
CONNECT GUIDE



JOIN THE
MISSION

WALLACE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Composed By: Chase Campbell
Designed By: Jarred Morgan

AS WE BEGIN A READING PLAN

WEEK 1

- Day 1: Ephesians 1
- Day 2: Ephesians 2
- Day3: Ephesians 3
- Day 4: Ephesians 4
- Day 5: Ephesians 5

WEEK 3

- Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 5
- Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 6
- Day3: 1 Peter 1
- Day 4: 1 Peter 2
- Day 5: 1 Peter 3

WEEK 2

- Day 1: Ephesians 6
- Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 1
- Day3: 1 Thessalonians 2
- Day 4: 1 Thessalonians 3
- Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 4

WEEK ONE

DAY 1: EPHESIANS 1

UUPG Prayer Focus: Kibet in Chad / Kadar in India

Every year we go through a series called "Join the Mission." In this series we take the time to analyze how the mission of Wallace is based on the word of Scripture. Pastor John will explain to us how the Bible and the Holy Spirit are guiding him to set a vision for our church as we engage the world around us. In simple terms, we say that we are called to love God, love the world, and love our community. All three of these are commands directly from the Bible, but we also want to make sure we are living out these commands in a way that addresses the specific needs of our geographic and cultural context.

A big part of joining the mission is serving the local church. There is a lot going on at our church every Sunday morning and every Wednesday night. We have childcare, choir, Bible study, Connect Group, E teams and so much more. We can't have a Sunday service without greeters, a security team, a tech team, or a worship ministry. We want to invite you to join the mission yourself by finding a weekly ministry that you can serve in. We know it can be hard to decide which one with so many options. That's why this guide will feature daily testimonials of how you can be involved weekly in a ministry here at Wallace.

You will get to hear about everything from singing in the choir to being a faithful Connect group Member. So take some time to read these testimonies, see if any of them catch a particular passion or skill set you have, pray about which one to choose, and join the mission here at Wallace!

P. Chase Campbell - Pastor of Discipleship, Wallace Member, Professional Nerd

DAY 2: EPHESIANS 2

UUPG Prayer Focus: Haluwai in Nepal / Dui-Menia Bedouin in Algeria

Serving as a Connect Leader.

In 1982 Sam Seagers told me he wanted to start a "newly wed" class and he wanted me to teach it. I laughed at him. So Sam got Ed Shoemaker to come see me, and he asked me the same thing. I laughed at Ed as well. Then Ed asked me a question I was not prepared for. He asked: "If not you then who?" I did not have an answer for him. So after praying about it, the Lord led me to say yes. During that first year I came across James 3:1 "Not many should be teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive a stricter judgment, for we all stumble in many ways." That day I sat down and had a long talk with Jesus. I told Jesus that if He wanted me to do this, then I would just

be His tool. I would take no credit or blame and each lesson would be His.

I decided that since I didn't pursue this position, and in all honesty I didn't even want to do it at the time, but Jesus led me that way, then it must be an actual calling. Sometimes people still ask me how long I will teach, and my answer is always the same: Until Jesus does not want me to teach anymore.

Being a Connect Group leader is a joy, not a burden. I look forward to every Sunday morning, but I also look forward to my time of preparation. That time starts every Sunday afternoon when I read the Scripture for the upcoming week. Then, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday I read commentaries from Herschel Hobbs, J. Vernon McGee, Charles Spurgeon, or perhaps someone else on the shelf that I've collected over the years. Either Thursday I sit down with my laptop and start typing. After a few hours I look down at my screen, and I'm just amazed at the lesson plan that Jesus has provided. It's so much fun, and I'm amazed at the experience every single week.

Gary Boyd - Wallace Member, Connect Leader, Wallace Deacon.

DAY 3: EPHESIANS 3

UUPG Prayer Focus: Figig Imazighen in Algeria / Laguat Bedouin in Algeria

Serving on the Guest Services Team.

Being a Christian means that you are a follower of Christ. We are to imitate Him and follow what He says. Jesus says "If you love me, you will keep my commands." (John 14:15 CSB). Jesus was not a passive person. He traveled around looking to meet the needs of people and then offer them the gift of eternal life through a relationship with Him. He was a servant leader. "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28 CSB). So as followers of Christ we are called to serve, in some capacity. Wallace has many opportunities to do this. One way is to join our First Impressions Team. Anyone can join this team and we are always in need of more volunteers. The success of this team could be the difference of a first time guest deciding to come back to our church. No one would want to go to a church where they don't feel seen and welcomed.

I am honored to be the First Impressions Director. Before doing this role I greeted at the Gym outside the door. Many many years ago I visited Wallace, while I was in High School. What stood out to me and why I wanted to keep coming wasn't the Bible teachings or the physical building. It was the love, friendliness, and caringness of everyone. All roles are important and have a purpose no matter where you serve. If we don't keep at this team and it falls apart then we will miss

so many opportunities to welcome guests who may choose to reconnect with God, make the decision to become a follower of Jesus, or decide to get baptized for the first time. Jesus welcomed all and we should strive to imitate that same culture here at Wallace.

