



# CIRCUIT RIDER

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MAY 2025

ROB'S TOP 5 LENTEN  
MOMENTS IN 2025

**VBS  
REGISTRATION  
IS OPEN - SPACE  
IS LIMITED!**

CAMP WAY MAKER  
RECAP

SUMMER READING  
SERIES: MAY  
SCRIPTURES

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY  
MAY 4TH

CENTRALROGERS.COM



## Rev. Rob Holifield

Senior Pastor

REV. DAWN SPRAGG  
Senior Associate Pastor of  
Worship

REV. KERRY TURNBOW  
Associate Pastor of Pastoral Care

CAROLE BAKER  
Executive Director of  
Programming

TAMI STEWART  
Executive Director of Church  
Administration

KRIS MICKNA  
Executive Director of Child  
Development

JENNIFER SINGH  
Director of Central Child Care

MISTY REVOIR  
Director of Tiny Tots Preschool

MISTY SMITH  
Nursery Director

KATIE EMERY  
Director of Children's Ministries

LUCY SWANSON  
Director of Youth Ministries

JOHN W. BEALL  
Director of Traditional Music &  
Worship

MOLLIE ARMOUR  
Director of Contemporary Worship  
& Accessibility

SAM GIBBY  
Director of Tech Ministries

AMY PENNY  
Director of Communications

ANGEL SHAW  
Administrative Assistant &  
Membership Secretary

BRIAN CARROLL  
Director of Facilities

CATHY BLACKWOOD  
Bookkeeper

I love a top “something” list. I am a kid of the 80s who used to listen to the weekly top 40 every week. You can still listen to those on SiriusXM’s 80s channel, and I find myself doing that fairly often. But I love to rank things. I love to create top fives and top 10 lists. Several years ago after many failed attempts to journal, I started my daily top five. This is an exercise where at either the end of the day or the beginning of the next day, I write down the top five things that happened to me. I started doing this when I was going through a difficult time in my life and so I would focus on Things to be thankful for or just good things that I observed.

I have been doing this now for many years. Yet, I have had stretches during the last several years where I didn’t do them. So regretfully I do not have a top five list going all the way back to 2008, which is when I began. But I have a lot of them. And the full process includes a weekly top five, monthly, quarterly and yearly. I think you get the point, top five for every period of time of the year.

So, as I was thinking about the May newsletter article, I thought it would be fun to give you my top five Lenten moments for 2025. We had a really great season of Lent and I thought it would be a fun way to highlight several of the great moments.

Lent Top Five Moments (not in any specific order)

5. Ash Wednesday video with Katie Emery and Mason Carter

We wanted to get out Lenten challenges to the congregation as Ash Wednesday was concluding. Katie had a challenge for her parents about trying out Sunday School as a way to add something on for the season of Lent. I wanted to give some more information about the 30 Pieces of Silver challenge. The encouragement of the Cornerstone Class to the church to bring “thirty pieces of Silver” to help raise money for the Way Station was another great moment. Mason Carter wanted to tell the church about a way to pray for the youth of the church through Pray Gravity. I was so impressed with Mason who did the video in one take. What a great way to close out the Ash Wednesday services.

4. 30 Pieces of Silver video by Thomas Szczepanek

I have already mentioned the great challenge from Lay Bennett and the Cornerstone Class for people to bring “30 pieces of Silver” to help with a key mission. During a staff meeting someone pulled up a Facebook post by the Szczepanek family featuring their youngest, Thomas. He explained the 30 Pieces of Silver challenge in a beautiful way and we knew we had to feature the video in a worship service. His mother, Melissa, gave us the go ahead and it was one of the most talked about announcements of Lent.

3. Teaching Prayer during Sunday School

So this is my top five list I am sharing. I have not polled the congregation or staff. One of my favorite parts of Lent was teaching a class on prayer during the Sunday school hour. It was a bit challenging to get there on time and then to make it back to worship ready to go. But there were not any major hiccups. I was able to teach a good group about what I have been learning about prayer. I had some amazing conversations throughout the season with those who attended. I also got to hear how God is answering prayer in our people’s lives, which thrilled my heart.

2. Confirmation Conversations

During Lent Lucy Swanson leads our Confirmation program with 8th graders and mentors selected from our church family. I love helping to teach Confirmation each year. But my favorite part is the private conversations I have with the confirmands about their faith commitment. I get the incredible opportunity to ask each one of them if they are ready to confirm their faith before the church family. This year was awesome once again as each one looked me in the eyes with confidence and told me they were ready. One even said before I asked, that she was confident and ready to do this. WOW! That right there is why I am a minister to hear, “I am confident in my decision for Christ, let’s do this!”

