

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 17TH-18TH, 2026 // VISION SERVICE

## FOR A FUTURE GENERATION (PSALM 78:2-7)

This Psalm reminds us of the truth that the mighty acts of God must be intentionally told and stewarded, or they will be first assumed, then taken for granted, and then unintentionally forgotten.

- Transmission of God's truth and story requires ownership and stewardship, which require responsibility in the present so future generations will benefit from it.

## SEVENTEEN YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

What God has done in the history of The Experience Community and our campus in Woodbury is something to celebrate.

- Our church (and this campus) didn't happen by accident, and its future won't either.
- People have made (and still make) intentional sacrifices so this church can exist. What we enjoy only lasts if we choose to carry it forward.

## A SIMPLE VISION

"To lead people to Christ through Authentic Worship, Authentic Community, and Authentic Community Service."

## 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 available to answer questions, a prayer team for anyone who needs prayer, and communion.

## NEXT CLASS

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

- This is where you get to meet our team and get to know more about this place.

## DEVELOPMENT

- Following Jesus: 7-week overview of Christianity and our church culture.
- Authentic Discipleship: 12-week group about how to be an effective disciple-maker.
- Preparing for Marriage: An 8-week premarital class/group for engaged couples (Murfreesboro Campus).

## LIFE GROUPS

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 in ECCO Kids, Students, Evident, and with our Life Groups.

## SERVING

We have many serving opportunities in (Nursery, ECCO Kids, Students, Hospitality, Parking, etc.) and through the church (5000, community service events, and nonprofits we support).

- Different serving opportunities have different levels of commitment.

## THINGS TO CELEBRATE

### BAPTISMS AND GROWTH

- We baptized 42 people at our campus in 2025 (729 total across ECC network).
- We averaged 756 people in attendance in 2025 (873 so far this year).
- We had 169 people go through Next Class, 75 attend Following Jesus, 53 attend Authentic Discipleship, and we have 27 Life Groups.
- 26% of adults are in a Life Group.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Last year, we ministered to our community through Community Cleaning Day, Fall Festival, WeCareCannon, Experience Thanksgiving/Christmas.

- In total, we gave away 1,500 food boxes through our 5000 Ministry in 2025.
- We provided care packages to community workers, local schools, and other organizations on a weekly basis.

### BENEVOLENCE AND SERVING

Last year we gave away \$110,682.50 to local nonprofits, schools, community outreach, and congregational care.

- We have 379 people (37%) volunteering across various ministries that serve our church and serve within our community.
- We took mission trips to El Salvador, Egypt, and the New England area.
- Though we celebrate those who are serving and giving, we still need more people willing to own this responsibility within our church.
- We need volunteers to serve in ECCO/Emerge (kids), EON/Encounter (students), Hospitality, Parking, Production, Security, and basically all areas of our church.
- Volunteer Fair is January 19th from 6-8pm!

### EXCITING THINGS FOR 2026

#### BORO NORTH CAMPUS

We're opening a second Murfreesboro campus to accommodate growth and reach people on the north side of town.

- Pastors Savut Som and Mike Lee will teach. It will be more stripped down with simple worship.
- We hope to get 10% from our current Murfreesboro Campus to go there.

#### MCMINNVILLE CAMPUS

We will be starting a campus in McMinnville with a soft launch in October.

- Fred Mindach and Adam Pitts are going to be leading that campus.
- This campus will help relieve some growth pains here in Cannon County and open doors in Warren County to do ministry and reach those far from Christ.
- We don't have a building yet, but that isn't the most important part of church planting. Our biggest needs are: 1) People willing to serve. 2) People willing to financially give. 3) People willing to consistently attend. 4) People willing to faithfully pray.
- If you're currently attending here but you feel like God has called you to be a part of the McMinnville Campus, start serving, giving, consistently attending, and praying now (talk with Fred/Adam).
- For that campus to be healthy, this campus must be healthy to support it! We all have a part to play in this.

#### FACILITY BUILDOUT

We're currently making space to expand our men's and women's restrooms (upstairs) and adding more classrooms for children's ministry (downstairs).

- In total, this project's budget is \$50k.
- We had hoped to move our offices out of this building into a portable, but we ran into snags related to the land survey.

#### 2026 OUTREACH PLANNED

This coming year we have budgeted \$27,000 to support our local schools, and our hope is to strengthen the relationship between our church and the schools.

- We are planning to serve our community through Community Cleaning Day, WeCareCannon, Fall Festival, Experience Thanksgiving, and Experience Christmas.

- We are financially partnering with local nonprofits and have budgeted to give away \$32,000 to:
- Recovery Court, Cannon County Rescue Squad, Cannon County Food Bank, Generations of Woodbury, Pregnancy Care Center of McMinnville, the Forgotten Initiative, and the Woodbury Senior Center.

## OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE

### FINANCIAL GIVING

- In 2024, our campus brought in \$1,207,843.00.
- In 2025, our campus brought in \$1,381,040.66.
- Our giving per person actually decreased (from \$1,833 to \$1,751), meaning on average each person gave less in 2025 than in 2024.
- The national average of giving per person at a healthy church is \$2,250 per year, which would have put us between \$1.6-\$1.7m.
- Last year, we brought in about \$1,381,040.
- As we have financially planned for 2026, we've tried to be as thoughtful, frugal, and responsible as possible.
- It will still cost about \$1,670,334 to run this campus.
- That's a cost-to-income ratio of 120%—for every dollar we bring in, it currently costs about \$1.21 to run this campus.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR CHURCH?

Our financial capacity is not keeping pace with our numerical growth.

- More people are being reached, but the resources required to reach them, disciple them, care for families, and sustain ministries haven't grown at the same rate.
- The growth is great, but unless we step up and start giving, it's not sustainable financially.

### CANNON COUNTY CAMPUS BUDGET 2026: \$1,670,334

- Ministry/operating costs: \$631,523; Outreach/benevolence: \$263,961; Operating costs/utilities: \$219,847; Ministry expenses: \$97,715; Bathroom buildout: \$50,000; Portable offices: \$300,000 (if available); Salaries/benefits for all staff: \$572,900; Salaries: \$464,900; Benefits: \$108,000
- Network Expenses: \$465,911 - HR software, payroll service fees, legal fees, accounting fees, bank fees, taxes, liability insurance, background checks, website/app, Operations and Business teams, network-wide events (Worship Nights, camps).

## STEWARDSHIP

We are 100% debt free (we owe \$0 to any bank and own all our facilities).

- We (myself, staff, our Business/Operations Team, Network Lead Team) have done all that we know how to do to be financially responsible and good stewards of God's money you give.
- Making the budget for 2026 work has been quite difficult. Something has to change.

### SOMETHING HAS TO CHANGE

We will eventually have to choose between slowing ministry growth or stretching resources beyond what is sustainable.

- Neither option aligns with the mission we believe God has entrusted to us.
- This is a serious warning light on the dashboard of our church that needs to get fixed. We can't wait for the engine to fail before addressing this.

### MORE OF A SPIRITUAL ISSUE THAN WE THINK

Generosity is one of the clearest indicators of spiritual maturity and ownership.

- A growing church without growing generosity eventually becomes a church of consumers where ministry outpaces discipleship and the resources to fund that ministry.
- The opportunity in front of us is not about meeting a budget.
- It's about reaching this community for Christ.
- If even a portion of us in this room took a step toward consistent financial giving, the potential for ministry impact in this community (and beyond) would be incredible.
- Scripture assumes God's people will give regularly and proportionally. What we do with our money reveals whom we trust.
- From the title in the Old Testament to the pattern of consistent giving in the early church, generosity is presented as a normal part of following God (Mal. 3:10; 1 Cor. 16:2).
- Jesus spoke about money more than almost anything else because it exposes where our security really sits (Mt. 6:21; Luke 16:11); Proverbs 3:9-10 (ESV)

### HONORING THE LORD WITH OUR WEALTH

For the people of Israel, this was a way that God's redemption out of Egypt was acknowledged.

- We have been redeemed from so much more!
- When we honor God, He honors and takes care of us. All our "barns" and "vats" are different sizes. God chooses who gets what. It may not be a lot, but it always will be enough.
- How are you honoring God with your wealth?

### REAL TALK

This church has never done, nor will ever do, a building campaign or pledge cards. We will not ask for any financial commitment other than faithful and consistent biblical giving.

- There must be ownership, stewardship, and responsibility when it comes to advancing the gospel in this community by financially supporting the mission of the church.

### STEWARDSHIP, OWNERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY

#### STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONS

Sometimes I think about what this church (and the Church in America) is going to look like when I'm gone.

- What are we doing today to ensure that this church is still around tomorrow?
- How can a church that is simply consumed but not cared for and stewarded stand?
- Not just rapid growth—generational legacy.

### AVOIDING CONSUMERISM AND ENTITLEMENT

Church isn't a place to simply get our own needs met while we ignore the needs of others.

- If this is your church home, what are you doing to serve others in this room and financially contribute to what God's doing here?
- If everyone contributed at the level that you contribute...where would our church be? Would we be able to exist anymore?

### IF WE WON'T TAKE OWNERSHIP, THE STORY DOESN'T CONTINUE, AND IT ENDS WITH US.

Psalm 78 assumes that the people of God actively decide to pass on what they've received. It never happens automatically.

- The question before us isn't simply how to sustain today, but rather what kind of spiritual foundation are we leaving for those who worship here long after we're gone?

### OWNERSHIP, STEWARDSHIP, AND RESPONSIBILITY

Take ownership of your faith and step into your responsibility to be a witness for Jesus.

- Take responsibility for the people God has put in your life to lead (family/children, friends, workplace, community).
- If this is your church home, step up and own your responsibility to steward this mission/vision through giving (tithing) and serving (Jan. 19).