



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

September 30, 2025

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CHEF JIM NOBLE

*Founder & CEO,
Noble Food & Pursuits
Co-Founder, Charlotte
Mecklenburg Dream Center*

by **Elly Clary**

"I love fried chicken," Chef Jim Noble was quick to admit. He even shared his recipe.

Not surprisingly, since he owns fowl purveyor Bossy Buelah's, he added that his favorite meal might supplement chicken with field peas and, if it's summer, tomatoes.

But Rotarians were assembled at his Noble Smoke barbecue spot to hear the affable restaurateur deliver 30 minutes of rapid-fire responses to interviewer Edwin Peacock. He also answered questions from the audience.

He assured the assemblage in an extremely high-ceilinged meeting room that barbecue is a noun, not a verb, as they devoured his smoked pork and chicken along with sides such as succotash, brussels sprouts, and two varieties of slaw.

An outside patio was bordered with stacks of wood for the cooking fires. It's mostly hickory, with a smattering of oak.

Noble's transition from engineering and furniture manufacturing into food service was not complicated. Growing up in High Point, he was attracted to cooking, and as a young professional, he "just decided I wanted to be in the restaurant business."

His first eatery opened four decades ago. He's made Charlotte his home since 2004 and now he operates Noble Food & Pursuits. That includes well-known monikers such as Rooster's and Copain, as well as Field Pea Catering. Of course, it also encompasses Bossy Buelah's and Noble Smoke on Freedom Drive.

When searching South End and other possible locations for his barbecue endeavor, Noble resisted advisers who prodded him to look at the vacant brick west side warehouse. Finally, he visited it and saw right away it was the right fit.

His Christian faith shined brightly through several mentions of his pastor and church. That has led him to feeding the hungry through the now-closed King's Kitchen and the creation of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Dream Center, a non-profit operating across the road from Noble Smoke.

"The Lord began to talk to me," Noble said, about a concept like the Dream Center. "We are on our way to serving 10,000,000 meals to our local community and beyond with a chef-prepared solution to hunger," a message on the Dream Center webpage states.

Recently, Noble purchased 13 acres farther out Freedom Drive. His intent is to create transitional housing for people facing myriad challenges. The development will include a workshop to teach marketable skills.

In ministering to the downtrodden, Noble feels he's doing the work of Jesus. He hopes his legacy will be making a difference in people's lives.

**Due to the special location, this week's meeting was not streamed or recorded.*