1. Holy Saturday.

I have been talking with John Beall about this service for a long time. It worried me that it was Saturday night before Easter. But it was so worth it. We gathered outside where a bon fire had been lit. We then lit the Paschal Candle which signifies the light of Christ. I then had the amazing opportunity to carry the light into the darkened chapel from the Holy Week services, and proclaim that Jesus Christ was risen! After the entrance we were able to celebrate a baptism of one of our confirmands. This was the practice of the early church and was awesome to connect to such an amazing tradition.

So, there you have it. This was your Sr. Pastor’s Top Five moments of the Lenten Season. Maybe Holy Saturday doesn’t fully qualify because it is sundown on Saturday night, which in the Jewish tradition began Easter Sunday. But I’ll go with how we count the start of Easter and include it. The Holy Vigil was a huge addition to our Holy Week experience.

A special thank you to all of our amazing staff, church leaders and church members. It was a great Lenten and Easter season. I look forward to many more amazing moments as we move through the church calendar together!

And don’t forget as you think through your Top Fives of Lent, You Matter to God.

God Bless,

Rev. Rob



**Sabrina Doss of 'Lavender and Sage Homestead' did an amazing job teaching us how to "Grow your own Groceries" at the April How To Series. It was a wonderful morning of learning about seeds, soil, and gardening techniques. Thank you to everyone that attended and a huge thank you to Sabrina. You can learn more about her business at [lavenderandsagehomestead.com](http://lavenderandsagehomestead.com)**



## WOMEN IN THE WORD

The Women's Sunday school has **MOVED AND IMPROVED!** We can now be found in room 204. We start gathering at 9:15 for coffee, treats, and fellowship, with the class beginning at 9:30. If you have been looking for a women's only class, we would love to have you join us! Starting May 4th, we will begin a NEW 10-week study.

**Romans: Dead to Sin and Alive to Christ.**

This study will help you wrestle with important, sometimes difficult verses. Be prepared for God to reveal new ways to think about and live out your faith!

**SAVE THE DATE! June 17th (9:00 – 11:00am)**

Before hitting the bike trails this summer, bring your bicycle and learn from Spencer Booz and Mitchel Lloyd some of the basics to good bicycle maintenance. Following this one hour session where you will get hands-on experience, you can hit the road for a family friendly bike ride. All experience levels are welcomed.

## NEW MEMBERS



Michael and Renee Wood joined by transfer of membership from Cardington Community Methodist Church in Cardington, OH. Mike and Renee are both with Walmart, Inc. Their daughter, Adelaide (pictured), will be confirmed this coming May. The Wood family live in Cave Springs, AR.



Byron and Beth Bailey, with son Phillip (pictured), joined from their former church, Grace Point Church in Bentonville, AR. Bryon is with Sam's Clubs and Beth is with AmeriMark Direct. Phillip, who has been assisting with both WNL and KidsMin, was confirmed prior to joining with his parents. The Bailey family live in Bentonville, AR



Jacqueline Portokalis joined by transfer of membership from Boston Avenue United Methodist in Tulsa, OK. Jacqueline is a member of our Chancel choir and part of worship ensembles. She is retired from the Parent Child Center of Tulsa. Jacqueline lives with her husband, George, in Elm Springs, AR.



Jim and Nancy King joined by transfer of membership from First United Methodist in Bentonville, AR. Jim retired from Arvest Bank and Nancy stopped teaching after 13 years to raise their (now grown) children. Jim and Nancy are members of Scripture Seekers Sunday School class and live in Bentonville, AR.



Bill and Gail Shanks joined by transfer of membership from First United Methodist in Carbondale, IL. Bill has retired from a career in Mechanical Engineering and Management and Gail is a retired Jr. and Sr. High teacher. Bill and Gail have recently moved to Pinnacle Springs Retirement Community in Rogers, AR.



Matthew and Lisa Moore joined by transfer of membership from Church of the Resurrection, Leawood, KS. Matthew is self-employed and Lisa is with the non-profit Ozark Foundation in Finance. Matthew grew up in Rogers and Central UMC prior to the church moving to New Hope Rd. Matthew and Lisa live in Rogers, AR.



The header features a cosmic background with a blue and green nebula, white stars of various sizes, and a white silhouette of an astronaut floating in space. The word "Gravity" is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, with "YOUTH MINISTRIES" in a smaller, all-caps, white sans-serif font below it.

# Gravity

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

It's hard to believe but Gravity Youth are beginning to wrap up their 24-25 school year programming; and what a year it has been! We don't do so quietly though. We celebrated our seniors on Sunday, April 27, and we want to encourage the congregation to continue to drive by on New Hope Road and pray for each of our graduating seniors as they prepare for graduation and all the feelings that go into ending a chapter and getting ready to begin a new one. But most importantly, we are so proud of you and your accomplishment; especially of graduating high school!

