

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

May 9, 2026 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 8:09

Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. Dave Havir

Presentation study—2:00 Dave Havir
(also transmitted live)

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Neil McIver

Pianist Dixon Cartwright

Scripture reading Joshua 1:1–9

Sermon Terry McAdams

Quick takes

1. Annual board-nomination process—The annual election for the board of the Church of God Big Sandy begins today. (The nomination portion of the process occurs for four weeks in May, and the election occurs in June.)
2. Dominoes tomorrow—Interested participants should contact Sue Jones.
3. Wednesday-night Bible study—May 13 at 7:00.
4. Edifying the Body—This week’s article is “The First Voice a Child Hears” by Kevin McCullough.
5. Among Friends—This week’s article is “1 Thessalonians 4:1-18” by Dave Havir.
6. Eye on the World—The project was not complete at the bulletin deadline.

Prayer updates

In the April 11 bulletin, we gave an update about **Meghan Searer**. Since then, we have learned that she went to **Mark’s** and **Nina’s** home on Sunday, April 19. She started physical therapy at the home. She continues to get stronger. She has gained back some of the weight and muscle she had lost. The family is expecting steady progress. (Family members reported that they are using the time she is spending with her parents to make unrelated upgrades on her house.) The family greatly appreciates your prayer support.

In the April 2 bulletin, we mentioned that **Brenda Marks** had a procedure to deal with her back problems. On April 15, she had shots in her back to get some relief. On April 29, she had her nerves “burned.” She is scheduled to have her nerves burned again on May 13.

In the April 11 bulletin, we reported that **Dave McLearn’s** back pain was improving. Yesterday, he reported that the gout pain was also gone.

New prayer requests

On Tuesday, **Janet Gordon** (who lives in a Michigan nursing home near her daughter, **Kim Snyder**) fell and had successful surgery for a partial hip replacement (the ball on the upper femur). The surgery was successful.

Kathy Murray (of Gladewater) died on May 4. Please remember her family in your prayers.

“The First Voice a Child Hears”

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of May 9, 2026. (A version was posted at townhall.com on May 5.)

By **Kevin McCullough**

NEW YORK, N.Y.—Before a child ever learns to read, before he or she understands rules or consequences, before he or she can even form a complete sentence, there is a voice.

Soft. Familiar. Repeated. Mom.

It’s the first voice most of us ever know. And, long before we have the ability to remember it, that voice is already doing something extraordinary—it’s shaping how we experience the world. Not metaphorically. Literally.

Neuroscience has been catching up to something families have always known. In those earliest months and years, a child’s brain is developing at a pace that will never be matched again. Millions of neural connections form every second. Pathways are being built that will determine how that child processes emotion, language, trust and even stress.

And at the center of that process—consistently, predictably—is the mother.

Her voice regulates a newborn’s heartbeat. Her presence lowers stress responses. Her responsiveness teaches a child whether the world is safe or unpredictable.

This isn’t sentimental language. It’s biology.

Researchers studying attachment have found that when a mother responds consistently—picking up a crying infant, making eye contact, speaking in that instinctive, melodic tone we all recognize—the child’s brain begins to organize itself around security.

That becomes the baseline. From there, everything else builds.

Language develops faster when a child is spoken to frequently and directly—especially by the mother. Vocabulary, comprehension, even future reading ability are tied to those early verbal interactions. It’s not just what is said—it’s the rhythm, the tone, the repetition.

It’s the relationship. And, if that sounds clinical, it isn’t. It’s deeply personal. Because behind every study is a reality most of us have lived.

■ A child falling asleep to the same voice every night.

■ A scraped knee soothed not just by words, but by who is speaking them.

■ A moment of fear quieted simply because Mom is there.

That presence does more than comfort. It defines.

It tells a child, without ever saying it out loud.

- You matter.
- You are safe.
- You are not alone.

And those messages—delivered a thousand times in a thousand small moments—become part of who that child is.

This is where identity begins.

- Not in a classroom.
- Not on a screen.
- Not from a peer group.
- But in the earliest relationship a child knows.

And it's why the role of a mother in those years cannot be casually replaced or outsourced without consequence.

When that bond is strong, children tend to grow into stability.

- They handle stress better.
- They form healthier relationships.
- They navigate the world with a baseline confidence (not to be manufactured later).

When it's fractured—or missing entirely—the effects show up just as clearly.

