



40 DAYS

OF PRAYER & DEVOTION



"Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever."
Joshua 4:6-7

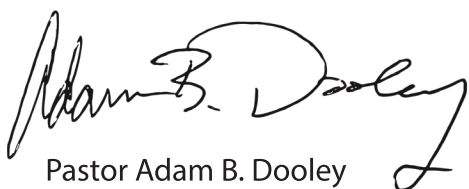
Celebrating 75 Years

After crossing over into the Promised Land, God commanded one member from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to carry a stone from the middle of the Jordan River to the other side. Intended to be a memorial for future generations, these rocks were not only a reminder of the nation's past, but also of God's miraculous provision and goodness along the way. Gathered in a large pile at Gilgal, the sight of these physical markers brought to mind Israel's collective experience with God as they followed Him. The collection also became a visual teaching tool for the next generation of Yahweh followers in a new land.

In a similar way, the collective effort of this devotional guide is ample evidence of God's faithfulness to Englewood over the years. Like stones of remembrance, each entry not only reminds us of practical, biblical truth, but also represents a person or family with a story to tell. Despite the numerous accomplishments and characteristics of this congregation, the people of Englewood remain the greatest testimony of God's blessing.

My prayer is that these pages will not only encourage each of us as we celebrate 75 years of ministry, but that they will also enlighten future generations of God's activity within our fellowship. Neither time nor space could fully capture the breadth of God's work among us, but there are numerous stones which keep us anchored to the eternal truth out of which our church was born. Though much has changed across eight decades of ministry, our foundational convictions remain the same.

Read each entry carefully, celebrating the Lord's goodness and applying His truth. God will continue blessing the ministries of our church if we tell His story and live by His Word. Let's keep building for the generations that come after us. The best of Englewood's story is yet to be written!



Pastor Adam B. Dooley

Faithful to the Finish

I became acquainted with Englewood Baptist Church when I came to Jackson to attend Union University in August of 1971. Bro. Paul Williams was the pastor then. I did not join Englewood at that time because I met a young lady who would become my wife at North Jackson Baptist Church. So, that is where I became a member.

After my wife and I both graduated from Union in 1974 and later I attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX, I pastored several churches in the greater "Hub City" area. By that time Dr. Philip Jett was Englewood's pastor. For several years my wife and I would attend the early service at Englewood and then I would go to my church to preach.

When I retired from the active pastorate at the end of 2016, the next week we decided that we would officially become members here. While we were filling out our membership applications Dr. Jett, who was then Pastor Emeritus, came back and said, "Garry, I want you to be on our Pastoral Care Team." I was able to be retired for about a week.

Dr. Jett, or "Dr. Phil" as he was affectionately called, was fond of saying that the word "retire" is not in the Bible. I cautiously invited his attention to a passage in his favorite translation, the New Living Bible, which says, "This is the rule the Levites must follow: They must begin serving in the Tabernacle at the age of twenty-five, and they must retire at the age of fifty. After retirement, they may assist their fellow Levites by serving as guards at the Tabernacle, but they may not officiate in the service. This is how you must assign duties to the Levites." (Numbers 8:24-26)

He may not have adopted it as his life verse, but Dr. Phil lived out Ecclesiastes 9:10, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going."

Even on the day he passed away, he was preparing to attend the Maximum Man Bible Study and engage with other men in the active study of the Word for the glory of the Lord.

I considered Dr. Phil, who served Englewood for more than half of the church's existence, a friend, a mentor, a guide, and an example to follow. Many young preachers and others would give testimony to the fact that he lived up to his belief that retirement was not in the Bible. He not only believed it, he lived it.

Gary Miller

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."*

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust Him in Every Season

Losing a job can feel like the ground is shifting beneath you. It brings fear, uncertainty, and a flood of questions. I've been there. In 2003, I lost my job. At the time, our children were still young, and we had only been living in Jackson for three years. The future felt uncertain and heavy.

But in the middle of that season, we weren't alone. We had Englewood Baptist Church, and it became a strong anchor for us. We were (and still are) part of Marty Jordan's incredible Sunday School class, which poured love and support into our lives. Our closest friends, the Hathcocks, walked beside us every step of the way. And so many from our church family surrounded us with encouragement, wisdom, and prayer.

At the time, we couldn't understand what God was doing. But Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to trust Him—not just when the road is clear, but especially when it isn't. We were called to trust with all our hearts, to stop relying on our own understanding, and to submit to Him in every detail.

Now, more than twenty years later, we can look back and clearly see God's hand in it all. That job loss—something we feared would break us—became the turning point that led us to open our own business. By God's grace, that business is now going into its 23rd year of operation. We have been blessed beyond anything we imagined at the time.

We couldn't see it then, but God was using that dark season for good. He was redirecting us, reshaping our faith, and leading us into something far better than we could have planned ourselves.

If you're facing trials today, take heart. You may not understand what God is doing—but one day, I trust that you will look back and see how He was at work all along. Trust Him. He is faithful in every season.

Tim Adcock

The Blessing of Life Groups

Reflecting on the early Church reveals the close-knit communities that formed. Today's culture often prevents the development of such relationships due to busy schedules and lack of proximity to the same people daily. Life Groups at Englewood have provided our family the opportunity to connect with others and grow in our faith together.

1. Devotion to God through Fellowship

Acts 2:42 says, "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." In Life Group, we follow this example of devotion. Together, we study God's Word, share meals, and lift our prayers to heaven. This rhythm of gathering and growing builds a solid foundation for our faith and reminds us that we are not alone on our journey. Take a moment to ask yourself: How can being in a Life Group help me deepen my relationship with Christ?

2. Unity in Spirit

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1). This verse reminds us of the beauty and blessing of unity within the body of Christ. Acts 2:1 and Acts 2:46 also echo this sentiment. Life Groups embody this unity, creating a space where believers can gather to joyfully sharpen and build each other up. Consider today: Why is being together in unity such a powerful component of our individual walk with Christ?

3. Encouraging One Another

1 Thessalonians 5:11 states, "Encourage one another and build up one another, just as you are doing". Life Groups provide an environment that fosters encouragement and support. By sharing testimonies, praying together, and speaking truth, we uplift one another in our faith. Reflect on this: How can I be the hands and feet of Jesus to support someone in my Life Group today?

Pray and Act

Heavenly Father, thank You for our community. Guide us to live in unity, carry one another's burdens, and encourage each other. Lord, continue to guide our Life Group as we strive to reflect Your light in all we do. Amen.

As you go about your day, think about how God might be calling you to engage more deeply in your Life Group. Whether through acts of service, words of encouragement, or simply showing up with a willing heart, know that you are part of something much greater—His plan for love and community.

Kody Alexander

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us,
and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.”

Hebrews 12:1

The Legacy of Englewood

I had just graduated from college and was beginning my career in Jackson, my new home. I visited different churches and felt drawn to Englewood. I was getting married that summer, and did not want to make any decision before Amy got here, so I waited until she came in August 1979 as my wife. We went through another round of church visits, and one day she told me she felt drawn to Englewood. We joined the following Sunday. I feel so fortunate to have worked with and alongside so many of the wonderful staff and lay people who have been members of Englewood. God has shown us His grace in so many ways during the 41 years we have been members here. We have had the privilege of seeing our children saved here, being a part of different small groups, singing in the choir, being part of mission efforts locally and internationally, making lasting friendships, and worshiping with other believers in so many different and wonderful ways.

I am incredibly mindful of the obedient people who have gone before us, seeing God's promises fulfilled in the incredible fellowship that is Englewood. I marvel at the faith of families from West Jackson Church who moved out to a lot on a gravel road to start a chapel that would grow into Englewood Baptist Church. They were faithful to obey God's call. They were faithful to go door to door to share the gospel with families and to serve where needed. They tore down a building and constructed a chapel that would grow into Englewood. As we celebrate 75 years, I marvel at the blessings God has bestowed on Englewood and wonder what future blessings He will bestow on us if we are faithful in continuing to seek and worship Him earnestly. How will we in the pews today leave a legacy that will continue the legacy for generations to come? Pray today that God will show you the place that He wants you to be obedient to His will to serve and play a part in continuing the legacy of our beloved church and the Kingdom of God in the future.

