



August 2025

Dear church family,

We are in the middle of a blistering hot and humid summer, and August is upon us, which means fall is just around the corner. Another Magnificent VBS is now a wonderful memory, especially those who professed faith in Jesus. It also means that school is upon us, and the fall routine is here.

I want to say a big “thank you” for stepping up and making July such a great ministry month. As we move into August, I will be preaching from Paul’s pastoral epistles on Sunday night, and continuing our Jude series in the morning. Wednesday nights will be favorite pics for a short while as we determine the length of the next study. I hope you will join with us for as many services as you can. Don’t forget Hebrews 10:24-25 (look it up).

I had expected that we would be well on our way of having a new Sr. Pastor, so that I could commence retirement. Since that has not yet happened, we will continue on as if I will be here for while longer, waiting on God’s timing to reveal the man He has chosen to step in. Remember, we are all interims on this earth to faithfully carry on until God moves us.

One more thing. I am planning on a trip to Israel leaving December 27, 2025 and returning in January. There is a three day extension offered to Jordan visiting Petra and Wadi Rum. If you are interested, I would love to have you join us.

Once, again, I want to thank you for your faithfulness in allowing God to use you with the investment of your time, finances, and most of all your prayers. It takes all of these to support the continued ministry of Towering Oaks. Pray about how God would have you give in each of these areas. We appreciate your participation and input as we continue on our mission to “know Him, and make Him known.” You are very much appreciated and loved.

I count it an honor to be your pastor. I pray that you all will have discernment, realize that God empowers those whom He calls, and that all we do is for the honor, glory and praise of God.

I am sincerely His and yours,

Grace Upon Grace

Isn't it wonderful? God's grace overflows in our lives with more grace. Evidence is everywhere.

Why?

Why does the Creator and Sustainer of all that is give us grace upon grace?

Because. Jesus.

This reminds me of what I heard Tommy say in a recent morning devotion, God doesn't bless us because of what we do for Him. He blesses us because of what Jesus has done.

Do you know my Jesus? Do you know the giver of all grace? If you are in constant turmoil stop now and give all you understand of yourself to all you understand of Jesus. Ask His forgiveness for choosing your own way. Thank Him for the gift of a personal relationship with the giver of everything right and good. Grace upon grace is available through Jesus.

We experienced grace in place of grace during our Bible school week. Why did He bless us so?

Because. Jesus.

We experience a new drop from the Ocean of Grace in every breath we take.

Because. Jesus.

We are surrounded by God's unmerited favor—grace—whether we recognize it or not.

Because. Jesus.

I'm excited about the coming weeks. Excited to be a part of God's work and ministries here in this very special church family.

Let us actively look for and praise God for His never-ending grace.

Let us look around and actively invite family, friends, and coworkers to find out for themselves of the goodness of God. Ask God to give you the courage to talk about His grace. To invite others to this wonderful walk. To bring people with you into God's House!

KidsMin is sharing God's love and grace. Bring the kids. Let the kids invite friends to come along. You are always welcomed to listen in, watch and ask questions about the fantastic teaching and modeling of God's grace that permeates our KidsMin.

Why Bible school? Why KidsMin? Why Towering Oaks Church?

Because.

Jesus.

I love you so very much

Shelley

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and not yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of yourselves, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9



“Train up a child...”

We’ve just enjoyed a most fabulous Vacation Bible School week! Lives have been impacted with the gospel and changed for eternity. If you know of a VBS-participating family that is non-churched or non-active, invite them to come and join you in worship.

Now, the school year is upon us. Regardless of where children may be enrolled, parents have an enormous responsibility. Parents are to “train up a child in the way he should go...” (Proverbs 22:6). Some parents may be heard saying, “I’ll just trust them in God’s hands.” – As well you should. However, when it’s time for them to have a bath, we don’t defer to God’s sovereignty; we make sure our little ones get a bath. Likewise, we should establish for them a foundation in God’s Word. Teach your children to pray & read the Bible, so when their little hearts feel heavy, they seek after God and not the world.

One of our greatest responsibilities is to Biblically train the next generation. Psalm 78:1-7 provides a multi-generational challenge to share the “praises of the Lord, and His power and His wondrous works” (verse 4b). As important as academics may be to our kids, knowing the Lord will be far more impactful to their future.

“**Listen**, my people, to my instruction;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
² I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will tell riddles of old,
³ Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
⁴ We will not conceal them from their children,
**But we will tell the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
And His power and His wondrous works that He has done.**
⁵ For He established a testimony in Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers
That they were to **teach them to their children,**
⁶ So that the generation to come would know, the children yet to be born,
That they would arise and tell them to their children,
⁷ **So that they would put their confidence in God**
And not forget the works of God,
But comply with His commandments,”
Psalm 78:1-7



My prayer is that you may one day say, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” (3 John 1:4)

In Christ’s love,

Bro Greg



Notes from the Underground!

