

# THE CROSSROAD

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH

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## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

BY ROB SUMRALL

I “belong” to several institutions. I am a member of a local gym, a charitable foundation, the chamber of commerce, a church, and a family. The level of intensity in “belonging” is a continuum. None of us would say our sense of belonging to our local gym is anywhere near how we feel about belonging to our family. Our commitment to our family is naturally the highest priority. But how should we understand our belonging to the local church? My suspicion is that on this intensity scale, most people assign belonging to the church closer to how we think of being a member of the gym than we do our family; it is important, but not really that big

of a deal. But here at Crossroads, **membership matters.**

Societally, the idea of church membership has been on the decline for a number of decades. Sadly, the church has done little to course correct this disturbing development. A church with loosely connected people is a church that accomplishes little for the Kingdom. A church that has low expectations from members will get exactly what it expects.

One of the primary ways that we seek to elevate the idea of local church membership is through the emphasis we place on our church covenant. At Crossroads, we

practice **renewable, covenantal membership.** Our members actually sign their covenants, and to emphasize the ongoing commitment we have to the church, we re-sign those covenants every other February. This may sound extreme against the backdrop of ecclesiastical mediocrity, but it is actually a return to an historical practice.

The idea of a local church covenant emerged in the “free church” movement in England in the 1500s. Early Puritans and Separatists left the Church of England and formed independent

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congregations free from government control. They understood the church to be a local body of believers that voluntarily joined together to worship and serve God. Author Marshall Davis writes concerning church covenants, “It became the normative form of church governance among the early Baptists in America.” Churches would write their own covenants until 1853 when John Newton Brown published both the New Hampshire Confession of Faith and his version of a church covenant in his Baptist Church Manual. The Brown Covenant would become widely used in the church until the late 1950s. The church covenant we use at Crossroads is a slightly modified version of that document.

While our emphasis on the covenant might seem out of step with modern culture, it is a return to the centuries-old practice of Baptists in America. We are expressing the same convictions that thousands before us have expressed. And that singular commitment level is high - more on the marriage end than the gym end. The sad truth is that most people are only “dating” the church. Their commitment level to a local congregation is more about what the church does for them than how they will faithfully serve God through the local church. This self-centered approach has produced weak and dying churches in America. We make no apologies for trying to build a strong church for Jesus.

As we enter into covenant renewal season, my hope is that we will refresh the commitment we have to love God, love Others, and serve the World. I pray that we will renew our covenants:

- thoughtfully, carefully considering the gravity of the content of the covenant,
- prayerfully, by asking God for strength honor our commitments to one another,
- thankfully, recognizing the good gift of a local family of faith, and
- missionally, recommitting ourselves to see God glorified through building disciples both here and around the world.

## UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

### HOW YOU CAN SERVE THE WORLD

Every member of our church plays a vital role in advancing our mission to love God, love others, and serve the world. This mission is lived out by the whole church as we partner together in prayer, generosity, and service to share the hope of the Gospel locally and globally.

In Croatia, we partner with **Davor and Sandra Kukec**, who minister throughout Eastern Europe using marriage counseling as a platform for gospel proclamation. Through their ministry, churches have been planted, pastors have been trained, and families have been strengthened through Christ-centered relationships. Our long-standing Croatia partnership now includes a well-developed men's retreat format that has borne significant spiritual fruit. An already-formed team will be serving April 27 - May 5, 2026.

We partner with **Jose and Areli Lopez**, whose Guatemalan ministry focuses on developing healthy

churches and faithful pastors. In addition to monthly support, Crossroads partners directly with a specific church plant, through teaching, encouragement, VBS, and practical service. These summer trips allow our church to walk alongside pastors and congregations as they grow in gospel faithfulness and mission.

In Scotland, we partner with **Tommy and Lorne Millar**, who are leading a church revitalization in Glasgow—a deeply post-Christian context where many churches have closed their doors. Crossroads supports their work through ongoing financial and pastoral partnership, as well as by helping provide an annual church-wide retreat that brings encouragement and training to their congregation. We look forward to continuing this partnership with another trip planned for September 2026.

We also provide regular support to Andy and Meredith Sims in

Southeast Asia. With more than 15 years of faithful ministry in-country, Andy has pastored a church plant that is now multiplying through locally trained pastors and new church plants, spreading the Gospel throughout the region.

Locally and nationally, Crossroads partners through monthly financial support and fervent prayer with organizations aligned with our mission and values, including, Hope Academy for Kids and Clarity Solutions (locally), the Kentucky Baptist Convention (state), and the Cooperative Program (nationally & internationally).

Through these partnerships—local and global—Crossroads joins arms with faithful gospel workers around the world, helping make ministry opportunities possible where resources are often limited. Together, through prayer, generosity, and going, we live out our calling to love God, love others, and serve the world.

# SCOTLAND MISSION TRIP

BY MARIBEL SIKES

'Be flexible' was the number one thing I was told in the weeks leading up to the Scotland mission trip in late September. While I am naturally inclined at things like organizing and serving others, flexibility is not one of my strongest suits. I love lists, filing systems, and schedules. I thrive on a routine and dislike when life throws me unexpected curveballs.

