



**3102**

vol. 5



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After growing up in a Christian household and appearing to “have it all together”, Emily hit her lowest point during her sophomore year of college. The next 9 months, leading into her Junior year, would be full of reckless decisions, drunken nights, and a singular conversation with her sister she won’t ever forget. Although her attendance was based on her desire to spend time with her niece, Emily eventually found herself in a living room with a group of believers hungry for God. Turns out, Emily just needed a taste of what God was doing in others’ lives to make the decision for herself to finally follow Him.



*Scan to read  
Emily's full story.*



Mason grew up in a Christian family, attended a Christian school, and knew Christian values, but none of that knowledge seemed to fill the void he was attempting to fill. After looking to girls, drinking, and other bad influences, the void only grew larger. It wasn’t until a hot summer day that Mason listened to God’s nudging and opened his Bible. It was in this moment, Mason knew his life would be different.



*Scan to read  
Mason's full story.*





Like a list of chores needing to be accomplished, Joslyn's faith story started out with a list of spiritual "to-dos" she thought gave her a pass to Heaven. In middle school Joslyn started to think that there might be more to this whole Jesus thing. After starting to attend her local youth group regularly, her dad became sick and she had to lean on Christ and her community more than ever. It was through this tragedy that God revealed himself most.



Scan to read  
*Joslyn's full story.*



Believing in Jesus and following Jesus don't always go hand-in-hand. This was the tension Cierra felt her sophomore year of high school as she wrestled between the need to be popular and her call to be a follower of Jesus. She'd believed her whole life, but the demands of the world were slowly pulling her away until she hit a breaking point. It wasn't until she left her group of friends and experienced a draught of loneliness that she realized God's approval was all she needed.



Scan to read  
*Cierra's full story.*













# NEXT GEN SUMMER RECAP

— Pages 5-10

## SKILL SCHOOL



In July, Central hosted over 500 elementary kids at the SW Campus for a week filled with fun, skill-building, and discovering Jesus. The theme, “Start the Party,” focused on inviting others into a relationship with Jesus.

Skill School allowed adults to connect with kids through activities they are passionate about, such as rock climbing and flower arranging, while also learning Bible stories each day. Mornings concluded with everyone in the Worship Center together worshipping, dancing, and group learning.

With the help of over 200 dedicated volunteers, Skill School was a great success. VBS was held in our early childhood classrooms for the children of volunteers who weren’t old enough to participate in Skill School. Infants through preschoolers enjoyed activities aligned with the “Start the Party” theme, learned Bible verses, and played games.

It was an awesome and memorable week for many. We’re grateful that Jesus is the life of the party all year round, and we love seeing new families experience Central for the first time through Skill School.







# SIouxPER SUMMERSERVE

Siouxper Summer Serve was a transformative week in June for over 100 middle schoolers in Sioux Falls. For many students, it was their first taste of mission work, packed with activities, worship, and the chance to forge new friendships.

Each morning, students ventured to various worksites around Sioux Falls. More than 20 local non-profits welcomed them to serve, pack meals, do yard work, and assist with various tasks. When not at worksites, the students engaged in gospel conversations at public places like the Empire Mall, sharing the Good News of Jesus with hundreds of people. As a result, 28 individuals came to Christ!

Evenings were filled with fun activities at places like Air Madness, Thunder Road, and Augustana's football field, where students enjoyed games and friendly competition. The day concluded back at Central with worship, teaching, and learning more about God's heart.

We always look forward to Siouxper Summer Serve with great anticipation, eager to see how the Lord will move. This year was a remarkable testament to His love for the lost, and we are grateful for the opportunity to minister to middle schoolers through this super fun event each year.





## MISSION TRIP

# MEMPHIS

## TENNESSEE

In June, a group from Student Central traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, for a 7-day mission trip. The team, including 35 Freshmen and Sophomore students and 8 adult leaders, partnered with a local church to serve the community and engage in the work that God is doing there. Their activities included serving meals, community cleanup, and immersing themselves in a new city and culture for a week.

Throughout the week, students had the opportunity to hear the stories of those working and serving in Memphis, which led to significant spiritual growth. A highlight of the trip was serving with Union Gospel Mission. This ministry gave students the opportunity to worship with and serve a meal to homeless men in the Memphis community.

The experience of stepping out of their comfort zones—being in an unfamiliar place with no cell phones and away from home—encouraged the students to rely on their friends, leaders, and God. Each morning began with focused quiet time, and evenings included group debriefs. Students returned with a renewed perspective and a deeper understanding of God's work in different communities.





