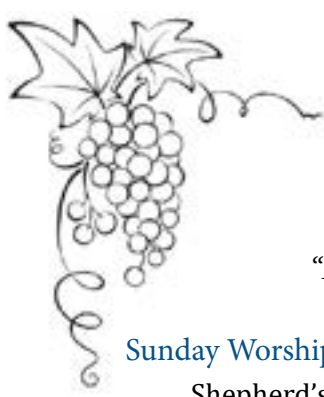




Gospel Grapevine September 2025



"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Sunday Worship Service: 10am | Life Application Classes: 9am | Music Rehearsals: 8:15am

Shepherd's Heart Fellowship
58362 Beech Road, Osceola, IN 46561
shfellowship@att.net; 574-679-4519

Check our Website: www.shfellowship.org
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/shfellowship
Subscribe to our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@shfellowship

Interim Pastor Len Smith - NEW EMAIL: lensmith@tkimail.com; 574-535-4269

Go Your Way

shared in part by Stacie Stark

"Then I said, 'O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?' He said, 'Go your way, Daniel ...'"
Daniel 12:8b-9 (ESV)

Whenever I'm driving somewhere new, I use the GPS on my phone. I enter the address and let it tell me where to turn. Whenever I'm driving with my husband, however, he likes to complicate my system.

He'll ask questions like, "Is this place near a landmark? What highways are we taking?"

My answer is always, "I don't know. I just do what my phone tells me."

Now, my husband's approach is probably better. It makes sense to know where you're going. What if the phone is wrong? (It never is.) What if there's an accident on the route? (The phone reroutes you automatically.) Or what if your phone runs out of battery because the kids stole the charger cord from the car? (More likely.) There is comfort and security in knowing the big picture.

In the book of Daniel, God showed Daniel a very detailed — and scary — picture of end-times events. Daniel foresaw violence, terror, and destruction, the likes of which the world has never seen (Daniel 12:1). The images didn't make much sense to him, and he struggled to put them into context.

Daniel was figuratively carrying the weight of the world, feeling the magnitude of the information, he now held. Naturally, he wanted to know how it all

would resolve. He wanted to know the big picture. He asked the angels around him:

"O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?" He said, 'Go your way, Daniel ...'" (Daniel 12:8b-9).

Interestingly, this doesn't just mean physically "go your way." It also means mentally. It's almost like the angel said, *"Rest in the assurance that God is in control and live your life. Follow God's lead as you take the next turn. And then take the next turn after that. Release your need to know the big picture and ask Him to direct you step by step."*

While the stresses in my life are certainly less concerning than the end times, I'm still worried about the outcomes. Will we have to relocate after this next job change? Are these symptoms just signs of aging, or am I sick? Will my kids turn out, OK?

But for Daniel and for us, God's guidance is reliable. One day, after following each individual direction to turn this way, then that way, we will arrive at our destination. We will see the big picture God created for His people and His path especially for us.

In time, you will look back in awe as you celebrate the divine architect of your story. But perhaps what you will most cherish is the path that led you there. A path lined with obedience and faith and intimacy as you trusted Him with every move.

Go your way, my friend.

As the Gift Discernment Team is making phone calls

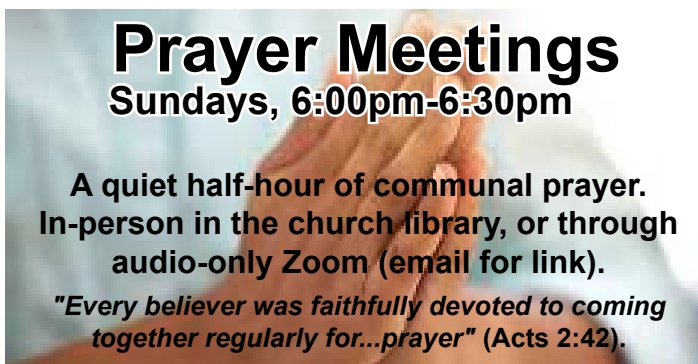
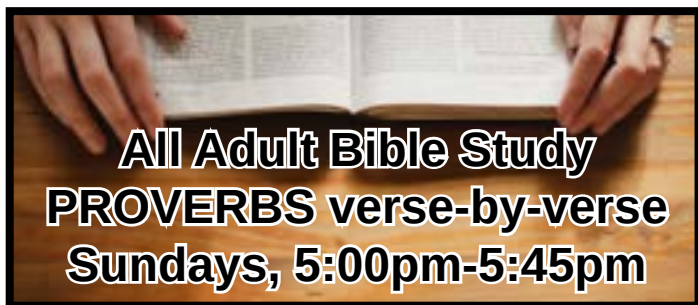
to many of you, think about what God would like you do - is it time to take on the commitment to being on the Leadership Team? Is God given you that nudge to make that next move and serve on our Leadership Team? Please be in prayer for the team as this can be a challenge to fill the Team Leader position on some of the teams.