Bob Alvey

Finding A Home at Englewood

My first visit to Englewood was in 1985 as a senior at Union University. I was accompanied by my soon-to-be fiancée, Brenda, who is now my wife. Brenda and I had been searching for a new church home for a while, and had visited several places before coming to Englewood. We arrived and were greeted by friendly church members around us. It was time for the service to begin when another man approached. He came over and welcomed us to Englewood. Assuming he was another friendly church member who had come to welcome us, we shook his hand. As the service began, we noticed that he found his way onto the stage. It was then that we discovered the man who had greeted us so kindly, introducing himself only as Phil, turned out to be the pastor, Dr. Phil Jett.

This experience profoundly impacted us. It was impressive to see that in a church as large as Englewood, the pastor genuinely cared for all the attendees. As we continued to sit under his teaching on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights, we were even more impressed by his love for God's Word and his desire to share the Gospel with others. Consequently, on March 24, 1985, we joined the church, and a little over a year later, we were married by Dr. Jett. Not only have we remained members of EBC, but we also raised two children here, and they (along with their spouses) are also members of Englewood.

To me, Englewood has always been the smallest big church we've ever known. Despite its growth, the biblical principle of Christian brotherhood endures. Loving your neighbor as yourself, praying for one another, caring for one another, and serving one another. It's our calling as Christians to fulfill the biblical ideals of Christian brotherhood so that we are better prepared to live out the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:16-20.

As a Christian, it's important to stay connected to a community of believers. Although you don't know everyone by name in the church, you can still make close friendships. Having a Life Group to pray with, study God's Word with, and connect with is crucial to your growth as a Christian. With these people, you can not only share the burdens of life, but also rejoice in the victories. They are your extended family — your Christian family. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Romans 12:10

Robert Briley

"and He said to them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:19

The Night the Porch Light Was On

Over the last 46 years, Regina and I have experienced many life-changing events through the ministry of Englewood Baptist Church. The program that impacted us the most was Continuous Witnessing Training (CWT).

Dr. Jett had a vision to start this at Englewood in 1986 and invited Regina and me, along with six or eight others, to begin. The only problem for me was that I had never shared my faith in a one-on-one setting. At the time Dr. Jett invited us to be part of it, I had been teaching Sunday School at Englewood for several years and had been ordained as a deacon, but I had never had the confidence to share the gospel in a one-on-one setting. I had always wanted to be a "fisher of men", but did not feel equipped to do so.

After much excuse-making on my part, I finally agreed to participate in this training. It changed my life! Regina has never been timid about telling what God had done in her life, so she was ready to go from the start.

Numerous stories could be told by each person who went through this training over the next 10 years. One night stands out for me. A teenage girl was saved at a youth event in Englewood. I received the name of her mother for us to visit. When we pulled into the driveway, the front porch light was on, which was a little unusual. When we knocked on the door and introduced ourselves, the lady said, "I turned my front porch light on and have been sitting here praying that someone would come visit me." She gave her heart to Christ that night, and she and her daughter made their decisions public the following Sunday and were baptized.

That experience always reminded me that there are people hungry for the gospel, and that as we pray, the Holy Spirit will go before us. Luke 12:12 says, "For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." We are not responsible for the response of the person we are sharing with. Our responsibility is to go and share.

Gary Carter

Day 8

When God Calls, GO!

Over 30 years ago, my wife, two young sons, and I came to Englewood Baptist looking for a new place to worship. We came not knowing how this church would transform our lives and give our family a ministry. God led us here, and Dr. Jett was our shepherd, as he boldly preached about obedience, faithfulness, and service. He planted the seeds that would lead our family into the area of ministry I never knew was possible. God gave His Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, which served as the basis for the beginning of our mission journey. During our time at Englewood, we have served with five different Missions Pastors and four different Senior Pastors, since first listening to Dr. Jett's powerful messages on serving, in the balcony of what is now the chapel. After being called by God to serve, I lacked the faith to step out of my comfort zone and GO!

I did what so many still do: I found reasons not to serve. Finally, I surrendered and answered His call. In Isaiah 6:8, the verse says, "Here am I, send me, Lord." Since that time, my family has been blessed to lead teams for over 20 years in many different areas of the world. We continually work to involve families in missions so they can receive the gifts of service. The message that we continue to share with people is the same one, no matter where we serve: in the back yards of Jackson, the desert of Nevada, the jungle of Central America, the villages of Kenya, the congested urban areas of Egypt, or the mountains of Nepal - that being "Only Jesus Saves"! In Romans 10:13-15, it states that people can't believe in someone they do not know. Englewood Baptist Church changed our lives, blessed our family, and allowed us to GO, tell people about Jesus, share His love, and be a blessing to others. Ministering to those in need is such a blessing and is an experience that changes lives not only the people we minister to, but also the team members who go and serve. When God calls, be obedient and faithful, GO. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Matt. 9:37).

Satan will attack when you decide to follow Jesus. The evil one will plant seeds of doubt, feelings of inadequacy, and stumbling blocks, trying to keep you from finding His blessings. When God calls me home, I want to hear "Well done, my good and faithful servant". We pray that Englewood will keep the focus and priority on missions, continuing to be a sending church. As Christ followers, we should inspire others to grow in Christ, worship, and "GO" while serving together in Jesus' mission.

Adrian and Nancy Cross

"I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God."

1 Timothy 3:15

*"By this we have known love, that He laid down His life for us;
and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."*

1 John 3:16

We Are Family

On a Sunday evening in 1996, I was down on one knee in the old sanctuary as a line of ordained men whispered prayers into my ear. This group of men wasn't just ordinary men to me; they were my heroes. I had grown up around these men, been around them several times a week since the day of my birth. I didn't always converse with them, but they were usually within eye contact and always smiled and said "hello." They were like family, my elder brothers in Jesus. We shared the same Savior, served the same King. I was thrilled to have them share in my ordination service that night. Deacons, such as Bob Alvey, Johnny Burleson, Gary Carter, Wayne Exum, Mike Montgomery, Don Walker, and my late father, Ron DeLoach. Other pastors and ministers who also participated such as Pastor Larry Murphy, Music Minister, Doug Polk, and my Pastor Phil Jett.

This group of men was a microcosm of a larger group of men and women that made up a "second home" for me at a place we all called Englewood. All that I am spiritually, I owe to God, my parents, and my church. I can think of no greater contributors to my maturity in Jesus than these.

My parents, Ron and Jo Ann, joined Englewood in 1958, and I was born in 1970. I was born again in 1978, baptized by Bro. Paul Williams and was discipled by countless elementary school and youth group leaders. The spiritual nurturing I received at church culminated in God's call on my life to follow him into full-time ministry. I have served as a senior pastor in Hawaii and as a foreign missionary, along with my wife and four children. Now, I am grateful to be back where it all started, serving the ones who first served me.

If I have accomplished anything in ministry at all, it is only because God used His people at this church to mold me and shape me. I often wonder if Sunday School teachers, youth group workers, and everyday church members walking up and down the hallway with a smile know how much of a difference they can make in a kid's life. As a pastor, I always hoped that an adult church member would talk to my children and build a relationship with them. They needed someone else, not just me. They needed to feel that their church was a second family. They needed what I had when I was growing up. They needed mentors. They needed another Englewood.

So, brothers and sisters, let's continue to make our church feel like "home". There are so many folks today who desperately need one. You never know what the future holds for a child, how far they will go for Jesus, and how much you can contribute to their success.

Blane DeLoach

Day 10

"For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live for God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Galatians 2:19-20

The Mission Continues

Growing up at Englewood, I often heard the importance of "Evangelizing the Lost and Equipping the Saints." Today, we clearly emphasize the church's mission in "Loving God, Loving People, and Serving the World." What is more important than the phrasing is the practice that has been central to the heart of Englewood.

Going back to the 1970s, our family was quickly enveloped in opportunities to grow in our love for the Lord through His Word, through worship, and through discipleship training. Sunday School teachers in the children's, youth, and adult ministries sought to fulfill Jesus' command to "go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus says in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commands." Knowing that "faith comes through hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17) and that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26), our Sunday School teachers and Bible Drill instructors encouraged us to hide God's Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11) and to obey His Word. By memorizing the Word of God, we can meditate on the truth day and night. Sunday School and Bible Drill reminded us that "this book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to recite it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it" (Joshua 1:8). Loving God began with His Word. It was then expressed through the many worship opportunities implemented over the decades. Making a joyful noise unto the Lord (Psalm 100:1) and singing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music from your heart to the Lord. . . ." (Ephesians 5:19) was just the natural outflow of having learned to love God through His Word. Also, learning to love God through His Word created a desire to "Love People" and "Serve the World." After all, we are called to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31).

