

SU News

An inside view of
Scripture Union

A Common Denominator

This past summer, I had a wonderful opportunity to interact with several NFL coaches who, despite their competitiveness on the field (and on fishing trips), had one thing in common that brought them together in unity: their love of God and his Word. For nearly a decade, a group of NFL coaches from across the US gather twice a month to share and reflect on God's Word, using Scripture Union's daily Bible reading guide, *Encounter with God*.

This year, just before training camp kicked off their season, four of these coaches joined me on SU's weekly video podcast, *Encounter with God Together*. They plan to return again post-season next year, and more coaches have committed to join the lineup.

During those weeks when I spoke with the coaches, their comments echoed those of many of you I have interacted with this past year; daily engagement with God's Word is transforma-

tive and important work. Many faithful supporters and members of Scripture Union have been engaging with our resources since they were young and have continued for decades. We are grateful for their testimonies shared about the Holy Spirit's speaking, encouraging, and convicting, transforming hearts and lives as they read the Scriptures and commentaries in our guides. This is exactly what we hope for as we prepare our ministry resources: to help people meet God every day.

We've now recorded over 100 episodes of the podcast. Consider subscribing to our YouTube channel and spend some time each week with those who share their insights from their own reading and meditation.



Every blessing,

Gail A. Martin, President, Scripture Union

Matt Eberflus, Head Coach of Chicago Bears joins *Encounter with God Together*

ONLINE
Weekly Devotion and Reflection

Subscribe to our Channel, Scripture Union-USA

Love Made Visible

DISCOVERING JESUS ON THE BEACH

“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another... if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:11-12

Love is a real thing. I know because I've experienced it firsthand, year after year. Never have I seen God's love displayed so strongly and so consistently as I have at Surf City's CSSM beach mission. If I could describe those two weeks in one word, it would be “love.” I felt that this year, love was our theme: the content that was brought up in many devotions and conversations, the attitude that was shown by team members and kids alike, and the topic of the Scripture verses that were taped to the kitchen mirror in the team house... love. I saw it everywhere.

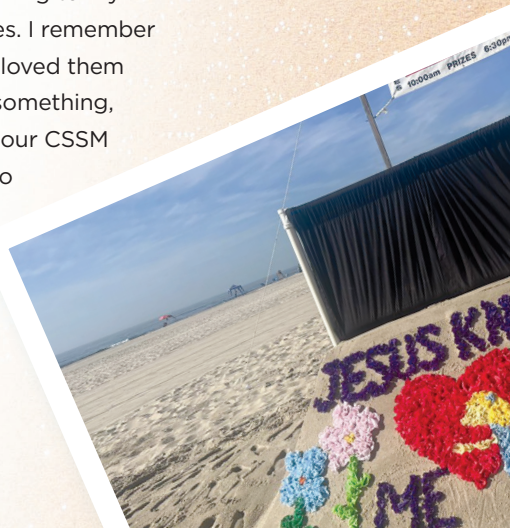
I first noticed the love from the kids toward the team when one girl made cupcakes for us and delivered them, a huge grin on her face. I could see it as kids ran down the beach in the morning, fist bumping and hugging team members left and right. At the end of the two weeks, families gave handwritten cards to the team, along with a gift to buy ice cream. I also noted the love shown to the kids when one team member bought a Bible for a child, another sat and listened to a girl day after day, talking and crying and sharing burdens together. I could see team members' love in the way they called each child by name, and in the ways they laughed and joked with them. There was also a mutual love within the team itself, seen in the unity we had, the struggles we shared, and the time we spent praying together and for each other. At the end of the second week, some of the team and family members were baptized. Friends and family came from all over just to witness this special moment. One team member explained to me afterward that, during the baptism, as she looked around, she noticed every single person was crying. I also remember watching on the last day, as everyone was leaving, a team member hugged my younger brother and said, “I love you so much!”

Even more visible was the love that Jesus showed us during those weeks. He provided beautiful weather every day so that the program could go on. He answered prayer after prayer. He was there through every individual struggle. I also witnessed the kids experience his love. At least four children were saved this summer. Jesus' love was “made complete in us.” I could hear the love each team member had for the Lord whenever they prayed. I could see it in their enthusiasm as they explained the gospel to kids on the beach. I could feel it in the testimonies they told and in their decisions to be baptized. I saw it in their tears when a few girls were saved.

In John 13, Jesus says, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another (vv. 34-35).” Our job as CSSM team members is not to press Christianity on children. It is to love those kids as Jesus loves us, to show our faith through our love, and to share Jesus' love with them. One night, I was explaining to my group of girls that Jesus died “because He loved...” and then I would insert each of their names. I remember watching as their heads snapped up and their eyes locked on my face as soon as I said Jesus loved them personally. Without love, we are nothing (1 Corinthians 13), but that night, those girls felt like something, knowing the God of the universe loved THEM. Giving them that gift, knowing we had fulfilled our CSSM purpose, made every struggle worth it. Love endures all things (1 Cor. 13:7). God's command to us is carried out in all aspects of the mission. That command, as a favorite CSSM song tells us, is “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul and mind, and all mankind. We've got Christian lives to live. We've got Jesus Christ to give. We've got nothing to hide, because it's in the way we love.”

