

THE *Able*

LIFE



FALL 2019

Stories of ordinary people in the Carmel Family cultivating lives which abide in Christ to build relationships and live the Gospel with everything.

lives
poured
out

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NO GREATER GIFT

Carmel Friends and Family,

No greater gift can I give my King, than a life poured out.

This is the simple but powerful refrain of a song I recently heard - and it has stuck with me. A life poured out is a fully surrendered life. It's what we refer to around here at Carmel as an "ABLE" life - a life that:

Abides in Christ so that we can
Build relationships and
Live the gospel with
Everything

Paul wrote of the sacrificial beauty of this type of life in the book of Philippians:

*But I will rejoice even if I lose my life,
pouring it out like a liquid offering to God,
just like your faithful service is an offering to God.
And I want all of you to share that joy.
Philippians 2:17 (NLT)*

We launched *The Able Life* a year ago to highlight stories of God at work in and through the lives of those at Carmel - lives "poured out" to our King. The stories have varied, but each has reflected the hope and joy that comes only from Christ.

Read the pages that follow. Let's celebrate and be challenged by all the ways God has been, and is, at work in and through His body of Christ, that is Carmel, and His people. As Paul reminds us, there is beauty and joy when we pour out our lives for the purposes of His kingdom and His glory.

Lord, through the wonderful mystery of Your ways, may these stories encourage and challenge us in our own faith journey.

Love you Carmel,

Pastor Alex

PS. Join me on Sunday, October 13 from 5:00 - 6:30pm for a Sacred Assembly. See back page for details.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

How is God at work in your life?
Share your story with a member
of our team or email it to
communications@carmelbaptist.org.

CELEBRATING DON BOULDIN

SALT AND LIGHT EVERYWHERE



Dr. Don Bouldin accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior in 1956, at age 18. With roots in Oklahoma and Texas, he served our country as U.S. Army chaplain in Vietnam from 1967-70 and arrived at Carmel in 1976. He served as our Senior Pastor (1976-1989) and later as our Missions Pastor (2004-2012). After his "retirement" he continued to actively serve and teach at Carmel.

Many have grown to know and love Don Bouldin through those years; for how much he loved the Lord, the Bible, his family, Baylor football and strawberry ice cream with Snickers on top.

On September 2, 2019, at the age of 81, Don left earth for the place he was most excited about going - heaven. And before he left, he insisted his funeral be a "celebration." And it was! The reflections of friends and family shared about Don since his passing and the way he lived out his Christian life are powerful reminders of the beauty and impact that comes from a life fully surrendered - a life poured out for others.



Don was Papa.

Don was a father of 3, grandfather to 11 and great-grandfather to 6. To his grands, he was known as Papa.

At Don's celebration of life service, grandson Brett shared his testimony. And Don is a key part of it. He never gave up on Brett. He regularly prayed for him and asked him about his walk with the Lord. Despite growing up in the church, Brett became a believer at 24 years of age.

Papa would have me over several times a week to drink black coffee and read the Bible with him. He held my hand as I took baby steps in following Jesus and abiding in his word. Papa disciplined me and he became my best friend during that time...I am truly the fruit of Papa's life and ministry here on this earth - and I am positive I am just one story of many.

Granddaughter Ashley shared how just being "Don Bouldin's granddaughter" made her known "in the best way." And she reflected sweetly on how Don was intentional about being available to his family and all those the Lord put in his path.

Papa practiced what he preached and never made us feel like we had to hide what we were struggling with. He was relatable...he loved coffee and sports. But most importantly, he loved the Lord and he loved people. Papa never looked too hard for people to share Gods' love with - they were already there - he was just available and ready to serve and share his testimony right where the Lord put him. Papa lived to make [Jesus] known and that is how I want to live.



Don was Pastor.

Pastor Alex cherished his friendship with Don which began in 2012 when Pastor Alex stepped into the Senior Pastor role at Carmel.

I, like so many others, will be forever grateful for Pastor Don's faithful servant leadership at Carmel. He is truly a patriarch of our church family in every way. I will miss his cheerful encouragement to me as one of many Timothy's in his life. May we follow in his footsteps to love God with all of our heart, soul and mind and love people well.