Hello TOBC family and friends! This summer has been a roller-coaster in the youth department: some weeks we have a full house, other weeks everyone is out of town! But that's okay, that's just how the summertime rolls.

Since July is the month of our children's VBS (orchestrated by the fantastic efforts of Mrs. Shelly and volunteers) we took the time in Youth to revisit those old Bible stories many of us learned when we went to VBS years ago to see what "new twists to the old, old stories" we could learn. The lessons were from student suggestions!

Lesson 1 we studied the classic story of Noah's Ark, one of the first lessons many children learn at church. But what "new" message could we take away from Noah's story? We found it in Genesis 8:20-21 when the first thing Noah did after God destroyed the world was to build an altar and give a sacrifice of thanks! It was because of this sacrifice that God said he would never destroy all living creatures again! *21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."*

Lesson 2 we studied the "old, old story" of Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and the Fiery Furnace. The focus for the youth in this lesson is found in Daniel 3:18 when these three men took a stand for their faith, regardless of outcomes. King Nebuchadnezzar demanded the three worship his idol of gold. Their response is something I think we should all remember when put to the test: *17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."* God saved them, by the way

Lesson 3 we studied the first Passover and the final plague on Egypt. Now in this lesson, I learned something new, something I don't think I had ever paid attention to before. The focus of this lesson for the youth was found Exodus 12:26-27, Exodus 13:6, Exodus 13:14-16 where Moses commands the elders of Israel to "instruct their children" of these observances and what they mean! Hey, I bet God still expects us to instruct our children about HIM! These passages coincide with Deuteronomy 6:6-9 where Moses commands Israel to teach their children God's commands, to write them on their doorframes, the doorframes that during the first Passover had the blood of the lamb on it.

Lesson 4 we studied the story of Abraham and Isaac, with a very unique look at the geography of the story. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah and it was on this mountain where Isaac was spared by God and a ram was provided for the sacrifice. This mountain would be the site that Solomon built the Temple on, known as Temple Mount, and today is known as The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. What is really interesting is that the site of Jesus's Crucifixion is mentioned in all four gospels as taking place on Golgotha, which was a smaller mountain/hill just outside the old city of Jerusalem. But when you look at a map of where Golgotha stands in relation to Mount Moriah you realize that Jesus was Crucified facing, more than likely, the taller Mount Moriah with the Temple rising high above on its summit. And the tragic irony of our Savior's death for our sins is that God spared Isaac on Mount Moriah and as Jesus was dying for us I can't help but think this was on His mind. Maybe that's why Jesus quoted Psalms 22:1 as recorded in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 when he says "My God, my God, why have you forsaken **me**?" Again, I can't help but think the emphasis of this statement is on the word "me". Psalms 22:1 reads- *My God, my God, why have you forsaken **me**? Why are you so far from saving **me**, so far from **my** cries of anguish?*

Notes from the Underground Continued...

Lesson 5 we studied Daniel in the Lions Den, an all time classic VBS lesson for boys and girls to learn. I would bet that this is one of the stories in the Bible that most people know and remember details about. However.....there is one key detail most people don't realize, maybe even you didn't? That key detail is Daniel's age when this story took place. Daniel chapter 6 records this story and tells us that the Persian king Darius was ruling when Daniel was cast to the lions. This is a long, long time after Daniel was first taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. How long? According to theologians and historians, Daniel would have been somewhere between 80-90 years old when this event happened! Think about this the next time you are spending time with one of your grandparents! Daniel had lived almost his whole life in exile and captivity to foreign kings, first the Babylonians and then the Persians. Then near the end of a long and faithful life others spread false rumors in an attempt to get rid of him. But Daniel stayed true to his faith, even when I am sure he was older, tired, yet still fighting the good fight. And it was because of his faith and moral character that God spared his life. Living right pays big dividends!

*New Twist to Old,
Old Stories*



Final Thought from Mark

Dear Towering Oaks Family,

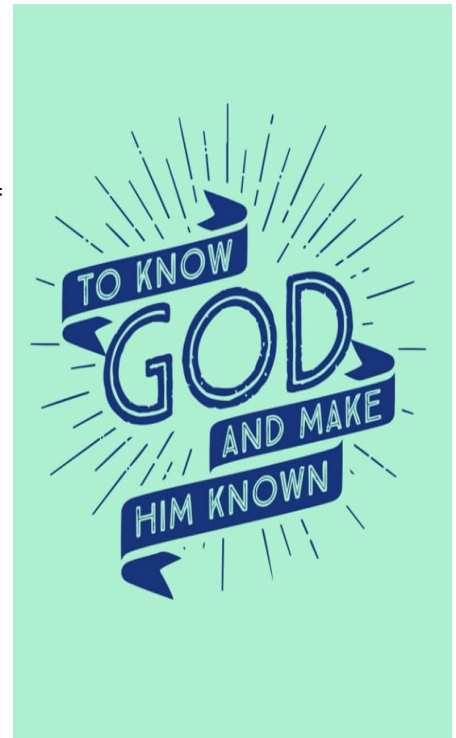
On behalf of my family, thank you for the love, support, and kind words both spoken and written as we said goodbye both at the end of June and to Jamie, Tori, and Mikey at the conclusion of VBS last week.