When you start serving, in any capacity, it makes you feel like you have purpose at church and you don't just feel like another number in a large gathering of people. It helps you connect more with others at church who are serving beside you. It helps you stay in touch with the different events and news that is happening at the church. And when you are doing something that is commanded by God you feel at peace.

If you are already serving in another area of the church then please keep pouring 100% of your time and energy into that. But if you, or someone you know at church, are wanting to connect more with God and His people then we would love to have you join our team. So I ask you to pray about either joining First Impressions or pray for someone you know to feel His calling to have them serve.

Tyler Gaddis - Wallace Member and Guest Services Volunteer

DAY 4: EPHESIANS 4

UUPG Prayer Focus: Ruarha Bedouins in Algeria / Macedonians in Germany

Serving with College Ministry

Curious about how college ministry is viewed today, I did what anyone in 2026 would do... I Googled it. Three concepts I read kept lingering in my mind: high-stakes, increasingly challenging, and rewarding. You can't believe everything you read on the internet, but I believe these to be pretty spot on.

I love serving in college ministry because I get to walk alongside students during such a formative, and at times formidable, season of life. They're each pursuing different passions and figuring out what they believe and what they want their lives to look like. They're navigating a world of newness and more freedom than they've ever experienced, while also facing plenty of noise that can pull them away from the Gospel and the way of life Christ calls us to. In the middle of it all, I find great joy in getting to know them beyond a 'Hello!' or 'How's it going?', building friendships, and simply meeting them where they are. More than anything, I want to encourage them to be people of the Word, to be curious, to ask questions about their faith, to seek truth, and ultimately to know and live in that truth, which is Christ. For some students, that may mean discovering Jesus for the very first time. For others, it may

mean rediscovering the goodness of God and learning what it looks like to trust Him wholly.

What makes this ministry especially rewarding is getting to watch their faith take shape in real life, in real time. Witnessing students find new joy in Jesus, understand His character more intimately, and wrestle with what it actually looks like to follow Him unashamedly is a gift. Sometimes that looks like a deeper conversation right after Connect about living as Christians among unbelievers. Sometimes it's stepping outside our comfort zones and serving alongside them on the mission field. And sometimes it's walking with them through disappointment, uncertainty, or loss and seeing their faith carry them through. One of those moments happened on the sidewalk right outside a pizza place in downtown Knoxville. A small group of our college women and I stood there with our arms around one another, praying together, and pleaded for the Lord to do "immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine." It's one of those moments I won't forget, largely because it captures so much of what I love about college ministry: getting to share life with these students and seeing them embrace Jesus more personally and deeply.

At the same time, serving in college ministry has challenged me to take a closer look at my own walk with the Lord. I've heard it said that you can't lead from a place you've never been. How can I encourage students to spend time in His Word, pursue Him, and live as He lived if I'm not doing those things myself?

In many ways, these students have encouraged me as much as I hope I've encouraged them. Walking alongside them has reminded me that discipleship isn't just something we do for others but begins with our own obedience to follow Christ.

I'm especially grateful that Wallace invests in college students and provides them a place to grow, serve, and build community. These four years can shape so much of who a person becomes, including their future relationship with the church and the trajectory of their faith. I pray we as a church don't settle for attendance alone, but continue fostering discipleship through God's Word, relationships, and service opportunities, equipping college students to live out their faith with confidence. My prayer is that the Word of Christ would dwell richly within them, shaping who they are, how they live, and how they love others, not just during their college years, but all their days.

Sure, college ministry is often high stakes and more challenging due to rapid changes in our world today, but the eternal reward students find in faith in Christ and the personal reward of witnessing lives change is, well, life changing. I'm grateful to serve our church and college students in this capacity and pray the Lord continues to use this ministry to further his Kingdom!

Channing Province - Wallace Member, College Department Volunteer, Mission Trip Leader.

DAY 5: EPHESIANS 5

UUPG Prayer Focus: Bisaya in Malaysia / Gosain in India

Leadership Pipeline

I accepted Jesus Christ as my savior and Lord when I was around six years old, and ever since that day, I've been drawn to work within the Church community. I've been at Wallace Memorial Baptist Church since I was in first grade, and it was around that time that I got saved. I remember hearing a song talking about how far God's love goes, which led me to ask my mom about this love and what the word sacrifice meant. She explained what it meant, and I knew that very night that Jesus loved me, and I needed Him to save me. I've grown more spiritually mature over my life, but the catalyst of it all was that moment. I've only loved the Lord more and more over time, which led me to join the team I was most drawn to: the Wallace Students' worship team.

My beginning in the leadership pipeline with the student worship team began when I was in eighth grade. Worship through song and praise was always what I felt most connected to, and it was when I felt most connected to the Lord. It was a huge change in my life, but Wallace was very patient and made me feel welcomed on that team the moment I entered. I acquired new responsibilities, since being on the worship team meant I was on the student leadership team as well, which I wasn't used to. Despite this, the experience has only made me

appreciate worshipping the Lord more and obtain new wisdom about it that I will carry through the rest of my life.