Anne Goodyear and her family found Carmel 36 years ago, thanks to Don. They filled out the visitor's card and before they knew it, there Don was in their living room, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and inviting them to be part of the Carmel family.

Don was relatable and winsome, a man with a sweetness that was unassuming and real. He pursued people for Christ, with a genuine love and a desire that they know Christ. He was the most amazing man.



Don and Pat Hoover have belonged to Carmel for 50 years. And for more than 40 years Don (Hoover) has considered Don (Bouldin) one of his closest friends, but also a brother and mentor in the Lord.

Don was a mighty man of God. A friend that made me feel like I was his favorite, but I have discovered many others felt the same way! He did radical things at Carmel, like challenging parents to pray God would call their children into missions both home and abroad. God has answered those prayers in ways we never expected. He never stopped learning and reading. Transformation continued for Don in his life all the way until he died. And Don's life is a testimony that he made his life available to the Lord.

Don (Bouldin) baptized all three of the Hoover children and married two of them. Pat loves to tell this story about their son, David:

David was eight at the time. As he did each Sunday morning, Don would close worship with an altar call, inviting all to come forward and commit (or recommit) their life to Christ. David answered the altar call one Sunday. Then he answered it the following Sunday. And the following Sunday, eight Sundays in all until Don told the little fellow to keep his seat, he's already gotten plenty right with the Lord.



Oh Lord, show me ways that I can be salt and light wherever I go...and give me the courage to embody it without hesitation.



Don was Preacher.

Don was a gifted preacher. He loved to teach.

In 2 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul writes: "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

Dr. Wayne Poplin knew Don for 30 years, having followed him as Carmel's Senior Pastor (1991-2012). He was a great friend and a wonderful brother in ministry.

Don was always doing something, always busy in the good things. He gave it his all. God gifted him and he honed those gifts and he used them to bless people, to challenge them and to teach them the word of God. I thank God for the example that Don was in giving 100%...he lived his life to offer his body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. He was that trusted servant. He was the one that opened the mysteries of God's word to people.

Longtime friend and mentor Dr. Jim Henry spoke of his love and admiration for Don's faithfulness and unashamed boldness.

Christ was Don's confidence and he exhibited the resurrected Christ in his life. He taught us how to live well and how to die well.

Rev. Inman Houston met Don when he was 15 and for 30 years he has loved and admired Don. This past summer, Houston brought his son to meet Don.

I wanted my son at age 14 to see and know this man. I wanted my son to know that a life of honor, a life of faith devoted to Christ will impact people from one generation to the next. People in your own family and not in your own family... Don never wrote someone off because they did not share his faith in Christ. One of his greatest desires was that God would save his friends.

He was my teacher, my role model... He taught through his teaching and his life. Everything he did was something worth watching. I learned many lessons from Don. He could have done anything... but it was his life's mission to lead people to know and follow Jesus.

Don was a man of legacy and influence. What we surely will remember most about Don are the moments with him that changed us more into the likeness of Christ.

Christians don't say goodbye - they say so long, for a little while.

So long, for a little while, Don. We'll see you soon. In the words of your famous closing prayer,

"Lord, help us to be salt and light, wherever we go."



COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

A DIFFERENT TYPE OF BIBLE STUDY

As we join close to 100 other Charlotte area churches this fall for the "Art of Neighboring" unified sermon series, we will no doubt reflect on Mark 12:31 where Jesus commands his followers to "Love your neighbor as yourself." But living out this command is not easy and does not come naturally to us. How do we bridge the gap? By fostering open dialogue between people from different races and cultural backgrounds.



A group from Carmel recently participated in "Loving the Neighbor Who Doesn't Look Like You" - a study developed by American Bible Society. Diverse small groups gathered weekly to study scripture and talk about how God can heal racial divides. They had courageous conversations, prayed for one another and planned practical ways to love their neighbors unconditionally.

"I came into a group of people - different ages, a different race than myself - hopeful, a little guarded and a little unsure about the benefits of this exercise. As soon as we prayed and opened scripture, I was so at ease. I was with brothers and sisters in Christ. We shared stories with each other, we cried with each other, we held hands. Healing took place and it was wonderful."

- Bible Study participant



Oh Lord, help me to celebrate the differences around me by opening my heart and home to neighbors who don't look like me.

