



Rooted

2025 - 2026



MANNA
UNIVERSITY

FALL 2025

WHAT'S NEW AT MANNA U

Rooted: *our 2025-2026 academic year theme*

“At Manna University, we believe that deep roots produce lasting fruit. That’s why our theme for the 2025-2026 academic year is Rooted—a call to stay anchored despite the chaos around us.

Be mindful, being rooted doesn’t mean standing still. Paul’s challenge in Colossians 2:6-7 is not just to stay grounded in Christ, but to walk in Him—to grow, build, and thrive from that solid foundation. This year, we’ll explore what it means to be rooted in Scripture, in the Spirit, and in transformational servant leadership.

Rooted leaders don’t drift with every cultural wind. They stand firm, loyal to King Jesus. In our classrooms, small groups, and mission fields, we’re not just collecting information—we’re being transformed from the inside out. This year, let’s grow deeper roots so we can rise higher in faith, in learning, and in love.”

Dr. Carlo Serrano





Daniel King

LEADING WITH GRIT AND GRACE

Daniel King's story is one of perseverance, transformation, and hope. A native of Waterford Township, Michigan, Daniel's life experience has given him deep empathy for the marginalized. Today, he stands as the Student Government Association (SGA) President at Manna University, a husband, a leader, and a passionate advocate for the next generation.

Daniel has been serving with Manna Kids, the Children's Ministry of Manna Church Fayetteville, for several years. His introduction to Manna U came through the Manna Kids Director, Judd Henderson, whose framed degree sparked a conversation that eventually led Daniel to connect with Dr. Carlo Serrano. That connection, he says, "was God-ordained, and the rest was divine timing."

What Daniel values most from his education is the clarity and depth he's gained in his understanding of the Bible. "I've learned it's the basic handbook for life," he shares. "But more than that, I've learned that failure isn't fatal." That lesson has helped him lead with courage, both on campus and in his local church, where he serves in Manna Kids alongside trusted mentors like Sabrina Bentley-Thompson and Judd Henderson.



... failure isn't fatal.



Daniel approaches leadership not as a spotlight, but as a responsibility. He credits Manna U for helping him understand the power of small groups and biblical community. "It's taught me how important it is to teach the right message," he says—something he lives out while mentoring children and fellow students alike.

His story isn't about titles or accolades. It's about living proof that God uses ordinary people with extraordinary resilience. "My journey reflects God's enduring strength and grace," Daniel says—and that journey is far from over.

Dream Run

Our 8th Annual Dream Run on September 21, 2024, was an incredible success! Last year was our biggest yet, with a record-breaking number of participants and funds raised. A huge thank you to the 263 Dream Runners who joined us, helping raise funds for Manna U student scholarships and local community projects with the Manna Dream Center. Together with our amazing 60-member Dream Team and generous sponsors and donors, we made unforgettable memories.

This year's Dream Run is proudly presented by Dick's House of Sport, and it's shaping up to be our best yet. Mark your calendars. You will not want to miss this year's event, live at Festival Park or virtually from wherever you are on Saturday, September 20.

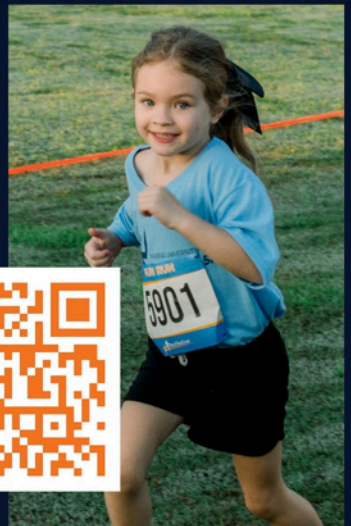
Registration is now open!

For more information, visit www.manna.edu/dream-run



MANNA UNIVERSITY
DREAM RUN 5K

Presented by





Azucena Ortiz

TEACHING THE WORD WITH BOLDNESS IN MEXICO

Azucena “Azu” Ortiz serves in one of the most sacred roles in her town—teaching the next generation how to understand and live out God’s Word. A Manna University alumna from Real de Asientos, Aguascalientes, Mexico, Azu has spent over a decade working in sales, growing both professionally and spiritually in a place she now sees as her mission field.

Though naturally introverted, Azu has embraced roles that stretch her, including teaching children in her local church. What began as a hesitant start—teaching messages in a small congregation without proper training—soon became a call to deeper understanding. “I started to feel afraid I might be taking the Bible out of context,” she says. That concern led her to study through Manna University, where she found what she had been missing: clarity, context, and confidence.