Over the years on the Wallace Students' worship and leadership team, it gave me more confidence and passion in what I believed in. I wasn't used to more responsibility and the term of being a leader, since I naturally prefer to be a follower and keep my voice aligned to the group around me. But being on those teams and being around other people like me, gave me more confidence in the Lord, as well as in myself. It also allowed me to grow more passionate; growing more secure in my beliefs and witnessing how much true worship and leadership affects others. Seeing how God truly works behind the scenes with teenagers my age empowered me, and for that, I'm eternally grateful.

This past summer of 2026, I had the opportunity to volunteer as a student intern at Wallace. It was a big jump, and I wasn't entirely prepared for the responsibility I'd have. I wrote in my notes that I wasn't sure if this internship was actually for me, since I wasn't used to taking charge and having a mentor to keep me accountable. However, I see now it was the plan the Lord had for me. My mentor was amazing; she discussed many topics with me, and I wasn't used to having that type of role model in my life. Overall, having the chance to volunteer at my church in the ways I was most suited for was an incredible experience. It gave me genuine curiosity about what the Leadership Pipeline might have to offer for my future.

Similar to many at my age, I'm unaware of what my future holds, but I know for a fact that it's God's plan for me to serve in the church in whatever way possible. I may pursue a job in the church, I may not, but I know for the rest of my life that I am called to serve at the church. I am able to not only serve my community, but also serve and worship the Lord. Christ was the example to us not to be served, but to serve, and as a believer, I feel the Leadership Pipeline has equipped me to follow this example.

Avery Poore - Wallace Member, Student Intern, Worship Ministry Intern.

DISCUSSION GUIDE: SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

WEEK ONE: EPHESIANS 2:1-10

LOVE GOD

This week you heard testimonies about how serving and engaging at Wallace can unlock new depth in your spiritual growth while also building community with your fellow church members. If one of these opportunities interests you then please let us know and we'll get you plugged in! Today you will hear from Pastor John as he tells you about the vision for Wallace to live out our mission by showing our love for God.

ACTION STEP

How will I live out the action step this week?

SERMON NOTES

[illegible]

CONNECT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: WEEK 1

- Ephesians 2 reminds us that we were all condemned and stuck in our sin at one point in this life. Have you ever been tempted to feel like you're better than someone else because of something they've done... or not done? How do you fight that temptation?
- How does this realization (that no one has any moral superiority to any other person in the world because we are all sinners) help us with our evangelism? How can we talk about sin to a lost person in a way that doesn't simply drive them away from us? How can we present truth and compassion at the same time?
- Ephesians 2:4 says that God was willing to save us through the work of Jesus because He is rich in Mercy, then verse 5 says we were "saved by grace." What is the difference between grace and mercy? What are some examples in Scripture of God showing each of these. What are some examples of God showing these gifts in your life?
-
- Ephesians 2:10 says that God prepared specific "good works" ahead of time that we are to accomplish as followers of Jesus. What are some of the ways we can accomplish these "good works?" What specific opportunities at Wallace can you participate in to live out this verse?
- The book of Ephesians talks at length about the church interacting and working together. How can your Connect Group live out some of these predestined good works together? Do you have a plan to do that yet?

WEEK 2

DAY 1: EPHESIANS 6

UUPG Prayer Focus: Afrikaners in Zambia / Huichol in Mexico

Why I serve in Preschool Ministry and why you should too!

What comes to your mind when you hear the words "preschool ministry"? Maybe it's rocking sweet babies to sleep, making a whole group of 4-year-olds belly laugh with a silly joke, or having a lap full of 3-year-olds listening while you read a Bible story. Or perhaps your vision looks more like a room full of screaming babies, pulling apart two four-year-olds fist-fighting over a toy or you on your hands and knees cleaning up all the dumped toys in the 3-year-old classroom. The truth is, ALL of these scenarios are preschool ministry (and often that last set of scenarios usually happens more often than the first). So...why serve? Why would anyone willingly choose to put themselves in the position of changing dirty diapers, poking tiny straws into an endless number of juice boxes, or settling a toy dispute with the wisdom of a Supreme Court judge? The answer is simple: because it's exactly what Jesus calls us to do.

I've served consistently in Wallace's preschool ministry nearly every week for the past four and a half years (and for several years before that on a monthly rotation). Needless to say, I've spent a lot of time thinking about serving the children of our church.

Why Preschool Ministry Matters

1. Kids matter to God.

Scripture is VERY clear that children are a priority in His Kingdom (Luke 18:16, Matthew 18:3, Matthew 18:10). And if kids are a priority to God, they should be a priority to us. If kids matter to us (because they matter to God), we should be serving them like Jesus, even if (and because!) they can't walk, talk or solve their own conflicts yet. My (and your) service matters to God.

2. Preschool ministry allows us to serve not only children, but entire families.

I have preschoolers of my own, so I'm well-versed in crazy Sunday mornings getting everyone ready and out the door. Knowing I have a place I can bring my kids where they will be safe and loved makes getting to church a relief and joy. Knowing I can offer that same feeling to other parents is one of the biggest reasons I serve. My (and your) service matters to our faith family.

