natural. Even if it is just for a brief moment, this time of togetherness reminds me of how Christ is building in himself a body of believers. Hugs are just better with your church family on Christmas Eve.

3. *I "borrow" the joy of your children.*
My kids are more likely to sleep in til 10 on Christmas morning than to wake us up to rip open presents at the crack of dawn. Seeing your children, wide-eyed with expectant joy, is absolutely wonderful. Every year, I am living vicariously through their Yuletide energy!

4. *I love the intimate feel.*
Imagine worshipping shoulder to shoulder with an army of people donning their ugliest Christmas sweaters with candies and

casseroles and gifts in their cars. You are soon off to your own family gatherings, but for one hour we draw aside to focus on our Savior. It feels close, intimate, and personal. It is beautiful.

5. *The Gospel will reach the world.*
When we pull the lights low and spread the lights of the candles, emblematic of the spread of the Good News, I always think two things: 1) "Thank you, Jesus, for letting me spread the Good News with people I love in a church that takes missions seriously," and 2) "I hope we don't catch this place on fire, but if we do, two fire units are in the back row." (I'm only kidding...at least a little).

6. *The baby became a man.*
And that man grew up and died on a cross. I need to be reminded of this. I think we all do. So much about the holidays is a distraction from this truth. God broke into human history to redeem a people for himself. He came to rescue us by his own precious blood. I dare not allow the sweetness of Christmas to blunt the profound sacrifice of the cross. Coming to the Lord's Table helps me get proper perspective.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT CROSSROADS

A NEW RHYTHM FOR 2026

We are excited to introduce a refreshed structure for Wednesday Nights at Crossroads beginning in January 2026. Our goal is to create a midweek environment that helps every person at Crossroads live out our mission in a tangible, sustainable way.

To do this, Wednesday nights will now follow a clear, consistent session-based rhythm, built around a simple discipleship pattern we're calling **Serve One, Grow One.**

This rhythm expresses how we want every believer to engage midweek:

- **Serve One:** Use your gifts to bless and build others through children's ministry, hospitality, student ministry, or other ministry opportunities.
- **Grow One:** Deepen your faith through intentional classes, biblical studies, and discipleship-focused learning.

This new rhythm:

- Creates space for every person to both serve the church and grow in Christ
- Promotes family discipleship through regular Family Meetings and Equipping Nights
- Aligns with our mission by bringing clarity and purpose to what we already do
- Helps us shepherd a growing congregation with simplicity and intentionality

This isn't just a scheduling strategy – it's a discipleship pathway. When you Grow One, you are actively learning to Love God. When you Serve One, you are putting into practice what it means to Love Others. As we develop healthy rhythms of both, we are formed and equipped to Serve the World.

Within each session, you'll find a variety of Grow One class options, such as:

- **Hermeneutics:** Together we'll learn how context, genre, and good questions help us understand God's Word faithfully.
- **Shepherding Their Hearts** – This class provides practical, Christ-centered tools to help you understand your child's emotions and behaviors and bring gospel hope into everyday family life.
- **Biblical Womanhood:** Women will be encouraged and equipped through an inductive Bible study designed specifically for women.
- **Great Commission Studies:** A course designed to deepen our understanding of Christ's call to make disciples of all nations through evangelism, missions, and faithful prayer.
- **Systematic Theology:** Learn the essential doctrines that shape a biblical worldview and ground all other areas of theology.

At the same time, there will be Serve One opportunities across children's ministry, hospitality (meal teams, clean-up, etc.), and additional ministry teams.

All class signups and service opportunities will be available in the Crossroads Church Center App, making it easy to plug in and take your next step.

Our hope is that Wednesday Nights at Crossroads become a weekly anchor point where individuals, families, and ministries move forward together in our mission to Love God. Love Others. Serve the World.

SESSION CALENDAR

Family Meeting: January 7

Session 1: Jan. 7 - Feb. 11

- Serve
- Hermeneutics (Rob Sumrall)
- Shepherding Their Hearts (Nate Brady)

Family Equipping Night: Feb. 18

Session 2: Feb. 25 - March 25

- Serve
- Biblical Womanhood (Carol Gardner & Sarah Watt)
- Systematic Theology (Jarrod Hawkins)
- Starting Point (Rob Sumrall)

No Wednesday Night: April 1

No Wednesday Night: April 8

Session 3: April 15 - May 20

- Serve
- Great Commission (David Lookabill)
- Shepherding Their Hearts (Nate Brady)

Family Meeting: May 27

FIND CLASS DESCRIPTIONS AND SIGN UP ON THE CROSSROADS CHURCH CENTER APP.