I pray and hope everyone has received their letter in regards to the Leadership Team recommendation to call Pastor Len to be our ½-time pastor for Shepherd's Heart Fellowship. If you didn't receive a letter, please be sure to let me know as we try our best to get it in the mail to everyone who is member or attends our church. The vote will take place on Sept 7th after morning worship.

Now for another big announcement: our Fall Congregational Business Meeting has been changed to November 2nd, 2025. Please change your calendar from Oct 26 to November 2. There will still be a carry-in lunch and then our business meeting where all are welcome for discussion and members will vote on new leaders for the Leadership Team and our 2026 budget.

Any questions, please know you can call or text me anytime.

Blessings,
Your Leadership Team Leader, Tammy Victor



Our Fall Congregational Business Meeting has moved to November 2nd, 2025

HOBBY NIGHT

**IT'S TIME AGAIN TO MEET!
SEPTEMBER 5TH, AT 6PM. BRING A
SNACK TO SHARE AND A FRIEND!
THANKS, TAMMY VICTOR**



**Special Congregational Business Meeting
after worship
Sunday., September 7th**

Hymn Sing September 7th @ 5pm in the church Sanctuary

Everyone is invited! Join us for a night of traditional worship singing and song. Stay for ice cream and drinks afterwards! The event is free but we will be taking an offering for our mission of the month: Faith Mission of Elkhart. We will also dedicate our new digital piano that night.

Ladies' Ministry - Sept. 13th

The Ladies will be cooking and serving breakfast for the gentleman at 9:00am. The men will enjoy some good, old fashioned fellowship and devotion time with God along a breakfast fit for a king, served by our lady ministers! Please RSVP to Tammy either by text or sign-up sheet in the narthex.

**Thanks, Tammy Victor
Ladies Ministry Leader**



**Men's Breakfast
Sat., Sept 13th, 9:00am
ALL MEN welcome for Breakfast & Devotions**

Friendship Appreciation Day Sunday, September 14th

Another day to celebrate our friends who don't usually spend Sundays with us. Invite someone you know or someone you meet to this worship service, and stay for our Carry-in Lunch to follow. Bring a delicious dish to share!

COMMUNITY MEAL

Wed., September 24th, 6pm

**Serving:
Lasagna
& Salad**

**FREE!
All welcome**



RSVP @ www.shfellowship.org/meal

**15th
Annual**

Chili Supper



Sat., Sept. 27th, 5pm

Slow-cooked all afternoon in the woods, there's nothing like this recipe or its tradition!

Join us under the pavilion for some great chili and fellowship. Bring your lawn chairs for the campfire circle as well.

**Hosted by the 'Be One of Us' Life Application Class
& Fox Family**

Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

We had scheduled a bonfire in July, and while it unfortunately got rained out, we were glad for the rain.

On July 20th, we had a carry-in after service. There was plenty to eat and we even had a few new visitors join us.

On August 3rd, we enjoyed a day at a SB Cubs ballgame. Everyone who went had a great time. I would like to thank Ron Hipsher for getting us the tickets and the use of the Hoosier suite. We enjoyed a great game with beautiful weather.

On September 14th, we will be having another Friendship Appreciation day with a carry-in after service.

