

## get connected:

Questions about anything below? Stop by the Connect Center in the lobby!

### Groups and Classes This Fall:

If you are ready to take a next step in your faith, there are several groups, studies and classes set to start in September. We have environments for you to build relationships and go deeper in your faith. You can find these fall options by scanning the qr code or by texting "group" to 217.546.4818.



### Mom's Group:

For those in the stage of raising children, come join us for fellowship, community and the study of God's word. This group is held on Wednesday mornings from 9:15-11am. Childcare and coffee are available! Women from any church are welcome. Regardless of your stage of motherhood – we would love to have you join us! This semester we are studying "Having A Mary Heart In A Martha World" by Joanna Weaver (purchase book on your own). Please sign up by texting "moms" to 217.546.4818.

### Essentials:

Essentials is our "start here" environment. It's a 7-week Sunday morning class beginning on September 13 at 10:30am designed to help orient you to the basics of Christian practice and equip you to live a better story: God's story. Essentials will prepare you for a next step into baptism, membership, Institute, life groups, or whatever God is moving you toward. Sign up by scanning the qr code or text "essentials" to 217.546.4818.



### International Student Furniture Drive:

On Friday, September 4, we are hosting a very important event for CSF, our local campus ministry partner at UIS & LLCC. This event allows new-to-America students to be blessed with much needed furniture and household items. This event has served as a great point of connection for hundreds of international students. If you would like to help on the day of the event, we have a number of opportunities. Sign up by texting "csf" to 217.546.4818.

for more information on what's happening, please visit our website: [www.cherryhillsfamily.org](http://www.cherryhillsfamily.org)

## a word from: Luke

Cherry Hills family,

I read a book a while back by two spiritual directors about stages of growth in discipleship. The authors contended that most churches do well at helping people discover God, connect with others, and begin learning—early stages of spiritual development. But later stages tend to be harder because they take more time, more personalized shepherding, more commitment. They involve processing grief, grappling with complexity and uncertainty, uprooting issues in our character that others may not be aware of or may even celebrate. Many of us reach a plateau in spiritual life where our spiritual disciplines, emotional health, and thinking level off. We've attained an acceptable measure of maturity and take our foot off the gas. Generally, these folks are good Christians and well-functioning people. But few of us press on further.

Recognizing forms of this complacency in their own day, many centuries ago some followers of Jesus ventured away from Rome and Alexandria, places of power and culture, and began intentional communities in the desert. Some of our faith's richest practices of rigorous discipline, sacrificial service, and the contemplation of God took root in desert soil. The way of the wilderness was demanding but life-giving. I often wonder: In our churches today, how do we help people walk this narrow path to love more extravagantly, think more critically, heal more fully? There are no silver bullets.

One way we've tried to draw people into more depth is through Institute. You don't have to be a saint or scholar to join a class. We've had teenagers thrive in these classes, as well as young parents and newly baptized people. But there is a certain demand placed upon you as you participate in reading assignments, spiritual practices, and written reflections. There's just no way to move toward later stages of spiritual maturity apart from slow and deep work that engages the body, heart, and mind. These classes are not "12 weeks to elite spiritual maturity!" But they address important domains of formation that we all need.

I hope if your season of life allows for it that you'll consider committing to one of the Institute classes offered this fall: Formation, Emotional Health, or Theology. Scan the QR code for more info. If you have a question reach out to me ([luke@cherryhillsfamily.org](mailto:luke@cherryhillsfamily.org)).



## prayer focus:

- week of August 23 -

**Church To Pray For**  
Elm Street Christian

**Mission To Pray For:**  
Powerlight Fest  
taking place today at the IL State Fair



**Infant - Preschool**  
[Jennifer@cherryhillsfamily.org](mailto:Jennifer@cherryhillsfamily.org)  
Check-in @ Main Level  
Education Center

**K - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
[Jessica@cherryhillsfamily.org](mailto:Jessica@cherryhillsfamily.org)  
Check-in @ Lower Level

Today, kids in early childhood and elementary are learning about "The Red Sea"

Exodus 14



[Caleb@cherryhillsfamily.org](mailto:Caleb@cherryhillsfamily.org)

**6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
Wednesday evenings 6-8 pm  
**9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
Sunday evenings 6-8 pm



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