



# Annual Theme Scope & Cycle

What if the story we were telling wasn't  
just about *me*—but about *we*?

**The Bible doesn't start with us. It doesn't begin with our dreams, our struggles, or even our faith. It starts with Jesus.**

**It's His story first.** The story of what God has done through His Son—through His life, His death, His resurrection. The story of how love moved toward the world, even when the world pushed love away.

**But here's the beautiful thing:** the story doesn't end with Jesus alone. It keeps going—through His people. Through a family formed by grace, not by genetics. A people called the Church. A we.

**The Bible tells the story of Jesus**—and then the story of the people who follow Him. It's a story full of broken people and unexpected heroes. Of failure and forgiveness. Of God sticking with His people, even when they wander.

**It's not just a story we read.** It's a story we're in. Because following Jesus was never meant to be something we do by ourselves. It's not a solo climb or a private journey. It's a life we live together.

We belong to each other.  
We grow alongside one another.  
We carry one another's burdens.  
We cheer each other on.

**This is why we matters.** Because faith was always meant to be shared. Not just my story of what God is doing in me—but our story of what God is doing through us. The life of Jesus leads to the life of His people.

The story of me always finds its place inside the bigger story of we.  
**And that's where the real beauty begins.**

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

One Priority

**“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”**

MATTHEW 22:37-39, NIV

Three Relational Motives



Move kids to **love God** by inciting wonder.



Move kids to **love life** by provoking discovery.\*



Move kids to **love others** by fueling passion.

\*In the Elementary Phase, the **DISCOVERY** dial is turned all the way up.

Nine Core Insights

**Design of God's Creation**

What I see around me reveals a Creator who cares about me.

**Identity based on God's Image**

I am created in the image of God and have unique potential and worth.

**Connection because of God's Love**

I live in pursuit of an infinite God who desires an eternal relationship with me.

**Faith in God's Son**

I believe in Jesus and will continue to trust Him even when life doesn't make sense.

**Transformation by the power of God's Spirit**

God's Spirit is transforming my unique and imperfect life into the character of Jesus.

**Truth according to God's Message**

What Jesus said and did impacts how I should respond to God's Word in my everyday life.

**Restoration through participating in God's Story**

I am designed to participate in God's story to restore a broken and hurting world.

**Compassion that reflects God's Character**

My faith in Christ is revealed by my compassion and care for others.

**Community in the context of God's Family**

I choose to live in the complexities of family and community because God values them.

## THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

### Three Basic Truths

In the elementary school years, kids will grow in wisdom, faith, and friendship.

**I need to make the wise choice.**

**I can trust God no matter what.**

**I should treat others the way  
I want to be treated.**

## PHASE

### The Elementary Phase

Kindergarten–Fifth Grade



#### ➔ What is a phase?

A phase is a timeframe in a kid’s life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future.

At each phase, your job is simple . . . Know what can be expected of them and know how they think so they will hear what you say and know what to do.

**It’s just a phase,  
don’t miss it.**

#### ➔ Thinks like . . .

An elementary schooler thinks like a scientist.

Scientists understand the world through concrete evidence they can test repeatedly.

Like scientists, elementary schoolers learn best when they can observe something in their present environment. They are concrete thinkers and need repetition and clear application. The more frequently a new concept can be connected to everyday experience, the better.

#### ➔ How they relate to God . . .

God’s story inspires my story.

Kids who think like scientists love stories. They relate to a God who heals the sick, conquers evil, explains mysteries, performs miracles, overcomes death, and teaches them how to win at life.

#### ➔ Wants to know . . .

In the elementary years, a child develops skills and competencies that equip their future.

The way a child resolves the “Do I have . . . ” questions of each phase provides them with critical knowledge and resources.

The best way to resolve an elementary schooler’s relational questions is to consistently engage their interests.

#### Do I have your attention?

In kindergarten and first grade, a child craves adult attention and approval. When adults demonstrate interest in kids’ progress, kids improve abilities.

#### Do I have what it takes?

In second and third grade, a kid wants to know how their abilities compare with peers. When adults praise kids’ persistence and efforts, kids broaden competence.

#### Do I have friends?

In fourth and fifth grade, a kid begins to prioritize friends in a new way. When adults make introductions and include peers, kids develop friendships.