God Bless,
Melba Beckman, Team Leader
Sally Whitmer, Tracey Gordy, & Cheryl Frick



Music & Worship Ministry Team

We have an exciting event coming up in September! We have scheduled a Hymn Sing for September 7th at 5 pm in the Sanctuary. The word has been spread out to the Brethren community and we hope to see some new faces! Our new digital piano will be dedicated that night along with a small offering being collected for the mission of the month: Faith Mission of Elkhart. There will be ice cream and refreshments afterwards.

On November 2nd, we have planned to have The Northmen & Cathy back for some great music!

God Bless,
Nicole Wilkins, Team Leader
Scott Hipsher, Rick Hipsher, Martha Lou Cary, & Steve Frick

24 Hours

Poem by Ed Freel

I have 24 hours to live each day,
May I use these hours wisely for You.

For by living, I lift You up,
I try to be faithful to You every day,
Praise GOD, for all blessings come from
You.

Prepare the rest of my life,
to honor, praise, and eternally love You.

Real Services BINGO



Come and Have Fun!
Every Tuesday from 10:30am-11:30am

Rules:

- Up to 2 cards only
- You can win as many times you bingo.
- You can pass your bingo winnings to another person.
- Come in late: Pick-up on the next game.

4 ways to win:

A straight line (Horizontal, Vertical, or Diagonal) or Four Corners.

Donation Items would be appreciated!
(NOT used, Outdated items, Old, or Worn out)

Thank You! Site Director Grace
(574) 674-6503

REAL SERVICES SENIOR MEAL SITE

We welcome all Seniors 60 years and better to join our program and access daily nutritional meals while increasing your socialization.

(A person who is underage may attend with their age-eligible spouse present. They may not attend alone. A disabled dependent may attend with their age-eligible parent present.)

Meals are prepared fresh daily in the RS Kitchen.

Shepherd's Heart is open for this service each Monday-Friday, 10:00am-1:30pm, closed for holidays.

This is a donation-based program and your donation directly impacts the number of seniors we can help. We gratefully accept whatever you can comfortably afford.

To make a reservation, please call or email our Site director, Grace Brubaker:

(574) 674-6503, osceolans@realservices.org

Reservations must be made 2 days in advance.

We look forward to serving you!

FIRST-TIME REGISTRATION:

1) Print & fill out the front & back meal sign up form online as legible and complete as possible:

www.realservices.org/meals-and-nutrition/senior-nutrition-sites/

2) Once the Nutrition Entry form is filled out, call the site director, Grace to make a reservation:
(574) 674-6503, osceolans@realservices.org

3) Grace will ask when you would like to attend. You can join us as soon as 2 business days. If you speak with Grace on Monday, we can make a reservation for Wednesday, or if you speak to Grace on Friday, we can serve you on Tuesday.

4) You can bring the completed nutrition form with you, OR fill one out on-site the day of your first reservation.

5) Show up! If you need to cancel, we ask you call us as soon as possible so that we can find someone else to eat the meal, or if we have a 2-day notice, we can cancel the meal and prevent waste.

