The BRIDGE

A PUBLICATION OF AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH



Percy V. Pennybacker Jr. Bridge, Austin, Texas
Photo by Richard Bennett

VOL. 19 NO. 43 — NOVEMBER 18, 2026

AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH

LET THERE BE LIGHT

TABLE of CONTENTS

A Word from Our Pastor 3
Deacons on Call 4
New Members 5
Upcoming Events 6
Weekly Reminders 7
Merry Christmas, Y'all!: Special Guest Artist 8
Operation Christmas Child 9
Merry, Merry Mahjong 9
Light Up Austin: BCC Coat Collection 10
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering 10
ABC Women's Ministry 11-12
Thailand Mission Trip Recap 13
Week in Review 14
- Corbin Smith & Garrett Ullrich Ordination Service
From the Pages of Bill's Notebook 15
ABC Library 16
Our Response to God's Faithfulness 17
- Attendance
- Financial Report

AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH

A WORD FROM **OUR PASTOR**

ABC Family,

It was great to be back with you last Sunday! Thank you again for your prayers while our missions team was in Thailand. I did a write-up on our trip and posted it on my blog. If you'd like to read more on the trip from my perspective, you can click **HERE**.

Thanksgiving week is upon us. Philippians 4:6 tells us, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."* We always have reasons to be anxious. Some of us are anxious about our country. Some are anxious about our families. Some are anxious about our financial or medical circumstances. Others are anxious about the family gathering we are preparing for next week! While anxieties are inevitable in our lives, we do have a choice on what we do with them.

Peter encouraged us to *"cast all your anxieties on the Lord because He cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:7). Paul agreed by telling us to present these petitions "with thanksgiving." Even in your anxiousness, find ways to give thanks. Thanksgiving week is an opportunity for Americans to turn their worry into worship. We get a chance to collectively pause and give thanks to God for His abundant grace. List those graces. Thank God for them one by one. As we do this, Paul says, *"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:7).

May God's peace rest over you this Thanksgiving week. Take time every day to give thanks to the Lord for He is good. His love endures forever.

Onward and Upward,

DR. JONATHAN SPENCER
SENIOR PASTOR





CURRENT SERIES

The Fruitful Life

A study of the Fruit of the Spirit

WEEKLY SERMON CONTENT

Follow us in the YouVersion Bible App and get weekly sermon notes to follow along with every Sunday!

DEACONS ON CALL

FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 16, 2026



David Campbell
512-810-1411



Andy White
256-457-2639

CHURCHWIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2026



Chloe Conner



Jay Chadhauri

Barry Peterson & Lacey Hutson with son Noah Tyler

LIGHT UP YOUR *Life*

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

UPCOMING EVENTS



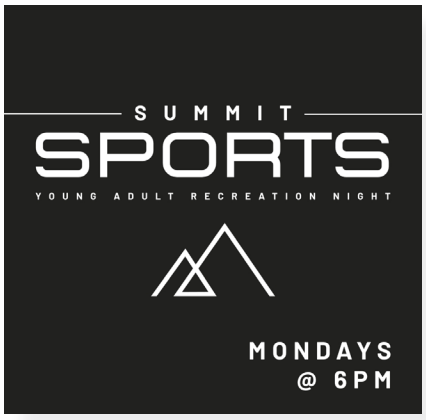






For all event and weekly activity information, please visit
austinbaptistchurch.com/EVENTS

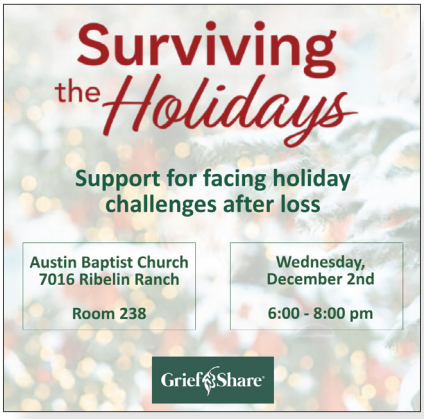
WEEKLY REMINDERS











STAY IN THE LOOP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Follow us on social media and keep up with everything happening at ABC.

Austin Baptist Church

@austinbaptistchurch

Austin Baptist Church

Merry Christmas Y'all

PERFORMANCE TIMES

SATURDAY DEC. 12

SUNDAY DEC. 13

Please invite your neighbors, friends, and family to our Merry Christmas Y'all presentations on December 12 and 13. Our Choir, Orchestra, Nativity Team, and Kids Choir have been working hard to create an amazing worship experience featuring traditional and modern Christmas music for the whole family!

