



FBC SALINA // SEPTEMBER 2026

FBC NEWSLETTER

Spiritual Health Check: caring for the Soul

PASTOR JOEL ODONDI



Dustin Schroller and Pastor Joel Odondi

Have you ever gone to the doctor feeling “mostly fine,” only to discover that a simple checkup helped you pay attention to something important? A wellness check is not meant to frighten us or shame us. It is meant to care for us. It gives us an opportunity to ask questions, notice patterns, make adjustments, and continue living with greater health and strength. In the same way, a Spiritual Health Check invites us to pause before the Lord and lovingly ask, “How is my soul?”

Many of us understand the importance of caring for our physical health. We monitor blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, diet, sleep, and exercise because we know that what is unseen can deeply affect how we live. But our spiritual health is even more important. Scripture reminds us, “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” Proverbs 4:23. The condition of the heart matters because it shapes our faith, our relationships, our choices, and our witness.

A person can attend church, serve faithfully, and smile warmly

while quietly carrying discouragement, spiritual dryness, isolation, grief, unanswered questions, or hidden burdens. That is why a Spiritual Health Check is not a burden. It is a gift of care, encouragement, and renewal. It is an opportunity to be reminded that we do not walk with Christ alone. The Bible calls us to care for one another spiritually. Galatians 6:2 says, “*Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*” Spiritual health grows when we bring our lives before God honestly and allow trusted spiritual leaders to listen, encourage, and pray with us.

A Spiritual Health Check is a simple, prayerful conversation designed to help every member feel seen, known, cared for, and

supported in their walk with Christ. It is not a test, an interview, or a spiritual audit. It is a pastoral opportunity to listen, encourage, pray, and help each believer continue growing in faith. The heart behind this effort is that a healthy church is made up of healthy, connected members. Our goal is not simply attendance, but discipleship, connection, spiritual growth, and a deeper walk with Jesus.

Why is this important? Because life has a way of pulling at the soul. Seasons of grief, illness, busyness, job changes, family pressures, disappointment, spiritual fatigue, and personal struggles can cause a believer to slowly drift. Sometimes people do not disconnect all at once.

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Eliana Odondi and Glacier Andonie enjoy Family Day, continued on page 4

Wednesday Night Programs Return



Morganne Jones, Eliana Odondi, Owen Patrick, Myra Wood, Lily Burkenbine, Caroline Wamser enjoying wednesday night kickoff and games.



Our Wednesday Night Kids, Youth, and Adult Discipleship Programs are underway, and there is still plenty of room for you and your family to join us! Each Wednesday evening is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a meal together, build meaningful relationships, and grow deeper in your faith through age-appropriate activities, lessons, and Bible study.

Weekly Schedule

- **5:30 PM** – Fellowship Meal
- **6:00 PM** – Kids & Youth Activities
- **6:30 PM** – Adult Bible Study

Programs are available for Preschool through 12th Grade, along with discipleship opportunities for adults. Whether you have already attended or have been thinking about joining, it is never too late to get involved. Come be part of a community that is growing together in Christ. Invite a friend. Bring a neighbor. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday night!

Three Great Reasons to Gather This Fall

We have exciting news on two fronts. Our weekly Thursday Morning Bible Studies are officially resuming, and our Monday Men's Ministry is kicking off — two wonderful opportunities to grow in faith and fellowship together.

When the world feels topsy-turvy and toxic, we all need a steady place to stand. That's exactly what our Thursday study offers through Max Lucado's heart-calming "Unbreakable Courage". Walking through the life of the prophet Elijah, this study connects today's headlines to the unchanging truth of Scripture — helping you find strength, quiet your fears, and stand firm through turbulent times. You'll learn how to pray impossible prayers, wait on God in the stillness, and face daily spiritual battles with confidence. Everyone is warmly



Josephine Wood, Sophia Billinger, Eliza Billinger, Jacqueline Wood, Larry Billinger, Jessica Billinger

welcome, so bring a friend and come as you are!

