



# *Reach. Touch. Connect.*

## Men in Mentoring

Positive male role models are making a quiet but powerful impact in our programs, especially among the boys and young men we serve. In response to a clear need for consistent, caring men, more brothers have stepped forward to mentor and it is already changing stories and shaping futures.

We want to recognize Alex Brown, Timothy Bates, Todd Scott, Costi Kutteh for the way they faithfully show up for our youth. Week after week, they offer a steady presence—helping with homework, talking through conflicts, and walking with students through challenges at school and at home. Sometimes that looks like explaining a math problem one more time; other days it means listening without judgment as a young man processes anger, fear, or disappointment. These men also serve as “book buddies,” sitting side by side with students to explore stories, practice reading, and discover new ideas. By celebrating progress, recommending age-appropriate books, and modeling a love for learning, they are helping students find (or rediscover) their own love for reading.

Their influence goes far beyond academics. Our mentoring approach is designed to build character, leadership, and life skills so that young people are prepared not only to pass tests, but to navigate life with integrity and purpose. Through conversations, encouragement, and accountability, these mentors help youth learn how to make wise choices, communicate with respect, and see themselves as leaders in their families, schools, and communities. For many boys, having a man consistently speak life into them is the difference between giving up and pressing forward.

Research reminds us why this work matters so much. Children with actively involved fathers are 43% more likely to earn A’s in school and 80% less likely to go to jail later in life. Yet up to 43% of boys report having no adult man they can turn to about friendships and relationships. Our mentors stand in that gap, offering the kind of guidance and presence so many young people are missing. Still, the need exceeds the number of men we currently have. We are actively recruiting additional male mentors who can invest just a few hours a month in the next generation. If you can listen, be patient, and show up consistently, there is a young person who needs what you carry: your story, your faith, your example. With more men like Costi, Alex, Timothy, and Todd answering the call, we believe even more boys and young men will discover that their lives matter and that, with God’s help, their future can look very different from their past.



S  
P  
O  
T  
L  
I  
G  
H  
T

## **Community Impact: Empowering Growth, One Connection at a Time**

### **Grace Baptist Church & Louise Grosse**

Grace Baptist Church has become a key anchor partner for Speak Life & Live. Their members volunteer, attend events, and consistently show up when we need hands-on support with students and families. This relationship helps us respond quickly when opportunities or needs arise in the community.

One of the strongest examples of this partnership is Louise Grosse, a Grace Baptist member who has become a dependable part of our volunteer team. Louise helps with set-up and check-in, supports classroom activities, and gives one-on-one attention to students who need extra encouragement during programs and camps. Her consistency builds trust with young people, and her willingness to do “whatever is needed” reflects the kind of collaborative spirit that makes programs run smoothly.

Through partners like Grace Baptist and volunteers like Louise, we are able to host more events, maintain safe ratios of adults to students, and offer a welcoming environment where families feel comfortable engaging with our programs.

### **First Presbyterian Church & Estelle Stitchcoln**

We are also excited about a growing relationship with First Presbyterian Church, which recently added Speak Life & Live to its internal missions focus. This means our work is now part of their regular conversations, planning, and outreach, opening new doors for awareness, volunteering, and financial support.

Within this partnership, **Estelle** Stitchcoln has emerged as a strong advocate and connector. Estelle has helped share our mission inside the church, encouraged others to get involved, and supported communication between First Presbyterian and our team. Her efforts help ensure that what we offer—mentoring, camps, and family support—is clearly understood and accessible to families connected to the church.

Together with First Presbyterian and leaders like Estelle, we are building a broader network of support around students, making it easier for families to hear about and access our programs.

# Financial Literacy Camp

We are **super** excited to introduce our new Financial Literacy Camp Extension, building on the success of our summer camps and giving students even more real-world money skills. Instead of just talking about money, we use real-life examples, simple tools, and interactive activities that connect to situations young people recognize every day.