## 2025-2026 THEMES



**AUGUST**

Origin Story: Where Our Story with God Begins



**SEPTEMBER**

On the Move: Brave the Unknown with God



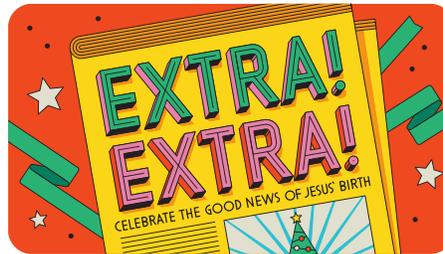
**OCTOBER**

Wisdomland: God Can Help You Make The Wise Choice



**NOVEMBER**

Bedrock: Building Confidence in God, Block by Block



**DECEMBER**

Extra! Extra! Celebrate the Good News of Jesus' Birth!



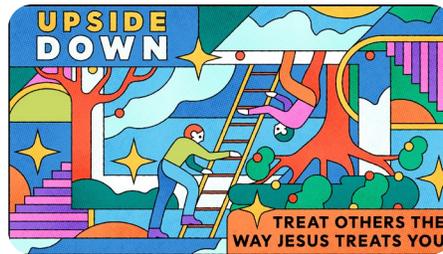
**JANUARY**

Game Plan: Growing Stronger in Faith Everyday



**FEBRUARY**

Like and Subscribe: Share the Love of Jesus



**MARCH**

Upside Down: Treat Others the Way Jesus Treats You



**APRIL**

Block Party: Celebrating Jesus and Joy that Never Ends



**MAY**

Trek: Don't Stop, Don't Give Up—God's With You



**JUNE**

Kingdom Quest: Seeking the greatest treasure



**JULY**

Kingdom Quest: Living the greatest adventure

2025-2026 THEMES

August



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

We can trust God. Looking back at the beginning of God's Big Story and seeing how God kept His promises then gives us confidence to trust that He will be with us now.

**CORE QUESTION**

How do I know that God is trustworthy?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Son / Faith

**MEMORY VERSE**

Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1, NIV)

**Week One:** Creation and the Fall (Genesis 1-2:3; 3)

**Bottom Line:** You can trust God no matter what.

**Week Two:** Noah (Genesis 6-9)

**Bottom Line:** You can trust God even when you don't understand.

**Week Three:** God Chooses Abram (Genesis 12:1-9, 15:1-6)

**Bottom Line:** You can trust that God has a plan.

**Week Four:** Jacob's Dream (Genesis 28:10-22)

**Bottom Line:** You can trust that God is with you.

**Week Five:** Joseph (Genesis 37, 39-45)

**Bottom Line:** You can trust God when things get tough.

September



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

It's hard to be brave. But when we look at God's Big Story, we can reflect on how He can help us be brave even when things are scary or hard.

**CORE QUESTION**

How can I trust that God can help me?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Spirit / Transformation

**MEMORY VERSE**

When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you. (Psalm 56:3, NIV)

**Week One:** Moses (Exodus 3-6:12, 7-12:42, 13:17-14:31)

**Bottom Line:** God can give you courage when you don't feel ready.

**Week Two:** Joshua and the Spies (Numbers 13-14:35)

**Bottom Line:** God can give you courage when others are afraid.

**Week Three:** Rahab Helps the Spies (Joshua 2)

**Bottom Line:** God can give you courage to help someone in need.

**Week Four:** Ruth (Ruth 1)

**Bottom Line:** God can give you courage when you don't know what's next.

2025-2026 THEMES

October



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

We may not know the answer to every question or problem, but God does. When we look at God's Big Story, we can see that we can turn to Him for wisdom whenever we need help.

**CORE QUESTION**

How did Jesus grow in wisdom?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Message / Truth

**MEMORY VERSE**

It is much better to get wisdom than gold. It is much better to choose understanding than silver. (Proverbs 16:16, NIV)

**Week One:** Samuel Anoints David (1 Samuel 16:1-13)

**Bottom Line:** God can help you make the wise choice.

**Week Two:** David and the Psalms (Psalm 1:1-4)

**Bottom Line:** If you want to be wise, focus on God.

**Week Three:** Solomon Chooses Wisdom (1 Kings 3:4-15)

**Bottom Line:** You can ask God for wisdom.

**Week Four:** The Kings (1 & 2 Kings)

**Bottom Line:** Be wise because your choices matter.

November



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

Trying to do something on your own is difficult. When we look at God's Big Story, we can see that no matter the situation, when we follow God, we can have confidence that He is with us.