3. Serving in preschool gives me the opportunity to partner with parents to introduce foundational truths to their youngest children.

When they leave our ministry, these children know the Bible is true, God loves them and the church is a good place to be. My own kids get so excited on Saturday nights because they know Sunday's coming and they get to go somewhere

they are loved and have fun. I get excited knowing they are learning Biblical truths every week. My (and your) service matters to children.

4. Serving in preschool is the gospel in action.

Comforting a child who misses their parents, encouraging a child who is excited to share their Bible verse with you, helping a child who needs a band aid or a snack. We are literally showing these children how much Jesus loves them through the smiles we share, the hugs we give, the tears we wipe away and the stories we share with them. My (and your) service matters to Jesus.

I could write pages about the benefits of serving in preschool, but for the sake of time and space, I'll stop here and leave you with this thought. Serving in the preschool ministry is good for your heart. It may pull you out of your comfort zone. It allows you to get to know families that you may not otherwise have the opportunity to know. It allows for multigenerational discipleship and gives these littlest ones more solid Christ-followers to emulate as they grow. Ultimately, serve in the preschool ministry because doing so is a reflection of God's heart for "even the least of these." My (and your) service matters.

Meghan Croft - Wallace Member and Preschool Volunteer

DAY 2: 1 THESSALONIANS 1

UUPG Prayer Focus: Perumkollar in India / Chikunda in Mozambique

Serving on the Tech Ministry Team.

Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, - Colossians 3:23

When I joined the Tech Team at Wallace over 10 years ago, I had no idea just how integral this team was to the worship experience nor did I understand the dedication of this team to the worship ministry. From cameras to lighting, sound to broadcast and streaming, it all works seamlessly each and every Sunday to enhance the worship that takes place in the Worship Center. And, this team of devoted servants ensures that their work goes on behind the scenes, virtually unnoticed.

I walked onto this team with no experience but a desire to serve, and they welcomed me in with open arms. I've had the privilege of serving in several areas on the team, but, more importantly, making lifelong friendships with those I've served alongside. I've learned about camera operations, broadcast production, livestreaming, and how "work" and "worship" can take place at the same time. I consider it a true blessing to have been a part of this ministry for the time that I've been here.

If you are looking for an area to serve in worship, but aren't

looking to be in front of the crowd, consider serving on the Tech Team here at Wallace.

Katie Smith - Wallace Member, Tech Team Volunteer, Mission Trip Leader.

DAY 3: 1 THESSALONIANS 2

UUPG Prayer Focus: Alawites in Lebanon / Selim in Sudan

Serving as a Connect Group Leader

For most of my life, I never imagined I'd be leading an adult Connect Group, much less encouraging others to step into mission opportunities. I've spent more than 33 years as a public elementary educator and 11 years teaching preschool here at Wallace. Children? Absolutely. Adults? I didn't think that was my lane. I was a member of Tim and Angela Holder's Connect Group at the time, and God thought differently. About a year before Angela Holder unexpectedly went home to be with the Lord, Tim Holder began preaching in other churches more often and asked several of us to fill in when he was away. Around January 2019, he shared that he felt the Lord nudging him to rely on me more. At the time, I had no idea God was preparing me for something I never would have chosen for myself.

Then everything changed. Angela passed away on Mother's Day 2019, and our Connect Group was devastated. At her receiving of friends, Tim pulled me aside and simply said, "I can't do this anymore. You need to just take it." The people-pleaser in me immediately assured him he didn't have to worry about a thing. But inside? I was terrified. The enemy wasted no time reminding me of every reason I wasn't qualified. You're only equipped to teach children. You're not as Biblically educated as other Connect Group leaders. You're a woman leading a group that's always been led by a man. You've never been to seminary. The voices were loud. Looking back, I'm grateful that my desire not to let Tim—and Angela—down was stronger than my fear. I had resilience, but I didn't have confidence. So, I just kept showing up. I kept asking questions.

The morning Angela passed away, we pulled our chairs into a circle, prayed together, and cried together. The next week, I studied harder than I ever had because I thought I needed to have all the answers. Over time, though, God gently showed me something I desperately needed to learn. . . I didn't have to have all the answers. I simply had to be faithful. Seven years later, I don't consider myself the teacher of our Connect Group; I'm the facilitator. Our church does such an incredible job of providing thoughtful discussion questions, and I've learned that some of our richest conversations happen because our group is filled with people who love the Lord and are willing to wrestle together with how to apply His Word. God has taught

me that He can accomplish amazing things through ordinary people who are willing to trust Him one step at a time.

That's exactly why I want to encourage anyone who feels God nudging them toward missions but immediately starts making a list of reasons they're not the right person. I've lived that story. Whether you're serving in our community or on the other side of the world, God isn't looking for people who feel perfectly qualified. He's looking for hearts that are willing to say yes. As you walk in obedience, He will give you the strength, wisdom, discernment, and courage you need for each next step. You don't have to see the whole path before you begin. You simply have to trust the One who does. If He's calling you to serve, don't let fear convince you you're not enough. God has a remarkable way of equipping the people He calls, and I can promise you that the journey of watching Him work through you will change your life just as much as it blesses the lives of those you serve.

