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The Connection

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF LIFESPRING CHRISTIAN CHURCH

North College Hill Is Not a Lost Cause

By Tim Dunn, Lead Pastor
As printed in the Cincinnati Enquirer on July 6, 2026

North College Hill has been in the headlines lately for reasons that break our hearts.

FOX19 reported: "18-year-old woman killed, another person hospitalized in North College Hill shooting." [1] Spectrum News and the Associated Press reported on gunfire outside a North College Hill High School football game that injured a student-athlete and prompted a stadium evacuation. [2] WLWT reported on new security rules at North College Hill football games after shooting incidents the previous season. [3] WCPO reported that North College Hill police were addressing a series of fights involving juveniles and adults. [4] WCPO also reported that students were facing consequences after a student walkout led to "riotous behavior" at the North College Hill Kroger. [5]

Those are not just headlines to us.

They are places we drive past. They are schools our students attend. They are streets where families live. They are young people we coach, teach, mentor, pray for, and love.

Most recently, an 18-year-old woman was killed in North College Hill, and another person was injured. That kind of news is hard to process from a distance. It is even harder when it happens near people and places you know personally.

I will be honest. It gets heavy.

It is hard enough to be a pastor, father, husband, coach, neighbor, and friend in normal circumstances. But when violence, fear, unrest, and grief keep showing up in the community you love, it can feel like you are constantly fighting an uphill battle.

But I want to say something clearly: North College Hill is not a lost cause.

Neither are the surrounding communities that have carried more pain than most people realize. These communities are not throwaway places. They are not beyond rescue. They are not worth less than any other neighborhood.

Most people here want what people everywhere want. They want to live in peace. They want to raise their children. They want to go to work, pay their bills, sit on the porch, coach a team, watch their kids grow up, and live some version of the American Dream.

They want normal.

But when violence keeps showing up, it is easy to grow numb.

It is easy to shake our heads, scroll past another headline, complain about "kids these days," and wait for the next terrible thing to happen.

We can't afford to do that.

So what do we do?

We pray, yes. Absolutely, we pray. We need prayer warriors who still believe God sees our streets, our schools, our families, our churches, and our young people. Prayer is not doing nothing. Prayer is where we start. ***(cont'd on page 2)***

North College Hill Is Not a Lost Cause (cont'd)

But we cannot stop there.
We also have to take love to the streets.
We show up. We speak hope. We share positivity. We refuse to let fear have the final word. We build relationships before tragedy strikes. We love our neighbors, not as a slogan, not as a social media post, but as a way of life.
And we are not going anywhere.
Every week, we open our doors for students in 6th through 12th grade to come hang out, play basketball, play games, eat some food, and simply have a safe place to be.
And here is what we see: these kids are not problems to be managed.
They are young people with names, stories, gifts, pain, questions, and potential.
Many of them want something more out of life. They want to be seen. They want to be encouraged. They want a place where someone believes they are capable of more than what they may see around them.
We have to show them there is more to live for.
They can dream. They are worthy of good, productive, meaningful lives. They can become leaders, parents, business owners, teachers, coaches, builders, pastors, artists, public servants, and peacemakers.
But that will not happen by accident.
It will take all of us.
Our young people need safe places to go after school and in the evening. They need adults who will learn their names and keep showing up. They need meals, transportation, mentorship, tutoring, counseling, job opportunities, conflict-resolution training, and a community willing to remove obstacles instead of simply pointing them out.
So here are some specific ways we can begin.
We need churches, schools, businesses, city leaders, police officers, parents, grandparents, coaches, and neighbors working together around a shared goal: give our students a safer, stronger path forward.
We need volunteers who can help create safe spaces for teens throughout the week.
We need mentors who can meet with students, encourage them, listen to them, and help them make wise decisions.
We need business owners and tradespeople willing to expose students to jobs, apprenticeships, work ethic, budgeting, and a picture of what a productive future can look like.
We need people willing to provide meals, snacks, equipment, and transportation so students are not kept away from positive opportunities because they lack basic support.
We need counselors, social workers, pastors, and trained community members who can help students process grief, trauma, anger, anxiety, and conflict.
We need adults willing to walk neighborhoods, pray over streets, encourage families, and build trust before crisis comes.
We need stronger partnerships between churches and schools, so teachers and administrators do not feel like they are carrying this alone.
We need parents and guardians supported, not shamed. Many are exhausted. Many are doing the best they can. Many need community around them too.
And we need all of us to stop sharing only the negative stories. ***(cont'd on page 3)***

North College Hill Is Not a Lost Cause (cont'd)

Yes, we have to tell the truth about violence. We cannot ignore it. We cannot pretend everything is fine when families are grieving and young people are hurting.

But we also need to tell the truth about the goodness that still exists here.

There are good families in North College Hill.

There are good teachers. There are good coaches. There are good police officers. There are good churches. There are good students. There are good neighbors who care deeply and quietly serve every day.

The worst headlines do not get to define the whole community.

As a pastor, a father, a husband, and a coach, I will be honest: this is hard. It is hard to watch so much pain. It is hard to carry concern for your family, your church, your team, and your community all at the same time.

But hard does not mean hopeless.

The gospel teaches me that broken things can be restored. It teaches me that light still shines in darkness. It teaches me that love moves toward pain, not away from it.

That is the kind of love our community needs right now.

Not distant love. Not judgmental love. Not political talking-point love. Real love.

Love that prays. Love that shows up. Love that protects. Love that serves.

Love that tells a young person, "You matter. Your life matters. Your future matters. And we are not giving up on you."

North College Hill is not a lost cause.

It is a community worth loving, worth serving, worth fighting for, and worth believing in.