Through Royal Ambassadors (RA's) and Girls in Action (GA's), my sister and I were taught that the best way to love and serve the world is to point the world to Jesus. We were encouraged to see our school, our neighborhood, our state, our country, and our world as a mission field that is "white for harvest" (John 4:35). Missions education led us to have hearts for supporting missionaries. As God's Word says in 3 John 8, "we ought to support such men so that we can be coworkers with the truth." Furthermore, a desire to see the next generation have the same seed of purpose and vision planted in their hearts has led to a life of training youth to also "Love God, Love People, and Serve the World." Our family is the recipient of discipleship from those before us who sought to "commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). Youth leaders, Sunday School teachers, and children's workers who developed mission trips, nursing home ministries, evangelism opportunities, and discipleship groups created more than just programming; they offered the means by which our hearts have been transformed to do the same: "Love God. Love People. Serve the World." As Paul says in Galatians 2:19-20, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Andy Exum

Trusting God Every Step of the Way

Englewood Baptist Church, its staff, and its members have been such an influential part of my story. Looking back, it is clear to see how God orchestrated my journey to Englewood. My first experience with Englewood was as a guest attending Beach Camp in 2003 as a sophomore in high school. My home church was in Lexington, but my cousin had invited me to attend camp with Englewood, and I couldn't pass up the offer. Little did I know what God had in store for me and my future family at Englewood.

Fast forward a few years. I was able to plug into the college ministry at Englewood and was also graciously hosted by Englewood at The Inn after the 2008 Union tornado. It was during my college years that I was heavily invested in by the college ministry and many others at Englewood. I met my wife, Jordan, at Union during that time, and we married and moved to Jackson in 2012. One of our first conversations as a newlywed couple was about which church we wanted to attend. Englewood was our first visit—and it turned out to be our only one. We felt welcomed and at home from the get-go, joining a couple of months later. It was four years later that I was asked to pray through joining the Englewood staff as the Middle School Minister.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

These verses have meant a great deal to me. I would even call them my life verses since giving my life to Jesus at 10. If I had relied on my own understanding and experience, I would have most likely attended another college, taken another career path, and totally missed the path God was leading me down. Truly trusting God means giving Him complete control and not partial control. Pride, selfishness, or partial trust can keep you from following the path that God has for you. Acknowledging Him in all your ways means inviting Him into every aspect of your life and every decision, big or small. When you make God a part of every step you take, He will direct your path and lead you in the right direction.

Blake Fondren

"For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws: then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess."

Deuteronomy 30:16

Stepping Out in Faith

When Englewood started talking about opening a new campus in Medina, I was not interested in it, much less thinking about moving to that campus. I did not want to leave the Highland Campus. We had our Life group, which we loved so very much, and so many other friends there. I joined Englewood in 1972 and had no desire to move to another campus.

One Sunday, during worship, the preacher was making appeals to members to move to the Medina Campus. It was at that moment that God spoke to me, saying GO! Not wanting to go, I told God that He would have to change Troy's mind about leaving the Highland Campus. We had discussed before that we would always stay at Englewood. I didn't say anything to Troy about it, thinking God wouldn't change his mind.

Oh! But God showed me his power a couple of weeks later. Again, after church on Sunday, Troy came to me and said, "I think God wants us to go to the Medina Campus". I knew at that moment God had made his will known. Still with some reluctance, we agreed to go because we knew that was what God was calling us to do, even though we loved our Highland campus family.

Needless to say, God has delivered so much more than we ever expected or deserved. What a blessing we have received since following God's will. I have grown so much closer to God. I see answered prayers every day. I have the peace that passes all understanding. We have so many new friends, a great Life group, and a whole community to love and serve. Plus, we still have all our friends at the Highland Campus. Since walking in obedience to him, we have increased, and the Lord has blessed us beyond measure.

Pam Giles

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think..."
Ephesians 3:20

More Than We Could Ask or Imagine

With 59 years of deep roots at Englewood Baptist Church through my beloved grandparents, this church has always held a special place in my heart. However, that special place expanded greatly when I was able to call Englewood my church home beginning in 2016. Shortly after my husband and I moved back to Gibson County, Englewood announced the launch of the Medina campus. After much prayer, God made it very clear that we were to join the mission here in our hometown area. We were so excited and hopeful about what God had in store, but I'll admit I underestimated what God would do!

Since the launch of the Medina campus, we have truly seen God do more than we could have asked or imagined. We have watched Him fill up Sunday morning worship gatherings, fill up living rooms for Life Group, fill up nurseries and kids ministry rooms, fill up adult Bible studies, fill up the indoor playground, fill up youth services, fill up the entire church building during VBS, fill up small circles of Grow Groups, fill up the outdoor areas for community events, and most importantly, fill up the baptismal waters more than 300 times. While filling up a church building and a baptismal does not always equate to genuine spiritual growth, at the very least, these accounts represent souls that have encountered the life-changing realities of the gospel through our church.

As I reflect on the numerical and spiritual growth I have witnessed and experienced at the Medina campus, my heart is overwhelmed with thankfulness. I am immensely thankful for all the staff and members who said yes to the mission in Medina and for all who have joined along the way. Above all, I am eternally thankful to the Lord, for He is the one who has filled up our church. As Paul explains well in 1 Corinthians 3:6, we can plant seeds and water them, but it is the Lord who makes them grow. Englewood, there is much to celebrate, yet much to anticipate. May we, as one church in two locations, continue to be faithful to plant and water until all of our buildings overflow. As we have seen, He is able.

Bonnie Holmes

Day 14

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!"

Psalms 98:4

The Power of a Worshiping Church

Worship is engaging and leads to a moment of teaching and consumption of God's Word. Through the years, God has brought wonderful and anointed worship leaders into Englewood's inspirational worship ministry. Music speaks God's Word to my heart and truly leads me to the throne of God. Songs are filled with theological messages that speak to my heart and encourage me in the faith. It encourages unity in worship. It prepares us and sets a tone for the teaching message God provides through our pastor.

I/We have spent forty-seven years experiencing many different forms of inspirational worship at Englewood. One being "worship" by being a member of our choir every Sunday, Nights of Praise, dinner theaters, Christmas, and Easter pageants. Our community has valued these services through the years with record attendance. We have been chosen to be a beacon of light through the many ministries God has called us to as a church. Not only has our Lord used Englewood, but He has used all of this for my spiritual growth and my walk for the Kingdom.

Singing in worship enlivens the heart of God's people as they sing together in one accord unto the Lord. Throughout Scripture, we see numerous instances of individuals singing and worshipping God. There is nothing more magnificent than God's people praising and singing together, worshipping our Lord.

Karen Looney Jett

Obedience and Walking by Faith

In 1963, my father, Dr. Phil Jett (the 6th pastor at EBC), felt God's call into the gospel ministry. Two years later, as he prepared for seminary, he became ill and lost his voice. Doctors told him it might never return. With a family to support and only three months until seminary, many well-meaning people suggested that this might not be God's calling for his life. His former boss even offered him his old job back. Logic would say, "Listen to them" —but God's call doesn't always make sense to the world.

Dad knew God had called him to preach, and he trusted that if God had called him, He would also make a way. A year later, in the middle of seminary, his voice returned, and those who heard him preach over the next 60 years would tell you that he didn't need a microphone. Even with only one vocal cord, God had made a way.

There was nothing extraordinary about my father, but two things defined his life and ministry: obedience and a daily walk by faith in the Spirit. God honored that faithfulness, and through it, He touched many lives. The Bible repeatedly calls us to a life of obedience. Yet obedience isn't always easy. Paul writes, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do" (Romans 7:15).

The battle in our minds and hearts is very real. The world tells us to "follow your heart" and "pursue happiness," but Scripture warns us, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jeremiah 17:9). Even David, a man after God's own heart, cried out for God to create a new heart within him. And as for our minds, "do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, His good, pleasing, and perfect will" Romans 12:2.

God doesn't call us to pursue happiness; He calls us to holiness. As Peter reminds us, "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do" (1 Peter 1:14-15).

The Christian life is one of surrender — a life in which obedience flows from faith, and our faith is strengthened through obedience.

As my father often said, "Only Jesus saves." May we be a people who live in that saving grace. Let us be a church and a people who walk by faith, live obediently to the word of God, and reflect the glory of Christ in all we do — so that others will feel His presence through us.

"Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith." — Romans 1:5

Father, help us to live lives shaped by obedience and faith. Give us the courage to walk daily in Your Spirit. Let Englewood remain a place where people feel your presence. May everything we do bring glory to Your name and draw others closer to You. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Steve Jett

*"Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."
Hebrews 13:7*

Honoring Their Faith, Continuing Their Work

Every church has a story. Behind every pulpit, pew, ministry, building, and story of life change, there have been faithful men and women who have sacrificed deeply for the gospel and Englewood's ministry in our community and beyond. Some taught Sunday school for decades. Some gave generously when no one noticed. Others prayed faithfully through seasons of growth and hardship. They may not have been perfect, but they were faithful, and we stand on their shoulders.

Hebrews 13:7 teaches us to remember the specific spiritual leaders and their examples when living the Christian life. We steward their legacy whether they were pastors, church leaders, or church members. To steward something means to take care of it, to carry it forward with intention. When we remember the faithfulness of those who came before us, we take on a responsibility not just to thank God for them, but to live in a way that continues what they started.

That might mean continuing a ministry they began or revitalizing a faded one. It might mean picking up the habit of praying for others as they once did. It might even mean continuing to lead with humility, love, and perseverance when others might give up.

We don't steward the past by preserving tradition for tradition's sake. We steward it by carrying forward the mission that motivated their sacrifice. The church is a living body. But it lives best when it knows where it came from. Some of these dear saints at Englewood may now be in glory. Others may be retired, aging, or unable to serve in the same way. We honor them by not letting their faithfulness go to waste.

Ask yourself, what did they build that needs guarding? What values did they hold that we must keep alive? What part of their example can I imitate in my ministry or leadership?

God calls every generation to steward and pass on what has been entrusted to them. If we neglect that calling, we risk losing more than a memory. We risk weakening the witness they worked so hard to strengthen.

Who at Englewood has modeled sacrificial faithfulness? How can you carry their legacy forward today?

Lord, thank You for the men and women who have gone before me in the faith—those who gave their time, resources, and hearts to build Your church. Help me honor them not just with words but by living faithfully by myself. May their legacy inspire my obedience, and may I be found faithful for those who come after me.

Jon Kenney

*"In My Distress, I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help. From his temple
he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears."*

Psalm 18:6

The God Who Hears Our Cries

When I was 5 years old, my dad took me out for a neighborhood bike ride. My dad worked hard at his job, so most of my time as a preschooler was spent with my sweet mother, and one-on-one time with dad was very special. A child of the '80s, we had these plastic child seats on the back side of adult bikes, and no one shamed us for safety issues. I distinctly remember my dad saying, "Julia, don't get your feet caught in the spokes!" Having no clue what a "spoke" was, and feeling so carefree and special as I rode that bike with my daddy, I just let my feet dangle way past the little plastic footholds, and felt sheer joy as we buzzed about the neighborhood. As I contemplated in my 5-year-old head what a spoke was, I felt the bike come to a screeching halt, followed by excruciating pain in my left foot. My dad's fear came true. I remember screaming in pain for the only person I felt could have made this better...MOMMY!!! For a few minutes, my dad did his best to muscle the spokes apart to free my little foot. I heard him say, "I don't know what else to do," and then I distinctly remember him on his knees praying. I was still screaming in pain. Dad says right after he prayed, three men showed up with a pair of wire cutters. They freed my little foot and offered us a ride to the ER. I'll never forget that day. I even have a scar to show for it.

It is our natural, human inclination to try to "muscle" our way out of a crisis, stay strong, and work through it on our own strength. When we see that our own strength just doesn't cut it, that is usually when we finally cry out to the God of the Universe. We know he can help us, but we don't always go to him first. Our God knows our need before we even cry out. He is ready and waiting for us to call to him in our distress, so he can send the help and rescue we need.

Julia Montgomery

*"...he set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along."
Psalm 40:2b*

Solid Ground

For most of the first 30 years of my life, I lived in New Madrid County, Missouri, which sits on the 150-mile-long New Madrid Seismic Zone, commonly called the New Madrid Fault. The area averages about 200 earthquakes a year. Though many are too small to be felt, it was not unusual for me to feel the earth tremble when I was growing up. It's a scary sensation I never got used to.

For the past 30 years, the Lord has been gracious to allow me to live in West Tennessee. My husband Joe and I were transplanted into the Englewood Church family in 1993 and quickly found places of service where we could use our gifts and talents to help spread the gospel. In 1996, I discovered that I could experience earthquakes in Tennessee when Joe's triple-bypass heart surgery rocked our world. Our church family stood with us, praying, encouraging, loving, and ministering to us as God restored Joe's health.

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America felt like a nationwide earthquake. I was at work, and one of my first thoughts was, "I need to go to Englewood." On my lunch hour, I came, sat quietly, and prayed in this sacred place. I was not surprised that many others did the same. For four years (2019-2023), our family experienced a personal earthquake that surely would have registered 9.5 on the Richter Scale.

Following a stroke, Joe's dementia worsened dramatically. The COVID pandemic isolated us from our church family. Every day of life became unpredictable. Saints at Englewood stepped up, holding us steady through the darkest days. Their strength became my steadiness. When I called for help at midnight, they came. At every turn, we were met with God's provision through this church family who daily put time, effort, and feet to their stated beliefs.

For seventy-five years, 2239 N. Highland Avenue has been Englewood's address. But I know that her real address is rooted and grounded in the SOLID GROUND of God's Word and built on a foundation of faith that remains consistent through all of life's earthquakes. Now I stand on solid ground, and I will publicly praise the LORD.

Joanna Moore

"Be still, and know that I am God ..."
Psalm 46:10a

Be Still and Know

We were halfway to Nashville, driving a van loaded with Englewood volunteers, when I looked at my wife, Lisa, and asked, "Did you get our luggage?"

She thought I was kidding but replied, "No."

It was not the answer I wanted to hear. In that instant, panic ensued.

I was leading a team of 16 people, ages 10 to 70, on a 2019 mission trip to Henderson, NV, a suburb of Las Vegas. We were prepared to lead Vacation Bible School for The Well Church, where former EBC youth pastor Jon LaBonte was worship pastor.

I was so focused on making sure everyone else's luggage was on the two vans we were driving to the airport, I never thought about my own. Lisa and I drove to Englewood in separate cars. She had the luggage in her car. I thought she had brought it to our van, but I never asked until we approached the Tennessee River.

My mind and heart were racing. We couldn't turn around and risk missing our flight. We would have to get everyone to the airport and then deal with it. We arrived, got unloaded, and drove the vans to the economy parking lot. It was packed, and we might have to go to another parking area.

I was waiting at a stop sign in the lot, contemplating our next move, when two cars, side by side, suddenly backed out of their spaces, right next to the shuttle stop. As we pulled our vans into those beautiful, empty spots, the Lord brought to my mind Psalm 46:10 – "Be still and know that I am God ..."

I smiled, said a quick prayer of thanks, and took a deep breath. I didn't know how the rest of that day would work out, but He had reminded me amid the chaos that He was in control. And He kept proving it.

Our son-in-law just happened to be off work that day. He could get the luggage from our car and bring it to Nashville. The locksmith I called at random was in his van and only a block from the church. He had our car unlocked within minutes and didn't charge us because he was mission-minded.

The airline was able to book Lisa and me on a later flight that evening, which gave us time to retrieve our luggage. The group was in good hands that night with Englewood's Bob and Amy Alvey, who were part of the team and veteran travelers and organizers. Lisa and I arrived in time for a good night's sleep and greeted the group the next morning.

It was a great week of mission work, but even more enlightening for me. In almost nine years as Englewood's Director of Senior Adult Ministries, I have led dozens of trips and faced many challenges. And I am always comforted and strengthened by the memory of God's special touch and the power of Psalm 46:10.

Dan and Lisa Morris

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."
Ephesians 3:20-21

Grateful for His Hand in Every Season

These verses sum up the praise in my heart for the blessings I have received from Englewood Baptist Church over the past 40 years. In January of 1985, Larry, Lauren, and I joined this fellowship of believers as Larry began ten years of service on EBC's staff. In times like these, when we celebrate our church's heritage, I believe one of the greatest gifts the Lord has given us is the ability to look back on our experiences and see His mighty hand in every situation. Those ten years of service on EBC's staff are etched in our memories as among the most rewarding of our lives. "He has made His wonderful works to be remembered." Psalm 111:4a

In our early days at Englewood, the church provided programming that taught members how to share the gospel at any opportunity. Continuing Witnessing Training was the first evangelistic tool I learned. My equipper was Gary Carter, who patiently, but expectantly, modeled how to share Jesus. Even though knocking on the doors of people I did not know was humbling, not to mention frightening, I was excited to share the Good News. I praise God for the training opportunities to share about the most important decision a person could ever make... trusting Jesus as their Savior.

