



Thornwell
BUILDING TOMORROW'S FAMILIES

Emphasis Month

Minutes for Mission

ROOTED IN FAITH

Sharing a Minute for Mission during a worship service is a meaningful way to highlight the importance of Emphasis Month and show how your church's generosity is changing lives. Here are a few great options for who might lead this moment:

- A church member who lived or worked at Thornwell
- A church member who has a family connection to Thornwell
- A Mission Committee member
- A Pastor
- A Thornwell board member or employee

If you would like to inquire about a Thornwell representative sharing a Minute for Mission at your church, please contact Rebecca at **864.923.2552** or **RCox@thornwell.org**

150 Years of Thornwell Minutes for Mission

Good morning!

Each November, we take time to lift up one of our ministry partners, Thornwell.

[Feel free to include your churches connections and history with Thornwell]

For generations, churches like ours have stood alongside Thornwell in their mission to serve children and families with Christ-centered care.

This year is especially significant as just last month, Thornwell celebrated 150 years of ministry and 150 years of answering God's call to bring hope and healing where it's needed most. As we begin **Thornwell Emphasis Month**, we'll be sharing stories that reflect the deep roots of this legacy starting with how it all began.

In 1 Samuel 3, we read the story of a young boy serving in the temple under Eli. One night, Samuel hears a voice calling his name. At first, he was confused. Samuel thinks it's Eli, but soon, Eli realizes what is happening. It was the Lord calling Samuel.

The next time Samuel hears his name, he answers, *"Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."* It's a turning point not only in Samuel's life, but in the life of Israel because he listened and acted on God's call.

That same faithfulness echoes through Thornwell's story.

Soon after the Civil War, a young Presbyterian

minister named Dr. William Plumer Jacobs heard God's call to care for children left orphaned and alone. In Clinton, South Carolina, with few resources and only his faith to guide him, Dr. Jacobs responded like Samuel. In his diary, he prayed: *"Oh my God, help me about the Orphans' Asylum and show me what to do."*

Just 3 years later, a legacy began.

For 150 years, God has provided. Bread showed up when there was none. Donors and church families rallied when the needs were great. And, one of the most beloved traditions, the turkey coin holders, emerged to teach generations of children about giving with compassion during Emphasis Month.

Today, Thornwell continues to live out Dr. Jacobs' vision, serving as a place of healing, hope, and transformation for children and families. While it is no longer an orphanage, Thornwell has faithfully adapted, meeting the changing needs of our communities. Through the continuum of care counseling, educational support, life skills training, and parenting resources, Thornwell equips families with the tools they need to thrive while always grounded in love that reflects the heart of Christ. Your support keeps this legacy alive.

Like Samuel, and like Dr. Jacobs, we are called to listen for God's voice and respond with faith. Whether through prayer, giving, or sharing Thornwell's story, you are part of this legacy rooted in faithfulness.

Thank you.

Good morning!

As we begin Thornwell Emphasis Month, we celebrate the ways your generosity is helping children and families. This year's theme, Rooted in Faith, reminds us that when we are planted in God's love, we can endure, heal, and flourish.

Let me share a powerful story with you.

By the time they were teenagers, twin sisters Kisha and Tanisha had endured years of abuse and neglect. Their lives were spiraling, grades slipping, relationships broken, and they found themselves in constant conflict. They were eventually expelled during their senior year of high school.

But then they came to Thornwell.

Like the wounded man in the story of the Good Samaritan, these girls were passed by until someone stopped. You stopped. Your support made it possible for them to be seen, cared for, and restored.

Because of YOUR choice to support Thornwell, Kisha and Tanisha were matched with tutors and therapists who walked with them through healing. Both sisters earned their high school diplomas and are now in college building futures they once thought were out of reach.

That's what happens when we "go and do likewise" by choosing love, compassion, and action.

This month, as we remain Rooted in Faith together, we invite you to give generously, pray boldly, and continue being a neighbor to children and families in need.



**Thank you for helping children and families grow strong,
rooted in love, and full of hope.**

CONTINUE TO WEEK 2 >>

Good morning!

As we continue through Thornwell Emphasis Month, we give thanks for how God is working through churches like ours to help families thrive. Our theme this year is *Rooted in Faith*, and this week we focus on how that faith takes root in the heart of the family through restoration, guidance, and love.

