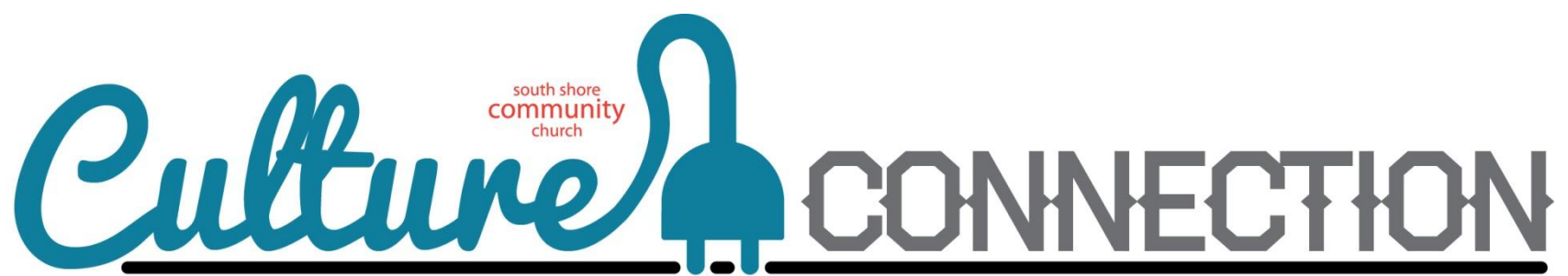



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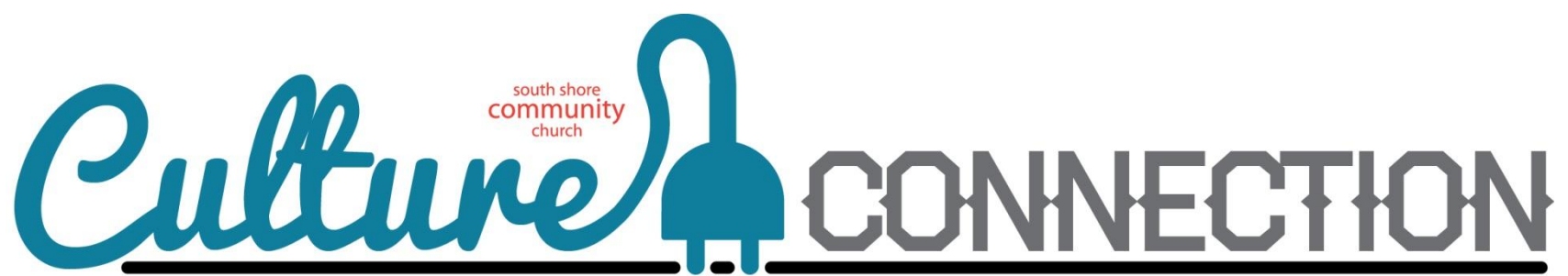



CONNECTION



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- Spiritual conversations (too timid; too pushy; bold but natural & winsome)
- How do we start spiritual conversations in this new America?
- 2 Cor 5:19-20, “And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”

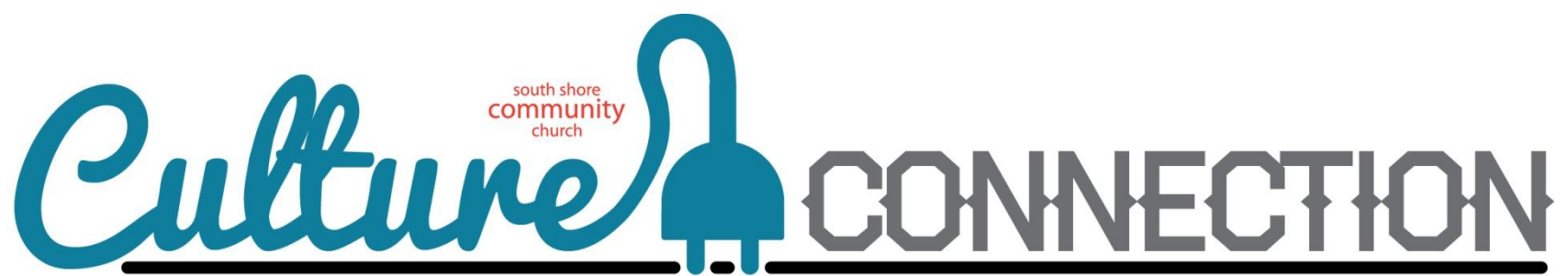


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- Col 4:5-6, “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”
- Here are 4 modern spiritual conversation starters:

