



Spring 2026

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.
—Ephesians 5:25



Our January 31 Super Bowl men's breakfast was our most attended ever, with 112 men who came for fellowship, food, and a message from scripture.

Pastor Eric Schumacher scored the winning points in his 1 Samuel message.



He said each of us should ask ourselves three questions: (1) What am I training for? (2) Where am I cutting corners spiritually? (3) What's one spiritual habit God is inviting me to take seriously?

Eric spoke of how God preparing King David as a shepherd for the challenge of —cont'd on page 2

How's your marriage? —by Keith Cook

If it's smooth sailing, praise God for that blessing. But if you're like many of us, there are rough patches—arguments that sting, feelings of disrespect or being unappreciated, maybe even the cold shoulder creeping in. In those moments, it's easy to wonder why things feel off, especially when we know God designed marriage for our good. The truth is, Jesus warned us in John 16:33 that "in this world you will have trouble." The real question isn't if marital struggles hit, but how we handle them as men of faith.



Too often, we approach marriage through a worldly lens, treating it like a contract. You know the drill: it's a deal where each spouse gives something and expects something back. We keep mental scorecards—did she meet my needs for respect? Did I get the affection I deserve? When the tally doesn't add up, resentment builds, conflicts erupt, and divorce starts looking like an escape clause. That's the transactional trap, and it's no way to build a lasting union. It turns love into a negotiation, leaving both sides feeling shortchanged.

But God calls us to something deeper—a covenant. On your wedding day, you didn't just promise your bride before family and friends; you vowed before God Himself. —cont'd on pg 3

Men's Breakfast Roundup

—cont'd from page 1

facing Goliath models for us the importance of discipline and preparation in our daily life to face our battles. "The battles everyone sees" he concluded, "are shaped by the habits no one sees."



Our next men's breakfast is Saturday, June 13 from 8-9:45 A.M. Join us for encouragement, fellowship, and a delicious breakfast. You can sign up for the June 13 men's breakfast on the Sunday service communication card, in the mobile app, or at <http://www.laurelridgechurch.org/men>.



Breakfast volunteers needed

We always need a few good men to cook the meal and set up tables. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Dan Mathisen at (209) 612-5028 or at mathisen.dan@gmail.com. †

Study the Bible on YouVersion

Staying in the Word in our often hectic lives is important. One way to do that is to study the Bible with others. The YouVersion app lets us study individually and discuss together. Download the app at: <https://www.bible.com/>. The site contains numerous Bible studies, videos, and reading plans. Dan Mathisen is starting *The Joy In Falling* study. Friend-request him through the app to join the study or contact him at mathisen.dan@gmail.com for details. †

Prayer Warriors Needed

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. —James 5:16

The Prayer Partners team has an opening for anyone with a heart to pray for others. Our teams meet with petitioners for a few minutes after each service to request God's healing, peace and direction for them and their loved ones. For more information, text Keith Cook at 925-768-2333. †

How's your marriage? —cont'd from page 1

Marriage isn't a business agreement; it's a sacred bond that includes God as the third strand, making it unbreakable (Ecclesiastes 4:12). As men, we're charged with the weighty role of leadership. Ephesians 5:23 tells us to be the head of our wives as Christ is the head of the church. That means we're accountable first for the health of our home. It's not about lording over her, but loving her sacrificially, just as Ephesians 5:25-33 lays out: *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*

Think about that. Christ's love wasn't conditional on the church's performance; it was total surrender, even to the cross. We're called to mirror that—putting her needs first, cherishing her, and nourishing the relationship even when it's tough. Colossians 3:19 drives it home: *Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.* No room for bitterness or sharp words there. And don't overlook 1 Peter 3:7: *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.* Those last words are a wake-up call—if we're not honoring our wives, our prayers hit a wall. God takes this seriously because how we treat her reflects our walk with Him.

So, what does this look like in the trenches? When tensions rise, don't rush to fix it your way, turning a spark into a fire. Instead, pause and seek God's wisdom. Start with self-examination: Am I leading with humility? King David shows us the heart God honors in Psalm 51:16-17: *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God,*

will not despise. Come to Him broken, repent of any harshness, and ask for strength to love as He does.

Focus on God's blessings, too—your problems shrink when you zoom out to see His faithfulness. Remember Proverbs 5:18-19: *May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love.* God wants joy in your covenant, not just endurance. Pursue that by praying together, studying Scripture as a couple, and seeking wise counsel from brothers in the church if needed.

Our Father in heaven is ready to meet every need in your marriage if we trust His wisdom and involve him in decisions about our struggles. Let's step up, lead with covenant love, and watch God transform our homes. Let's build marriages that glorify Him this spring and beyond. †



Jesus often referred to Himself as the Son of Man. Who else in the Bible was addressed with that name? I can't cite a verse without giving away the answer, so search your Bible app or concordance if you want to know.

Laurel Ridge Men's Community Groups

The groups below are open to men looking for devotion, prayer and fellowship. To join a group, browse to laurelridgechurch.org/community-groups, click the **Sign Up** button and fill-in the form. For more information, contact the group leaders.

Tuesday Evenings

Time: 6:00 PM
Place: Room 201 at church or online via Zoom
Host: Dennis Ouka
(925) 584-6618
denouka@sbcglobal.net



Monday Mornings

Time: 9:00 AM
Place: Bergeron home in Brentwood
Host: Skip Bergeron
(925) 522-9393
skip_3@comcast.net



Thursday Mornings

Time: 6:30 AM
Place: Online via YouVersion
Host: Dan Mathisen
(209) 612-5028
mathisen.dan@gmail.com



Monday Evenings

Young Men's Group, 18-30
Time: 6:00 PM
Place: Room 201 at church
Host: Lorenzo Guerrero
(925) 864-1835
lorenzo.guerrero4824@gmail.com



Friday Evenings

(Starting April 24)
Time: 6:00 PM
Place: Room 201 at LRCC
Hosts: Andrew Easton
(925) 765-4322
aceaston@ari247.com



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