I have been blessed to sit under pastors who have unapologetically preached God's Word. These pastors have challenged me to study and dwell upon the truth in the scriptures. One of my favorite quotes from Amy Carmichael is "Nothing is important but that which is eternal." Our pastors have exemplified this statement by holding true to the Bible. Each pastor has preached "Only Jesus Saves" and challenged us to live in our world in a way that reflects the likeness of Christ.

Lastly, my family has been blessed through countless personal experiences at EBC. Our daughter, Lauren, was saved, baptized, and shaped for today by what she was taught in her formative years. It was in her 5th-grade small group that she met her future husband, AJ. They have blessed us with two grandsons who are now taught by faithful leaders in the children's department. I am so grateful for every stamp Englewood has made on my family. I praise God for leading us to be a part of this church and look forward with great expectation. I truly believe "the best is yet to come"!

Sharon Murphy

*"Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!"
Psalm 105:2*

Equipped to Worship

Since our family joined Englewood in 1987, the Music Ministry has been an integral part of our worship experience. Music Makers, Young Musicians, youth choir, youth bands, adult choir, handbells, ensembles, choir trips, and countless programs and nights of praise. Englewood has intentionally nurtured the music in our hearts so that we can offer our praises back to our Lord.

Scripture clearly uses music and singing to convey joy, praise, and fellowship. Specific verses like Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, and James 5:13 encourage believers to engage in singing and to make music to the Lord. These verses highlight the importance of music in worship and in expressing praise to God. Romans 15:6 urges Christians to have a singleness of heart, mind, and voice so that our church is much like a choir made up of individual voices singing in harmony in a splendid anthem to "glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

As we sing in this choir, we pray the lyrics to God, feeling the weight of our sin that is washed clean by the blood of Jesus. Then, throughout the week, God brings the lyrics to mind, shaping our words and actions, often drawing us to the scripture that underlies the lyrics.

God equips us individually to lead worship. Some are equipped with incredible voices, others with willing voices. As the participants in the music ministry—instrumentalists, vocalists, and technicians—serve together, the Lord knits our hearts and lives together, allowing us to be a community within the full congregation.

Has God equipped you musically? Is he calling you to serve him through this vital ministry? If so, move to him. Worship through corporate music is powerful because God is the creator of music, and He delights in hearing the praises of His children. He is worthy to be praised!

Sam and Dottie Myatt

"So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household."
Ephesian 2:19

Find Your Family First

Englewood has become our family. I'm so grateful. Aren't you grateful for a church family?

We moved to Jackson 11 years ago and did not know a single person who lived here. But God has provided in every way, including a church family that welcomed us, included us, embraced us (lunches and dinners and connections with friends – such a kind embrace), celebrated with us (our daughter's wedding, our three grandchildren, including two who were dedicated at Englewood), grieved with us (the deaths of Susie's mom and my mom), allowed us to serve alongside them (the year serving as Interim Pastor was such a sweet season for us), and loved us through every one of those days. For these reasons and so many more, I'm so grateful for our church family. That is God's intention for the church—the gathering of His family on earth.

I remember very clearly having a conversation with Callie (our daughter) as I drove her from Jackson to Nashville so that she could catch a plane to New York City, where she was moving for work.

"I want to tell you something really important...Do you remember our closest friends?"

"Yes," she replied.

"The ones we call family, even though we aren't related?" I emphasized.

"Yes, Dad."

"Where did we find them?"

"At church."

"That's right, sweet girl. As you move to New York (or wherever you move in the world), go find your family first."

Susie and I had done the same each time we moved to a new town. It was no different when we moved to Jackson and found our family at Englewood. We need family.

Earlier in Ephesians 1:5, Paul says that we are adopted as sons and daughters in the family of God. In Romans 8:17, we are reminded that we are joint heirs with Christ. What a family!

I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God; I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, for I'm part of the family, the Family of God. Lord, thank you for the blessing of Englewood Baptist Church, my family.

Dub Oliver

*"In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust;
I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?"
Psalm 56:4*

Living Out the Gospel Without Fear

A key value that has shaped Englewood's culture and reputation as a church for many years is its commitment to being a courageous witness to the Gospel. I am so glad that I have the privilege of serving a church that has clearly articulated its mission to love God, love people, and serve the world by living out and sharing the life changing realities of the Gospel in every place every day.

I vividly remember the first time I was encouraged and challenged at Englewood to be courageous in sharing Jesus. When I was a student at Union, I was invited by Blane DeLoach to attend a Sunday night service where a missionary named Wade Akins would be preaching. I will never forget hearing Wade share story after story about his evangelistic efforts not only in Brazil but all over the world.

The story really impacted me was about a time when he was sharing the Gospel in a small village in Vietnam. On his way back, Wade got caught in the crossfire between two groups who were shooting at each other. He went on to describe the incredible peace that the Lord gave him in that moment as a "dying grace" that the Lord will give if we need it. He then challenged us to share Jesus with no fear.

That challenge shook me to the core and set me on a path to seek to share Jesus with everyone I could regardless of their circumstances. Thank you, Englewood, for exposing me as a young pastor to people like Wade who embrace a lifestyle of being a Courageous Witness!

Russ Quinn

*"I will instruct and teach you in the way which you shall go. I will guide you with mine eye."
Psalm 32:8*

Desires, People, and Scripture

In February 1962, the desire to begin college and prepare to become a teacher was instilled in me. We were living in Memphis. I was 28. Our children were two and four. Correspondence courses, one class on TV, night classes, day classes, and summer school prepared me for graduation in May 1965. My husband, employed by Bellsouth, was transferred to Jackson. In June, I accepted a position at Grahamwood School. We moved to Jackson on the last day of school. In August, I began my 26-year teaching career at Pope School. On the first Sunday in October 1966, our family joined Englewood.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort who comforts us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble with which we ourselves are comforted by God. People of Englewood have been our mentors, prayers warriors, comforters, encouragers, and rejoiced with us in joyful times. I now have precious memories of people who were once pillars of Englewood and are now deceased.

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do all that is written in it, for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Joshua 1:8

In my later years at Englewood, I have found that memorized scripture is beneficial for Christian witnessing, sharing the gospel, in times when my words are not adequate, for reciting in the stillness of the night, and for passing the time. I read scripture daily morning and night as I trust our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even to death. Psalm 48:14

DESIRES, PEOPLE, and SCRIPTURE are listed as ways to hear the voice of God in *Whisper How to Hear the Voice of God* by Mark Batterson. They have enhanced my spiritual life through my years at Englewood. I am almost ninety, the Holy Spirit continues to speak to me and to fill my life with good things. I desire to be a blessing to others as he continues to bless me.

Angalee Reeves

*"And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."
Matthew 21:22*

*"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you."
Luke 11:9*

*"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up."
Thessalonians 5:11*

His Timing Is Perfect

I realize the truth of these scriptures and know that God's plans for me are greater than my own, but usually when he answers my prayers, it is not on my schedule but his, and the answers are often not what I expected, but far better. At least once in my life, though, he answered a prayer immediately.

Some years ago, I was driving into Memphis and received a call informing me that my youngest son, who was nineteen at the time, had been involved in a serious accident and had been airlifted from Jackson to the Regional Medical Center there. Realizing that his condition must be very serious, I drove there immediately. On arrival, I was given general directions to the emergency area and told to pass through a set of double doors, then look for someone to ask more specifically where to find him. As I passed through those double doors, I silently prayed, "Please God, send someone to tell me that he's going to be okay, because that's all that I really need to know right now." I almost ran over a young lady whom I recognized as the daughter of a coworker of mine. I asked her what seems now like a silly question: "What are you doing here?" Before she could answer, I remembered that she was a nurse, so I asked, "Did you bring John in just now?" Her mouth dropped open, and she responded: "I am so sorry, I didn't know that he was yours." I said, "That's okay. Is there anything that you can tell me?" She paused and said, "He has some very serious injuries, but his vitals are good, and I think he's probably going to be okay." I responded, "Thanks, that is really all that I needed to know." She then introduced me to someone who could help me, as she needed to return to the helicopter.

I have had many opportunities to share this story with others, and many of us have similar stories, though the timing is often not as dramatic. The next evening, we had about 40 visitors in the critical care waiting room. Several people commented to me that we certainly must have a big family. I always told them that this was mostly church family, and that our church was a very special gathering of many very special people.