Tiffany Nicely - Wallace Member and Connect Group Leader

DAY 4: 1 THESSALONIANS 3

UUPG Prayer Focus: Sudanese Arabs in United Arab Emirates
/ Sayyid in India

Singing in the Choir.

As followers of Christ, we are called to worship. Worship is our response to who God is and what He has done for us through Jesus Christ. While worship is so much more than music, there is something special about God's people coming together to sing—to praise the one true God who created heaven and earth and to proclaim the truth of the gospel. Music is universal, and the songs we sing can remind us of God's faithfulness, encourage us in our walk, and point us again and again to the hope we have in Jesus.

I have always loved to sing, and I grew up in a family that sang in church choirs, so being part of the choir has always felt natural to me. It gives me the opportunity to serve by doing something I love, but through the years I've come to realize that choir is about so much more than singing. It's a community within the church. We worship together, but we also fellowship together, pray for and encourage one another, grieve and celebrate together, and help each other grow in our walk with Christ. Being part of the worship ministry has helped me grow in my own walk with Him.

One of the most important things I've learned is that worship isn't about us, and it isn't a performance. It's about putting "we" above "me." Every voice and every musician has a part in leading our church family in worship, but our desire is never to draw attention to ourselves. We want our worship to be genuine and heartfelt, coming from a place of gratitude for

who God is and what He has done. Ultimately, we want to point people away from ourselves and toward Jesus.

I also want to be an example to my two sons and to the generations coming behind us. I love that our worship ministry can be a place where different generations serve Christ side by side. My hope is that younger generations will see the joy that comes from worshipping and serving together and will want to join the mission with us—using the gifts God has given them to glorify Him, serve His church, and share the hope of the gospel.

Scott Giffin- Wallace Choir Member and Wallace Deacon.

DAY 5: 1 THESSALONIANS 4

UUPG Prayer Focus: Kemak in Timor-Leste / Ngoni in Mozambique

Serving on the Security Team

I enjoy serving on the church safety and security team because it gives me an opportunity to serve others in a way that is often behind the scenes but has a meaningful impact. Our team engages with people, welcomes and serves guests, helps meet varying needs during services, and supports the church with mild medical, de-escalation, and security situations.

What I value is that serving is much more than helping. It has allowed me to build meaningful relationships with like-minded people, particularly through the time we spend training, developing, and preparing together outside of the church campus. Over the years, I've been able to serve others in different capacities and have found genuine joy in using the skills God has given me (1 Peter 4:10).

My professional career in business has sharpened my skills in organization, planning, communication, and people and process development. I see serving on this team as an outlet God has given me to use those abilities for His church. Each person brings different strengths, experiences, and areas of focus. Together, those individual parts become something greater than one could accomplish alone (1 Corinthians 12:12).

I believe that the same opportunity exists for anyone who chooses to serve. You don't need a specific background or skill set to find a place on the team. There is an opportunity to learn, grow, develop relationships, and discover how God can use the gifts and experiences He has already given you (Romans 12:6-8).

For me, serving on this team has brought genuine joy, purpose, and fulfillment. More importantly, it has shown me that serving isn't simply about filling a role, it's about being part of something bigger than yourself and using what God

has given you to help others. I believe anyone who is willing to serve can find that same joy and purpose by discovering their place, developing alongside others, and becoming part of the body God is building.

Referenced passages:

1 Peter 4:10 - Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

1 Corinthians 12:12 - For just as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body – so also is Christ.

Romans 12: 6-8 - According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one's faith; if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching; if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness.

Kendall Roach - Wallace Member, Security Team Volunteer, Deacon, Student Connect Leader.

DISCUSSION GUIDE: SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

WEEK TWO: EPHESIANS 2:11-22

LOVE COMMUNITY

This week you heard testimonies about how serving and engaging at Wallace can unlock new depth in your spiritual growth while also building community with your fellow church members. If one of these opportunities interests you then please let us know and we'll get you plugged in! Today you will hear from Pastor John as he tells you about the vision for Wallace to live out our mission by showing our love for our community.

ACTION STEP

How will I live out the action step this week?

SERMON NOTES

[illegible]

CONNECT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: WEEK 2

- What traditions, customs, or habits are important expressions of our local culture? WHY are these things meaningful to us? What traditions, customs, or habits are important to us (Wallace) as a specific church? How do these things make you feel like you belong here? Ephesians 2:11-22 is all about unity in the church community. How can we help make others feel like they belong in our community?
- Have you ever felt left out or shunned by a particular group of people? Maybe it was at work, or school? Maybe it was part of moving to a new place? How can the memory of feeling excluded help us remember to be more welcome to others in our church? How can it help motivate us to evangelism?
- In the book of Ephesians, Paul spends a good deal of time addressing the tension of Jews and Gentiles as they try to live our Christianity together as the church. Are there similar tensions in our churches today? These tensions in the first century were almost always because people mistakenly thought their personal or cultural preferences were moral necessities. What cultural tendencies in our world are often mistaken as moral necessities? How can we rid ourselves of these cultural idols and embrace biblical unity?
- Read Romans 14. As church members and fellow believers, how can we disagree on a number of things and still function in unity as the church? How can we display that unity to our local community?
- What can your Connect Group specifically do to encourage and live out Christian unity?