TOOLS TO HELP US LIVE THE MISSION

THE CROSSROADS CHURCH CENTER APP

As Crossroads continues to grow, we are committed to building systems that help us live out our mission to Love God, Love Others, and Serve the World with clarity and simplicity. Healthy systems aren't about technology for technology's sake – they are about removing barriers so ministry can thrive, families can stay connected, and our whole church can move together with purpose.

To support this mission, we are excited to announce the next major step in improving our communication and ministry systems: a full transition to the [Crossroads Church Center App](#) during the month of December.

Just as our Wednesday Night restructure provides clear pathways for discipleship, our technology updates are designed to provide clear pathways for connection. We want every person at Crossroads to have one simple, reliable place for:

- Ministry communication
- Session and class signups
- Serve One/Grow One opportunities
- Children's check-in
- Giving and generosity
- Group updates
- Church-wide announcements
- Family management and household information

When everything flows through one unified platform, clarity increases, communication improves, and everyone can engage more easily in the life of our church.

This technology does not replace discipleship; it supports it. It helps us organize ourselves around the mission rather than around complexity.

Throughout December, we will be transitioning away from Realm and fully onboarding to the [Crossroads Church Center App](#).

Important Notes

- Realm will be fully shut down on December 31.
- All online giving must be moved to Church Center before December 31.
- Every household should create a profile and get connected in the new system during December.
- You'll notice immediate improvements, but more new features will roll out gradually through 2026.

We want this transition to be smooth and simple for everyone, and we're here to help.

Thank you for your patience, your flexibility, and your faithfulness as we take these important steps together. God is doing incredible things at Crossroads, and these updates will help us continue to move forward – with a shared commitment to Love God, Love Others, and Serve the World.

DOWNLOAD THE APP

Scan this QR code to download the [Crossroads Church Center App](#).



Once downloaded, open the app and find the Crossroads logo.

Now scan the QR code to the right to create profiles for you and your family.



Helpful Hints:

- Use an email address you frequently check so that you can receive relevant information from Crossroads.
- Under "Household members" you can add children and adults to your household. Please only add grades for children in Kindergarten through 12th grade.



HANDS-ON SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Have questions? Need help? Swing by Room 101 from 9:15-10:15 on

- December 7
- December 14
- December 21

Our team will be ready to assist with:

- Downloading the Church Center App
- Creating household profiles
- Switching your online giving
- Connecting to groups and ministries
- Registering for upcoming sessions
- Understanding the new features

GIVING WITH CHURCH CENTER

Giving is such an important way we can participate in God's work through our church. We are so grateful for your faithfulness and generosity.

The [Give](#) feature on the Crossroads Church Center app makes tithing and supporting the ministry at Crossroads simple and convenient. After December 31, 2025, giving through Realm will be deactivated, so now is a great time to set up your recurring gifts in the new Crossroads Church Center app.

Watch this video to learn how:



Setting up [Giving](#) in the Crossroads Church Center is easy!

- Tap Give
- Enter your amount
- Select a fund (Tithes & Offerings, Missions, or Building & Facilities, etc.)
- Choose your giving frequency
- Pick your payment method, and add a new one if needed (We recommend ACH.)
- Tap "Give Now"

You may also give by placing your offering in the box at the Worship Center entrance or by mailing it to P.O. Box 2601
Elizabethtown, KY 42701

For any questions, feel free to reach out to Jesse, Mary Jo, or admin@crossroadsetown.com.

Ways to Give



Use the "Give" button in the Crossroads Church Center App



Place your offering in the box at the Worship Center entrance



Mail to:
Crossroads Baptist Church
P.O. Box 2601
Elizabethtown, KY 42701

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

RESOURCES FROM THE STAFF

Recapturing the Glory of Christmas

This advent devotional is a quick but meaty read that God used to prepare my heart for the Christmas season. Available for purchase in the Resource Center.

Wicked: For Good - A Biblical Worldview Movie Review for Families

I really enjoy the worldview conversations that Foundation Worldview raises. This video is a great example of their excellent content. Click [here](#) to watch.

Truth Rising

This full-length documentary can be accessed for free! It addresses the decline of Western culture and the answer we have in the Gospel. A must watch! Click [here](#) to watch.

The Mother I Meant to Be

A much-needed word of grace for moms. Click [here](#) to read.

Is Eastern Orthodoxy the Next Big Thing for Young Men?

This thought-provoking article reminds us that setting the bar high and honoring God-given masculinity and femininity are essential to reaching the next generation. Click [here](#) to read.

CROSSROADS WOMEN'S MINISTRY

BY CAROL GARDNER

"Thank you, ladies, for bringing us together and facilitating good conversation. It was a sweet time to connect." I often receive messages like these from the women after events, and the Bullseye Bonfire was no exception!