## MISSION TRIP



# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Traveling to a new country with language barriers and challenging physical conditions—including heat, unfamiliar meals, and lack of phones—was a transformative experience for 48 Student Central juniors and seniors, and 12 adult leaders. The group partnered with Casas Por Cristo, an organization that organizes short-term mission trips where participants build houses from start to finish within a week for families in need. This marked our third year collaborating with Casas for an international mission trip.

The students engaged in a variety of home construction tasks, including leveling the ground, pouring cement, framing walls, adding a roof, installing doors, and performing electrical work. The highlight for many was meeting and serving the family for whom they were building the house. While working, local children frequently visited the site, and neighborhood families provided meals, allowing the Student Central group to fully immerse themselves in the local culture.

Mornings began with guided devotionals during quiet time, and evenings featured rooftop worship and reflection on the day's experiences. This week-long trip offered the students profound insights and a deeper appreciation for different cultures, community service, and mission work.









# FIRST CHRONICLES

## TWENTY NINE

**Jon Hiatt**

*Mission Expansion Fundraising Chair*

Influence. It's a massive market in our culture today. Print ads, radio spots, and TV commercials have morphed into a technological, carefully crafted, and laser-focused algorithm targeted specifically at us. The influencers who seek to shape our spending habits are, for the most part, motivated by selfish gain. What we buy and do fills their bank accounts, grows their networks, and builds upon their ever-growing spheres of influence.

How did influence work in the early days of the Old Testament? There was no printing press, radio tower, television station, and certainly no internet infrastructure capable of connecting every human being across planet Earth. Personal relationships and word of mouth were really the only options for leveraging one's influence.

Consider the example from I Chronicles 29. God had previously told David that because he was a leader of war and bloodshed, he would not be the king to build the temple. Instead, David's son, Solomon, would be the Israelite king to lead the effort, but there was one problem:



*“My son Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for man but for the LORD God.”*

**- 1 Chronicles 29:1**

Solomon was chosen, but he didn't have the experience necessary to complete the task. David, who was still king at the time, recognized the gap. As one of his last acts, he catalyzed the Israelites to fulfill God's wishes of building the temple. David's address to the Israelites demonstrated a profound act of influential leadership for the benefit of his son Solomon, but more importantly for the task that God had called them to. King David used the only social network that existed during his time, a national assembly, and gathered together all of the Israelites in one place to speak to them face to face.

David started his speech by sharing what the Israelite kingdom would give to the project:

*“With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God – gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron and wood for the wood, as well as onyx for the settings, turquoise, stones of various colors, and all kinds of fine stone and marble – all of these in large quantities.”*

**- 1 Chronicles 29:2**

He continued, describing what he would give from his personal resources:

*“Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple:*

*three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, for the gold work and the silver work, and for all the work to be done by the craftsmen. Now, who is willing to consecrate themselves to the Lord today?”*

**- 1 Chronicles 29:3-5**

Consecrate. It's a word we don't use much anymore, but it was a powerful request that David presented to his leaders and people. He first told them what the kingdom had committed, then shared what he would give personally, and finally asked them to consecrate, or make sacred, what they would give to the Lord and the temple.

The response from the leaders was overwhelming. They gave “willingly, freely, and wholeheartedly” (v 9). It inspired the rest of the Israelites to do the same. David's use of power, authority, and influence was not intended to lift himself up, but to honor God. Unlike contemporary influencers focused on themselves, King David's legacy act was a demonstration of great humility as he pushed all of his chips of influence into the middle of the table and bet on the response from God's people. And it paid off in a God-sized way!

Central Church has been through a number of seasons during its 140 year history. About two years ago when we entered a season of exploring how our church would support space for growing ministries, we prayed and asked God for discernment in what He would have us do. Church leadership explored many options and kept coming back to the fact that in order to carry out our mission, we needed to create more space for people to come and discover the love of Jesus.

With our vision crystallized, the task, much like the Israelites building the temple, was great. We needed the skills, knowledge, expertise, and resources to fulfill what God was calling us to do. The Mission Facility Steering Committee was formed and a host of professional advisors was assembled. Many projects like ours utilize outside counsel when it comes to raising funds. We considered that and talked with professionals who run church campaigns everyday.

However, 1 Chronicles 29 was sprouting in our hearts. The more we read and prayed over the passage, the more convinced we became that it was the path we would follow. Instead of hiring outside counsel, we decided to simply follow God's playbook for fundraising outlined in this chapter.

The financial blessing and generosity of the congregation over the past decade allowed us to follow King David's model and commit \$5 million of Central's "kingdom" cash reserves. We then asked the Elders, staff, and operating board leaders to "give freely and wholeheartedly" and an additional \$4.1 million was committed to the effort.

As we move into the larger public phase of the Mission Expansion fundraising campaign, we as the leaders of the Steering Committee are asking the Central family to consider a simple but challenging question: "Who will consecrate themselves to the Lord today?"