WEEK THREE

DAY 1: 1 THESSALONIANS 5

UUPG Prayer Focus: Tai Khang in Laos / Azerbaijani in Uzbekistan

Why Connect matters.

When I was first asked to write about Connect class, the reason seemed obvious—it's right there in the name! Connect. As I thought about it more, the nuance and significance of that Connect became more clear. Yes, Connect is a place where we quite literally touch base, participate, engage, and come together, but it is so much more than simply that. Connect gives us a place to move beyond attending church toward a place of truly belonging. It connects us to biblical truth and helps us figure out what that truth looks like in our everyday lives. It connects us to the people who know us, pray for us, encourage us and walk alongside us through different seasons. And it connects us to the larger body of Christ where we find opportunities to serve, grow, and participate in the work of the Church. Those connections, built Sunday after Sunday and year after year, help turn a church we attend into a community where we are known, needed, and able to grow.

Connect is a place to wrestle with biblical concepts and work those out together. Church services and sermons are largely one-directional, but Connect helps us take that message one step further and apply it to our lives. In a classroom, we can

ask questions, share perspectives, challenge one another's thinking, and consider ideas we might never have arrived at on our own. Scripture becomes something we share and learn about together rather than something we hear. Connect is the place where we learn how to be a doer of the word and not just a hearer only. Most importantly, Connect helps us bridge the space between knowing what Scripture says and living what Scripture teaches. Together, we figure out what it looks like to display our faith, follow Jesus, and put biblical truth into practice in our marriages, families, workplaces, friendships, and everyday interactions. We aren't simply gaining biblical knowledge; we are helping one another grow into people who live it.

Connect is a place to build rooted relationships. Through a repeated presence, people begin to know one another's stories. We learn about each other and support each other. We share experiences in various life stages. We support one another through the toddler phase, empty nesting, and aging parents. We build a bond that is solidified in encouragement, service, and prayer. How beautiful it is to see prayers answered in our groups and build a community of support over a period of time. Connect offers us a place to build relationships with people we might never have chosen to build relationships with and what a gift that is! To gain knowledge, wisdom, and perspective from others is a treasure. In Connect, we aren't just surrounded by people; we know we can call on those people in times of both

joy and sorrow and they will be there with an encouraging word, a meal, and to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Connect is a place to connect to the larger body of believers—the Church! A large church like Wallace can often feel like just a place to attend. In Connect, we have an entry point into the life and ministry of the church. It's in Connect classes that we learn not only about the mission, values, and vision of the church, but also how to live those out together. In Connect we serve together, pray for our missionaries, and grow as believers. We move from simply going to church to being the church.

And maybe that is what makes Connect so valuable. It isn't simply another hour on Sunday mornings. It is a place where faith becomes shared life. A place where what we hear on Sunday mornings becomes action. A place where we wrestle with and live out the scripture. A place where familiar faces become people who know our stories and where we find ways to serve. Connect gives us a place not just to attend, but to belong; not just to learn, but to grow, and not just to go to church, but to be the church together.

Dr. Katie Rowe - Wallace Member, Connect Group Member, Home School Ministry Volunteer.

DAY 2: 1 THESSALONIANS 6

UUPG Prayer Focus: Somalis in Sweden / Wolog in Italy

Leadership Pipeline

I have been blessed with the opportunity to serve on staff at Wallace Memorial through the Leadership Pipeline for over a year now, and I can say it has been the greatest year of growth both in my practice and spiritual life to date. Whether it's Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings, or just random days coming into the treehouse, every moment I have spent in the pipeline has been enjoyable and filled with growth. Through my first year and some change, my Apprenticeship in worship through the Leadership Pipeline has grown my ability to lead both during and beyond service.

My ability to lead a congregation during service has progressed tremendously through the Leadership Pipeline. One of the biggest things Kory has taught me is the importance of speaking during music and teaching songs to your congregation rather than just jumping straight into singing. Speaking while a song is playing, even when it is as simple as letting them know what the next words are, helps build a connection between you and the congregation, and helps them remember what they are singing. When you introduce a new song to your congregation, you can teach the chorus and explain the meaning of the song to them so that they know the words that they are about to sing are not void, but are meant to glorify God. Kory has

helped me become more confident in speaking and teaching to a congregation, and therefore has also improved my ability to do so. He has also taught me the significance of basing your words upon Scripture. Every time I speak to a congregation, I want the words that I speak to be backed by the Bible, not just something out of my own head. Kory has also shown me how to be more spontaneous and flexible in the way that I worship. When a worship service's response time is prolonged, it is important to know how to extend that time of worship spontaneously without it being awkward, and Kory has shown me how to do that. Another way the Leadership Pipeline has grown my ability is in my freedom of worship. I know that a worship service is supposed to be a time of freedom and authenticity, and the worship leader is the one who helps to cultivate that by displaying their own freedom of worship.