Our Special Guest Artist

DR. LINDSEY GRAHAM



We are delighted to welcome our special guest artist for this year's Merry Christmas Y'all presentation, Dr. Lindsey Graham, joining us from Naples, Florida!

Lindsey is a full-time vocalist who is passionate about pursuing God's calling on her life through music and serves as Worship Director at First Naples Church. A graduate of Belmont University with a degree in Commercial Vocal Performance, she also holds a Master's degree in Religion with an emphasis in Worship Studies and a Doctorate in Worship Studies from Liberty University.

A gifted and versatile musician, Lindsey enjoys incorporating the flute, penny whistle, and piano into her performances, alongside her beautiful vocals and a wide range of musical styles, including Gospel, Classical, and Musical Theater.

Throughout her career, Lindsey has shared the stage with many beloved Gospel artists, including The Isaacs, Triumphant Quartet, The Booth Brothers, and Ernie Haase & Signature Sound. She also participated in the 2007 Gaither Homecoming video Amazing Grace.

Above all, Lindsey loves the Lord Jesus, loves His people, and considers it a privilege to use her gifts to sing for His glory. We are excited to have her with us this Christmas!



SCAN HERE TO BUILD A SHOEBOX ONLINE

OR GRAB AN EMPTY BOX AND RETURN IT FILLED BY SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND.

MERRY, MERRY Mahjong

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

Ladies, you are invited to join us for this special holiday edition of Merry, Merry Mahjong on Tuesday, December 8th!

No experience is necessary. We'll have instructors available to help you learn. So, whether you're a seasoned player or have never picked up a tile, you are welcome. So grab a friend and come join us for a festive time!




NEW OR GENTLY USED COATS FOR ALL AGES
GREATEST NEED: MEN'S COATS
DONATE FROM NOVEMBER 15-29
LIGHT UP AUSTIN
COAT COLLECTION FOR THE BAPTIST COMMUNITY CENTER


OUR CHURCH GOAL
$ 50,000
OFFERING BEGINS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH
Give online at austinbaptistchurch.com/give
LOTTIEMOON.COM


LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING®
the gospel
CHANGES EVERYTHING
INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

ABC Women's Ministry

WHERE EVERYONE HAS A SEAT AT THE TABLE



For nearly 20 years, Ginger Tew has faithfully poured into the moms of Austin Baptist Church, sharing her wisdom, encouragement, and, most importantly, her love for Jesus. And that is just a glimpse of the ministry she and her husband, Rodney, have shared over more than 50 years of serving others!

Recently, we gathered to celebrate Ginger and the countless women whose lives have been touched by her ministry. As we reflected on her years of service, we couldn't help but think of her name. Virginia, her given name, means "pure," but Ginger brings a little extra spice, warmth, and vitality! So, we came up with a few words that describe her well:

G – Gracious
I – Intuitive
N – Note Writer
G – Giver
E – Encourager
R – Receiver (a role we were delighted to see her take for a change!)

Anyone who knows Ginger knows that moms are truly her heart and passion. Whether sharing a pearl of wisdom over coffee, sending a handwritten note, or showing up at your home with dinner, gifts, and flowers, Ginger has a way of making women feel seen, loved, and celebrated.

Her ministry began with Mom2Mom, which eventually transitioned into MomQ four years ago. As the first church to pilot this program, Ginger faithfully helped lead it from its beginning, and today it has grown beyond ABC to reach moms in churches across the country!

Her heart for mentoring younger women beautifully reflects Titus 2:3–5, which calls older women to teach and encourage younger women. Through the years, Ginger has shared countless pearls of wisdom, and those pearls will continue to be passed along through the women and families she has impacted.

As a small token of our gratitude, we presented Ginger with pearl bracelets, a bouquet of handwritten notes, a special set of note cards, and a mother-of-pearl pen. But the greatest gift is the legacy she leaves behind.