The FUN does not stop there; on Sunday, May 4, we will be welcoming our Confirmation Class of 2025 into church membership at 10:30a with a combined service in the Sanctuary. Don't forget to join us in the Atrium following for a reception and to congratulate our Confirmands and mentors.

That evening, Gravity students and Gravity grownups will head out for ONE MORE evening of FUN to wrap up the 24-25 school year, before taking a month break.



#### DATES TO ADD TO THE CALENDAR:

6/1 SUMMER KICKOFF POOL PARTY AT PICKERINGS

6/8 NATURALS GAME WITH NORTHWEST DISTRICT YOUTH

6/9-13 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

6/14 GRAVITY.FLOAT AT SILOAM SPRINGS

6/22-28 LOCAL MISSION PROJECT AT FIRST SPRINGDALE (REGISTRATION OPEN AT [FIRSTCHURCHSPRINGDALE.ORG/LMP](https://firstchurchspringdale.org/lmp))

7/13, 20, 27 GROWINGUP.GRAVITY SERIES

8/10 PROMOTION SUNDAY & BO'SMO

9/5-7 FALL RETREAT AT NEW LIFE RANCH



@GravityYouthMinistries



*Ministries*

# Community Easter Egg Hunt

Boy oh boy, did God show up and show out for our Community Easter Egg Hunt this year! On Saturday, April 12 we had perfect weather and an abundance of Christ's love. We hosted this event on the front lawn and had a live broadcast from KLRC (Robert is SO amazing), inflatable bounce house & games, a petting zoo, and pony rides. Our sensory friendly area expanded this year and had their own egg hunt space. The missions committee cooked and served 352 hot dogs along with chips and drinks that were so appreciated. We certainly weren't complaining about the sun, but it did make for a toasty afternoon.

New this year, the kids hunted for empty eggs and traded them in for goodie bags after the hunt. This was a huge success and allowed us to share that we handed out 298 goodie bags! Join us as we continue to pray that all those who were here will feel the power and the presence of our Lord and Savior.



## VBS – Registration Open

REGISTRATION IS OPEN! You can register your kids, your youth, and yourself (as a volunteer!) on the church website - <https://centralrogers.com/event/23919148-2025-06-09-vbs/>

We would also ask for your prayers during June 9-13 for our Bible Points each day:

June 9: When we wonder, we can trust Jesus!

June 10: When we feel alone, we can trust Jesus!

June 11: When we feel powerless, we can trust Jesus!

June 12: When we need hope, we can trust Jesus!

June 13: When we need help, we can trust Jesus!





# Camp Way Maker!



In March, we hosted our second Camp Way Maker! This was an Accessible Worship Arts Camp specifically designed for people of neurodiversity. This spring session was crafted for participants ages 15+. They focused their day on embracing God's truth and being fully present as a Disciple of Christ. As our participants gathered for morning check-in, one thing was clear: God's joy and goodness were radiating in these young people. We started our day with prayer and fellowship before heading to our first class, Visual Worship Art! Participants created their very own treasure box—the inside was decorated with things that symbolized their own personal relationship with God and the outside was decorated to symbolize the gifts they share with others. Our next class was Worship Dance. It was incredible to see how each person expressed themselves and leaned into the full body experience of worshiping God with abandon! We had Music and Worship up next where students made the most joyful noise and learned the skills of a Worship Leader. One of our last classes of the day was Testimony and Scripture. In this class, students selected a "life verse" and learned how to deliver scripture with confidence to a congregation. They then took that life verse and created personal testimony about where they felt God had placed a calling on their heart. We can't wait till the next camp session!



# NOTES FROM THE MINISTRY OF THE TOWEL

**Kerry L. Turnbow, Pastor of Congregational Care**

Psalms 119: 105 tells us God's word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. This Psalm is telling us that God's word can guide and illuminate our lives to provide us direction and clarity. God's word is a source of guidance and truth. Therefore, the study of God's word should hold a prominent place in our reading and study life.

I think we all recognize the importance of studying God's word on a consistent basis. Our Bible should be a valuable tool that we use extensively in study and reflection.

Last Sunday I was asked to preach at Living Water United Methodist Church. While I was upfront preparing to preach my sermon I asked the congregation a question, "How many of you brought your Bibles today?" The reason why I asked the question is because I was going to read several scriptures out of the book of Hebrews and I felt like it was important for the congregation to be able to turn in their Bible and follow along.