Rebecca S. was among those from Carmel who participated. Her study group included men and women spanning three generations, several ethnic backgrounds and members of two churches. The experience had such a profound impact on her perspective that she subsequently teamed up with a fellow participant from Wilson Heights Baptist Church to co-lead a group of women served by Changed Choices, one of Carmel's local ministry partners.

Here Rebecca reflects on the experience:



I can't help but think of Jesus' prayer in John 17.

"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one - as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me..."

How can we be as one if there is racism between us? Racism, it's layered and faceted.

Understanding doesn't come in one fell swoop. It's a process of learning, listening and not being in a hurry to respond, but rather sitting and really taking in another's experience. Simple comments made by one may hold deep meaning, implication, and hurt for another. One has no idea of the negative impact, unless one watches, observes, pauses, waits and questions.

I am learning that this is not something easily taught. Perhaps it might be learned, or even better, may the Holy Spirit reveal and guide them in a new way of thinking and processing words, body language, and thinking before speaking,

As we love our literal neighbor, we still may not be connecting with the neighbor who doesn't look like us. Our neighborhoods are not always heterogenous. We may have to look outside of our neighborhoods for the opportunities to build new, diverse friendships.

- Rebecca S.

BEYOND OUR EFFORTS

REFLECTIONS FROM CCS MINISTRY HEAD OF SCHOOL

Earlier this year, Dr. Jay Hancock stepped out of his long-time role as Carmel's Executive Pastor to become Head of School for our Carmel Christian School (CCS) ministry. One of his first goals was to develop a clear discipleship partnership strategy with parents that promotes excellence in education while aligning our school and Carmel ministries. Below Jay reflects on the efforts toward this goal and celebrates what only the Lord could do.

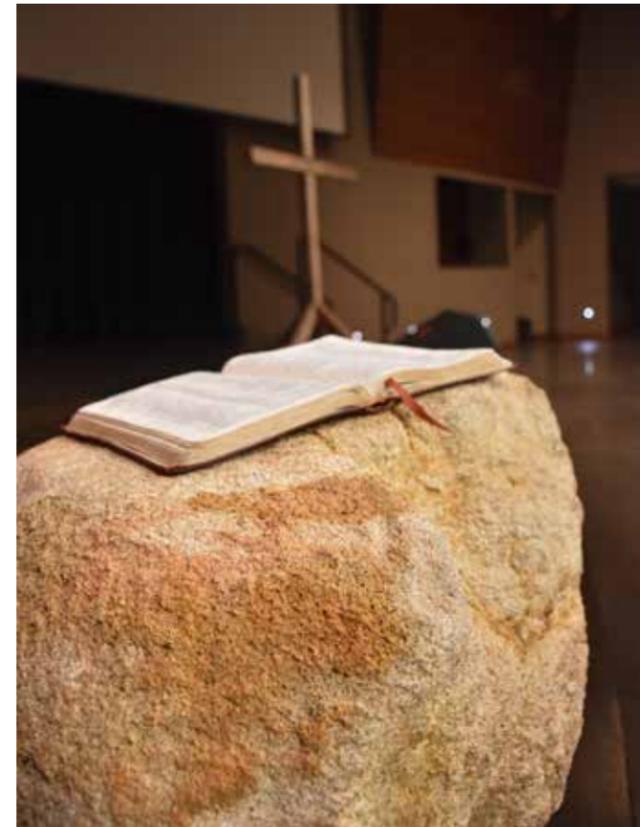
As school began this year with this new strategy in place, I was reminded that we can make plans, but God does the work of bringing new life and spiritual growth in the lives of His children. Allow me to explain.

During the last week of August, CCS middle and high schoolers attended their annual retreat at Windy Gap Camp near Asheville. Faculty and staff, along with a worship team and pastors from Carmel, Five Stones, and Central Church ministered to the students...and something special happened.

God did in one week what we could not have done in years of work.



Oh Lord, help me to be fully yielded to You... and I ask that You would do more than I could ever do!



When God moves, you know it. Every student was challenged to yield to God and give Him their hurts, fears, dreams and lives, but only the Spirit of God can make that a reality, and He did that for hundreds of students who let Him work in their lives. I am already hearing, for example, of a group of juniors who have started a weekly Bible study and another senior who has asked a faculty member to help start a weekly time of prayer with her friends.