Men, we've got something for you too. Every Monday, join us for a meaningful evening of worship, study, and brotherhood. We open in worship, then dig into a book study together — we're currently working through "Spiritual Leadership" by J. Oswald Sanders. Each week's reading is printed and provided, so you can jump in anytime. We close by praying for one another. We'd love to see you there.

Whether it's Thursday mornings or Monday evenings, there's a place for you to belong this season. Come be part of it!

Men's Ministry

Every Monday

Worship 6:00 PM
Study 6:30 PM
Venue: FBC Fellowship Hall

Bible Study

Every Wednesday

Time: 6:30 PM
Venue: FBC Library

Timely Thursdays

Thursdays, Sept 17 – Oct 22

Time: 10:00 AM
Venue: FBC Library
Bring your Bible and your coffee!



Together Is a Wonderful Place to Be



Zach Andonie's winning belly flop.

PASTOR JOEL ODONDI

Powerful worship, life-changing commitments, crafts, tacos, new friendships, and even a belly flop competition made our FBC Church Family Day a celebration to remember!

Our day began in the chapel as heartfelt worship lifted our spirits. Pastor Joel then shared a challenging message from Luke 15, reminding us of God's invitation to return to Him and experience the joy of being welcomed home.

Throughout the day, teamwork was everywhere. Children made crafts for our shut-ins with the support of caring adults and youth. After worship,

our church family gathered at the lake to celebrate three baptisms. We are thrilled to welcome Sophia Billinger, Zyrus Galvez, and Gabriella Schmaderer as they take this important step in their walk with Christ!

Of course, church family time also means good food and plenty of fun. A joyful team served a delicious taco meal, with youth enthusiastically lending a hand. Thank you to Kellie Thelander for bringing together such a great team!

Thoughtfully planned activities helped us build stronger relationships, while the poolside belly flop competition filled the afternoon with



Barbara Karlin playing service worship on the baby grand.



Gabriella Schmaderer baptism.



laughter. Prizes were awarded, splashes were plentiful, and Jathan did a fantastic job leading the fun.

This day showed us what can happen when God's people come together. We worship more deeply, serve more gladly, celebrate more joyfully, and grow closer as one family. Thank you to everyone who helped make Church Family Day such a meaningful and memorable occasion!



(left to right) Jed Phillips, Zach Sulsar, Konnor Phillips, Kaydence Philips enjoying family time and games with the church family. (right photo) Michael Woody making cards for our church family.



Spiritual Health Check

Continued from page 1

They drift quietly. Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us, *"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...but encouraging one another."* A Spiritual Health Check helps ensure that no one falls through the cracks and that every member has an opportunity to receive prayer, encouragement, and support from the church family. What should you expect? You can expect a warm, caring, and confidential conversation. You may be asked questions such as:

- How are you feeling connected to God and the church community?
- What has your personal time with God looked like recently?
- What have you been learning from God's Word?
- Is there a joy or struggle you would like to share?
- Is there a spiritual goal you would like to pursue?
- How can the church better support you in this season?

These questions are meant to open the door for honest reflection, not pressure. At the center of every Spiritual Health Check is prayer. Some may need comfort. Some may need help reconnecting with worship, Bible

study, service, or fellowship. Some may need encouragement to keep going. Others may simply need someone to celebrate what God is already doing in their lives. In every case, the purpose is love. The Spiritual Health Check is one way we come before the Lord together, trusting Him to restore, strengthen, guide, and renew us.

Invitation

We invite every member of the church to be part of this important season of spiritual care. Let us receive this opportunity with open hearts, humility, and faith. Just as physical wellness grows through regular attention, spiritual wellness grows when we honestly and prayerfully examine our hearts before God. Please schedule an appointment with Pastor Joel or Pastor Kevin for this all-important time of conversation and prayer. This is not just a meeting. It is a moment to be encouraged, strengthened, and reminded that you are known, loved, and cared for by God and by your church family.