What I am sure of is that God does answer our prayers, and while he may not always be on our schedule, his timing is always perfect and his plans for us are always greater than our own. I am also more acutely aware of the priceless value of Godly people he places in our lives to provide love and encouragement in times of great need.

Robert Simpson

*"And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."
Hebrews 15:24-25*

The Power of Biblical Community

My wife and I spent the first few years of our marriage living in Nashville and though we attended a great church there, we had trouble plugging into a Life Group. We deeply missed that sense of community and prayed for an opportunity to grow in fellowship with others. The Lord would answer that prayer by calling us home to Englewood where we would get plugged in at Englewood Medina Campus.

As Christians, we are called to live in community with other believers. We aren't meant to "do life" on our own. While it is true that we must spend time alone with God to read scripture and pray during a dedicated quiet time, the Bible also makes it apparent that we need community.

Though it is not clear who the author of Hebrews is, what is clear is that at the time of this writing, there were some who were failing to meet together in community. The Scripture here contrasts the failure of "assembling together" with what we should be doing as believers: encouraging one another in the Lord, especially as we get closer to the day Christ returns.

Furthermore, Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:20, that He will be with us when we gather as believers in smaller groups. This truth of Scripture came to life for us when we dove headfirst into a Life Group and I believe all who participate in Biblical community regularly can attest to that truth.

"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." Matthew 18:20

The God of Abraham, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, etc. is the same God who dwells in our midst. When we gather in Life Group to pray for the specific needs of those in the group, which are sometimes very difficult trials, the power of God is among us.

Let this be an encouragement to try a Life Group and grow in community with other believers. May God continue to bless Englewood Baptist Church and its faithfulness to demonstrate that Jesus truly changes everything.

Brady Sheppard

A Family of Friends

When I retired a few years ago, my wife and I moved to Jackson to be near our daughters and grandchildren. One of our priorities was to find a church that supported Southern Baptist missions programs, with a pastor who preached Biblical messages with knowledge and conviction, and an inspiring music ministry. We visited several area churches, and the Lord soon led us to Englewood.

Our next task was to find a Bible study class where we could study the Bible with a group of people who would love us, help us grow, and serve as believers. Englewood has dozens of Bible study classes, so we visited several for a few weeks each, and the Lord clearly led us to a group of people who have become our Family of Friends.

Englewood calls these weekly gatherings Life Groups, a term I've grown to appreciate, because it describes a group of people who live life together, especially in three vital areas.

Our life group prays together. Every class begins with a time of sharing prayer requests, which are recorded and then distributed to class members so we can continue to support one another in prayer throughout the week. If a class member is dealing with health problems or family issues, or is concerned about the spiritual condition of a friend or family member, we bring those needs to the Lord together. Ephesians 6:18 says, "Be alert and always keep praying for all the Lord's people."

Most of our life group time is devoted to Bible Study, because scripture instructs us to "show yourself approved to God." (2 Tim. 2:15) Bible study gives us a growing understanding of Who God is and how He works, His will for our lives, and how to live a life devoted to Him. What better place to do that than in a group of loving believers?

Life Groups also help us address one of the challenges of a large church like Englewood – the need for Christian fellowship. It's hard to develop close friendships in a worship center full of several hundred people. But a Life Group connects us to a small number of believers who are seeking to know God and grow in service to Him. Hebrews 10:24 says, "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together."

Recently, one of our class members shared a prayer request, then said, "I share this request with you because you are my family." If you aren't a regular member of an Englewood Life Group, I encourage you to find one that can be your Family of Friends.

Marty King

*"Therefore welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."
Romans 15:1*

*"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever."
Psalm 136:1*

A Church That Became Family

In 1970, our family relocated to Jackson with our daughters, Pam (14) and Andrea (6 months). Our family opened the Western Auto Store, and eventually, I would join the Quaker Oats Company. This was a difficult move for all of us since we did not know anyone in Jackson; we were literally starting our lives over.

Soon, we felt love and encouragement from many folks who visited us from Englewood. Pam began attending Englewood with her friend, Pam Williams, and became involved in the youth program. One evening, Bro. Paul Williams and the Evangelist, Rev. Jerry Spencer, visited our home. They prayed with Pam, and she chose to invite Jesus into her life. Because of the love shown to our daughter and her involvement in the church, Billy (my husband) and I joined Englewood soon thereafter and became quite involved, serving in several positions over our fifty-plus years here. I served on the church steering committee for several years, and Billy served as a deacon. We found our core group of friends at Englewood and felt a sense of belonging.

Soon after, we added another daughter, Staci, to our family, and both Andrea and Staci became involved at Englewood and continue to serve there to this day, along with their families. All three of my daughters were married at Englewood, and my husband's funeral service was there as well. Needless to say, God has used this church in so many ways in our lives, during good times and difficult times. We will forever love our church family here at Englewood and are grateful to God for their love and acceptance of each of us!

Peggy Smith

*"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,
according to the power that works within us."*

Ephesians 3:20

*"Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also;
and greater works than these he will do; because I am going to the Father."*

John 14:12

Holy Ghost Power

Reflecting on Englewood memories, I am confident that at the top of the list for many of us is Dr. Jett's rapping rendition of "Holy Ghost Power!" Recalling the moments of Dr. Jett's unforgettable display of this truth confirmed the realization that Englewood has been the launching ground for teaching me to love and study God's Word and surrender to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Through this discipline, I have gained assurance of the presence of the Holy Spirit, the One who is promised to all of us in John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name; He will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you."

This past year, while teaching a Bible Study, I encouraged the ladies to consider a verse in God's Word that had significant meaning to them. I never ask participants to do anything that I do not first do myself, so I began soul-searching for a meaningful verse. Immediately, Ephesians 3:20 came to mind, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us".

How could I, after all the years of studying God's Word and memorizing this verse, miss one of the most powerful prepositional phrases in all of scripture? The blessing of "abundantly beyond what we could ever ask or think" happens in our lives when we believe in the work and power of the Holy Spirit and surrender to it. Wrap your head around that!

Romans 15:13, "Now, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Melinda Stewart

*"God is not a man, that he might lie, or a son of man, that he might change his mind.
Does he speak and not act, or promise and not fulfill? Because his people feared
the children of Israel, Balak king of Moab called for Balaam a prophet to curse Israel, but The Lord
would not let him and every time he tried, he could only speak blessings over them.
Numbers 23:18-20*

The Four Truths of God's Faithfulness

This is one of the many clear examples throughout scripture of God's faithfulness not only to His chosen people but to us. Throughout our lives as followers of Christ, my wife and I have gone through many challenges. Some of those challenges we have faced as individuals, and some we have faced together. But through them all God has always been faithful!

At times when circumstances seem impossible to overcome, when we feel like our entire world is falling apart. It is in those times that it can be challenging to remember how truly faithful the Lord is.

When those times come —and they will —we must hold fast to the four truths in Numbers 23:19. The first thing we see is that God is not like us. He will not and cannot lie. Every word that He speaks is the truth. God does not change His mind; He remains faithful to His purposes. What appears as "regret" in Scripture reflects His consistent holiness and compassion responding to changing human circumstances, not divine fickleness. The third truth we see is that God will do exactly what He says because, in short, His words and actions are always in line with one another. Finally, we also recognize that "His promises are Yes and amen." So we can put our full weight on His promises for our lives.

Therefore, no matter what comes, whether we are in the wilderness of our journey or the promised land of our journey, and no matter what lies the enemy tries to make us believe, we must stand firm, and, if necessary, "encourage ourselves in the Lord" to REMEMBER HIS FAITHFULNESS!!!!

T.C. and Juanita Talley

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses..."
Acts 1:8

Leaning into the Power of the Holy Spirit

Over the past 30 years of ministry on the mission fields of Brazil, I have come to understand more deeply the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Ministry in unfamiliar cultures, preaching and teaching the gospel in remote areas, and helping plant churches in spiritually resistant regions has stretched my faith far beyond the comforts of my home. It's in those places of dependence that the Holy Spirit has proven Himself faithful—guiding, empowering, and strengthening and teaching me.

Jesus told His disciples in John 16:7, "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you." That Helper, the Holy Spirit, is not a distant force but a present Person—God Himself dwelling within us. He does not simply comfort; He equips. He does not just encourage; He empowers.

At Englewood Baptist Church, I've been reminded through worship, preaching, and the fellowship of believers that the Spirit is not limited to the mission field—He is active in the lives of all who believe. Englewood has a culture based on Loving God, Loving People, and Serving the World. Whether I'm on a job site building churches on the northeastern coast of Brazil or teaching a Men's Bible study on Thursday mornings at Englewood, the Holy Spirit is always at work—convicting me of sin, revealing the truth of Scripture, and giving me boldness to speak the name of Jesus.