**CORE QUESTION**

How does believing in God change the way I live?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Image / Identity

**MEMORY VERSE**

Those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak. (Isaiah 40:31 NIV)

**Week One:** Elijah and the Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:16-45)

**Bottom Line:** God can do the impossible.

**Week Two:** Jonah (Jonah 1-3)

**Bottom Line:** God knows what's best.

**Week Three:** Daniel and the Lions' Den (Daniel 6)

**Bottom Line:** God is always with you.

**Week Four:** Esther (Esther)

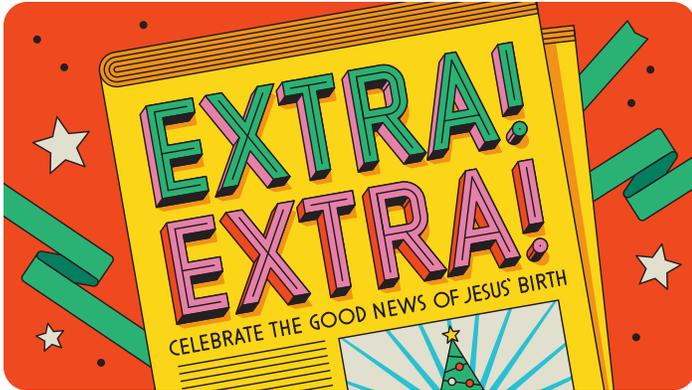
**Bottom Line:** God can help you stand up for others.

**Week Four:** Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1-4, 6:1-15)

**Bottom Line:** God can help you do big things.

2025-2026 THEMES

December



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

The most exciting thing about Christmas is that we celebrate the birth of Jesus! Jesus' birth is part of God's plan to restore what was broken.

**CORE QUESTION**

Why is Jesus so important in God's story?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Creation / Design

**MEMORY VERSE**

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:11, NIV)

**Week One:** Jesus Is Promised (Isaiah 9:6-7, Micah 5:2)

**Bottom Line:** Jesus is good news for everyone.

**Week Two:** Gabriel Visits Mary (Luke 1:5-66)

**Bottom Line:** God always had a plan to send Jesus.

**Week Three:** Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:1-20)

**Bottom Line:** Jesus is the greatest gift.

**Week Four:** The Wise Men Visit Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)

**Bottom Line:** Celebrate Jesus all year long.

January



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

Practicing something every day helps you learn how to do it better. When we follow Jesus and actually live out the things we hear and learn, the Holy Spirit helps our faith grow.

**CORE QUESTION**

How can I grow daily in my relationship with God?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Love / Connection

**MEMORY VERSE**

Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come. (1 Timothy 4:8, NIV)

**Week One:** Jesus at the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

**Bottom Line:** Practice talking about God.

**Week Two:** The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

**Bottom Line:** Practice praying to God.

**Week Three:** The Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 7:24-27)

**Bottom Line:** Practice hearing from God.

**Week Four:** Jesus Chooses Matthew (Luke 5:27-32)

**Bottom Line:** Practice living for God.

2025-2026 THEMES

February



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

God’s Big Story shows how Jesus showed His love to everyone. When we follow Jesus, we can love others just like Jesus.

**CORE QUESTION**

What does it look like to love like Jesus?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God’s Family / Community

**MEMORY VERSE**

“I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you.” (John 13:34, Nlrv)

**Week One:** Jesus Teaches Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

**Bottom Line:** God loves the whole world.

**Week Two:** The Most Important Commandment (Matthew 22:34-40)

**Bottom Line:** Love God. Love others.

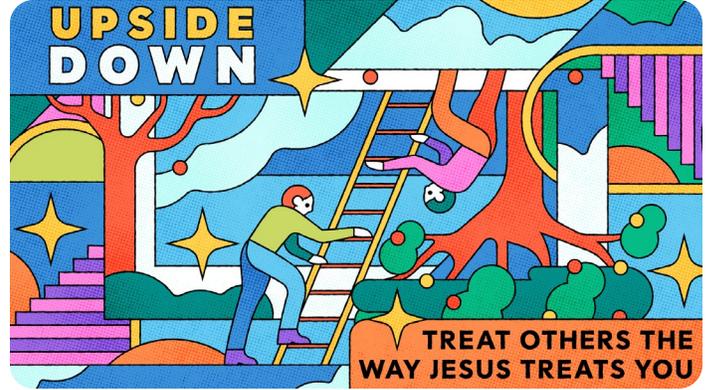
**Week Three:** Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

**Bottom Line:** The love of Jesus can change things for the better.

**Week Four:** Jesus Heals Jairus’ Daughter and a Suffering Woman (Mark 5:21-43)

**Bottom Line:** Show the love of Jesus to people in need.

March



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

In God’s Big Story, Jesus showed compassion by becoming one of us. He gave up a lot to make that happen. Jesus showed us that sometimes you have to give things up to show others just how much you care.