Welcome

Our Site director, Grace Brubaker:
(574) 674-6503), osceolans@realservices.org



SEPTEMBER

All Meals Served with Milk

Suggested Donation: \$4.50

Menus Subject To Change

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Closed for Holiday LABOR DAY 	2 Meatloaf Baby Bakers Seasoned Green Beans Dinner Roll/Marg. Peach Cup	3 CLOSED	4 BBQ Chicken Baked Beans Corn Wheat Bread/Marg. Pudding Cup	5 Potato Crusted Fish Mashed Potatoes Brussel's Sprouts Wheat Bread/Marg. Mandarin Oranges	6
7  Grandparents' Day	8 Vegetable Soup Tuna Salad Slider Spiced Peaches Cottage Cheese	9 Lasagna Bake w/Sausage Italian Green Beans Warm Spiced Apples Garlic Bread	10 BBQ Riblet on Bun Red Skin Potatoes Spinach Fresh Orange	11 Chef Salad w/Turk. Ham Cheese and Boiled Egg Diced Tom. and Ranch Pickled Beets Club Crackers Jello	12 Broccoli Cheddar Chix & Rice Casserole Buttered Carrots Wheat Bread/Marg. Tropical Fruit Cup	13
14	15 Deli Turkey/Hoagie Bun American Cheese and Mayo & Pickles Macaroni Salad Coleslaw Berry Applesauce	16 Chicken w/ Creamy Garlic Sauce Baby Bakers Asparagus Wheat Bread/Marg. Mixed Fruit Cup	17 Hamburger on Bun Baked Beans Roasted Summer Squash Jello	18 Fire Braised Chicken Breast Garlic Mashers Maple Roasted Beets Wheat Bread/Marg. Brownie	19 Sausage Gravy over Biscuit Scrambled Eggs Roasted Rosemary Potatoes Fresh Fruit	20 
21	22 French Onion Chicken Baby Bakers Parisian Carrots Wheat Bread/Marg. Cookies	23 Hot Dog on a Bun Potato Salad Succotash Pineapple Cup Milk	24 Sloppy Joe on Bun Macaroni & Cheese Mixed Vegetables Applesauce	25 Cabbage Burger Casserole Mashed Potatoes Peas Wheat Bread/Marg. Spiced Peaches	26 Chix Chipotle Bowl w/ Diced Tom, Rice, Ranch Tortilla Chips Fiesta Corn Pineapple Cup	27
28 	29 Bourbon Chicken Mashed Sweet Pot. Cauliflower Dinner Roll/ Marg. Cinnamon Applesauce	30 Turkey Tetrazzini Green Beans Garlic Bread Fig Newton	All donations directly support this program. Please donate what you can comfortably afford. Thank you.			30 Your donation counts. Even small donations make a big difference. We provide over 160,000 meals each year to seniors. 

Wasted meals are costly. Please, if you cannot make it for any reason, please call to cancel.

Christian Education Ministry Team

Life Application Classes

- The "Be One of Us" class is studying *God Never Gives Up on You* by Max Lucado.
- The "Willing Workers Class" is studying *Call Sealed with a Promise*, a Brethren Press study guide.
- The Young Adult class is studying *Genesis 1-11, Creation, Sin, & the Nature of God* by John MacArthur.
- Senior High Youth continue weekly Bible trivia and is working through "Talk Sheets" based on passages from the Gospels.
- We currently have Life Application Classes for both Lower and Upper Elementary
- Thanks to Jess Gordy, we now have a Nursery Teacher! We are grateful for all the teachers who are committed to preparing weekly lessons, Biblical studies, and discussions.

Relational Evangelism Class: For My Neighbors Good

Beginning September 21st we will offer an all-church discipleship development opportunity through a class on relational evangelism entitled *For My Neighbors Good*. The class will be led by Pastor Len Smith each Sunday during Life Application Class period from 9:00 to 9:45 AM. There will be 6 sessions with a break on October 12th. This program was developed by the Church of the Brethren's Discipleship and Leadership Formation and specifically designed to help us reach out to our neighbors and be Jesus in the Neighborhood!

CEF Bible School Support

At the end of July, we supported Child Evangelism Fellowship at their 5-day Bible club held at Cobus Green. We supplied drinks and visited several times during the club. CEF shared with us contact information for the families and we are reaching out to them to invite to our outreach activities and events.

Proverbs Bible Study

Pastor Len continues his weekly Bible study of Proverbs meeting each Sunday evening from 5:00 to 5:45 in the Be One of Us class area. All are welcome to come any time you can make it!

As always, we invite your input. Give us your ideas, suggestions, areas of interest, and we welcome volunteers to lead or **participate**.

Jeff Tuholski, Team Leader
Cheryl Hipsher, Marcia Troup, Denise Tuholski

September Library Update

We received a new/used book for our library recently: **Heaven is for Real**, by Todd Burpo (20-BU.) "When Colton Burpo [not yet four years old] made it through an emergency appendectomy, his family was overjoyed at his miraculous survival. What they weren't expecting, though, was the story that emerged in the months that followed – a story as beautiful as it was extraordinary, detailing their little boy's trip to heaven and back." This is an easy, must-read book, one that is hard to put down once you start it.