What made this celebration even sweeter was seeing the baton be passed to Melanie Frey, who first experienced Ginger's ministry as a mentee, then served alongside her as a Mentoring Mom, and now steps into leadership of our moms' ministry. What a beautiful picture of discipleship and God's faithfulness!

continued on next page

ABC Women's Ministry

WHERE EVERYONE HAS A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Ginger, thank you for running your race with such faithfulness, love, and grace. You have planted seeds, watered them with God's Word, and witnessed the fruit. And that fruit will continue to bear fruit for generations to come. Your impact reaches far beyond the walls of ABC, and we are so grateful for you!









We love you Ginger! Thank you for everything you do!



BEHOLDING CHRIST AT AUSTIN RIDGE WITH NANCY GUTHRIE

This past week we had an amazing group join in with Austin Ridge for a night of ***Beholding Christ*** with Nancy Guthrie. It was truly a worshipful night as we beheld Christ from Genesis to Revelation in His Word and in song!

Thailand Mission Trip Recap

Written by Julie Christianson

God's hand of blessing has certainly been on ABC as we saw our second mission team ministering in Thailand within the last eight weeks. This latest team included five youth and nine adults, one of whom was Pastor Jonathan.

We partnered with IMB missionaries to assist at church planting sites in Chiang Mai as well as some remote areas up north. Our team had unique opportunities to sow the seeds of the gospel in young hearts by providing VBS-style sessions in public Buddhist schools, hosting ESL activities at a university, leading Bible study in a children's home, and interacting through soccer activities.

Two members of our team visited the Trauma Healing Center in Myanmar and connected Love for Myanmar leaders with an IMB missionary couple who had recently moved back to the area. The Trauma Healing Center is progressing on time and is nicely situated on a corner lot, surrounded by beautiful trees. Other members prayer walked a temple, visited a local zoo, and rode elephants.

The group also provided an act of kindness at a Baptist church by spending a morning and afternoon painting the inner side of a concrete wall that surrounded a small Thai Baptist church and participated in a Thai cooking class that benefited the church as well.

The team finished the trip assisting the North Thailand missionary team with children's programming for their annual team retreat, while Eddie Cox lead worship and Pastor Jonathan preached during their two worship services. The group especially enjoyed meeting the missionary families and hearing about how God is working through their ministries and praying for them.

Please continue to pray for the workers there as they creatively and passionately share the Good News with the people of Thailand, a spiritually dark country that desperately needs to experience the Light of the world, Jesus Christ.










WEEK IN REVIEW

Corbin Smith and Garrett Ullrich Ordination Service

November 15, 2026













From the Pages of Bill's Notebook

Don't be fooled by substitutes. On a recent trip to New York, I texted a friend to ask where he had gotten the delicious New York cheesecake that he had shipped to his house more than ten years ago. This was the most marvelous cheesecake I had ever had. It was just the right velvety consistency, the perfect crust, with just the right amount of sweetness. This was one of those tastes that once you have had it, you don't want to waste your time being disappointed by any other cheesecake. My friend told me it was from Carnegie Deli. He said they had been closed for a few years but had just re-opened. We had a little over an hour before meeting our daughter and son-in-law, so we started walking toward the Carnegie Hall area. We were glad to stretch our legs after the long flight and Uber ride to the hotel. As we walked, we noticed the Carnegie Diner and Cafe, thinking this must be the place. So, we stopped in and ordered. We were a little disappointed with the food and the service, but we waited patiently for the cheesecake to come out. We took the first bite and we were so disappointed. At that moment, I felt so foolish. This restaurant had Carnegie in the name and it was in the same area, but the quality was far from the expectation. It felt like the restaurant version of one of those kiosks that sell knock-off watches, sunglasses, purses, etc. After looking at Google Maps we realized we were a few blocks from the real, actual Carnegie Deli. Though we were kinda full, we were determined to have some of the Big Apple's finest dessert that I had tasted and craved from years ago. We walked in and saw the cheesecake in the display case and instantly knew it was the real McCoy. We quickly ordered a piece with some coffee and WOW, it did not disappoint. We walked back to the hotel with tummies overfull, but we were determined to be a bit more discerning.

The apostle Paul was warning those in the early church not to be fooled by a knock-off Gospel. There were versions of the Good News being shared that sounded almost right, but it was not the real thing. Many false religions require people to follow a set of rules or do enough good things in order to be accepted by their deity. The Good News is that only Jesus can save us, because we are not capable of being good enough morally or doing enough works of goodness to make ourselves presentable to The One and Only God of the Universe. Knock-off religions are much more dangerous than a knock-off cheesecake. Fake good news has eternal consequences. Paul says, *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!"* (Galatians 1:6-8 NIV). Don't be fooled by religious alternatives to the real, actual Gospel of God's grace and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Hang in there people. God is glad to be with us. I'm praying for us all.