I am grateful for the hospitality of the Dozers and Steve Green for forming a team to run the range. You prepared a unique opportunity for the women of Crossroads. We started the evening with a group of women ready to practice their shooting skills. Steve and his men provided good instruction and a safe and fun atmosphere for the novices and the sharp shooters. Sarah Watt said, "[It was] nice to be together in community to do something for the first time. It was fun to see the spectrum of experience." The target practice ended with an award given to the sharp shooter, Aurora Rucker, Kathy Moore's sister.

But the fun had just begun. More women arrived and engaged in good conversation. Amidst the sound of laughter and chatter, women shared stories, made connections and enjoyed the fellowship of the saints. This is the desire of the Women's Ministry: to provide opportunities for women to love God more, to love their sisters in Christ deeply which overflows to serving one another.

A special way women grow in their affection for God and find encouragement is through the testimonies of women. Brittany Douglas shared her testimony and reminded us that the Lord does not promise to deliver us out of sorrow, grief, or trial, but we can be confident that He delivers us from all our fears in the midst of them. Out of His abundance, steadfastness, and faithfulness, He leads us and comforts us.

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"I was honored to share my testimony this year at the annual Ladies' Bonfire. Though I felt nervous speaking to a large group, I was eager to boast in the Lord and share how the bonfires have been touchstones in the paths the Lord has led me on."

-Brittany Douglas

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I am grateful to the LORD for how He uses women's events, like the bonfire, to lift Him high, to encourage one another in our walk with Christ, and to grow in our love for one another. I hope that you will attend the **Christmas Brunch** this **Saturday, December 6 at 11:00**. You don't want to miss out on how God is working in your sisters in Christ!

On **March 6-8, 2026**, Crossroads will hold a **Women's Retreat** at the **Legacy Hotel at Southern Seminary**. Here are three reasons why you should attend:

1) Spiritual Renewal

Getting away from everyday distractions creates space for us to reconnect with God through worship, prayer, and community. Practical biblical teaching pushes us deeper into the Word. Renewal comes when we experience afresh the presence of God moving among us.

2) Community

As women, many roles vie for our time and attention. We often neglect deep friendships due to the numerous hats we wear. We know practically that abiding relationships develop through meeting for coffee or tea, gathering around tables for small group discussions, walking and talking, and in interacting with fun activities. A women's retreat offers these vital opportunities for new and established friendships to grow.

3) Encouragement and Hope

A retreat offers a safe place to be honest about our struggles and to discover that other women wrestle to honor Jesus in the same areas that we face. Knowing that others have endured similar struggles and seen victory through Christ gives us hope and encouragement.

Register for Women's Events on the Church Center app.



CROSSROADS STUDENT MINISTRY

BY STANLEY GOODMAN

It was an amazing Fall semester for our student ministry! One highlight for me was teaching through the book of Judges. If it's been a while since you've read through the book, this book is full of violence, injustice, pain, and downright chaos. At worst, its characters are evil. At best, they are redeemable failures - redeemable only by God himself!

Judges poses the age-old question: what is the answer to the problem of evil? Surprisingly enough, Judges answers this question, not with a what, but with a Who? The twelve judges raised up by God couldn't fix the problem because they were part of the problem. But through their failure, they point us forward to a perfect Savior who dealt finally and fully with the problem of evil on a cross - showing us both the justice of God toward sin and the love of God for sinners.

Through this semester, students wrestled with the hard realities of idolatry, pride, evil, and suffering. They were challenged to recognize their own sin, trust in Christ, and own their faith. It is my prayer that every student who graduates from student ministry would love God, love others, and serve the world. I pray that they would be disciples - disciples who know their Bibles, own their faith, and pass it along to others. What more could we hope for? I love that we don't shy away from the hard topics in student ministry. Why? Because the Bible doesn't! And if students don't wrestle with the hard topics now, when will they? I am thankful that our student ministry is a place where we can have honest conversations with open Bibles!

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These conversations are not only happening on Wednesday evenings, but all through the week, in Sunday school, small groups, and discipleship groups. If you didn't know, there are many adult leaders who invest in your students on a weekly basis. I praise God for them, and for how they are serving faithfully in student ministry. They love your students, and they care deeply to see disciples made. What a joy it is to be a church where students are so loved and cared for!