Maybe you have been at an event like this where God's presence and power were clearly felt. There were many tears shed and many heavy conversations. One thing I have learned is that God gives us these experiences for His kingdom purposes. He is glorified in them. He is preparing us for kingdom work. He is growing us so that we can live for Him and in His will. It's not about us - it's about Him and His work.

A few weeks after our return, our high school Christian Leadership class, along with our staff, decided to place a rock on campus as a reminder that God moved at Windy Gap. I spoke at middle and high school chapels and reminded the students that God always leverages the past for the future. We will remember, but we look forward to whatever He has for us. Also, I was proud of our students who shared what God said to them at Windy Gap and who worshipped freely.

So, let's do our part, but let's ask God to do more than we could ever do. He will do it in His time and His way when we are prepared, dependent, and yielded to Him. Rest assured that Carmel's Christian School ministry is fully on board with advancing the mission of making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors, and the Nations.



NOT FORGOTTEN

THE POWER OF UNEXPECTED BLESSINGS

Summer Serve provided easy opportunities for women to participate in outreach experiences with fellow Carmel women. The fourteen Summer Serve opportunities in June, July and August ranged from making snack bags for Merry Oaks Elementary to sharing dinner and decorating cookies with clients of Changed Choices.



One Summer Serve involved flower arranging and delivery to Carmel's homebound and shut ins. Amy was among the women who gathered to create beautiful arrangements from fresh-picked flowers generously donated by a local farm.

The abundance of flowers allowed for several extra arrangements to be created. And Amy was asked to take and deliver two of these arrangements.

The Holy Spirit prompted Amy to take the first arrangement to Lucy - her elderly neighbor who cares for her wheelchair-bound husband. Amy and the flowers arrived at just the right time.

This caregiver was physically and emotionally spent after a day full of doctor's appointments. When Lucy answered the door, her first words were "How did you know? I have just had the worst day." Amy told her that the women of her church gathered to create flowers to encourage folks who may be homebound and Lucy came to her mind. Lucy was blessed by the prompting of the Holy Spirit in Amy to encourage her, not knowing she was at a low point.

Amy was prompted to take the second arrangement to a friend's recently widowed father but was not able to because he was in the hospital. Another friend's widowed mother - a Carmel member who had recently entered an assisted living home - came to mind. Just as supper was being served, Amy arrived and met Ruth as she was dining at a table with other widows. She teared up at the sight of Amy with flowers, invited her to pull up a chair and refused to eat her dinner until they had finished catching up. Ruth said "I can't tell you how much this means to me. It is so good to know I have not been forgotten."



"Delivering the flowers that day reminded me that people are hurting all around me, but I can be Jesus to show love if I am obedient to follow the Spirit's prompting. That's real community...trusting the Spirit's timing and being obedient to answer the call to help a hurting soul."

Having been widowed, Amy understands the power of being remembered and of unexpected blessings.

Sharing flowers with folks who just need an extra bit of something special to know they're loved and cared for is one of my absolute favorite things about growing flowers!

- Pressly W, Carmel member and farm owner

A STRONG SHOT

FATHER/SON DISCIPLESHIP

This past summer on Wednesday nights, Director of Men's Ministry, Jim Hughes, facilitated an intentional discipleship experience through the context of archery for a dozen father/son teams. Two fathers reflect on the experience below:

David and son Dave

This past summer, my son Dave and I were fortunate to be part of a unique father and son experience. On the surface, we learned to shoot a bow and arrow, but the experience encompassed much, much more than that. We were led on a journey that intertwined spiritual teaching with much needed bonding time.

So often, I have fallen prey to focusing on my career or my interests at the detriment of my son. This opportunity showed me how investing in him has eternal value that far outweighs anything else I can do or will do.

Through the activity of shooting a bow and arrow we supported and encouraged each other and interacted with each other on a deeper level. Sometimes it was simply helping each other to succeed in hitting the target while at other times it was through challenging questions Jim gave us each week. Learning something new together and being open and transparent with feelings is very impactful and fulfilling. Dave and I believe this to be a catalyst for continued bonding with each other and the Lord.

James and son Connor

This was such a blessing to me and my son.

In this season of life, it can be difficult to get time away from technology and other distractions to bond with your child. It was great to just be together.