Students will explore topics such as:

- How allowance, part-time work, or side jobs can lead to savings, long-term goals, and even small investments in things like stocks.
- The difference between “needs” and “wants” when making spending decisions.
- How to create a basic budget for a short-term goal (like a special purchase or event).
- Why giving and sharing resources can strengthen families and communities.
- What a stock is—owning a small piece of a company—how stock prices can go up or down, and why investing involves both risk and potential reward.

Through money games, budgeting challenges, and a fun “Market Day” where students design, price, and “sell” a simple product, campers will begin to think like savers, givers, and young entrepreneurs. By the end of the extension, participants should feel more confident making decisions about money, asking good questions (including about saving and investing), and planning for the future—skills that support long-term stability and independence.

## Sponsor a Student for Summer Camp

Each summer, Speak Life and Live provides impactful camp experiences that help local youth grow in confidence, leadership, creativity, financial literacy, and reading skills. Many of our students come from families who would not otherwise be able to afford the full cost of participation. By sponsoring a student, you ensure that every child—regardless of financial circumstance—can attend camp and benefit from this life-changing opportunity.

### \$200 Sponsors One Student for All Camps

Your support provides program materials, supplies, meals, and full access to every camp session. Donations of any amount are appreciated and go directly toward scholarships for local youth.

You can sponsor a student by visiting our website, QR code or by mailing a contribution to:

Speak Life and Live  
P.O. Box 6461  
Statesville NC 28687



# Meet Our Board

A strong board is essential to a strong organization. Our seven-member Board of Directors oversees strategy, finances, and long-term planning, ensuring that Speak Life & Live remains accountable, sustainable, and focused on impact.

- Brandy Gaither, Board Chair
- Leisa Rucker, Board Vice Chair
- Jerome Byers, Board Member
- Todd Houston, Board Member
- Anne Herschler, Board Member (New)
- Shelton Moore, Board Member (New)
- Timothy Campbell, Board Member (New)

With three new board members joining this year, we have expanded our range of professional experience, education, nonprofit leadership, business, and community engagement, positioning us to scale programs. and deepen our work in local schools and neighborhoods.



## Seed Sowing Opportunity

To make the mission of Speak Life and Live Inc. possible in our community we would like to personally invite you to make a difference with us.

We are asking for your donations to assist our mission within and throughout the Iredell County community. Your help will foster our motto to inspire families, and encourage self-dependency. We ask that you consider a monetary donation. To make a donation please visit our website at [www.LeslieSpeakLife.com](http://www.LeslieSpeakLife.com)

## Monthly Supporter

Your monthly donation is essential to our cause.

The consistency of monthly gifts provides a unique type of comfort for ensuring stability in our services.

Please consider adding \$2-3 to your total donation amount if you'd like to cover the administrative and credit card fees for processing your donation.

# Upcoming Events



**FOR BOYS & GIRLS 7-18 YEARS OLD**

**FREE**  
**Register By**  
**June 6, 2026**

## **CHESS CAMP**

10am- 12pm

**July 6-10, 2026**

- Learn chess basics and winning strategies.
- Build confidence through friendly tournaments.

## **Financial Literacy**

10 am- 12pm

**July 13-17, 2026**

- Learn smart saving, spending, and giving.
- Play money games and budgeting challenges.
- Design and price a simple product.
- Run a booth at fun "Market Day."

## **READING CAMP**

9am- 12pm

**July 20-23, 2026**

- Grow skills in phonics and writing.
- Explore new books and genres together.
- Build leadership and social-emotional skills.

## **ART DAY CAMPS**

10am- 12pm

**July 11, 2026**  
**July 18, 2026**

- Create fun, hands-on art projects.
- Enjoy creative outdoor workshops.
- Collaborate with other young artists.

**We're inviting you to sponsor a child for our FREE summer camps in Statesville. Just \$200 gives a child access to all our camps—led by caring educators and mentors. It's a small gift that makes a big impact on their confidence, creativity, and learning.**



**If you'd like to sponsor:**  
**CashApp: \$SpeakLifeLive**  
**Zelle: Admin@speaklifeandlive.org**  
**PayPal: www.speaklifeandlive.org/get-involved**