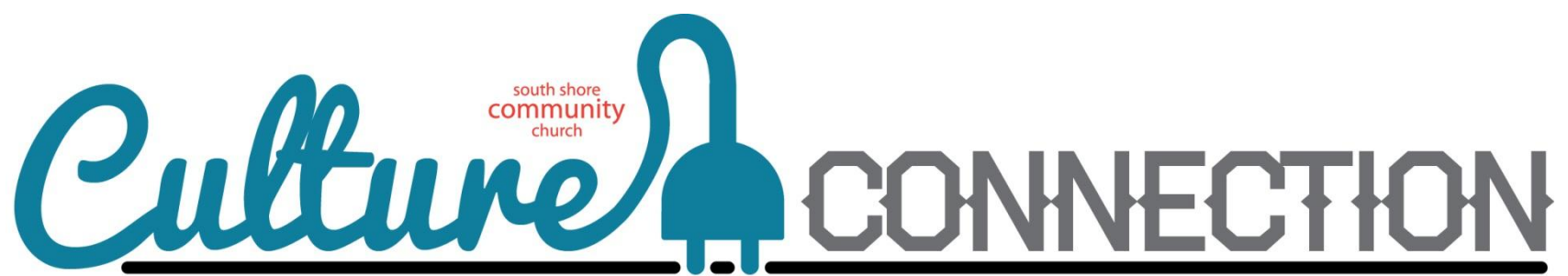
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- First, we can often start a spiritual conversation around the pathway of meaning. We long for meaning in life because we are created in the image of God. (the meaning vs meaning)
(psychological tension – image bearers vs cosmic accidents; tragic results)
- Testimony is crucial. People can refute your world view, but not your testimony. (1 Cor 2:1)
(subtle expressions – e.g., emptiness; boredom)



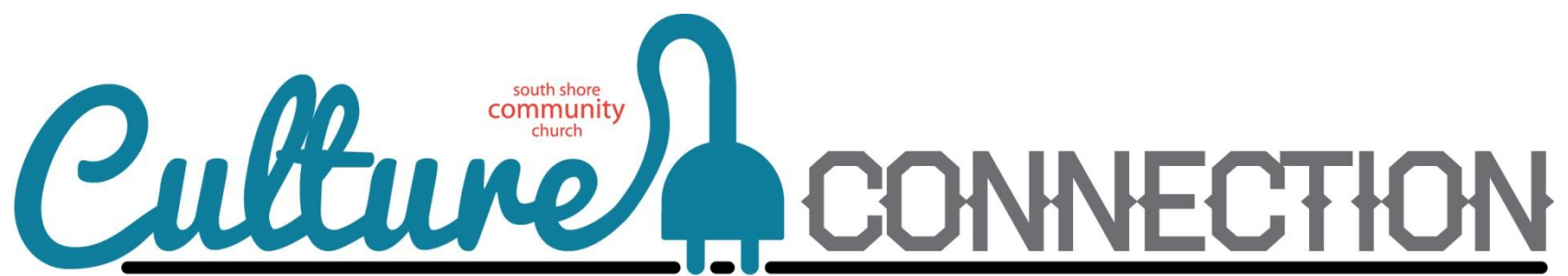
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- Second, we can often start a spiritual conversation around the pathway of soul care. Our society is more openly dysfunctional than ever before. People will often come to Jesus in this 21st C. America, not because they are aware they need a Savior, but because they are open to healing help for their souls. (1 Cor 1:30, “And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”) (addiction; anxiety)



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- Third, we can often start a spiritual conversation around the pathway of depth & wisdom. In the modern world we could present the gospel, and use apologetics to help people answer their questions. Today's world will require wisdom, not just knowledge, in order to move more people to Jesus. 1 Cor 1:30, "It is because of him that you are in Jesus Christ, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption."

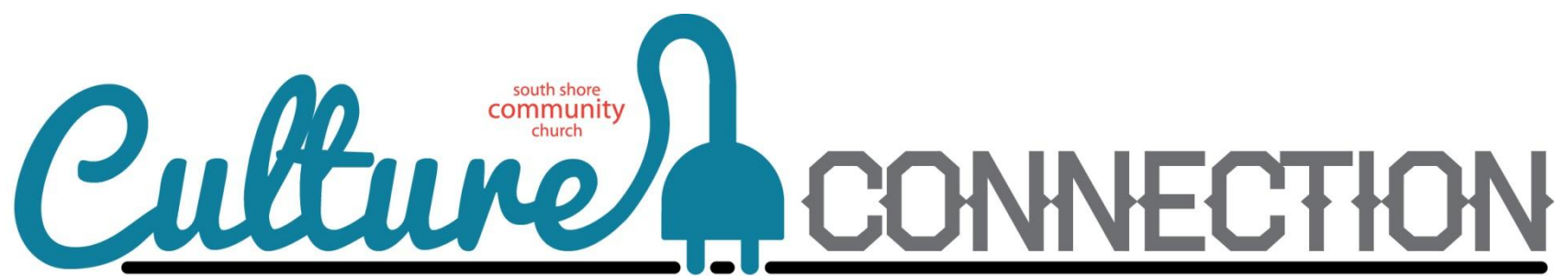



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- Third, we can often start a spiritual conversation around the pathway of depth & wisdom. 1 Cor 1:30
- In Corinth the wisdom that appealed to them in that pluralistic, syncretistic culture was the transforming work of Jesus. Life change demonstrated the wisdom of God. Knowledge is overrated. Depth is appealing. (redemptive suffering is key – 2 Cor 1:3-4 – comfort; listen empathetically & offer hope & healing)