We got to engage in a sport where we could learn together, talk and connect over a common interest. We enjoyed being in community with other dads and their sons. And the final challenge had us shooting for a purpose with pledges for our target hits raising donations for materials to build home wheelchair ramps through ministry partner Love Inc. We were shooting arrows for a purpose!

As our archery skills progressed and improved each week, Connor and I were reminded how we can use our God-given gifts and skills to help others within our community.



Oh Lord, help me to look for unique ways to connect with and encourage others.

INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION

THE POWER OF UNEXPECTED BLESSINGS



Throughout her life, God used Carmel member Lois Bumpus to show His love to many people around the world. She was a friend to foreign students in the US, a missionary to Thailand and the Philippines, and passionate about planting seeds of faith in the next generation.

Upon Lois' death in 2008, her husband, Bill, established the **Lois Bumpus Endowment and Scholarship** to underwrite missionary work in the US and around the globe for 16 to 26-year-olds within the Carmel family. This past year, 20 students were awarded Bumpus scholarships totaling nearly \$19,000!

Jackson F, a 16-year-old scholarship recipient who served on the Albania trip team shared this reflection:

The best part of the trip was the community and fellowship. We built relationships with [Albanian] teens at English Camp and on the last day, we shared our testimonies, making it very personal and intentional. I'm introverted and talking to people doesn't always come naturally. It was nice to get out of my comfort zone and get to know some amazing people on a deeper level.

Shelby K, a scholarship recipient who was part of our first student trip team to the Mediterranean, shared:

More than two million people - primarily Muslim refugees - have fled this Middle Eastern country to avoid homeland conflict. On this trip, God taught me how desperately the gospel is needed. He also showed me how youth in any nation are searching for their value and identity and need to find that in Christ. Together we shared about studying Scripture and walking on the path God has intended for your life. I was so blessed by this trip.

We're actively planning trips for 2020. If the Lord has put participating in a trip on your heart - regardless of your age - let us know of your interest by emailing missions@carmelbaptist.org.

Calvin Ferguson was a faithful participant in student ministry activities, professing his faith through baptism in 2017. Despite his love for the Lord, connection with his family and involvement in a variety of activities, Calvin lost his battle with depression in February 2018. Upon Calvin's death, his parents established the **Calvin Ferguson Student Camp Scholarship** to help provide camp opportunities to Carmel youth. This past summer, 33 students received scholarships to participate in summer camp and mission trips.

OUTREACH FOR EVERYONE

NEW MONTHLY MIDWEEK SERVE EXPERIENCE

We've ADDED something NEW to Midweek! Once a month this fall, we'll gather in the Worship Center after supper for an interactive experience that benefits vulnerable children in our city. We're calling it Midweek Serve. All ages will work together on a project, hear stories of God at work in our city, pray and fellowship! Don't miss it!

Midweek Serve Fall 2019

Benefiting vulnerable children in our community.



Midweek Serve will be held in the Worship Center from 6:15 - 7:30pm on the evenings below. Bring the kids - this is for all ages!

PARENTS: Childcare is available during Midweek Serve for children birth through 2's with reservation. Email Cindi Baker (cindib@carmelbaptist.org) or call 704-847-8575 x3027.

