

FALL DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

Registration Opens **SOON** and Classes Begin **September 21!**



It is only because He became like us that we can become like Him.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

FACILITATORS MEETING

September 17, 2025
6 PM

Call to Order

Dr. Susan Willis Capers

Prayer

Dr. Darwin L. Jones

Presentations

1. Our Why—Pastor Rico Craig
2. Our Job Description—Pastor Rico Craig
3. Community Is Everything—Pastor R. Timothy Jones
4. Adult Curriculum—Dr. Susan Capers
5. Children/Youth Curriculum—Taurean Randolph
6. Turning A Study into A Journey—Pastor Rico Craig
7. Group Connection and Study Time—Pastor Rico Craig
8. Group Leadership—Dr. Darwin L. Jones
9. What Success Looks Like—Dr. Darwin L. Jones
10. Our Timeline—Dr. Susan Capers
11. Keys to Effectively Leading A Discipleship Group—Pastor R. Timothy Jones

Questions and Answers

Remarks and Closing Prayer

Dr. Susan Willis Capers

OUR WHY

Our goal is to move people from membership to maturity and from maturity to ministry.

OUR JOB DESCRIPTION

We are here to inspire people to grow, serve, and care.

[Jesus Christ] is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. (Colossians 1:28 NIV)

▪ COMMUNITY IS EVERYTHING!

The African philosophy of “Ubuntu” represents collective success. Ubuntu means I cannot be all I can be unless you are all that you can be. Its mantra is “I am because we are and because we are I am.”

Community means that people come together around the table, not just to feed their bodies, but also to feed their minds and their relationships.—Henri J.M. Nouwen

1. Making disciples requires building community.
2. Community engenders accountability, encouragement, solidarity, and mutual edification.
3. Engagement is the new attendance.
4. Community turns rows into circles.
5. Belonging precedes becoming (and sometimes believing!).
6. Community makes people visible.
7. We are better together—connect people to God and each other!

▪ BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL SUNDAY

September 21, 2025 @ 9 AM

▪ What We Need You To Do

1. Pray for the success of our discipleship journey
2. Commit to being present and prepared for each group connection and study session for the entirety of the series
3. Meet weekly for the first three weeks and monthly afterwards (via Zoom)
4. Call every person in your group **BEFORE** Back to Sunday School Sunday.¹

The nature of the call is as follows:

- a. “Briefly” introduce yourself and thank them for joining the journey;
- b. Invite them to Back to Sunday School Night (March 19);
- c. REMIND them that instruction begins the week of March 20;
- d. Answer any questions than they might have; and
- e. Ask them how our team can pray for them and their families.

▪ The First Session—Back to Sunday School Day

The purpose of the first session is community building.

- a. Welcome – SMILE!!!
- b. ICE-BREAKER
- c. Gifts for your students
- d. Introductions [Facilitators go last – ALWAYS!]
- e. Brief preview of the curriculum
- f. Prayer

▪ How to Make the Study A Journey

1. **Grow** (faith means spiritual needs)—Turn principles into practice (study together weekly)

¹ Students will be informed that facilitators will be reaching out to them.

2. **Serve** (Hope meets missional needs)—Change the world by changing somebody's world (design and execute a mission/community service project)
3. **Care/connect** (Love meets relational needs)—Build relationships (plan a fellowship opportunity AWAY from the campus)

▪ **Group Connection and Study Time**

Ice breaker/community building [3]

Prayer Time/Praise Reports [6]

Group Study [45]

Announcements/Procedural Matters [3]

Who is in the Empty Chair? [1]

Closing Prayer [2]

▪ **Group Leadership**

1. **Prayer leader:** Opens and closes sessions with prayer [ALWAYS open the floor and yield to volunteers].
2. **Connection leader [secretary]:** Keeps the roll and manages communication for group members [especially those missing].
3. **Mission leader:** Plan, coordinate, and execute the group's mission project.
4. **Fellowship leader:** Plan, coordinate, and execute the group's fellowship opportunity.
5. **Evangelist (the nicest person in the group-LOL!):** Make the person in "the empty seat" feel welcome.

▪ **The "Empty Seat"**

As open groups, new people are welcome. Each group should strive to have at least one new person weekly. If a new person decides to join the group, a new "empty chair" should be added.

The "empty seat" opens the SIDE doors of the church!

▪ **Curriculum**

REVIVE US AGAIN! Nine Steps to Spiritual Renewal

by Dr. R. Timothy Jones

Adults

REVIVE US AGAIN! aims to restore the joy of our salvation by redirecting the hearts of God's people to the heart of God.

Welcome to ADULTING

by Jonathan "JP" Pokluda

Young Adults

This text lays out a roadmap for emerging and young adults to navigate faith, friends, finances, and the future.

God's Answers to Life's Difficult Questions

by Rick Warren

Rick Warren invites us to take a closer look at key biblical figures and the ways in which they faced difficult questions and challenges in their daily lives.