- Higher anxiety.
 - Difficulty forming attachments.
 - Struggles with trust.
 - A constant sense that something foundational is off, even if they can't explain why.
- This isn't about assigning blame.
- Life happens.
 - Circumstances vary.
 - No two families are identical.
 - But patterns are patterns.
 - And the pattern here is unmistakable.

The first voice a child hears matters. More than we've been willing to admit.

I think about that when I look back on my own life. I don't remember the first words my mom ever said to me. None of us does. But I remember the feeling of her presence. I remember what it felt like to come home and know she was there. To hear her voice and immediately feel the world settle into something understandable.

When she stepped in to teach me at home—when she took responsibility for my education in a way that wasn't common at the time—it wasn't just about academics.

It was about formation. It was about reinforcing something she had already been build-

ing from the beginning: that I was seen, that I was capable, that I wasn't going to be left to figure things out alone.

And, when I lost her at 17, I didn't lose that foundation. Because, by then, it was already part of me.

That's what a mother's voice does. It stays.

- Long after the house is quiet.
- Long after the routines change.
- Long after, in some cases, she's no longer physically here.

We carry it. In how we speak to others. In how we handle pressure. In the internal dialogue that kicks in when things get hard.

That voice becomes a reference point. A compass. And, from a Christian worldview, none of this is surprising.

Scripture has always pointed to the importance of early instruction, of guidance rooted in relationship. "Train up a child in the way he should go . . ." isn't just about discipline—it's about formation in the earliest, most impressionable years. And who is most often doing that training?

Mom.

Not alone, of course.

- Fathers matter deeply.
- Family matters collectively.

But there is something uniquely powerful about the role a mother plays in those first interactions with life itself. She is, quite literally, the introduction to the world. Which makes what we do with that role—as individuals and as a culture—far more important than we tend to admit. Because, if we get those early years right, a lot of what comes later becomes easier. And, if we get them wrong, we spend decades trying to repair what should have been built from the beginning.

That's not hyperbole. That's reality.

So, when we talk about mothers this week, we're not talking about sentiment. We're talking about influence. The kind that doesn't make headlines, doesn't trend, doesn't get measured in quarterly reports—but quietly shapes everything that follows.

It starts with a voice.

- Simple
- Familiar
- Consistent

And, if that voice is steady, loving, and present, it echoes for a lifetime.

“1 Thessalonians 4:1–18”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of May 9, 2026.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued a series about 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The title of the presentation was “1 Thessalonians 4:1-18.

Father and Son

Let’s take a brief glimpse at chapter 3.

■ 1 Thessalonians 3:11—“May our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way to you.”

■ 1 Thessalonians 3:12—“May the Lord make you increase in love to one another and to all.”

■ 1 Thessalonians 3:13—“So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness, before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”

Remember the instructions

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:1—Walk to please God.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:2—Paul said: “Remember the commandments (instructions) we gave you through the Lord Jesus.”

God wants sanctification

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6, Paul reminded them about principles of holiness.

■ Abstain from sexual immorality.

■ Possess your own vessel in sanctification and honor.

■ Avoid the passion of lust.

■ Do not take advantage of another person in this matter.

Called to holiness

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:7—God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:8—People who reject holiness are not rejecting people, but are rejecting God (who gave us His Holy Spirit).

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:9—God taught us to love one another.

Targeted behavior

In Thessalonians 4:10-12, Paul taught them to aspire to specific behavior.

■ Lead a quiet life.

■ Mind your own business.

■ Work with your hands.

■ Walk properly toward those outside the faith.

‘Fallen asleep’

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:13—Paul reminded the brethren that there is a tremendous hope associated with falling asleep (death).

■ 1 Corinthians 15:6—After Christ had risen, most of the people who saw Him were still alive, but some had fallen asleep (died).

■ 1 Corinthians 15:12-18—If Christ is not risen, then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

■ 1 Corinthians 15:51—Paul said: “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”

■ 1 Corinthians 15:52—Paul said: “The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

■ Revelation 8:1-2—The seventh seal involves seven trumpets.

■ Revelation 11:15-19—At the seventh trumpet, “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ—and He shall reign forever and ever!”

■ Revelation 20:5-6—John spoke about the first resurrection.

Very positive message

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:13—Although death brings understandable sorrow, we should not sorrow as others who have no hope.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:14—If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:15—Those who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who are asleep (have died).

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:16—The Lord will descend from heaven with the trumpet, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:17—Then those who are alive will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

■ 1 Thessalonians 4:18—“Comfort one another with these words.”