

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 12TH, 2025 // VISION SERVICE

## WORSHIP

### SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE CORPORATE WORSHIP

We always have **worship, verse-by-verse teaching from the Bible**, and **time to respond regardless of what stage of faith one is in** via a pastor or elder available to **answer questions, a prayer team** for anyone who needs prayer, and **communion**.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2024, we averaged **8,078**. Last weekend was **8,403**. We baptized **705** people in 2024.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

Just be consistent in coming to church (Hebrews 10:25) and inviting other people who don't know Jesus or don't have a church home. Get plugged in and take advantage of the tools that are available to you.

### NEXT

#### AN EASY NEXT STEP IN THE PROCESS

On the second Monday of every month, we invite anyone interested in learning more about The Experience to come take a tour, hear my story, hear the church's story, and take their next step in the process.

- This is where I get to meet a lot of you, and you get to know more about this place and who we are.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

We have seen a lot of new visitors and new faces at our weekend services but not at our Next Class.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

If you haven't been, please come out and see if this church is a good fit for you. This is an important step in getting plugged into The Experience.

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Following Jesus:** 7-week overview of Christianity and our church culture (**Jan. 29th**); **Authentic Discipleship:** 12-week course about how to be an effective disciple-maker (**Feb. 12th**); **Experience Finance:** A one-day free study on the biblical approach to debt and money.; **Preparing for Marriage:** An 8-week premarital class/group for engaged couples.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2024, **18** people completed Following Jesus and **39** people completed Authentic Discipleship.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

For people to go through the process. We expect all volunteers to at least go through Following Jesus to make sure we are on the same page.

## COMMUNITY

### INTENTIONALLY BUILDING COMMUNITY

We encourage people to not only be in groups but to be in and lead groups that are intentional about **reaching people, discipling, and multiplying** into more groups.

- We create community via large group/small group format from ECCO, Students, Evident, Development Courses and with our Life Groups.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

Currently, we have 10 Life Groups, and we hope to double this in 2025! We have about **55% of adults** in groups.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

Consistency from those currently in a LG. Attend **Intro to Life Groups January 19th at 1:00** in the Sanctuary. **LG Leader Interest Meeting** March 2nd at 1:30 in the Student Center.

## SERVE

### BLOCK SERVICES CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITY

We have many serving opportunities in (**Nursery, ECCO, EON, Encounter, Hospitality, Parking, Security**, etc.) and through the church (**5000 and non-profits** we support).

- Different serving opportunities have different levels of commitment which create opportunities for everyone.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

62% of our church serves in some capacity. Though this is great, we'd love to get more people serving.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

**If you are not serving in some capacity, come to the Volunteer Fair Monday! We're called to serve, and with our growing church and city there are many opportunities!**

## MISSIONS

- **Our city and state:** our four campuses (Boro, CC, Tully, and Ville); **Our nation:** Garden City Church and New Life Church (Mass.), City Church (NY), Hope Church (DE), and six other domestic partnerships.; **Our world:** El Salvador, Egypt, Guatemala, Costa Rica, EEM, and 13 other international partnerships.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

This year we will take seven mission trips: El Salvador, Egypt, Massachusetts, and New York.

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

We need to communicate missions better and create more opportunities, and congregants need to **pray about going!** Go to our app or website for more info.

## FINANCES

### WHY DO WE SHOW FINANCES?

We are transparent about finances because we want to **live above reproach** (1 Timothy 3:2), **be good stewards** (1 Peter 4:10, Matthew 25:29), and **honor your sacrifice** (1 Corinthians 4:2). We are not doing this to brag, guilt you, or manipulate you, but to earn your trust.

- **We're frugal, benevolent, & conscientious about how we use your giving!**

### 2024 SUMMARY FOR ALL CAMPUSES:

Expenses: \$14.2m. Income: \$17.1m. Surplus and lean spending allowed us to put **\$4m more in savings**.

### 2025 BUDGET FOR ALL CAMPUSES:

Estimated expenses: **\$15.5m**. Projected income: **\$19m**. We are going to operate on a lean budget to prepare for **future growth**.

- Full and part time salaries for all campuses: **\$4,874,640 (31% of budget)** - The national average is 50-55%.; Employee Taxes: \$250,800; Health Benefits: \$1,737,924; Police and Sheriff Dept.: \$96,000 (present during all services in Boro and for directing traffic on 41a here in the Ville); Outside CPA: \$15,000; Ministry Expenses: \$1,516,525 - All expenses to serve nursery through adult ministries (supplies, gear, printing, other materials, subscriptions, etc.); Operating costs: \$1,549,700 - Utilities, rent for Tullahoma, cleaning services; Construction costs: \$1,000,000 - Mayday and ECCO build out in Boro as well as maintenance/repairs for each campus.; Outreach/Benevolence: **\$4.65m (30% of budget)** - Individuals needing help, schools, missionary needs, non-profits, church plants, etc. The national average is 10% for churches.; Debt: **\$0**. We currently own three of our four buildings and rent our Tullahoma campus. We are trimming expenses and saving up to buy it in cash.

## SHELBYVILLE CAMPUS

- 2024 Income: **\$568,730**; 2025 projected expenses: **\$476,865**; Total Network Cost: **\$5,470,209**
- Includes all Network Employees (salaries & benefits), HR, payroll, legal fees, accounting and bank fees, taxes,

liability ins., background checks, website, app, Ops Team, Business Team, and all Network-wide events (WN, Vol. Fair, Camps).