After I asked the question, I was shocked that not one person raised their hand. Now I am not sharing all of this as a chastisement to this congregation. I know that many of us including myself have apps on our phone where we can just turn to the scripture and read a passage of scripture from the Bible app. The person who did the scripture reading for my sermon came forward and read the scripture from his phone. And I commented to the congregation how much we rely on technology these days in our services and that I was preaching my sermon from my iPad.

Later, I told my wife Kelli who was also sitting in the congregation on the front row that no one raised their hand when I asked the question about bringing their Bible to church. And then I said, "I wonder how many people today actually bring a Bible with them to church." I continued, "We have a society that loves convenience, and it is much more convenient to bring our phone with us to church and read the scripture the minister is using from our phones." Or many times the scripture just appears on the overhead screen.

I told Kelli I see a problem with this. Back in the day, when we brought our Bibles to church, our Bibles became a place where we could make notes and highlight various passages of scriptures so we could go back and study them again and see our notes. Our Bibles became for us a living witness and testimony to sermons and scriptures and subject matter that would inspire us. I said, "We don't have that opportunity on our phones and I believe the church is missing something when we do not have a Bible with us so we can make notes about the meaning of a scripture being shared either in a Bible study or a sermon."

In no way am I trying to lay a guilt trip on any of you about whether you use your phone or bring your Bible to church. This is just me sort of wondering out loud whether it would be more beneficial if we got back to the old school way of bringing our Bibles to church with us so when we open the passage of scripture we know where it's at, we see it, we read it, and we have a pen with us to write notes that will serve us later in our own study and devotional time.

Kelli's response was, "Well, on my phone's app I can take notes on my app about that Bible passage." I ask, "How often do you go back to those notes to reread them to see them in your app?" Her response was, "Not very often." I think when we carry our Bibles with us, the word of God is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path and we use it for study, and we write notes and thoughts, we glean more from God's word. As we spend time in God's word reading a scripture passage, I believe we will get more out of it. I would encourage you to bring your Bible to church with you, not just the app on your phone. (Rebuttals are welcome!)





**Lean In.**  
Connecting People to Christ

# May

2	Women's Gala
3	Corriendo por Oportunidades 2025
4	Confirmation Sunday
5	Missions Committee Meeting
7	Sacred Thread Quilt Mission
7	Prayer Shawl Ministry
11-25	Cleaning Kits for Disaster Relief Fundraiser
12	Ministry Council Meeting
14	Prayer Shawl Ministry
17	Men's Fellowship Breakfast
17	How to Series... "Maintaining your Bike"
18	Grace Community Dinner
19	Evangelism Committee Meeting
19	Discipleship Committee Meeting
19	Church Council Meeting
21	Prayer Shawl Ministry
22	Priscilla Circle
25	Recital & Evensong
26	Church Office Closed - Memorial Day
28	Prayer Shawl Ministry
29	Central Media Open House

# SUMMER READING SERIES

A relaxed journey through the New Testament

● May 1	Matthew 22 - 23
● May 2	Matthew 24 - 25
● May 3	Matthew 26 - 28
● May 4	Rest and Reflect
● May 5	Mark 1 - 2
● May 6	Mark 3 - 4
● May 7	Mark 5
● May 8	Mark 6 - 7
● May 9	Mark 8 - 9
● May 10	Mark 10 - 11
● May 11	Rest and Reflect
● May 12	Mark 12 - 13
● May 13	Mark 14 - 16
● May 14	Luke 1 - 3
● May 15	Luke 4 - 5
● May 16	Luke 6 - 7
● May 17	Luke 8 - 9
● May 18	Rest and Reflect
● May 19	Luke 10 - 11
● May 20	Luke 12 - 14
● May 21	Luke 15 - 16
● May 22	Luke 17 - 18
● May 23	Luke 19 - 20
● May 24	Luke 21 - 22
● May 25	Rest and Reflect
● May 26	Luke 23 - 24
● May 27	John 1
● May 28	John 2 - 3
● May 29	John 4 - 5
● May 30	John 6 - 8
● May 31	John 9 - 11



## GRACE FOOD PANTRY

Grace United Methodist Church

**TUESDAY EVENING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP STAFF THE PANTRY.**

### PLANNING/ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

at Grace United Methodist Church (1801 S. Dixieland)

MONDAY, MAY 12 AT 6:00P

Need More Info? Contact Cathy Blackwood, Co-Coordinator Grace Food Pantry  
at tree21958@gmail.com

## Cleaning Kits for Disaster Relief

When disaster strikes, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is there to help. Floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes leave behind devastation, and one of the first steps toward recovery is cleanup. Cleaning kits provide those affected with essential supplies to begin the overwhelming task of restoring their homes and lives. These supplies must constantly be replenished, and we need your help to restock them. Donate by purchasing items and having them delivered directly to the church!



**May 11-25**