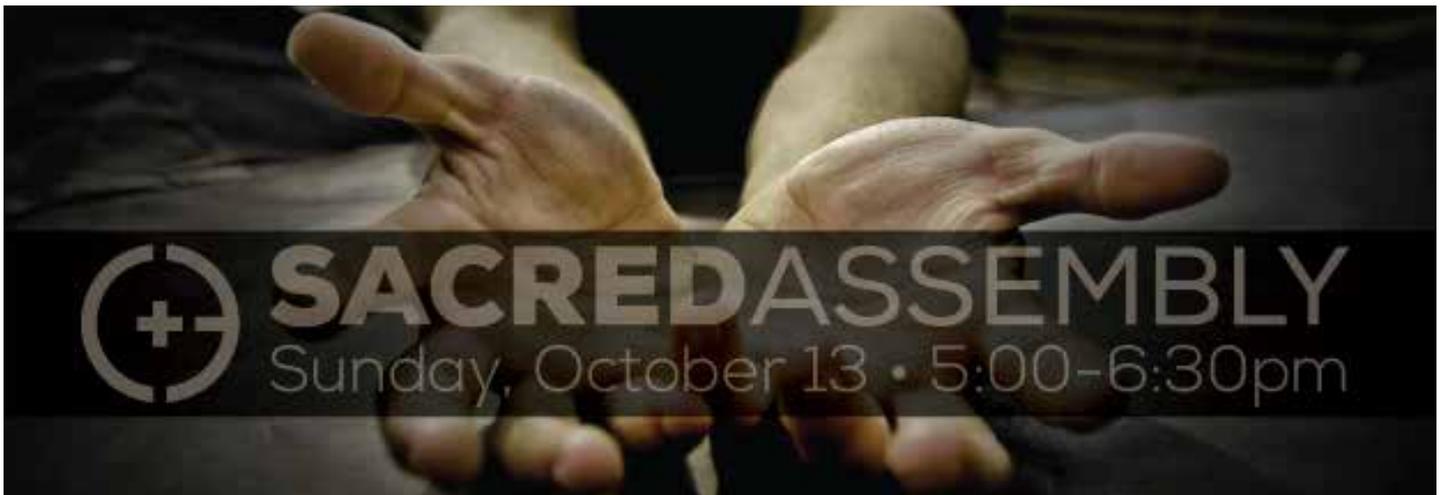
SEPTEMBER 25
School Partners

OCTOBER 23
Homelessness

NOVEMBER 20
Foster Care



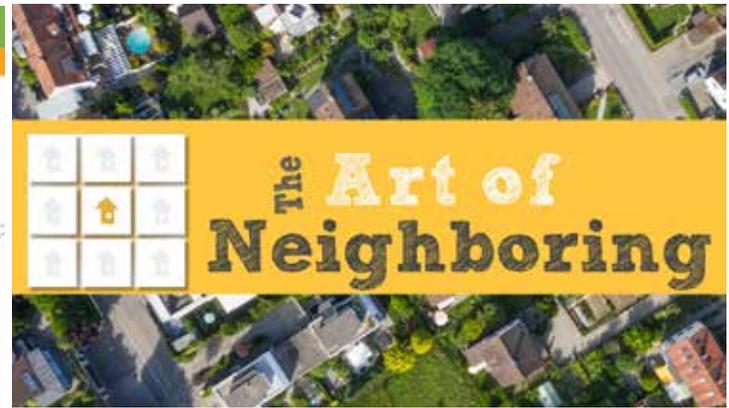
Lord, help me to have a heart and hands willing to serve.



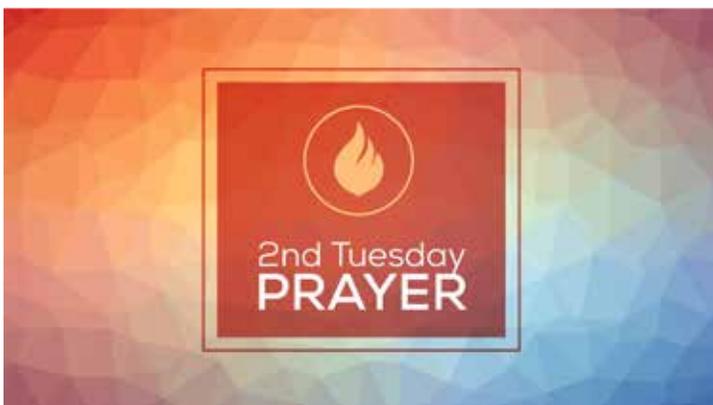
We'll gather to seek the Lord through reflection, prayer and worship.
Register for childcare (birth - 5th grade) at carmelbaptist.org/sacred-assembly.



Providing opportunities for individuals & families to build relationships with those served by our local ministry partners.



Sunday Mornings • Oct 6 / 13 / 20
We'll join 90+ for the FORCLT Unified Sermon Series.



7:00 - 8:00am • Oct 8 / Nov 12 / Dec 10
Join Pastor Alex on campus or online for this monthly prayer gathering.



Come Wednesday nights for supper and stay for Midweek activities designed to help us know and love Jesus. NEW on-campus Midweek Serve Oct 23 / Nov 20 benefiting vulnerable children.



Carmel is committed to making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors and the Nations.

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