## THE NETWORK (SHARED BY ALL FOUR CAMPUSES)

- Our share of Network Expenses: **\$1,367,552**
- Many of you only see the four of us here on the team at the Shelbyville campus, but there are 30+ people who work hard to protect, create, plan, and implement so much of what happens here in Shelbyville and we are only responsible for a portion of that expense out of our budget.

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The average giving per person was \$2,340 for 14,000 churches surveyed in America. **Average giving per person at this campus is \$1,788**. Though we are trending in the right direction, we are still below average.

- **The congregation's giving is better across all campuses, but we must continue in obedience and trust.**

## COMMITMENT TO THE VISION

**I do not know who gives at this church.** Whether one believes tithing is a NT thing or not, it is impossible to argue that Christians should not financially contribute to the mission of the church.

- **If we're going to advance the gospel, it will take not only time and effort but also a financial commitment.**

## ALL OF US SHARING THE WEIGHT

This church has never done, nor will we ever do, a building campaign, pledge cards, or ask for any additional financial commitment from you other than biblical tithing.

- **If we will just be faithful to what the Bible asks, we will have more than enough to accomplish everything God wants us to do!**

## EXCITING THINGS

### SOME RECENT WINS

So much happens that we don't have time to share all the wins in our community.

- Over 700 were baptized, over \$4.5 Million was given away, \$10K was given to the Veterans Counsel of Bedford County to purchase a new vehicle, 55% growth in EON, and 40+ volunteers came together for Experience Christmas.

## FURTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

We are aware that there has been a strain on our young families trying to attend our Development Classes. Along with online formats, we want to do everything we can to make these classes accessible to everyone.

- In 2025, we are moving Following Jesus and Authentic Discipleship to Wednesday nights, so families have access to childcare.

## STUDENT MINISTRY

Launched Encounter in mid July 2024 and have maintained an average of 16 students.

- Three students have been baptized since the launch and over 60 people were in attendance for our first Encounter Baptism Night. There are 20 students currently serving on Sun. (all HS students, including an Emerge student and 11 EON students).

## BIG FOCUS ON STUDENT MINISTRY

Student Ministries are getting more involved in schools and doing more events to create an easy door to invite friends while still teaching through the Word and doing groups.

- We hope to see Encounter grow closer to the national average of 10% of the church in Student Ministries. We are currently at about 5%.

## CHALLENGES

### MAKING THIS A HOUSE OF PRAYER

**Fasting:** We need as many of us as possible doing the fast together (Matthew 17:21).

- **More prayer opportunities:** Prayer Room throughout the week, Prayer Groups that meet in the offices on the 4th Sunday of every month starting Jan. 26th, and Prayer Teams.
- **Prayer Nights:** getting bigger and better; 47 people came to the last one.

## PARKING

We are grateful to have an officer directing traffic for those who park across 41a.

- As we grow, our parking situation will become more difficult to figure out. We have a plan that buys us time before needing a golfcart or bus to bring visitors in. Please be patient with us as we do our best to get you in and out efficiently and safely.

## WEBB STUDENTS

We have several students who are boarded at Webb in Bell Buckle who call this their church home.

- Their previous mode of transportation has ended, and we need a way to ensure these students can make it back to services. Email [sean@experiencecc.com](mailto:sean@experiencecc.com) for information on how to help.

## EVANGELISM

Do we have a heart for the lost in our community? About 48% of people in our area claim to have a church home. There are about 25k in Shelbyville and 53k in Bedford Co.

- There are more than 12k unchurched people in our city alone, and more than 25k unchurched in Bedford Co. The harvest is truly plentiful and the laborers few (Matthew 9:35-38).

## NOT LOSING SIGHT OF OUR (HIS) MISSION

As we continue to grow and prepare for long term ministry in this city, state, nation, and world, **we cannot lose sight of what God is blessing at this church: teaching the truth, loving and welcoming all people, and serving the city!**

## WE HAVE TO LEAN HEAVILY ON JESUS!

- We have to be **praying, ingesting the Word, obeying the Word** and the Spirit's conviction, and be in **strong community**.
- **We must also fall deeper in love with God and ALL people!** This will become increasingly more difficult, but also increasingly more vital!

## SMALL SACRIFICES FOR A BETTER EXPERIENCE!

- Our church is not the easiest to get to, in, or out of. We also don't have a lot of material amenities like green space, ample square footage and parking, or fancy décor.
- This year may be a little uncomfortable, but **we must make sure we're focused on the truly important things of our church**.
- What we do have is **authenticity, biblical teaching, community, a reputation of serving the city, a clear discipleship process, and a welcoming environment**.
- Though it may be a little less convenient, here anyone can grow in their relationship with God and others!

## WE MUST PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE!

- The culture God has created at this church must not only be fed and protected, but **we must take steps to make sure generations to follow have a healthy church like this**.
- If we will be **patient, get involved, and be faithful**, God will open the door for this church (us) to continue to flourish.

## NOT GROWING WEARY (GALATIANS 6:9)

- In essence, we must keep the Great Commission the focus (disciple, baptize, teach) without compromise or burnout.
- **Now more than ever, people need the hope, wisdom, grace, and love Jesus has to offer. We are His conduits for His light and the good news to touch hearts.**