In the book of Ruth, we see a story of deep family commitment and resilience. After loss and uncertainty, Naomi and Ruth rebuild their lives together, learning to trust God's provision as they find hope and healing in a new chapter. Their story reminds us that family, biological or chosen, can be a powerful place where love takes root and redemption begins.

Let me tell you about Lekeisha, a single mom of three, whose story reflects that same spirit of courage and restoration.

Before enrolling in Thornwell's Strengthening Families program, Lekeisha felt overwhelmed. Her children were struggling in school and constantly demanding. She deeply loved them, but guilt and exhaustion led her to say "yes" to keep the peace.

What her family needed most wasn't more things, it was her presence, structure, and confidence.

Through a 14-week journey with Strengthening Families, Lekeisha learned how to lead with both love and boundaries. Today, her home is filled with peace, laughter, and "I love you's." Her children are thriving in school and at home, all three are now on the honor roll!

As Lekeisha says, *"We learned how to be a real family. We overcame things we never thought we could."*

That's what happens when faith takes root in families.

And it's all possible because of your support.

This month, as we remain *Rooted in Faith* together, we invite you to give generously, pray boldly, and continue being a neighbor to children and families in need.



Thank you for helping families grow stronger together.

CONTINUE TO WEEK 3 >>

Good morning!

As we journey through Thornwell Emphasis Month under the theme Rooted in Faith, we reflect on the redemptive power of love, love that goes beyond obligation and reaches across boundaries to bring families together.

In Galatians 6:2, Paul reminds us to *“carry one another’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.”* It’s a simple command, but one that requires deep compassion. It means showing up, standing beside someone in their struggle, and choosing love when it is easier to walk away.

Let me share with you a story of that kind of love.

When tiny Alana was discharged from the hospital, she had complex medical needs and required specialized care, including tube feeding. Through Thornwell’s foster care program, Victoria and Chris Cunninham welcomed her into their home with open arms. Thanks to your support, Thornwell wrapped around the Cunningham family with the training, resources, and encouragement they needed to help Alana thrive.

But the story doesn’t end there.

When it came time for Alana to visit her biological family, Victoria didn’t just meet the minimum requirements, she chose love. Victoria met the family in a local park and taught them how to do Alana’s tube feeding. She saw the love they had for this little girl and kept showing up, through updates, FaceTime calls, and doctor’s visits.

When Alana was eventually reunified with her family, Victoria and Chris were at the celebration party hugging, praying, even sharing cake.

Today, they’re still a family. Alana calls Victoria *Tía*, Spanish for “aunt.” They still share holidays and life moments together. Love made room, and your generosity made it possible.

Because of you, Thornwell is helping families redefine what love, support, and healing can look like.

This month, as we remain Rooted in Faith together, we invite you to give generously, pray boldly, and continue walk alongside Thornwell in this ministry of healing, connection, and hope.

Thank you.

CONTINUE TO WEEK 4 >>



Good morning!

As we wrap up Thornwell Emphasis Month, we turn our focus to hope, the kind of hope that grows when we invest in the potential of a child. Hope that takes root when seeds are planted in love and nurtured through faith.

In Matthew 13, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower. Seeds are scattered, but only those that fall on good soil grow strong and bear fruit. That's what your support of Thornwell does; it prepares the soil, plants the seeds, and helps children thrive.

Let me tell you about Mateo, a 16-year-old who started Thornwell's Read Right program soft-spoken and struggling. His primary language being Spanish, his grades started to fall in his all-English speaking school. Science class was especially difficult with overwhelming vocabulary. When Mateo started Reid Right, he was reading at a second-grade level.

But Mateo showed up early. He worked hard. And he didn't give up.

With the help of caring tutors and your generosity, the seeds of hope were planted and nurtured. By the end of the year, Mateo had read *The Odyssey* and *Romeo and Juliet*, made the A/B honor roll, and was reading on grade level.

Mateo's journey is a testimony to what happens when love prepares the soil, and faith plants the seed.

Today, on this Thornwell Sunday, we invite you to give generously, pray boldly, and continue walking alongside Thornwell, planting and nurturing seeds of hope, that grow into lasting change, one child at a time.

Thank you.