**CORE QUESTION**

How does following Jesus influence the way I treat others?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God’s Character / Compassion

**MEMORY VERSE**

Don’t do anything only to get ahead. Don’t do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3, Nlrv)

**Week One:** John the Baptist Is a Witness About Jesus (John 3:22-36)

**Bottom Line:** Jesus must increase. I must decrease.

**Week Two:** A Roman Commander Has Faith (Matthew 8:5-13)

**Bottom Line:** Remember God is most important.

**Week Three:** Be Humble / Love Your Enemies (Matthew 5:38-48)

**Bottom Line:** Love like Jesus even when it’s hard.

**Week Four:** Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42)

**Bottom Line:** Make time for Jesus first.

**Week Five:** Palm Sunday / Jesus Washes His Disciples’ Feet (John 12:9-16, 13:1-17)

**Bottom Line:** Jesus showed us how to be humble.

2025-2026 THEMES

April



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

Jesus is alive! We can have joy because of what Jesus did for us. When we look at God's Big Story, we can see that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection were God's plan all along.

**CORE QUESTION**

What does it look like for God's Spirit to be with you?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Story / Restoration

**MEMORY VERSE**

Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! (Philippians 4:4, NIV)

**Week One:** Easter (Crucified and Risen) (John 18-20:23)

**Bottom Line:** You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

**Week Two:** On the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

**Bottom Line:** You can have joy because there's a bigger story.

**Week Three:** Great Commission and Ascension (Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:1-11)

**Bottom Line:** You can have joy because God is with you.

**Week Four:** Pentecost / Fruit of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-41)

**Bottom Line:** God's Spirit gives you joy.

May



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

After the church was formed, being a follower of Jesus wasn't easy. But we can see in God's Big Story that no matter what happens, we can have the perseverance to not give up when it gets hard because God is with us.

**CORE QUESTION**

How can you remember that God is with you in tough times?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Son / Faith

**MEMORY VERSE**

Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up. (Galatians 6:9, NIV)

**Week One:** Peter and John Are Taken to the Sanhedrin (Acts 3-4:22)

**Bottom Line:** Keep going because of what God has done.

**Week Two:** Philip and the Man From Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-40)

**Bottom Line:** Keep going and ask when you have hard questions about God.

**Week Three:** Paul Becomes a Believer / Ananias Helps Paul (Acts 9:1-31)

**Bottom Line:** God can help you see things in a new way.

**Week Four:** Paul Shipwrecked (Acts 27-28:10)

**Bottom Line:** Don't give up on God when bad things happen.

**Week Five:** Heaven (Revelation 21:3-5)

**Bottom Line:** God will make everything right in the end.

2025-2026 THEMES

June



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

The quest for God's kingdom begins with knowing the King, Jesus. When we choose to follow Jesus and learn to know Him more, we are given the amazing mission of helping to grow God's kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit. It can start with the smallest thing—one choice, a kind word, an offer of help—and grow into something far bigger and more amazing than we can imagine. But seeking God's kingdom and inviting others to be a part of it is more valuable than anything else that we can ever own or achieve or be. God has invited us on the amazing adventure of partnering with Him to bring the kingdom now, where we live, until the time when God makes everything right and brings the kingdom fully.

**CORE QUESTION**

What Is God's kingdom?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Message / Truth

**MEMORY VERSE**

"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:10 NIV).

**Week One:** The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast (Matthew 13:31-34)

**Bottom Line:** Jesus shows us God's kingdom.

**Week Two:** The Story of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7 (supporting: 1 Timothy 1:15?))

**Bottom Line:** Jesus made a way for you to be part of God's kingdom.

**Week Three:** The Story of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

**Bottom Line:** God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom.

**Week Four:** The Stories of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Matthew 13:44-46 (supporting: Matthew 4:18-22))

**Bottom Line:** Loving God and His kingdom is most important.

July



**SERIES DESCRIPTION**

The quest for God's kingdom begins with knowing the King, Jesus. When we choose to follow Jesus and learn to know Him more, we are given the amazing mission of helping to grow God's kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit. It can start with the smallest thing—one choice, a kind word, an offer of help—and grow into something far bigger and more amazing than we can imagine. But seeking God's kingdom and inviting others to be a part of it is more valuable than anything else that we can ever own or achieve or be. God has invited us on the amazing adventure of partnering with Him to bring the kingdom now, where we live, until the time when God makes everything right and brings the kingdom fully.