A Teen's Guide to Conflict

by Gary Chapman

Middle and High School Students

Conflict can lead to isolation, anger, and broken relationships. With the proper tools, however, teenagers can learn to deal with drama, manage anger, and make things right.

It's OK That You're NOT OK

by Megan Devine

Adults

Meeting grief and loss in a culture that doesn't understand. Megan Devine writes with deep insight about the unspoken truths of loss, love, and healing.

Leave It on the Field

by Dr. R. Timothy Jones

Men

Leave It on the Field explores the four quarters of a man's life. Its aim is to help men rediscover themselves, rethink failure, and redefine success.

NOTE: Traditional Sunday School curricula for pre-school through 5th grades as well as senior adults.

▪ **Timeline**

September 5	REGISTRATION OPENS <i>Registration desk before and after worship every Sunday in September</i>
September 17	TEACHERS MEETING (6 PM)
September 21	Back to Sunday School Day GOAL: Building community
September 22	Men's Discipleship (6 PM)
September 25	Online Study Group
October 5	Super Sunday and Perfect Attendance Day

▪ **GROUP COVENANT (Ground Rules)**

1. EVERYONE HAS VALUE – EVERYONE!
2. Be humble, be gentle, and be patient. (Ephesians 4:2)
3. What is said here stays here.
4. Jesus, not judgment.
Grace, not guilt.
5. Let us HEAR each other.
6. Speak life and only life!
Death and life are in the power of the tongue. (Proverbs 18:21)
7. Your sins are the only sins you have the right to confess.
8. No preaching, lecturing, "piggy-backing", or unsolicited advice!
9. Dialogue is good; debate is not.
10. Community is EVERYTHING!

▪ **What Success Looks Like**

1. Did we rediscover or rekindle the joy of our salvation?
2. Did the study become a journey?
3. Did we build relationships?

4. Did we engender accountability, connection, and encouragement?
5. Did we warmly welcome new people to our group?
6. Did we serve the needs of others (outside our group and church)?
7. Did we make more disciplers?

▪ **Keys to Effectively Leading Discipleship Group**

1. BE PRAYERFUL, PROMPT, PREPARED, and POSITIVE—All the time!
2. Make Jesus Christ the hero in every gathering.
3. Know your role.
We are guides, not gurus (tour guides versus concierge).
4. Protect the space!
Do not allow the class to become toxic, unhealthy, or unsafe.
5. REMEMBER—Discipleship takes time!
Do not rush through the curriculum (it takes as long as it takes).
6. Cultivate relationships.
The people are more important than the program!
7. FACILITATE!!!
The right questions pave the way to the right answers.
8. Community is everything!
Turn rows into circles.
9. Make sure the rubber meets the road.
Make the Word flesh that dwells among us (John 1:1, 14)
10. Know that EVERYONE is vulnerable (to some degree).
Their journey starts where they are!
11. Hear the people—*do not hijack their moment!*
Hearing leads to healing.
12. Exegete your people.
Respect your group's uniqueness!
13. Win or learn.
We learn from good mistakes; we ignore and repeat bad mistakes.
14. Thou shalt not lecture nor read to the people.
15. Resist the temptation to editorialize.
Do not offer subjective, irrelevant commentary!
16. Groups should not migrate into care groups.
The goal is interdependence, not codependence!
17. Silence is golden.
Dead space is not!
18. Do not bleed on the people.
Our groups do not wish to hear our trauma every week.

▪ **Classes and Facilitators**

PRE-K/LOWER ELEMENTARY:

Annette Osborne, Lead Teacher
Alice Holland

UPPER ELEMENTARY:

Taurean Randolph, Lead Teacher
Vernicia Fisher

Middle School Students

Brandon Combs, Lead Teacher
Kimberly Johnson
Satara Scott

Youth Room (2nd Floor)

High School Boys

Marcus Jones, Lead Teacher
Keldrick Moore

North Foyer

High School Girls

Amy Whitaker, Lead Teacher
Shunta Singleton
Chrishonda Harper

Balcony Center

Seasoned Saints

Artie Polk
Inell T. Prealow
Lillian Trammel

Sanctuary (North Section)

Emerging Adults (18-24)

Marco French
Natika Lee

South Foyer

Young Adults (25 & up)

Chena W. Johnson
Brent and Jessica Latin

Fellowship Hall

Revive Us Again!

Tre Moore
Briana Moore

Women's Life (Saturday)

Mary A. Trammel
Amy Whitaker

Multi-Purpose Center

Men's Discipleship (Mondays)

Pastor R. Timothy Jones
Jack Johnson
Rico Craig

Multi-Purpose Center

Adults Growing in Christ (Co-Ed Adults)

Deacon Dr. Darwin L. Jones
Veronica Trahan

Music Suite

Online Study Group (Thursday)

Natasha Fields
Ryant Rico Craig