Not only has the Leadership Pipeline grown me in my ability during service, but it has also grown me in the way I lead outside of a service. One way the pipeline has done this is by strengthening my ability to build relationships. Kory has placed me in so many different environments where I get the chance to meet new people who can also help me in my ministry journey. He has shown me how important it is to not just lead from the stage, but lead beyond the stage by getting to know the members of your church. Pastor John always says that the "shepherds smell like their sheep," and that couldn't be more true. I now see that my job is to connect with and be involved in the lives of my church family, not just lead them in

worship from the stage. They gain a lot more respect for me in the things I do outside of Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings. Another big thing Kory has taught me in leadership off the stage is knowing your people when it comes to planning. You have to know the musical ability of your team and the level they are at, you can't just plan anything you want or it would be a disaster. You also have to know the people you are singing to. Sometimes songs can get too wordy for your congregation, and in that case they won't get a single thing out of worship because they don't even know what they are saying. If you plan a song that's too upbeat or too musically challenging, it can distract your congregation from the true meaning of the words they are singing. For example, sometimes we have to cut the bridges of certain songs at Riverview because they are too fast and too wordy for the people there to keep up. Knowing your people is important because it is essential to cultivating the environment of worship for them. Preparation is also essential to worship. The biggest thing Kory has preached to me in my time in the pipeline has been how important it is to be prepared. If I, as the worship leader and organizer of everything, am not prepared, how can I expect the rest of my team to be? And if the rest of my team is not prepared, the only outcome is disaster. Practice on Sunday morning before the real service should look just like the service itself.

In conclusion, the year I have spent as a Worship Apprentice in the Leadership Pipeline has been nothing short of outstanding. I have loved every second of time I have gotten to spend both

with Kory and with all the other pastors. The biggest word of encouragement I could give to those who want to join would be to let the staff pour into you. When you have an open mind to receive the wisdom they are trying to give you, it is unreal how much you will grow. They all want to help you, and truly, they all want the best for you.

Wyatt Andrews - Wallace Worship Apprentice, Riverview Worship Leader, Human Encyclopedia of Sports Knowledge.

DAY 3: 1 PETER 1

UUPG Prayer Focus: Poles in Sweden / Ahiska Turks in Russian Federation

Serving on the Tech Ministry Team

I was in fifth grade when I first started serving in tech ministry. I started running PowerPoint slides for Pastor Jeff while he was teaching from the stage. This was the beginning of my journey serving in tech ministry. I first got involved because I saw that Pastor Jeff was running from the back of the room and then to the front of the room before and after he spoke on a Wednesday night. When I moved up to sixth grade I constantly felt like something was missing whenever I went to Wednesday night activities. I could not figure out what was missing until around my seventh or eighth grade year. I started volunteering to run words for the students, and I finally found

what had been missing. I felt like I had found a place where I belonged. I continued to do this for the rest of my time in the youth. Over time, I began learning other areas of tech ministry ,moving from ProPresenter into audio, lighting, and stage design. During my later years of high school, I ran lyrics for the Sunday services and ran audio for Wednesday night activities for the youth. Tech ministry became more than just a place for me to serve; it became a place for me to grow, learn, meet new people, and step outside of my comfort zone.

I continue to serve in the tech ministry because it is a place where I feel like I belong, and I love being able to see how God is working from behind the scenes. To me, tech ministry is not about being the center of attention; we are there in the background to amplify and blend the worship. Whether we are running audio, putting lyrics on the screen, or helping the pastor be heard, our purpose is to help the congregation worship without becoming the focus ourselves. Ultimately, we are using the talents God has given us to serve Him and others. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." I believe tech ministry is one of the ways I can do that. Serving has also helped me grow by making me more confident and pushing me outside of my comfort zone. I have learned to voice my opinion, teach others, lead volunteers, and build friendships with people I probably would not have met otherwise. I have also learned that I do not have to know everything, but instead I should learn from people around

me who know more than I do so that I can continue to grow. Seeing everything that goes into making one service happen has also strengthened my relationship with God. I get to see all the small details that come together behind the scenes, and it makes me think about how much more God sees when He looks at the plans for each person's life. As I have grown up and watched the church change and grow, I have realized that I have been changing and growing alongside it.

I believe that every member of the church should find a place where they can serve. Romans 12:4-6 says, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them." Not everyone is going to be called to serve in tech ministry, but I believe we are all called to use the gifts God has given us to serve Him and His church. For some people, the tech ministry may be the place where they find that opportunity, but for some people that may be in another ministry. One of the great things about serving in tech is that you get to work behind the scenes without having to worry about the pressure of being in front of people. You also do not need to have any prior experience with sound, lights, computers, and technology before you start. We are willing to train you and help you learn whatever areas interest you, although that does not necessarily mean you will immediately be placed in the position you want. Through serving, you can gain

leadership, confidence, community, and most importantly, a place where you feel like you belong. Serving should never be about receiving attention or praise for what we do; instead, what we do should always point back to God. If any part of my experience resonates with you, I encourage you to reach out and find a place to volunteer. If that place is tech ministry, that is great, and if it is somewhere else, that is great too. What matters is finding a ministry where you can use the gifts God has given you, serve others, and find a place where you belong. If you have questions about serving in tech ministry, you can always ask me or any other tech.