**CORE QUESTION**

What does it look like to live and grow in God's kingdom?

**CORE INSIGHT**

God's Character/ Compassion

**MEMORY VERSE**

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17)

**Week One:** The Story of the Farmer (Matthew 13:1-23)

**Bottom Line:** God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says.

**Week Two:** The Parable of the Bags of Gold (Matthew 25:14-30 (NIV))

**Bottom Line:** God's kingdom grows when you use what He's given you.

**Week Three:** The Servant Who Had No Mercy (Matthew 18:21-35)

**Bottom Line:** God's kingdom grows when you forgive.

**Week Four:** The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up (Luke 18:1-8)

**Bottom Line:** God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.

VIRTUES

What is a virtue?

What God is doing in you to change the world around you.

Monthly Virtues

AUGUST

Faith

Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

Hebrews 11:1

SEPTEMBER

Courage

When God helps you to be brave enough to do hard things

Psalms 56:3, NIV

OCTOBER

Wisdom

Finding out God's best and doing it

Proverbs 16:16, NIV

NOVEMBER

Confidence

Living like you believe God is with you

Isaiah 40:31 NIV

DECEMBER

Christmas

Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift

Luke 2:11

JANUARY

Commitment

Making a plan to be like Jesus and putting it into practice

1 Timothy 4:8

FEBRUARY

Love

Choosing to treat others the way Jesus treats us

John 13:34

MARCH

Humility

Putting others first by giving up what you want

Philippians 2:3

APRIL

Joy

Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

Philippians 4:4

MAY

Perseverance

Refusing to give up when life gets hard because God is always with you

Galatians 6:9

JUNE

TBD

JULY

TBD

## VIRTUES

### Three-Year Overview

#### 2023-24

##### August

Creativity—Using your imagination to do something new (Ephesians 2:10)

##### September

Friendship—Using your words and actions to show others you care (Proverbs 17:17)

##### October

Integrity—Choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do (Proverbs 10:9)

##### November

Gratitude—Letting others know you see how they've helped you (Psalm 136:1)

##### December

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift (Isaiah 9:6)

##### January

Responsibility—Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you (Luke 16:10a)

##### February

Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them (Colossians 3:12)

##### March

Peace—Proving you care more about each other than winning an argument (Romans 12:18)

Easter—Celebrating that Jesus is alive (John 3:16)

##### April

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now (Psalm 27:14)

##### May

Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice (1 Timothy 4:8)

##### Summer (June/July)

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing (Proverbs 17:22, Philippians 4:4)

Note: While the Virtues recycle every three years, the content for each Virtue does not. New content is created each month, as well as new resources and products. Virtues and definitions are subject to change.

#### 2024-25

##### August

Wisdom—Finding out what you should do and doing it (James 1:5)

##### September

Compassion—Caring enough to do something about someone else's needs (Matthew 5:16)

##### October

Self-Control—Choosing to do what's best even when you don't want to (2 Peter 1:3a)

##### November

Generosity—Making someone's day by giving something away (James 1:17a)

##### December

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift (Matthew 1:21)

##### January

Resilience—Getting back up when something gets you down (Psalm 31:24)

##### February

Uniqueness—Learning more about yourself so you can make a difference (Psalm 139:14)

##### March

Cooperation—Working together to do more than you can do alone (Ecclesiastes 4:9)

##### April

Hope—Believing that something good can come out of something bad (John 16:33b)

##### May

Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it (Philippians 2:4)

##### Summer (June/July)

Live It Out—With Jesus we can help change the world (Philippians 2:5, Romans 15:5)

#### 2025-26

##### August

Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see (Hebrews 11:1)

##### September

Courage—When God helps you to be brave enough to do hard things (Psalm 56:3, NlrV)

##### October

Wisdom—Finding out God's best and doing it (Proverbs 16:16, NlrV)

##### November

Confidence—Living like you believe God is with you (Isaiah 40:31 NlrV)

##### December

Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift (Luke 2:11)

##### January

Commitment—Making a plan to be like Jesus and putting it into practice (1 Timothy 4:8)

##### February

Love—Choosing to treat others the way Jesus treats us (John 13:34)

##### March

Humility  
Putting others first by giving up what you want (Philippians 2:3)

##### April

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing (Philippians 4:4)

##### May

Perseverance—Refusing to give up when life gets hard because God is always with you (Galatians 6:9)

##### Summer (June/July)

TBD