

# koinonia

June 2023

## Hide and Seek From Pastor Brandon

There is a peculiar detail in the story of King Saul that stuck out to me in my reading. In 1 Samuel 10:1, Saul is anointed as king over Israel. In verse 9, we see the Lord do a work in Saul and change his heart. Prophecy spoken over him was fulfilled. In verse 10 we see Saul prophesy under the power of the Spirit of God. This was such a stark contrast to who he was that all who knew him saw the difference. (v.11) All of this seemed to be a tremendous work of the Lord. This makes verses 15&16 curious. Saul did not tell his uncle about what the Lord had done. In the following verses, Samuel gathers the people at Mizpah to set Saul as king. In verse 21 it is revealed that Saul could not be found. In verse 22 we see a sad reality. The Lord reveals that although Saul had received a word from Him, been anointed as king, had prophecy fulfilled, and even been empowered by the Spirit of God to prophesy, he was hiding amongst the baggage. Everything which the Lord had done for Saul leading up to that moment was met with hiding. It was only after being found out, sought out, and called out that Saul stepped into his role as king.

We know from the rest of the story that Saul did not perform his role perfectly and was meant to set up David as God's king over Israel, but it does not mean that we cannot take away some important truth from this passage. As I prayed about and considered this passage, I saw two types of people. Those hiding and those seeking. I'm not sure where you fall today but know that the Lord has a plan for you. You may find yourself in the position of Saul, having been chosen by the Lord, hearing His call on your life, seeing His truth, and being empowered by His Spirit, but still hiding. You may be faithfully serving the Lord according to His calling on your life and looking for those that would come alongside you to see His work accomplished. Regardless, it seems that we must all come to terms with the fact that we will end up among baggage. So many times, we try to stay away from the extra drama of the world and forget that we are called to bear one another's burdens. Galatians 6:2 tells us to carry one another's burdens. Saul hid amongst the baggage. For whatever reason, there was something in him that made him feel as if he was not ready. Likely the same reason which led him to not tell His uncle about what the Lord had done in Him. It wasn't until the men went to the baggage that Saul was brought out and was able to fulfill his God-ordained role.

We need people seeking those hiding. Those hiding need their brothers and sisters in Christ to fulfill God's call on their life. We need to come out of hiding. Knowing that others are willing to walk with us through the next step on God's path is

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## Upcoming Events:

**Youth Camp**  
**June 12th – 16th**

**Elder's Retreat**  
**June 23rd – 24th**

**VBS**  
**July 24th – 28th**

empowering. If you are hiding, regardless of what your baggage is, you are called, you are wanted, you are needed, and you are important to the work God has for Northside Christian Center. If you aren't hiding, you are meant to be seeking. You are called, you are wanted, you are needed, and you are important to the work God has for Northside Christian Center. The singular thing that both parties need is to share their testimony with those around them. Our testimony – and that includes our baggage sometimes – is powerful, not because of what we have come through, but because of what the Lord has done. When we do not share God's work in our lives, we can find ourselves amongst the baggage, stuck in a place from which we have already been de-

livered. When we share what God has done in and for us with others, we step out from the baggage to be used by Him. Our testimony is also a powerful tool for calling out others in hiding. When others see what the Lord has done for us, they are more likely to come out from their hiding spot and work together with you for the sake of the kingdom. My prayer is that we can be those seeking and that those hiding can find a place amongst us to accomplish the kingdom mission we share.

## VBS 2023

July 24–28th will be the dates for Vacation Bible School this year. We are so excited to continue the great ministry we experienced last summer. This year's VBS is called "Hall of Heroes." We will have an exciting museum theme and the kids will get to see some of the heroes of the faith in person as well as some exhibits of important items from their stories. We'll be looking at the stories of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and David. With everyone's help, this will be an exciting time of ministry for both the kids and the adults! We still need adult volunteers to make this week a success, so please let Pastor Brandon, Tonia Crittenden, or Holly Derrick know whether you are available. Each night will run from 5:00 to 8:00 with a meal beginning at 5:00. Our big need right now is for four men who would be willing to get into character as one of our four heroes of the faith. As we get closer to July, we'll give you more information on what is needed.