Will Simpson - Wallace Staff Intern and Church Planting Tech Consultant.

DAY 4: 1 PETER 2

UUPG Prayer Focus: Tai Nua in Myanmar / Kaperwar in India

Serving with Wallace Kids

Dr. Randy Davis, President of the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board writes "that the motivation for a passionate pursuit of accomplishing the Great Commission (Acts 1:8) work is our children and grandchildren." If I didn't believe that statement I would not have invested in helping children know the love of Jesus for 55 years! Children are facing a culture that tells them right is wrong and wrong is right.

Working with children is not just about teaching them in class but showing them right is right and wrong is wrong by building relationships with them and their families. We want them to know that we genuinely care about them. I thoroughly enjoy attending their extracurricular activities and spending time getting to know the parents. Sometimes I can share with some of the children about their parents and grandparents as children because I taught them!

What are the benefits of teaching children? 1. Gives you the opportunity to share the Gospel on their level every week. The highlight of my ministry is to disciple a child who has made a decision to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior or has questions about that important decision. 2. Guides you in personal Bible Study, Scripture learning and application of Scripture. 3. An investment in a child's and families spiritual life. (Deut. 6:7) 4. Provides an opportunity to know a different group of people in the church. Teaching a Children's group is FUN, sometimes challenging, very rewarding and a wonderful way to delve into Bible Study.

Children are not the future of the church, they are an integral part of it. My ultimate goal since 2021 has been to help children use God's Word and prayer to make the right decisions. Always pray "What Would Jesus Do?" when making any choice. If you have a love for Jesus and teaching children how to "Be doers of the Word and not hearers only." James 1:22, we have a place for you with babies – 5th grade. (Connect

Groups, Kids Worship, Wednesday evenings and Children's Bible Drill (every other Sunday 12:00pm-2:00pm August – April). See Jeff Stevens or Tara Miller. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A CHILD'S LIFE!**

Candy Macon - Wallace Member, Former Children's Director, Lifelong Children's Teacher

DAY 5: 1 PETER 3

UUPG Prayer Focus: Balkan Romani in Turkiye / Najdi Arabs in United States

Singing in the Choir.

My name is Patty Maples and I am a member of the choir family at Wallace. We worship the Lord together, and we care for one another. It is a very special family. You are never without a friend or a prayer warrior in this family. When we sing together bringing praise to our Lord, there is just nothing like it. We are one in the bond of love, and a very special atmosphere is always present. My soul is always lifted when we gather together, because it is always a worship service; no matter if it's practice or Sunday morning worship.

It might be that a lot of people out there may be asking "What does being in the choir accomplish?" "Does it really serve the Lord and present the Gospel?" "Can it do anything spiritually for me personally?" Well, I am here to tell you that it will bring you closer to God every single time you participate. We serve

the Lord by making a joyful noise before Him every chance we get, especially on Sunday mornings. We literally sing the words of the Bible! That's because the songs Kory picks are always based in Scripture and have an outstanding message. We sing to praise Jesus and to lead our congregation in a meaningful experience every Sunday.

I would highly recommend that ANYONE join our choir here at Wallace. You will love it and be blessed by it. Kory creates so many opportunities for us, including the new "multi choir" event where we partner with other churches in the Knoxville area. Honestly, it feels like we are getting a preview of what it will be like to join in singing one day with the Heavenly choir. I pray every week that we are a sweet, sweet sound in the Lord's ear. You should join us, so you can be a part of that too!

Patty Maples- Wallace Choir Member and Assistant Connect Leader.

DISCUSSION GUIDE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

WEEK THREE: EPHESIANS 3:1-9

LOVE WORLD

This week you heard testimonies about how serving and engaging at Wallace can unlock new depth in your spiritual growth while also building community with your fellow church members. If one of these opportunities interests you then please let us know and we'll get you plugged in! Today you will hear from Pastor John as he tells you about the vision for Wallace to live out our mission by showing our love for the whole world.

ACTION STEP

How will I live out the action step this week?

SERMON NOTES

[illegible]

CONNECT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: WEEK 3

- Have you ever been on a vacation or mission trip and ended up really loving a particular place or people group? What did you love about it? How did you express that new found affinity you gained from that experience? If you have a story from a mission trip, please share it with your group.
- Paul was specifically called by God to be the “apostle to the Gentiles.” What types of struggles and sacrifices did Paul undergo for the privilege of sharing the Gospel with so many new places? If you don’t know any off the top of your head then look through the book Acts to find some.
- Peter was called to share primarily with his Jewish brothers. Paul felt called to the Gentiles. Many people believe that Simon traveled to Persia, and Thomas went all the way to India. How do we decide if we are called to stay where we are or move to another place in the world? How can we reject convenience and comfort to be obedient to the Gospel and share with the world?
- Your Connect leader has a list of mission opportunities at Wallace. Listen as they share this list with you. Which of these opportunities sound most interesting to you?