Before the trip, we talked a lot as a team about 'putting your yes on the table,' trusting God in areas that stretched us. I thought I knew what my yes would be: I would give a testimony, help lead worship, and participate in the women's discussions after each testimony. I had no idea that God had different plans for my time in Scotland, plans that would force me to be adaptable and involve more fun than I could imagine.

My first hint that things would not be like my unspoken plans in my head was the first night in Scotland. We were discussing what the retreat would look like when Mr. Jesse asked what the kids were doing. One of us answered that we were going to do tie dye with the kids and that I would be helping. I had never done tie dye before, but I was eager to help.

When the church members began showing up on Friday afternoon for the weekend retreat, a few kids asked Alea and me to play on the playground with them. Before I knew it, I had spent most of my time outside with the amazing children: pushing swings, taking part in football (soccer) games, and playing Hide and Seek or Tag. The littlest kids could not pronounce my name, so they called me Tinkerbell because of my blond hair.

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*"For My thoughts are  
not your thoughts, nor  
are your ways My  
ways,"*  
says the Lord. *"For as  
the heavens are higher  
than the earth, So are  
My ways higher  
than your ways, And  
My thoughts than your  
thoughts."*

Isaiah 55:8-9

..... ❁ .....

As it turned out, the only time I spent with the adults was during my testimony, meals, and at night around the fire. I never led worship and only participated in one discussion. Rather than serving the adults, I spent my time in Scotland ministering to the kids. We ran and laughed like nothing else mattered. I led their Sunday School time on Sunday, preparing the crafts and arranging to do worship time with the adults. I was able to share my faith with them, telling biblical accounts of Jesus.

On Saturday, I did indeed help with the tie dye, in the middle of the

only rainstorm the whole time we were there. Before we left for Scotland, I would have laughed if someone told me I would be sitting outside across from Ms. Ali Grinnell as we tie dyed shirts in the freezing rain without gloves! But I did it. And I treasured every single minute.

One of the reasons I loved being in Scotland so much is that I did not feel hurried. The Scottish kids I played with live in the Scottish scheme, areas of poverty in Scotland. Despite this, they lived in the moment, not worrying about the things ahead of them in life. They taught me how to play like a kid and have a childlike faith. I realized in America, I set for myself a too rigid schedule. I focused on doing everything for my future but forgot to enjoy the present. I do not want my faith to become a checklist. Now, I am working toward being flexible and making time in my schedule for the opportunities God has given me. I have learned that sometimes the things that can seem like side paths or detours, like pushing swings or doing tie dye in the rain, can be chances for us to experience immense joy. God's plans are always greater than ours, even when they stretch us.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE CROSSROADS CHURCH CENTER APP

## What is the Church Center app?

Church Center is a free mobile app that helps you connect with our church—find events, join groups, give online, and more.

## How do I download the Church Center app?

You can download it from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store by searching for “Church Center.”

You can also scan this QR code:



## How do I find our church in the app?

Open the app and search for our church by name or location. Once you find it, select it to get started.

## How do I log in?

Enter your phone number or email address, then use the verification code sent to you to sign in.

## How do I update my profile information, such as my phone number or mailing address?

Tap your profile icon in the app and select Profile to update your contact details and preferences.

## Who can see my information?

Only covenanted members have access to the Church Directory.

## How do I add family members to my household?

Simply scan the QR code below:



## Can I give through the app?

Yes! Tap Give, choose an amount and fund, then select a payment method.

## Can I set up recurring giving?

Yes! You can create, edit, or cancel recurring donations at any time by tapping the Give button and following the prompts.

## How do I sign up for events?

Tap Signups, select the event, and follow the registration steps if required.

## How do I join a group?

Tap More, select Groups. Select a category under “Find a Group”. Tap the group you’d like to join. Tap Request to Join.

## I have a question that wasn’t answered. Who can help me?

Call (270) 982-1392 or email [admin@crossroadsetown.com](mailto:admin@crossroadsetown.com) or stop by the church office during the week.

## SERVE ONE GROW ONE

ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT CROSSROADS

### Why the new “Serve One Grow One” approach?

We believe that it is important to use your gifts to bless and build others through ministry opportunities AND to deepen your faith through intentional classes and discipleship-focused learning.

Our Serve Model is designed first and foremost to care for you when you serve on a team that requires that you are away from Bible Studies or Worship Service, such as the Safety, Student Ministry, and Children’s Ministry. Other serving opportunities such as Hospitality Team, don’t bind you to the same serving rhythm, so you’re welcome to continue both serving

and growing in whatever rhythm best fits in this season.

### Why do I need to sign up for a class?

Signing up helps us assign the appropriate classroom and ensure we have enough materials for everyone. If a class fills up, you’ll be added to a waitlist.

### How do I sign up for a class or to serve?

On the Crossroads Church Center App, tap “Signups.” Then tap the Serve One Grow One icon.

### Do any of the classes repeat?

Yes. Some will repeat within the semester, but others may repeat the following year.

### How can I find out what classes are offered?

You can find an updated list of classes and register in the Crossroads Church Center app.

### How long is my commitment?

In the spring, classes and serving opportunities are 5 weeks (except for the 3<sup>rd</sup> session which is 6 weeks long). You can go to a class and serve the next two sessions. Or serve the first and third session and take a class in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session. Or any other combination!

### How can I find out more about Wednesday Nights at Crossroads?

You can find out more information on the Crossroads Church Center App.