Romans 8:11 says, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus will also give life to your mortal bodies." What a powerful promise! The same Spirit that raised Jesus lives in us—giving life, guidance, and courage to follow wherever He leads.

My journey has shown me that the Christian life is not about trying harder—it's about trusting deeper. And that trust is strengthened when I yield to the Holy Spirit. As I seek to know Christ more, I try to sort out the background noise, listen for His voice, follow His prompting, and rest in His power.

Holy Spirit, fill me afresh today. Lead me in truth, strengthen me in weakness, and empower me to live boldly for Jesus.

Gary Taylor

*"And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."
Hebrews 15:24-25*

Faithful Friends in Difficult Times

The year 2020 will forever live in the minds of many of us as a before-and-after marker of time. While many aspects of life changed that year, a major one for us was when my dear mother-in-law, who had developed dementia, moved in with us. That challenging season was made easier because of our life group, a close-knit community of brothers and sisters who loved us well. Hebrews 10:24-25 beautifully describes how a life group should function and how we were the beneficiaries of that process.

"And let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds."

To consider means being thoughtful and seeking meaningful ways to help our brothers and sisters walk the path God puts before them.

Our life group was a front-row witness to the good, the bad, and the ugly of caring for a loved one with dementia. Yet they didn't judge us, nor did they let us coast through this season. They listened and gently encouraged us to die to ourselves and love like Christ.

"Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit,"

To neglect is to let something fall to the wayside, which church and life groups can easily slip off our priority list if we are not careful. Our small group welcomed Mom each Sunday night, making it easy for us to still attend the small group. They would hug her, sit her in a comfy chair, and plate her favorite food, giving us time to fellowship and relax. Their practical support gave us no excuse to miss a gathering, where we felt reassured and supported.

"But let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

To encourage one another is to cheer one another on and to speak the truth in love. During the hard times, our small group would pray for us, send us Scripture, and drop off a meal or a little happy. They encouraged us spiritually, mentally, and physically.

Looking back on this time, we can attest to the fact that small groups are an integral part of life at EBC and, in turn, of our own spiritual journey. Are you connected to a small group? Do you regularly attend and participate? If not, you miss out on the many blessings of active small group involvement.

Tammy Valdivia

*"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and to prayer."*

Luke 2:42

The Joy of Being in a Life Group at Englewood

Luke chapter 2 explains to us the beginning of the church in our world. The Lord Jesus ascended into heaven; 120 people gathered in prayer; the Holy Spirit descended; believers spoke in known tongues; and Peter preached his first recorded sermon. Then about 3,000 were saved! But what came next?

Luke 2:42 gave us the blueprint of what those early Christians did and what we should do. They were devoted to the apostles' teaching. We have the blessing of holding in our hands the entire Word of God in one Book. We should listen to it, read it, study it, apply it, memorize it, and meditate on it.

They were also devoted to fellowship. The word in the original language is *koinonia* and comes from a root word meaning "sharing." Those early believers set the example for us by sharing their lives, knowing one another, and caring for one another. They learned to open their lives to one another, building each other up in their relationship with Jesus.

A third aspect of their blueprint was breaking bread together. They ate meals with each other. Perhaps you have wonderful memories of family meals during the holiday season. You may remember loved ones who have passed on with whom you experienced the joys of being together around the table: grandparents, parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and cousins. The happiness, the laughter, and the stories were part of those times together. We have the opportunity to share the same experience with fellow believers today.

Finally, they were devoted to prayer. They opened up to one another with their prayer concerns, needs, and struggles. Spending time in prayer with others deepens our friendships and deepens our intimacy with our Heavenly Father. Seeing God answer prayers strengthens our walk with our Lord. We have the privilege of experiencing all four of these spiritual disciplines in our Life Groups at Englewood.

The opportunity to discuss and learn the Word of God from one another is a unique honor. Being able to share life with fellow believers and draw new believers or unbelievers into that kind of relationship is life-affirming. Enjoying the laughter and fun of sharing meals allows us to grow and deepen real friendships, which lead us to a growing relationship with our Lord and Savior. Praying with believers and for others helps us love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love others as ourselves. Joy —real joy—can be the result of being involved in a Life Group at Englewood Baptist Church.

Doug Walker

*"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."
Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Purpose in Every Season

The very fact that Englewood Baptist Church is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year indicates that there are notable times and periods in our lives that are recognized as milestones or periods of special consequence. Some seasons are worthy of our celebration. Other seasons are just as memorable, but often for very different reasons. Whether good or bad, though, it is a fact of life that we will endure various times of accomplishment, loss, celebration, sorrow, challenge, or joy in a lifetime. The trick, though, is to find and capitalize on God's "purpose" for those seasons.

We can quickly scan our past and recognize seasons of our youth, of raising our children, then a season of letting them go, our career years, retirement, etc. We survive most seasons of life in good order, but they often take a heavy toll on our mental and emotional well-being. Absent the Lord's help, we may never fully recover from some seasons.

So how do we find God's "purpose" in the challenging seasons we endure? My personal journey through a season of retirement, some health issues, and a relocation experience brought about an unexpected opportunity to realize a purpose I hadn't imagined, centered in a teaching/leading ministry in one of the Life Groups within EBC. All my ministry years were spent leading choirs and worship experiences in the churches I served. I had never really envisioned myself as a potential Bible teacher.

As a result of our move to Jackson in recent years, my wife and I relished the opportunity for fellowship and instruction in the Life Group we attend at EBC. And then I was asked to consider leading the Choir Life Group, made up mostly of individuals involved in Englewood's music ministry. The offer frightened me at first, but I warmed to the possibility as God impressed upon my heart His purpose for me in this season of my life. I accepted the role 2 ½ years ago and have found facilitating this study group to be one of the most rewarding and fulfilling experiences of my life.

Englewood Baptist Church and its education/teaching ministry afforded me the opportunity I needed to serve, grow, and minister in this "season" of my life, and I am grateful!

David Willard

The Importance of Church Family

In Philippians 1:3-11, the Apostle Paul writes to the church at Philippi with a heart full of gratitude and love. He begins by saying, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,” highlighting the deep bond and affection he has for his fellow believers. This passage speaks volumes about the importance of a church family—a spiritual community where members support, encourage, and uplift one another in their walk with Christ.

Paul’s words reflect the essence of a true church family. He prays for the Philippians with joy, thankful for their partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. This partnership is not merely about working together; it is a mutual commitment to grow in faith and spread the message of Christ’s love. Englewood, you serve as a beacon of hope not just for believers in Jackson but also for new believers across the U.S., here in Henderson, NV!

The strength of a church family lies in its unity and shared goals. Paul is confident that the good work God began in the Philippians will be carried to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. This assurance underscores the church family’s role in nurturing spiritual growth and maturity. It is within the church community that individuals find the encouragement to persevere and the accountability to stay true to their faith.

Furthermore, Paul’s prayer for the church is filled with profound love and longing. He desires that their love may abound more and more, with knowledge and discernment. This growing love is the foundation of a church family—it binds members together, fostering a supportive and caring environment. In this type of community, members are not isolated in their struggles and triumphs but are connected, sharing each other’s burdens and victories.

The church family is essential in helping believers discern what is best and pure, leading to a life filled with the fruits of righteousness. Paul’s prayer reflects the nurturing environment of a church family, where members are encouraged to grow in wisdom and purity, becoming more Christ-like in their actions and attitudes.

In conclusion, Philippians 1:3-11 encapsulates the importance of church family. It is a community rooted in love, partnership, and spiritual growth. As believers, we are called to cherish and nurture our church family, knowing that through this fellowship, we can achieve greater heights in our spiritual journey and fulfill our purpose in Christ.

Englewood will always be my family. Every time I think of you, I thank God for you. Consider our church plant to be Englewood WEST! I love you all, family.

Pastor Jon Labonte

*"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
Hebrews 10:25*

Your Pew and Your People

Community is more than shared space—it's shared life. It's where we rejoice and grieve, grow and serve, laugh and worship. If you have a desire to belong, know that God can and will make room for you among his people.

In 2002, I first walked through the doors of Englewood as a newly hired teacher. I was young, newly planted in Jackson, and looking for community. When I was invited to the Young Adults class led by Gary and Regina Carter, I didn't know I was about to find more than a Sunday morning routine—I was about to find my people. In that room, filled with laughter, prayer, and God's Word, I found my place. I also met my husband there. Our years at Englewood were foundational—we were growing in faith and raising our family with the people that we were blessed to do life beside.