Among her most formative experiences at Manna U was the Hermeneutics course. “After that, I never looked at God’s Word the same way again,” Azu shares. She now teaches children to ask, “What does God want to say to us through this passage?”—a question that has transformed how they, too, engage with Scripture.



... I never looked at God’s Word the same way again.



In a small but growing church community, Azu is laying a firm foundation for discipleship. The children’s ministry she leads has begun to grow organically as kids invite friends to the “Bible class”—where they not only hear about the Gospel—they learn how to read it for themselves.

For Azu, academic preparation has become an essential part of faithful service. “People prepare themselves for careers,” she says. “How much more should we do that for the Kingdom of God?” Her story reminds us that great leaders don’t just emerge in pulpits or platforms—they rise in quiet classrooms and small towns, equipped by the Word and committed to live it boldly.

Ways to Pray *for Manna University*

Wisdom for Manna University Leadership

"Please pray that Manna University's leadership will continually seek God's wisdom to guide decisions with humility, discernment, and a heart for serving our students and mission."

Ron McBride

Student Success

"Pray that students will be able to remember their 'why' when challenges like time management or work-life-ministry balances come in to play. May students keep being able to make short-term sacrifices for long-term Kingdom gain!"

Tauri Maldonado

Faculty & Staff

"2 Timothy 2:15 exhorts us to 'Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.' (ESV) May the Lord make us guardians of His Word in order to be salt and light to those around us."

David Michalski

Global Impact

"Please pray for God's favor and new opportunities internationally as we continue to advance the Kingdom of God through biblical higher education – everywhere."

Dr. Carlo Serrano

Ways to Give *to Manna University*

Help us advance the Kingdom of God.

"... this is an opportunity for good, effective biblical leaders to rise to the surface in the Church and ministries, to lead in real advance for the Kingdom of God on the earth."

Dr. Steven Crowther

Online Giving:

Head over to this link, www.manna.edu/giving, and select where you would like your Kingdom investment to go. You may also scan this QR Code with your smartphone for information on how to make an impact today.

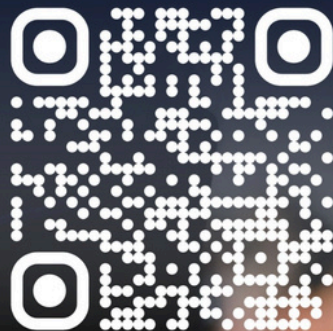
By Check:

Checks can be sent by mail to our secure mailbox.

Manna University

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If you have questions regarding how to become an active donor, please contact Dee Bowie, Advancement Director at dbowie@manna.edu.

Jaedon Fletcher

A STEADY BEAT OF
GROWTH AND FAITH



At just nineteen years old, Jaedon Fletcher wears many hats—college student, janitor, pianist, semi-pro soccer player, and SGA Executive Administrator. But perhaps most notably, he's a young man determined to grow in discipline, service, and faith.

Born and raised in Fayetteville, Jaedon grew up surrounded by the influence of Manna University students at Manna Church's Cliffdale Site. "A lot of the people I looked up to had attended Manna U," he recalls, and that inspiration eventually led him to enroll.

Now entering his sophomore year, Jaedon reflects on how his time at Manna U has already transformed him. "High school was full of procrastination," he admits with honesty. "But college taught me the value of staying on top of things. I've seen major growth in that area." That growth hasn't just shown up in academics—it's overflowed into every area of life.



*Manna U has helped me
grow in my walk with God.*



Jaedon serves faithfully on the worship team at Manna Church, primarily as a keyboardist and occasionally as a worship leader. "Manna U has helped me grow in my walk with God," he says, noting that spiritual formation isn't just something he's learned—it's something he's living.

What Jaedon sees as the greatest value for others in the Church is simple but profound: "Everything you learn at Manna U builds on your foundation in Christ." He's careful to clarify that it's not the only way to grow in faith, but for him, it's been a transformative one. "God has spoken to me in so many ways through Manna U," he says. "And I know He will do the same for others."



MANNA UNIVERSITY

Our Mission

Manna University is a biblical higher education institution dedicated to educating, equipping, and empowering emerging leaders to change the world.

Our Vision

We exist to advance the Kingdom of God through biblical higher education - Everywhere.

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