Along with 1 Chronicles 29, other guiding verses have emerged during our prayer and







discernment process. 2 Corinthians 9:7 is a key scripture that demonstrates the posture we have as we come before the Central family and ask for financial support of expanding our facility:

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

**- 2 Corinthians 9:7**

While his ask and influence were critical to the success of gathering the resources necessary to build God’s temple, David knew it wasn’t about him. His gracious prayer of thanksgiving to God reads:

*“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand...Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you...And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you.”*

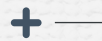
**- 1 Chronicles 29:14-17**

David understood that building the temple was not about him, his son Solomon, or the Israelite people. Rather it was about using abundant provision to honor and participate in God’s Kingdom work. King David’s influence created a cascade of participation and generosity that exceeded all human expectations. It’s a lesson in influence that we’re grateful to still be learning from today.



CENTRAL CHURCH'S  
**ORIGIN**  
+  
**of**  
+  
**OIKOS**

Jeff Wheeler  
*Lead Pastor*



I was told Pastor Tom Mercer from High Desert Church (in Victorville, CA) was going to be speaking at the church in California where I was an associate pastor. He was going to be talking about “oikos.” “Why did we need a pastor to talk to us about Greek yogurt?” I thought. All kidding aside, I had never heard the word used in any other way until this message. And it was life changing.

I’m an introvert. So the concept of “evangelism” (sharing our faith story with others) always intimidated me. It brought back memories of people with bullhorns preaching about Jesus on the street corners at Huntington Beach. Or people handing out gospel tracts to strangers or going door to door and talking to people about the Bible. No thanks! I get hives just thinking about it.

Tom explained that oikos was a New Testament principle for every Christian, even petrified introverts. The Greek word oikos in the New Testament means family, house, or household. It is the circle of people you already have relationships with, not strangers. It’s your relational world. In the time of Jesus it included family, extended family, servants, and those who might have helped run a family business. And Tom said we all have an oikos.

My oikos consists of people I work with, go to school with, play tennis with, and live by. In other words, it’s those people God has already supernaturally and strategically connected me with relationally.







Now, I don't have a relationship with everyone at my work, or everyone at my school, or everyone in my tennis league, or all of my neighbors. But I do have a relationship with some of them. And that some makes up my oikos.

Tom said it wasn't my job to save people in my oikos. I just had to be myself, and tell the people in my oikos that I was a Christian and how Jesus made a difference in my life. I could do that! Just don't ask me to knock on the door of my neighbor Mike four houses down from me. Again, hives. Be authentic, tell my story, and God will do the rest.

Our story is most powerful to the people in our oikos because they know us best. They sit in the front row watching our lives every day, and they can smell a phony a mile away. But if there has been a genuine change, they know that, too.

In Mark 5 Jesus encounters a severely demon possessed man and heals him. His messed up life gets radically changed. When the man wants to go with Jesus on his speaking tour, Jesus said "no." Instead, Jesus said, "Go home to your oikos and tell them the wonderful things God has done for you and how he had mercy on you (Mark 5:18-20)." When this man spoke lucidly to those who knew how messed up he was, it gave power to the gospel. The people in his oikos started thinking, "If God can help that guy, he can probably help me!"

That day Tom asked us to raise our hand if we came to know Jesus as a direct result of a person we knew (a friend or family member). Maybe they shared their faith, or gave us a book to read or invited us to church with them. Then he asked us to raise our hand if we came to know Jesus by some other means (went to a crusade, heard a sermon on Christian TV or a Christian podcast or just started reading the Bible on our own). 90 percent of the hands that went up were because of a personal relationship with someone. **Oikos. That's because oikos is God's plan to save the world. One life at a time through one relationship at a time.**

I love the oikos principle because it's natural. It doesn't involve awkward conversations with strangers. In the normal course of my day, with people I already know and am comfortable with, I simply have to talk about what I'm most familiar with...ME! And tell them how a sinful and imperfect person like me could be loved and wonderfully saved by God, even though I don't deserve it. It can happen on the tennis court, at the gym, or across from my cubicle at work. You're not responsible to change THE world. But you are responsible to help change YOUR world. Your relational world. One life at a time. It's called OIKOS.

We all have a story, and we all have an oikos. Jesus asks us to go to our oikos and tell them the wonderful things he's done for us. I can do that. Can you?





## MISSION EXPANSION BUILDING PLANS

During the exploration phase of the project, the steering committee collaborated with TSP to develop a master plan for the SW campus. The master plan identified the full potential of the land Central owns at 3102 W Ralph Rogers Road.

Once the master plan was solidified, the steering committee prioritized phase 1 construction plans. They used the lens of “highest mission impact” throughout this process. What would increase Central’s ability to help share the love of Jesus? What allows us to open our doors to more people looking for a Savior?