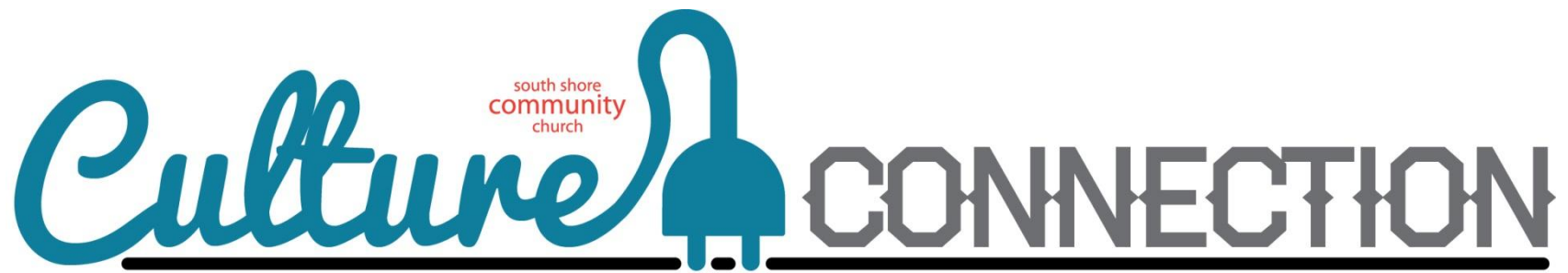
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- Finally, we can often start a spiritual conversation around the pathway of the kingdom of heaven. People are longing for the kingdom of heaven, even if they don't know it. Be aware of its expressions. (Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart.") (Kingdom message – e.g., longing for justice; elimination of poverty; freedom) (moving to MA)



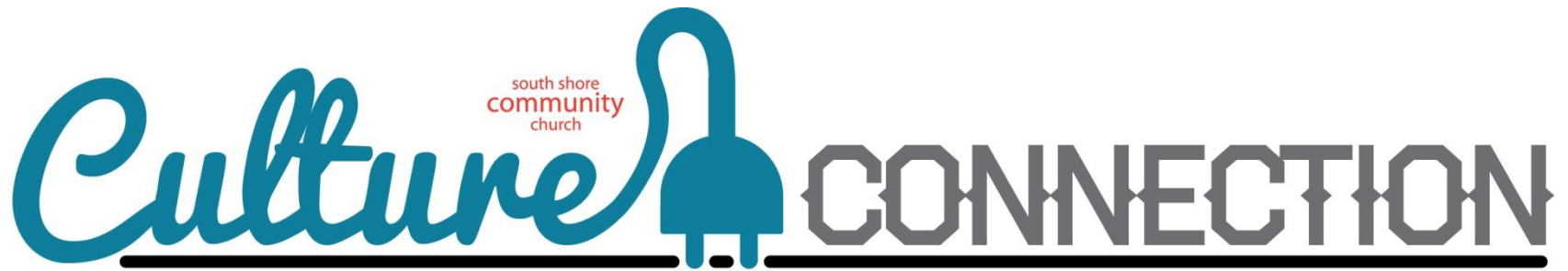
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- Mark Buchanan, “I recently had an epiphany: about half the Christians I know love the King but are almost oblivious to the fact that he rules a kingdom, and that he calls them, in season and out, to seek his kingdom and to advance it. They are intimate with the King, or at least they say they are, but they’re not about the King’s business. And this: that about half the pagans I know have some inkling there’s a kingdom – that life is meant to be other than it is,



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- Mark Buchanan, “More joyful, hopeful, peaceful, fruitful, just; less segregated, paranoid, dismal, violent – and to varying degrees they are stumbling toward the kingdom, groping for it. But they are mostly oblivious to two things: first, that what they dream, however blurrily, is really the kingdom of God rather than some political utopia or socialist paradise or retooled version of the American dream,



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- Mark Buchanan, “and second, that this kingdom has a King. They intuit the kingdom, and in some remarkable cases are doing the King’s business, but they shun or remain aloof from or outright ignorant of or openly hostile to its King.”
- The Call