Sophie Gauvain

Surf City Team Member 2022





Ship Bottom, New Jersey

Leader: **Ryan Baitzel**

Every morning for two weeks, together with Shorty Sherlock and Wallaby Watson, children gathered around the CSSM banner on the beach in Ship Bottom.. They were on a quest to find out “Who is Jesus?” Each evening the children rushed to their Bible Digger groups to dig deeper into the Bible story from the morning. This was followed by games and activities, including their own beach Olympics. Ship Bottom hosted the very first CSSM in the USA in 1958, and the mission has been welcomed by the Council every year since then. Many children and young people have come to faith in Christ and grown in their walk with Jesus through CSSM. We are thankful to Emergence Church, Totowa, New Jersey for their commitment to the mission.

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Virginia Beach, Virginia

Leader: **Anna Strickland**

There were shouts of joy as local children streamed from the school bus and on to the beach. Leaders greeted them with fist bumps and high fives as they settled around the beach pulpit. The children were easily recognized as they all wore orange t-shirts. The program was filled with singing, Bible story dramas, skits, quizzes, and fun activities. In response to the hot summer, a great deal of water was distributed to the children in cups and also sprayed around the children and team. The program also included a daily swim for which the local Council provided a lifeguard. The morning finished with Bible Diggers and lunch generously provided by a local Chick-fil-A®. We are grateful to Spring Branch Community Church for faithfully providing the team and support needed over many years.

Member Services Spotlight

Have you ever called or emailed Scripture Union and wondered who is answering on the other end? Meet our fantastic Member Services team; we couldn't do what we do without them!

Cindy is our veteran Member Services team member who SU has been blessed to have for 5+ years. Cindy began answering phones, updating member profiles, processing mail and handling orders, to name a few. Today she adds proofreading our Bible Guides and other mailings to her many talents that we are grateful she shares with us. When asked how she has seen SU make a positive impact, she says that almost daily, she hears from members on how the Bible Guides have impacted their walk with God. And her favorite part of SU? The relaxed work environment, caring colleagues, and that every day is different.

Tracy hasn't been with us long, but we are so glad the Lord introduced her to us! She has been a great asset as her experience, gifts, and love for Jesus align with SU perfectly. Tracy lives near to our Valley Forge, PA headquarters and loves spending summers in her garden, as well as by her pool with her husband, 3 adult children and 2 Mini Australian Shepherds. Although Tracy is not an avid reader, her one constant is the Bible, as well as Kay Arthur's, *Lord I Want to Know You*. When asked what brought her to Scripture Union, she replied that, not only did she connect with the ministry and its core values, but that, after her interviews, it was apparent that ours were people that she would really want to work with. She also shared that her favorite part of SU is seeing all the positive feedback when members, especially prisoners or long timers, write or call to say how very blessed they are by our Bible Guides.

Wanda is also new to our Member Services team. Working part time for her church and part time for SU, she is a welcome addition to our team. Wanda works diligently, processing our daily mail, and we are grateful to have her. She says that her principles and spreading the word of the Gospel align with those of Scripture Union, and her favorite part of the job is the people. In her free time, Wanda enjoys spending time with family and friends, but most especially her three grandchildren, whether it be at the beach or watching them play softball and soccer. Wanda also enjoys cooking and shared her favorite sweet potato souffle recipe (to right) just in time for Thanksgiving.

Gift a Bible Guide Membership this Christmas and Share the Joy of Daily Meditation on God's Word

What greater gift than a daily walk with God? Do you know someone who could benefit from one of our Bible Guides? Gift a Bible guide membership today! Help your friends and loved ones meet God every day in the coming New Year with *Encounter with God* or *Discovery*. Gift Membership Form insert included in this mailing for your convenience.



SWEET POTATO SOUFFLE RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

Souffle:

3 cups cooked and mashed sweet potatoes
(2 to 3 medium to large potatoes)
1 cup granulated sugar
3 eggs beaten
½ cup milk
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, about 1 stick, melted
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon salt

Topping:

1 cup packed light brown sugar
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed, at room temperature
½ cup self-rising cake flour
1 cup chopped pecans

DIRECTIONS

Souffle: Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly grease an 8-inch square baking dish. In a large bowl, combine the sweet potatoes, sugar, eggs, milk, butter, vanilla, and salt. Pour mixture into prepared baking dish.

Topping: Combine brown sugar, butter, flour, and pecans in a separate bowl. Crumble the topping over the sweet potato mixture.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until the topping is golden brown. Serve hot.



Gift Membership Testimonials

My grandparents gave me a subscription to Scripture Union at a young age, and I have been using it as my daily devotional ever since!

– S.R., Schererville, IN

My aunt, now in her late 80's, was a missionary in the 1950's-1960's. She recently told me she used SU materials while abroad and appreciated them so much. Some time in recent years she reconnected with Scripture Union, then last year, gave subscriptions to all her nieces and nephews. I've appreciated this devotional guide! May God bless you all, and your many avenues of outreach for Christ and the Gospel.

– N.D., Fort Wayne, IN

I was first introduced to SU within about 6 months after moving to London nearly 27 years ago. I have used EWG ever since and given as Christmas gifts to family and friends. I'm so grateful to have SU available every day—like my morning coffee! Thank you.

– S.S., Naples, FL