We have also received four new (to us) Max Lucado books – to be placed on the north shelf by the window with the rest of Max's book:

- **You are Never Alone**
- **How Happiness Happens**
- **In the Eye of the Storm**
- **Max on Life**

And we have received the following videos:

- Extraordinary
- GraceCard
- A trilogy of: the book of Esther, Apostle Peter & the Last Supper, the book of Ruth
 - Esther
 - Me Again

As we continue to highlight the **DVDs** located on the shelf to the left as you enter the library, let's look at "Woodlawn," a football-themed, true story:

"Following government-mandated desegregation in 1973, Tony Nathan joins fellow African-American students at Woodlawn High School in Birmingham, AL. As violence and anger erupt in the city, Woodlawn football coach, Tandy



Gerelds, allows an outsider to speak to his players. His message of hope and love leads to a spiritual awakening that inspires star athlete Nathan, his teammates, and other members of the community to overcome the hate that surrounds them."

Your Librarians: Marcia Troup and Pat Gordy

A Tale of Two Conferences

by Interim Pastor Len Smith

Earlier this summer there were two conferences which had connections to Shepherd's Heart Fellowship. Both conferences were held in North Carolina. The first one was an interdenominational conference and the second one was a denominational conference.

The first one was a Child Evangelism Fellowship International Conference attended by over 1200 CEF missionaries from over 100 nations! Some of you may recall that our local Saturday Vacation Bible School outreach this summer was accomplished with the cooperation of local CEF staff leadership that even included teenagers presenting the program to younger children. In an earlier newsletter article this year I shared that Child Evangelism Fellowship was originally founded by a former Church of the Brethren minister, J. Irvin Overholtzer, in California. He was born on July 20, 1877 and started CEF to reach children with the Gospel of Christ when he was 60 years old.

At the opening ceremony of the conference each nation had a representative carry its national flag across a stage. Currently CEF is active in 201 out of 211 countries. Last year CEF shared the Gospel with over 30 million children. The conference had testimonials from different leaders from various countries. The conference attendees heard about the incredible work that God is doing especially in the Middle East and Africa.

This CEF international conference set a primary goal of reaching 100 million children with the Gospel by 2032. The second conference referenced in this article that was held this summer was the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in Greensboro, NC in early July. Jeff Tuholski was our delegate this year and has shared and is available to share other details about this conference. His report is posted at the end of this newsletter edition. From our Annual Conference website I have been able to glean some of the following information.

The 2025 Annual Conference renewed the agency status of Bethany Seminary, Eder Financial, and On Earth Peace. One Query in regards to human sexuality was referred to the Review and Evaluation Committee. Another Query concerning human sexuality was adopted by the conference that quoted selective portions of the 1983 Annual Conference Paper called Human Sexuality from a Christian

perspective. Recommendations were adopted in regards to the calling of future denominational leadership. Recommendations were adopted from the Breaking Down Barriers committee to encourage Annual Conference participation that included the consideration of two new options for Annual Conference. One option would be for a biennial conference, and the other option would include alternate years of an in-person and online Conference, with the fully online year for business only and the in-person year for other Conference functions. The final report of the Standing With People of Color was shared. A cost of living adjustment for pastors' salaries was also adopted.

1,342 individuals registered for Annual Conference this year including 409 delegates and 933 non-delegates, 52 of which were virtual. Three new Church of the Fellowships were welcomed from CA, NC, and VA. Pastor Dennis Beckner of the Columbia City Church of the Brethren was chosen to be Annual Conference Moderator-Elect. He will become the Annual Conference Moderator in 2027. The 2026 Church of the Annual Conference will be held in Ft. Wayne, Indiana from June 28-July 2. I hope that many individuals from Shepherd's Heart Fellowship will plan to attend this 2026 Annual Conference.