At LifeSpring, we will keep opening our doors. We will keep serving families. We will keep loving students. We will keep reaching out one family at a time, one student at a time, one neighbor at a time.

But we cannot do it alone.

If you love this community, now is the time to step forward.

Pray. Volunteer. Mentor. Give. Encourage. Partner. Show up.

The next headline does not have to be another tragedy.

By God's grace, it can be a story of a community that refused to give up on its children.

LifeSpring Christian Church has deep roots in this area. Our church began in 1931 as Chase Avenue Church of Christ in Northside. In 1969, the church relocated to North College Hill and became Clovernook Christian Church. In 2004, the name was changed to LifeSpring Christian Church.

We are a non-denominational church and part of a loose-knit fellowship of churches known as Christian Churches or Churches of Christ. There is no hierarchy beyond the local congregation. In other words, we are a local church trying to faithfully serve the local community God has placed us in.

References

[1] FOX19, "18-year-old woman killed, another person hospitalized in North College Hill shooting," published June 22, 2026. [2] Spectrum News 1 / Associated Press, "North College Hill High School football game evacuated," published September 21, 2024. [3] WLWT, "New security rules at North College Hill football games after shooting incidents last season," published August 22, 2025. [4] WCPO, "North College Hill police 'addressing' series of fights involving juveniles, adults," published April 17, 2026. [5] WCPO, "North College Hill Schools, police working together to ID students involved in 'riotous behavior,'" published February 2026.

IMPACT UPDATE



Bob and Amy Carter
South/Southeast Asia & Jerusalem

LifeSpring has partnered with Bob & Amy since 1984. Through the years, they have lived and done Bible translation and training projects in Germany, Israel, Pakistan, and the Solomon Islands.

In addition to training and coaching translation teams, Bob serves as an instructor and mentoring consultant for Bible translators from 6 of the world's 7 continents, originating from 45 different countries. Their Bible translation effort is directly associated with Seed Company and also associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators and SIL Global.

Bob & Amy have a special passion for the people, culture and history of Israel, which gets expressed in teaching and training Hebrew and Old Testament translation. For the past 20 years, Bob has had the opportunity to lead classes at the Jerusalem Center for Bible Translators and was called to become JCBT's Executive Director starting in April 2023.

The Carters continue to work with language groups in countries that are not open to Christianity and God's Word being made available to the people. For this reason, the details of the people and locations where they work can't be shared on websites or through social media.

Prayer Requests for the Carters:

- For continued progress on the 30 translation projects currently underway in one country where they work. For the successful conclusion of the complete Bible for the "Imola" speakers in this country in ~2 years.
- For the 7 translator trainees from India currently enrolled at JCBT to be able to complete their training and bring the Bible to their people-groups in their heart-language within the next decade.
- For spiritual, mental, and physical endurance for Bob and Amy as well as the translator teams.
- Peace to come to Israel so the students planning to study at Jerusalem Center for Bible Translation can travel there to benefit from seeing the actual locations of the texts they'll be translating in the future.
- For safe travel and a time of renewal and refreshment as Bob & Amy host four of their kids and twelve grandchildren in their home in North Carolina this month.
- Wisdom for Bob in deciding if this is the year to get his left knee replaced (his right knee replacement last year was a solid success).

Want to know more info about our Global Partners?
Scan the Q.R. code or visit www.lifespringchristian.org

IMPACT OPPORTUNITY



International Friendships, Inc. (IFI)

(Global/Cincinnati)
Focus: To extend life-changing hospitality and friendship to international students out of reverence for Jesus



Join International Friendships, Inc. (IFI) Cincinnati for Fueling Friendships, our annual summer fundraiser celebrating the power of cross-cultural connection.

Enjoy an evening of great food, fun raffles & auctions, and community at Fueled Collective at Rookwood. Talk with internationals who have been impacted by IFI Cincy. Your ticket supports IFI's mission of extending life-changing hospitality and friendships to international students out of reverence for Jesus. Tickets are $20.

To learn more and to RSVP, go to https://givebutter.com/c/fueling-friendships-dtemv4

FAMILY NEWS

MASTER OF THE GRILL

The grills worked overtime, the steaks disappeared quickly, and nobody left hungry.
About 20 men gathered at the Hutchins' home for Master of the Grill, where the menu included steaks, burgers, brats, and enough protein to keep everyone full for days.
The best part wasn't just the food—it was the conversations. Old friendships picked up where they left off, new ones were formed, and plenty of laughs were shared along the way.
To top it all off, several guys cooled off with a post-dinner swim, proving that "Master of the Grill" can also include a cannonball or two.
Thanks to the Hutchins family for opening their home and to everyone who came out. Good food is great—but it's even better when it's shared with good people.
**No steaks were overcooked... at least none that we're admitting to.





Upcoming Events:

August

8/2 - Move Up Sunday (Children's Ministry)
8/6 - Weekly Prayer Gathering (Thursday Mornings)
8/6 - Blacktop Thursdays (Last one for summer, Stud Min)
8/15 - **ALL IN EVENT-The End of Summer Bash**

GENEROSITY REPORT:
Financial Update (thru May)

YTD Budget:
$542,435

YTD Actual Giving:
$523,375

Difference:
-$19,060

IN SYMPATHY:
To Connie and Paul Bittner and their family on the death of Connie's father, James Henry, on 6/28.
To Janene and Azar Nader on the death of Janene's mother, Aleene Hunsinger, on 6/26.
To the family and friends of Sharon Phelps on her death on 7/3.
To Samantha Snyder and Cameron Forrer on the death of Samantha's daughter, Annabelle Acheampong, on 7/14.

Go to lifespringchristian.org for more information on upcoming events & more!