## A Word on Worship

From Pastor Scott

In our May Word on Worship, we ended a bit abruptly with a definition of worship being our response to the revelation of who God is and all that He has done. So what does that mean for us as we seek to worship the Lord?

First, we see that worship is not about us. At the point that we are more concerned about our thoughts, preferences, or desires our "worship" ceases to be worship. Therefore, we must recognize what an appropriate response to God looks like. It starts with humility, gratitude, and obedience. We see this beautifully laid out in Psalm 103. I have included verses 1–5 below, but I encourage you to pause here and read the whole chapter before you continue to the end of this article.

Psalm 103:1–5 ESV

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Humility is demonstrated from the beginning of this passage. There is a recognition of God's holiness and greatness that surpasses all and a deserves a submitted, humble response from me. The first word, bless, is the Hebrew word barak, which means to kneel, bless, or salute in adoration.

Verses 3–5 lays out many of the reasons we should show gratitude towards the Lord. He has done things that no one else could do. Things that we didn't even know we needed. Verse 8 reveals that He has done them as a result of His character, leading us to adore Him all the more.

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Then, in verses 17 and 18, we see obedience enter the picture.

17 But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, 18 to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

Worship then becomes a journey of learning about God, what He has done and said, and living in accordance with His character and word. We continue learning daily and humbly and gratefully walking in obedience to Him. This is your reasonable act of worship as Paul teaches in Romans 12:1. I pray the Lord bless and keep you as you daily move forward in your journey of worship unto Him.

## Giving Update

We are coming to a close on our fiscal year with July being the last month in our financial plan. This year has been a year of challenge and refinement. This was the first year in which we implemented a different approach to our financial process. It is also the first year of a new financial paradigm for our school ministry. Last May we began our monthly reporting through Koinonia. Having finished a year's worth of financial updates, I am blessed to see how the Lord has provided! We have spent a year praying for the Lord's provision and praising Him for His faithfulness.

Rather than presenting a typical budget to the church, we presented an estimate of expenses, understanding that the Lord provides for the things which are a part of His plan. This decision brought results in two areas. The first thing seen was a clear picture that God absolutely provides for the needs of His kingdom. This blessing has been evident and overwhelming. The second thing seen is that we can plan, but the Lord will determine our steps. (Proverbs 16:9) While we made plans to spend money on certain things, the Lord prioritized our finances based on His provision. Some areas in which we planned to spend money were taken care of by other means. We realized that some areas didn't require what we thought. Still, other things became less of a priority in the grand scope of the kingdom work happening at Northside.

The following chart shows the giving that has come in and the funds still needed to

spend according to our original plan. When you see this chart, please don't feel as if the numbers must match for us to be financially successful as a church. These numbers are based on the estimated expenditures we came up with last year. Not meeting those numbers is not a failure, but a reflection of what giving has enabled us to do. We praise God for every dollar provided for His kingdom work. We thank God for every faithful giver. We thank Him for the many blessings He has poured out upon us as His people over this past year. Finally, we continue to look to Him for our every provision and purpose to live according to His provision over our plan.

I realize that this is not the comfortable process that we have been accustomed to. I realize that this faith walk will have us on pins and needles from time to time because the kingdom of this world leads us to operate according to its principles. I have also realized the immense blessing that comes from seeing the Lord provide according to His timing and will. I trust that the Creator, Sustainer, and Owner of everything in creation will work all things according to His purpose for our church. I've seen this much to be true and am continually in awe of His attention to us. As we begin to close this fiscal year and prepare to begin the next, I expect nothing more than for us to be challenged to depend completely upon Him for our every need and to see Him work time and again to determine our steps. We should have a complete report for the year in the August newsletter. In the meantime, prayerfully consider special giving to help ensure that our full-time teachers are paid through the summer and that necessary preparations can be made for our next school year. May the Lord bless you so that you can be a blessing!

-Pastor Brandon

The chart below reflects giving through the month of March. If you have any questions about giving or finances, feel free to call the church office and we'll make time to discuss any thoughts or concerns you may have. (903) 693-6366