Then came a move to Texas—a step of obedience that felt like tearing roots from familiar soil. I was having a tough time with the transition. Just a few months after our move, we came back for a visit and found ourselves sitting in the same pews, surrounded by the same faces that I missed so much. It felt right and familiar, but the Lord spoke clearly to my heart: "This isn't your pew anymore." As painful as it was to let go, God was asking me to plant myself again—this time in Texas. And He was faithful. In time, we found another church home. New friends, new small groups, and new ways to serve reminded me that the body of Christ is not confined to one zip code. As Paul says in Romans 12:5, "So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

Seven years later, God brought us back to Tennessee. Englewood had started meeting in Medina, and we returned once again. This time, it wasn't just about going back—it was about growing deeper. We found community again, just as warm and welcoming as before. Because God, in His goodness, always makes room for us among His people. Just as the author of Hebrews reminds us not to give up meeting together, don't give up your search for your community. Your pew and your people are waiting.

Kelly Buck

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house,
and put Me to the test now in this," says the Lord of armies, "if I do not open for you the windows
of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.*

Micah 3:10

The Joy of Faithful Stewardship

This verse took on a different meaning for me after coming to Englewood. I always saw tithing as a burden or thought, "What difference would my giving really make?" At Englewood, I learned that tithing is really giving back to God what is already His. Learning that we are simply stewards of his resources helped me to let go of more. It is a supernatural working that the more we give back to God, the more we receive. These gifts from God are not usually financial in nature. It may be the joy of seeing how your money has been used to reach the lost in a different part of the world. It is also a way to reach lost people in the community.

God actually asks us to test Him in this. He literally wants us to hold Him accountable to His word and His promise. This is an act of a gracious and giving God. Giving back to God should not be a chore or a burden but a joy. It does something to you that is unexplainable. It frees you from the worries of material wealth and changes your perception of what true riches really are.

When we embrace tithing as an act of faith and gratitude, we step into a deeper relationship with God, trusting Him to provide not only for our needs but to work through us in ways we could never imagine. It is a testament to His unchanging character and infinite kindness. By surrendering what we hold tightly to, we find not loss but gain—a life rich in purpose, joy, and the knowledge that we are part of a divine story unfolding across the world. This is the heart of faithful stewardship: trusting, giving, and witnessing the transformative power of God's love through our obedience.

Wes Harris

"Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

Hebrews 11:6

Get Yourself To Jesus, Any Way Possible!

A significant focus of Jesus' earthly ministry was loving and connecting with people. He LOVED to bless people in His Father's name, for them believing in Him. One of the primary ways Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah was through healing hurting and broken people. In this context, Mark and Luke (& Matthew 9:1-8 too) each tell a different version of the same story of Jesus healing a paralytic man.

While the rightful focus of the story is Jesus lovingly healing this man and forgiving his sins, the details reveal a truth that can challenge and encourage us. We know from these gospel accounts that: Somebody believed Jesus could heal this paralyzed man. The man was physically unable to get himself to Jesus on his own. To get to Jesus, he needed the tremendous efforts of four awesome friends, who went to extreme lengths to get there. Scripture does not indicate if the paralyzed man was the one begging his friends to take him to Jesus, or if his friends were the ones determined to get him there. But, does it really matter?

The most important thing is this: These people believed in Jesus and did everything they could to reach Him.

The question for today is: What are you doing to get to Jesus?

It does not matter if you are the broken person that desperately needs a loving, healing touch from Our Lord, or if you are the committed friend(s) doing everything in your power to bring a person in need to Jesus. The reality is that we live in both of those roles at the same time.

One cool thing is that all the characters in this story ended up at the same place: the presence of Jesus. Right where they need to be. Engaging Him, confessing their brokenness and need for Him, and believing that He loved them and wanted a relationship with them.

That same truth still exists, and it is our opportunity as believers every day. To get ourselves to Jesus by any means possible, believe in His loving, saving power, and ask Him to help us, as we depend on Him. And of course, Jesus will meet us there, just like he met this paralyzed man & his friends. He always does. He always gives us what we need, even if it isn't always what we want.

Get yourself to Jesus today, no matter what it takes! If you don't feel you can get there on your own, ask a friend to take you. And, if you know of someone who needs to get to Jesus, figure out how to bring them to Him!

Brian Hedstrom

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

Ephesians 2:10

Saved to Serve

The previous verses (Eph 2:8-9) make it very clear that we are not saved by good works, but by faith in Jesus Christ. But, once we are saved, we are to do good works as we live and serve in God's Kingdom. God has prepared these works for us to do beforehand.

The first time I fully realized this was in 1984. My family and I made a career change and moved to Blytheville, Arkansas. We joined First Baptist Church, Blytheville. A short time after we joined, the pastor came to visit us and welcome us to the church. During the conversation, he stated, "Mike, you and your family are an answer to my prayer. I have been praying for several months for God to send us a person to revitalize the church's RA (Royal Ambassadors) program. I read your transfer letter and see that you have been leading the RAs at your previous church. God has sent you here to lead ours." This came as a surprise because this was the first time I ever knew there really was a "letter of transfer" of membership.

I committed to taking a leadership role to help enlist and train other leaders, enroll boys, and plan weekly meetings and programs. With God's help and the encouragement of our pastor, the RA Program grew into a strong spiritual program to train boys to serve Christ. We were in Blytheville for only 14 months, but during that short time, leaders were trained to continue and improve the work God started with us.

I talked about God moving my family to Blytheville to illustrate how God has prepared "good works" for us beforehand. He has continued this in my life at Englewood. I remember the day Pastor Ben Mandrell called and asked me to join him for lunch. I agreed and met him in a local restaurant. He asked me if I would consider taking the leadership of the Senior Adult Ministry at Englewood. I told Ben I needed to talk with my wife and spend time praying about this decision. We agreed to get back together in a week. During that time of prayer and contemplation, God gave me a verse. Colossians 3:23-24 says, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve."

Shortly before Pastor Ben asked me about serving, I had retired from my business and was planning to relax and travel. The amazing thing is God wanted me to do all that while leading and ministering with the wonderful Senior Adults of Englewood. God's plans are always best.

In Christ Jesus, we are "Saved to Serve". Have you discovered the place of service that God has prepared just for you? If you haven't, my hope and prayer is that you will soon. You're missing out on a great blessing.

Mike Montgomery

Day 40

*"Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear."
Philippians 1:12-14*

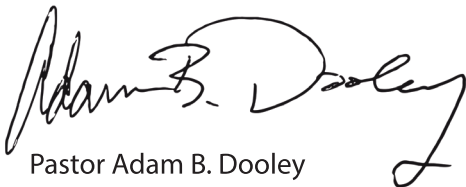
Every Place, Every Day

Love God, love people, and serve the world by living out and sharing the life changing realities of the gospel in every place, every day. These words embody the mission of our church over the years. Our shared commitment to reach others with the same messages that changes us is the core commitment that makes Englewood special. And yet, sometimes we lose focus.

Life has a way of wearing us down. Unexpected sickness. Unpaid bills. Unresolved conflict. Unmet needs. Unfair accusations. Unplanned detours. Even the most passionate Christians who love to share the gospel sometimes feel blindsided by circumstances beyond their control. Nothing tempts us to question the goodness of God and neglect the spread of His Word like the unforeseen interruptions in our lives. Pain has a way dampening our passion to share the life changing realities of the gospel.

Challenges like these make the Apostle Paul's example in these verses all the more astounding. Writing from prison while contemplating life and death (1:21-24), God's missionary warhorse saw his hardship as a means to the gospel rather than the hindrance of it. Instead of bemoaning his difficulties, Paul chose to use them for spreading the Good News in unusual ways. A shift change every six hours brought a new member of the Praetorian Guard to watch over God's apostle and each one of them heard the redemptive story of a Jewish Messiah who died, was buried, and then rose from grave.

If our faithfulness ends when our comfort ceases, it reveals an unhealthy preoccupation with ourselves. Our goal for living cannot be inward focused if we are to kindle the fire of sharing the life changing realities of the gospel in every place, every day. Our adversities can be platforms for impacting others as long as we are not slaves to our circumstances. The history of Englewood has been full of highs and lows, yet through it all God continues to honor our efforts to reach as many people for Christ as possible. So, on our best days and our worst days, let's keep living out and sharing the old, old story of Jesus and His love.



Pastor Adam B. Dooley