Pastoral Relations Ministry Team

Pastor Len is available by appointment each Friday, Saturday, & Sunday through the month of September.
lensmith@tkimail.com; 574-535-4269

Here is a preview of messages from Pastor Len:
9/7 Mark 4:1-20 "Seed Quantity and Quality"
9/14 Exodus 33:7-11 "Making and Maintaining Friends"
9/21 Mark 4:35-41 "The Smell of Fear"
9/28 Mark 5:1-20 "When Jesus Comes"

Vern Beckman, Team Leader
Nicole Wilkins

Shepherding Team

We will host Love Feast on October 5th, 2025 at 6:30pm in the church fellowship hall.

If anyone needs help or want to talk, we are here for you.

Cindy Carlisle, Phil Carlisle, Jeff & Denise Tuholski

Missions & Evangelism Ministry Team

Paper and Hygiene Products Pantry

In August we distributed over 45 bags of paper and hygiene products. Thanks to all the volunteers who come to support this ministry by passing out product and faithfully praying for all the requests that we gather each month.

Food Table

We have a large amount of food on the table in the hallway. If you know anyone in need, please feel free to take a supply to them.

Community Meals

We had another great turn out for our community meal in July. Vern and Melba hosted and served Sloppy Joe's, veggies and chips. On August 27th Tammy provided a meal of chili dogs and chips. Please consider volunteering to host an upcoming meal! In September, Jeff and Denise will supply Lasagna & salad.

Mission of the Month

Faith Mission of Elkhart is our supported mission for the months of September and October. You can support this wonderful ministry through your giving. Please mark your envelope for Faith Mission

Osceola Music Festival

On August 8th, 9th and 10th we participated in the festival. Our booth blessed over 200 children with crafts and candy. We also collected prayer requests and raffled a bird feeder donated by Phil Carlisle and an NIV Study Bible. It was wonderful to greet and connect with our neighbors in this venue. Thanks to all the volunteers who came to serve our neighbors.

CROP Hunger Walk

The 2025 CROP Walk is scheduled for September 21st. You can support this ministry by signing up as a team member to collect donations, donate to our team, and/or come walk with us on the 21st. The walk is scheduled to begin at 2:00p.m. and leave from Zion Church in South Bend across from Howard Park. Please help us fight Hunger One Step at a Time!

Video Devotions Opportunity

We still welcome volunteers to lend their voices and talents to our weekly video devotionals. You'll be able to take all the time you need as Jenn does a wonderful job of editing. This is a great chance to offer your God Stories to our community, or to share in how you came

to the Lord. Express how God has shown up in your life, or share a special reading you came across that impacted your walk with Christ. For those who are just willing to read on camera, we can help find you content to share. For more information and to volunteer, please contact Jenn Adams: jenn.ministries@gmail.com

Missions and Evangelism Ministry Team

CROP WALK 2025



The steps we take - and the funds we raise together - will provide life-saving support including emergency food and resources, along with the seeds, tools and programs that will help families feed themselves in the future. Here's how your donations make an impact:

\$50	Food packets for refugees in Moldova
\$80	Chickens for four families
\$100	Two beehives
\$216	Emergency food rations
\$470	A cow

To DONATE:

**visit our team site at www.events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/shepherds-heart
OR give cash/check to Jeff & Denise Tuholski (made out to CROP Hunger Walk)**

Your TIME also makes an impact. As hundreds gather to walk the streets of South Bend, more and more are brought to awareness of the change *they* can make to world hunger. To WALK:

**September 21st @ 2pm - Leaves from Zion Church across from Howard Park in South Bend
Please Donate & walk with our team - help us END HUNGER...one step at a time!**

Paper & Hygiene Products Pantry

OPENS AGAIN

Wed., Sept. 10th, 6-7pm

Volunteers to pray & pass out bags -

join us at 5:30pm

ALL donations appreciated

St. Margaret's House

One of the things that St. Margaret's House does is give skills to the women. Their silk creations are beautiful. Go to their website: stmargarethouse.org to see this amazing art. They make scarves, greeting cards, wall paintings, etc. You could support them by purchasing gifts for birthdays, Christmas presents, or just thank you gifts.

More about Silk Creations:

Through this empowerment program, women learn the craft of painting on silk, creating one-of-a-kind hand-painted pieces of art in the form of scarves, prints, notecards, and jewelry that are sold to the public. Participants develop: Organization and problem-solving skills, Basic business skills, Leadership skills, and Mentorship.