May this season help us renew our love for Christ, strengthen our fellowship with one another, and become a congregation where every member is spiritually healthy, deeply connected, growing in grace, and faithfully living out the mission of Jesus.

The Miracle of Forgiveness

PASTOR KEVIN HAZELTON

On October 2, 2006, Charles Carl Roberts IV drove to the West Nickel Mines Amish School in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and committed an unthinkable act of violence. He bound and shot ten Amish girls, ages 6–13, killing five of them before taking his own life.

Nine years earlier, Roberts and his wife, Amy, had lost their first child, a baby girl who died just 20 minutes after birth. Although Roberts attended church regularly with his wife and their three children, he carried deep anger and bitterness toward God. He said in a message to his wife, "I'm angry at God and I need to punish some Christian girls to get even with him."

As horrific as Roberts' actions were, the response of the Amish community to his family was equally astonishing.

Roberts' widow and children, as well as his parents, lived in the surrounding community. They had lost a husband, father, and son too. The Amish recognized that his family was grieving, hurting, and carrying the shame and sorrow of an event over which they had no control. Within hours of the shooting, members of the Amish community went to the homes of Amy Roberts, Chuck and Terri Roberts, and other family members. They did not go seeking revenge. They went to bring food. They went to offer condolences. They went to extend forgiveness.

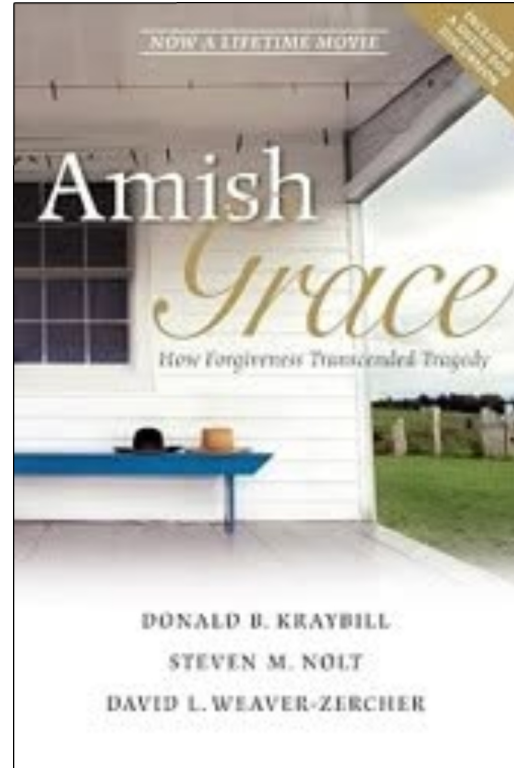
Forgiveness is a miracle

News outlets initially traveled to Nickel Mines to report on a terrible tragedy. Before long, however, they were reporting on something they found even more astonishing: the Nickel Mines miracle. The extraordinary forgiveness displayed by these Amish Christians stunned the world, the surrounding community, and even the Roberts family.

Our church library has two books that tell this remarkable story of grace and forgiveness. I highly recommend both.

"Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy" by Donald B. Kraybill, Steven M. Nolt, and David L. Weaver-Zercher offers a deeper look at the Amish response to the tragedy. Through this book, I gained a greater understanding of forgiveness, pardon, and reconciliation.

The second book is "Forgiven: The Amish School Shooting, A Mother's Love, and a Story of Remarkable Grace" by Terri Roberts,



the mother of the shooter. Terri shares firsthand accounts of the relationships her family developed with members of the Amish community, including families whose daughters were killed by her son. Her story provides a remarkable testimony of God's grace at work in the midst of unimaginable grief. The Nickel Mines story challenges us with an important question:

"What does it look like to forgive because we have been forgiven?"

We may never face a tragedy like the Amish community did. But every Christian will encounter opportunities to choose between bitterness and grace, resentment and forgiveness, revenge and mercy. The Amish response reminds us that forgiveness is not weakness. It is a powerful expression of faith. It is a gift freely given, not earned.