We love you all and do and will miss Towering Oaks.

Our prayers and with and for you to continue To Know Him and Make Him Known.

With love and gratitude,

Bro. Mark, Jamie, and the Ellison "tribe"



Magnified

We thank, praise, and magnify the Lord for a wonderful Vacation Bible School experience for children and the church family alike.

The total registration was 441, 327 of those being children.

Their attendance varied from all 5 days down to only 1 day. We celebrated every moment we had as we modeled and shared God's love.

We were blessed with 4 decisions to follow Christ and 1 saying she is ready for baptism.

New friendships were formed and longtime friendships refreshed.

Thank you Towering Oaks Family for your faithfulness in tithes and offerings and your willingness to serve.

Don't wait until VBS 2026 JULY 20-24 to grow the church by inviting others to attend.

Get involved in ministry. You'll be glad you did!

ALL volunteers during the week of

Magnified VBS

are invited to

A celebration lunch and teamtime

immediately following worship

Sunday, August 10

in the chapel

RSVP greatly appreciated call

638-7464, text 639-8106 or email spierce@toweringoaks.org

KIDS movin' Up

Sunday, August 10!

It's time to move on up!

Promotion Sunday for our preschool and elementary small groups is Sunday, August 10. That means, Sunday August 3rd might be your child's last morning with his or her teachers.

This is not easy for most kids and, I confess, it is not easy for the teachers to see the kids they have invest in move to another room.

What does this mean for your children?

In preschool, 2's, 3's, and 4's promote to the next room by age.

New kindergarteners will be taught by Randy and Carol Eldridge

First and Second Grades meet with

Johnna & Lance Miller and Tim & Susan Beddingfield

Third and Fourth grades are taught by Pam Rayburn and Daniel Ricker
in the Kids For Christ Building.

Fifth & Sixth grades meet in the preteen CrossTrain Room with

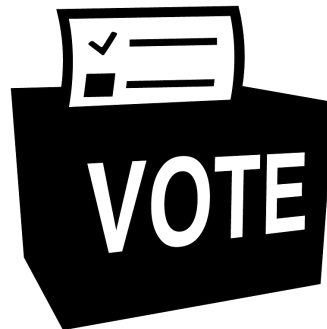
Randa Youngblood and Shelley Pierce

Our sixth grade graduates will move to the Underground Student Ministry



Deacon Election

Ballot forms
are located
in the front foyer outside
the Worship Center.



Deadline is Sunday,
August 31.
We encourage ALL
"active" members to vote.



WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

Sundays @ 9:00am

- Bible Study for ALL Ages

Sundays @ 10:30am

- AM Worship Service
- KidStyle Worship (2nd & 4th Sundays)

Wednesdays @ 6:00pm

- Bible Study led by Bro. Tommy
-Chapel
- Men's Small Group,
-Room 145 (Library)
- Women's Small Group
-Room 147
- Grief Support Group, "GriefShare"
led by Cyndi Vogt
-Room 142—starting August 20th
- Student Ministry (7th-12th Grade)
- Children's Ministry (K-6th Grade)
- Preschool Ministry (Babies-4s/Fall 5s)

Thursdays @ 8:15am

- Moms-In-Prayer Group
-KFC Building




GriefShare®

Grief Recovery Groups

Join us:

New Semester Begins August 20
6:00pm // Room 142
Contact Cyndi Vogt with Questions

GRIEFSHARE.ORG



PaceSetters

- *Monday, August 18
- *Lunch @ Pottery House Café in Pigeon Forge
- *Vans Leaving at 9:30
- *Sign up in Sunday School Classes, Café, and Main Foyer

TOWERING OAKS WOMEN'S MINISTRY

COOKIES WITH A CALLING

Join us for a night of service & devotion!

- Bring 1 dozen cookies
- We will divide the cookies into gift boxes
- We will give each person (if they wish) a location to deliver the cookies to in the community

When: Tuesday, August 5th

Time: 6-7 PM

Galatians 5:13
"Serve one another humbly in love."

BRING A FINGER FOOD TO SHARE
CHILDCARE PROVIDED!