I want to conclude my writing with a word of encouragement to parents. In my years working with

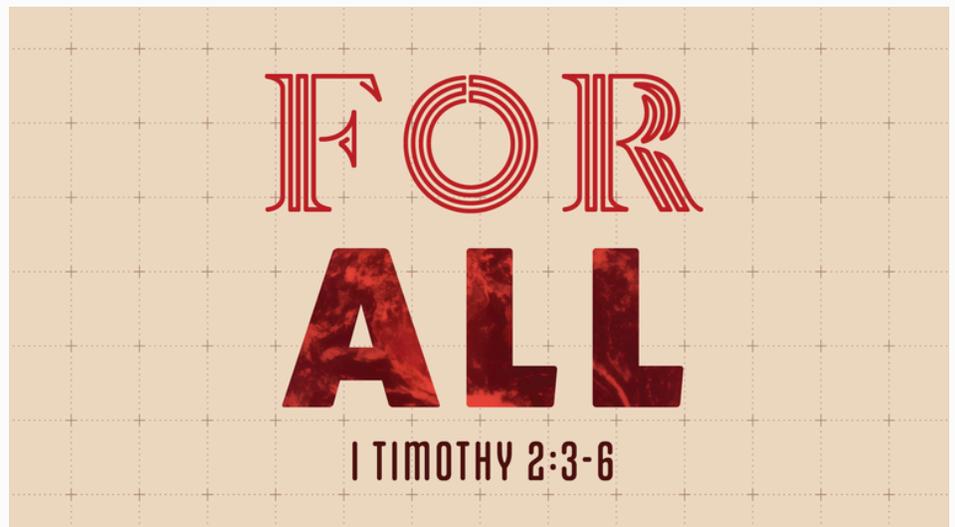
students, one thing has been clear: discipleship at home matters. It makes a huge difference. Discipleship is also hard and often discouraging. God knows this, and that's why He reassures us through His Word in 1 Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

Parents, be encouraged! Your labor, though difficult, is not pointless. So, don't give up. Keep being faithful. I am thankful for you, and I praise God that I get to walk alongside you in your discipleship efforts.

As we look forward, I want to emphasize two important dates that you'll want to put on your calendar:

- Student Winter Retreat: March 13-15
- Student Camp: June 27 - July 1
- Reserve your spot now in the Church Center app.

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to me. I pray this holiday season is sweet for your family.



CROSSROADS CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

BY REBEKAH HAWKINS

The Children's Ministry is experiencing an exciting and joy-filled season, and we can't help but celebrate the incredible things God is doing among our kids and their families. We are seeing growth not just in numbers but in hearts. Children are accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior, taking bold steps of faith, and following Him in baptism. It is a beautiful reminder that God is actively moving in the next generation.

I am excited about our Serve One, Grow One rhythm. It will give you a healthy balance between pouring into others and being poured into yourself. You can invest deeply in kids during the sessions you serve, and then have dedicated time to refuel spiritually the next session. This rhythm will help our ministry continue to grow stronger, healthier, and more connected as we serve the children and families of Crossroads.

As our ministry grows, so does the opportunity for people to be part of the amazing work God is doing. Children's Ministry is a place where everyone has a role to play. Some help behind the scenes by cutting and preparing crafts, organizing supplies, and making sure classrooms are ready for Sundays and Wednesdays. Others welcome families and assist with check-ins. Still others step into the classroom to teach or assist the lead teacher. Each role is meaningful. Each role makes a difference. And together, these roles create a ministry where children feel loved, safe, and eager to learn about Jesus. If you would like to learn more about opportunities to love God, love others, and serve the world in the Children's Ministry, please reach out. I'd love to grab a cup of coffee

with you and share more about all God is doing in the Children's Ministry and how you could be a part of it.

One of the most helpful improvements this season has been our transition to Check-Ins with Church Center. We've already seen how much easier it makes Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. The ability to pre-check your children before even leaving the house has been a game changer. With just a few taps on a phone, parents can walk into the building, scan their code, and quickly print their children's name tags. Our hope is that a streamlined check in process will help families like yours focus on discipleship and connection.

As the year winds down, we're gearing up for our last big event of 2025: the Children's Ministry Christmas Party! This year our party will look a little different, and I am so excited! This event will involve parents and grandparents working together with their children. We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 for fellowship and instruction. Then families will travel together throughout the building on a festive Christmas scavenger hunt, discovering surprises, completing activities, and celebrating the birth of Jesus in a hands-on, memory-making way.

Don't forget this is a pajama party, so put on your cutest, coziest PJs and join us for our "Light of the World" Christmas Party on December 10 at 6:30 PM.

We can't wait to see what God continues to do in and through our Children's Ministry in 2026. Whether you serve, give, or pray, you are part of the great work God is doing here at Crossroads.



You're invited to our

Children's Ministry "Light of the World" Christmas Party

*Join us for a pajama
party on December 10
6:30-7:45 in the
Fellowship Hall.*

*Kids and their adults
will partake in a fun-
filled scavenger hunt
to collect special items
to take home.*

Light snacks provided.

*Register in the
Crossroads Church
Center App.*