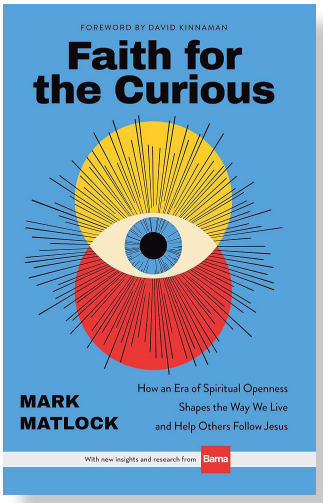


In His Joy,

BILL MCGINNIS

PASTOR OF CARE

ABC Library



Faith for the Curious: How an Era of Spiritual Openness Shapes the Way We Live and Help Others Follow Jesus
by Mark Matlock (Reviewed by Dr. Matt Gillum)

Faith for the Curious by Mark Matlock is a wonderful read that gives great insight on the spiritual mindset of our current culture. I've been a fan of Mark Matlock for a long time. Fun fact: I learned how to lead a Bible study from Mark during a breakout session at a conference I attended as a teenager. It's a very interesting thing to continue to see his ministry play out now.

What I like about the book is that it takes on the study of those in culture who are spiritually curious. In the surveys that Matlock cites in the book, we learn that a very large part of our population, whether non-practicing Christians or those who don't subscribe to a particular religion, still carry a strong mix of belief in supernaturalism and curiosity about the spiritual world. While many won't commit themselves to a single belief system, they are not closed off to it. While there is a significant part of the population that embraces naturalism (or the belief that there is no supernatural reality), that percentage pales in comparison to the amount of folks who do believe in the supernatural reality.

Another major point in the book is the reality that many who are turned off to Christianity do so because of an apparent unassailable certainty when it comes to theology and faith. Because the spiritually curious are investigative, many who reject Christianity do so because the Christianity they've interacted with does not allow for questions or discovery. The story of many is an unquestionable truth. For the spiritually curious, they must have that room to ask questions. And one very interesting data point: Matlock found that practicing Christians are more likely than those outside of the church to have a high need for closure. In their basic identity, many believers are differentiated from non-believers in a need for absolute closure of truth.

Matlock closes the book with several helpful guides for those desiring to interact with the spiritually curious. The one that I find most compelling is "It's better to know Jesus than know about him." The spiritually curious are looking for real life change and growth, not more data points. They need the room to grow and ask questions. And churches that commit to providing that room will have a wonderful field for the gospel to bear fruit. Check it out today at the ABC Library or on Amazon! (And for more of Matt's book reviews and writing, check out his substack at **www.mattgillum.substack.com**.)

CONTACT: Rita Ervin

Email **library@austinbaptistchurch.com**

or visit us online at **austinbaptistchurch.com/LIBRARY**

LIBRARY HOLIDAY HOURS

SUNDAYS - 9:45AM-11:15AM

OUR RESPONSE TO **GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**

ATTENDANCE — 11.15.2026

8:45 AM WORSHIP	591
11:15 AM WORSHIP	298
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP	686

FINANCIAL REPORT — 11.15.2026

ACCOUNT	NOV. 15, 2026	YTD
GREAT COMMISSION FUND *(GENERAL)*	$126,301.98	$4,343,636.48
DESIGNATED		$241,892.44
TOTAL GIVING	$128,221.89	$5,334,939.60

JOIN US SUNDAY FOR WORSHIP!

8:45 AM | Choir-led Worship
10:00 AM | Bible Fellowship Groups
11:15 AM | Band-led Worship

HAVE A QUESTION OR NEED PRAYER?

CONTACT US!

ABC CHURCH OFFICE

Call **512.491.9600** or visit **austinbaptistchurch.com/TEAM**

ABC PRAYER TEAM

Email Bill McGinnis at **billm@austinbaptistchurch.com**

FOR PUBLICATION CONSIDERATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Mariah Parker, Director of Communications

- **EMAIL: mariahp@austinbaptistchurch.com**
- **CALL: 512.334.8247**

Please submit articles and items for The Bridge by the Friday BEFORE publication.

7016 RIBELIN RANCH DR. AUSTIN, TX, 78750