September Sermons

"Something's not true because it's in the Bible, it's in the Bible because it's true—true to life." What does that statement mean? It means that the Bible doesn't create truth, it reveals truth. The Bible reveals truth and it reveals the source of all truth, who is Jesus. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* John 14:6

After a sermon from Pastor Joel on Judges 11, we'll finish the month with three final sermons on godly wisdom. Using the book of Proverbs, we will discover why following the Bible truly is the best way to live life. It's best because when you align your life with the Bible, you align your life with Jesus. You align your life with the source of all truth.

Sermon Series:

Proverbs - True to Life

September 6:
Judges 11
Pastor Joel

September 13:
Proverbs 3:5-6
Pastor Kevin

September 20:
Various Proverbs
Pastor Kevin

September 27:
Proverbs 30:15b-16
Pastor Kevin



LOVE GOD | LOVE OTHERS | MAKE DISCIPLES

Your Testimony Matters

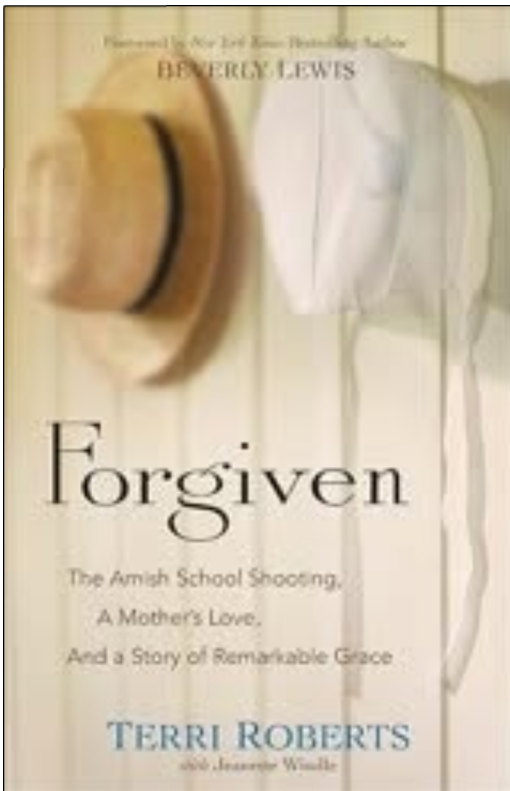
God is continually at work in our lives, and every story of His faithfulness has the power to encourage, strengthen, and inspire others. What has God done in your life recently? Has He answered a prayer, provided in a time of need, brought healing, restored hope, or guided you through a difficult season?

Your testimony is more than just a personal story. It is a powerful reminder of God's love, grace, and goodness in action. Someone in our church family may be facing a challenge today and could find renewed faith through hearing how God has worked in your life. We would love to feature testimonies from our members in our monthly church newsletter. Don't worry if you're not a writer or aren't sure where to begin. We are here to help! A member of our team will gladly walk with you through the process and help you put your story into words.

Let your experience become an encouragement to others and bring glory to God through the sharing of His wonderful works.

Interested in sharing your testimony? Talk to Pastor Joel today for more details.

"Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story..."
(Psalm 107:2)



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Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 3

Out of Touch

Sunday, September 6

Communion

Monday, September 7

Office Closed

Thursday, September 17

Bible Study Resumes at 10am

Friday-Saturday, September 25-26

Annual Gathering

Find the calendar online at : www.fbcsalina.org

Join Us in Person

Sundays

Worship at 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School at 10:30 a.m.

Praise & Growth Groups at 6 p.m.



Mondays

Men's Ministry at 6 p.m.

Thursdays

Timely Thursday at 10 a.m.

Wednesdays

Prayer Group at 9 a.m.

FBC Kids & Youth 5:30

p.m.

Adult Bible Study 6:30
p.m.

CONTACT US:

Church Office (785) 825-4643

office@fbcsalina.org

Pastor Kevin Hazelton (785) 643-6346

kevin@fbcsalina.org

Pastor Joel Odondi (785) 404-5833

joel@fbcsalina.org