## HERE ARE THE PHASE 1 PRIORITIES

### 1. Next Gen Spaces

We’ll build classrooms for weekday Central Preschool & Kindergarten (CPK), Sunday Kid Central programming, and Wednesday night Student Central LifeGroups. CPK & Kid Central will also have new check-in areas where parents can safely drop off children.

### 2. Worship Center

600 additional seats will be added to the Worship Center. The stage will be renovated, adding an in-stage baptismal pool.

### 3. Renovated Gym

The current Family Life Center gym will be renovated into a multi-purpose space. Acoustics and equipment will be added so the gym can be used to host large group ministries like Woven and Forged.

### 4. North Entrance

A north entrance will be added as an additional entry point for weekend services. A parking loop will also be added for Student Central dropoff on Wednesday nights.





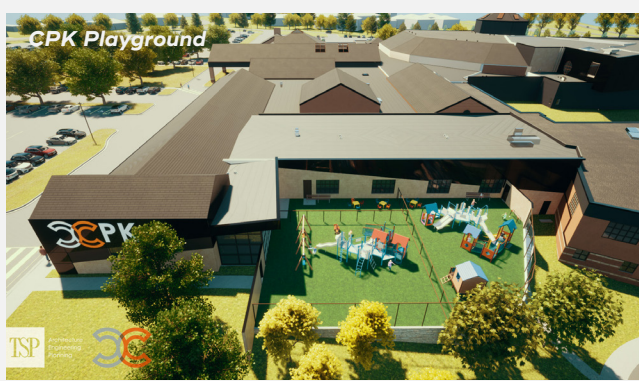
North Entrance, Inside



Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



CPK Playground



TSP

Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



CPK Entrance



Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



Expanded Worship Center



TSP

Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



Student Central & Gym Entrance



TSP

Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



Kid Central Check-In



TSP

Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



North Entrance, Outside



TSP

Architecture  
Engineering  
Planning



# MEET LYNN!

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Lynn is truly a jack of all trades. If you're looking for Lynn in the church building, you'll likely find her in a different place each week. With her leadership abilities and musical talent, Lynn has been a blessing to each ministry she works with, and she continues to be a light to everyone she encounters inside and outside our church walls. Here is a little more about Lynn.

### 1. WHICH AREAS DO YOU VOLUNTEER IN?

Worship team, Welcome team and Woven women's ministry. All the Ws.

### 2. WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT SERVING AT CENTRAL?

I love the fact that the church is committed to growth and outreach, not just in the church building, but in the community. I love the fellowship opportunities and the different ministries offered.

### 3. HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD MOVING AT CENTRAL?

I see hurting people being ministered to by fellow church members. I see people with a desire to dig into the truth of God's Word. I see the youth eager to gather and learn together weekly. My own children look forward to Wednesday night youth group.

### 4. WHY DO YOU SERVE AT CENTRAL?

Jesus set the ultimate example of what service is to look like. I serve in gratitude to Him for all He has done for me, and in obedience to Him. I serve because we, as the church, are called to serve. We have been created to do good works which He prepared in advance for us to do.

### 5. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CENTRAL MEMORY?

My favorite Central memory will forever be my 2 sons getting baptized. Every Christian parent desires for their children to walk in the ways of the Lord. It blessed my heart to hear mine declaring their love and commitment to Christ Jesus, and testifying to His goodness in their life.

### 6. WHERE IS ONE PLACE IN THE WORLD YOU'D LOVE TO VISIT AND WHY?

I love being in God's natural creation: mountains, rivers, rock formations, etc. One spot that I hope to see someday soon is the boiling lake of Dominica. A natural wonder that you can literally boil an egg in. It is a World Heritage Site that happens to be on the most beautiful island in the world, on which I was born. It involves an all day hike, so I've got to train for that [challenge accepted].

### 7. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE WORSHIP ARTIST?

I definitely do not have just one favorite. There are a lot that I enjoy: Cece Winans, Paul Baloche, Israel Houghton, Lauren Daigle, and Allison DeJong are among them.











# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ONGOING

**Student Central**, Wednesday nights @ 6:30pm

**College Central**, Sunday nights @ 6:30pm

**Young Adults**, monthly on the third Monday @ 7:00pm

## OCTOBER

**3rd - Four Great Date Nights**, 6-8:30pm

**15th - Live Sent: Sharing Your Story**, 6:30-8pm

**19th - Forged Men's Breakfast**, 8-9:30am

## NOVEMBER

**10th - Reveal Night**, 6-7:30pm

**17th - Baptism Celebration**, 4-5pm







*Helping you share the love of **Jesus**  
with your relational world.*