Join us in ministry! Assist to bring song, connection, & message to our beloved neighbors at these two facilities:

Elkhart Place Worship

Thurs., Sept. 18th - 2pm

(the 3rd Thursday of each month)

2024 Co Rd 24, Elkhart, IN 46517

Milton Adult Day Services Worship

Thurs., Sept. 25th - 1:30pm

(the 4th Thursday of each month)

111 Sunnybrook Ct, South Bend, IN 46637



Everence Update

Roll Over Your Retirement Savings

When you retire or leave your employer, you will need to decide what to do with your accumulated retirement savings. You have several different options with what you can do with your savings. With help from Everence, you can make a decision that puts your financial well-being first.

If you need information or help with your roll over, please contact me for referral to an Everence representative.

Marcia Troup, Stewardship Advocate



The Everence credit card program, MyNeighbor, offers you the unique ability to generate donations for our church ministries each time you use your card.

For every grocery, gas or other purchase you make, Everence will donate 1.50% of the transaction total to your selected Neighbor. Once choosing Shepherd's Heart Fellowship, you can later direct your donation to any of our ministries you would like to support. The additional funds to our Paper & Hygiene Products Pantry, Hands of the King benevolence ministry, monthly missions, or unique events would all be welcome and appreciated!

You can speak with our Stewardship Advocate, Marcia Troup, for more information, or call/email Everence directly below:

Toll-Free: 800-451-5719

Phone: 717-735-8330

Text: 717-735-8332

Email: MyNeighbor@everence.com

Look at the Birds by Jenn Adams

Stepping out of the house on mid-August, Indiana Summer mornings, we never know if we'll hit a cool, clear breeze, or a heavy bag of thick, unbreathable cloud. I typically begin my days walking outside to water my flowers and twist on a couple sprinklers so our lawn doesn't turn into brown, dusty, straw. The activity keeps me away from my phone and computer for a little while longer, and gives me a better chance to connect with the Lord before beginning the hustle and bustle of the day. But it has been a *hot* Summer, a *humid* Summer – several weeks and recent days of degrees in the 90s. My plants have been suffering from my lack of motivation to step out on these mornings, and they are drooped and withered. This day was another one of those thick, humid days – the kind where the first words out of your mouth after opening the door are, “EGH, BLEH.” It's only been a week, but day after day of neglect has dried everything out. The grass is the same – brown, thirsty. I don't want to step another foot out the door, but I must. It's time.



I turn on the hose and first water my starving plants – it will be a miracle if half of them come back to life at this point. I reattach the wave-form sprinkler head and trek to the left side of the backyard and see my other planted garden which I don't usually even bother to water since it rains. But rains have been infrequent, so I hold the sprinkler to give this patch of dirt a drink before setting it down to do the rest of its duty. Then something wonderful happens.

As I hold the streams against the house and two rows of decaying flowers, a robin hops down from the tree beside me and peeps his head from side to side. He is unusually close. As I steady the flowing sprinkler, Robin hops a little closer to the outer droplets. It takes me a few seconds to realize he wants a bath. *He heard the water*, I think to myself, *it's been hot for you, too*. I jerk my wrist a little so more drops hit his head and back, and he gives a little satisfied shiver to move the water between his feathers. I take one step toward him and he flies back into the tree again, but not far.

This encounter makes me smile. I finish my attention on the garden, then place the sprinkler over the brownest grass. I mosey to the front yard, doing the same with the other hose. Tasks completed, I have to leave the house for an errand, but when I return, twenty minutes later, I am blessed once more.

A dozen birds – robins, finches, all shapes and sizes, are bathing beneath the sprinkler in the side yard. They are bristling, hopping, stretching for the waterfall trickling off the tree leaves. One is low to the ground, spreading his wings to get all that cool, fresh water between every feather. If I was happy for my

Robin friend before, I am *full* of joy to see this provision laid out for these birds at this moment.

My mind reels with the thought that I almost didn't set foot outside today. I almost restricted this blessing; I almost denied the much-needed relief for these creatures – and God didn't let me. He brought me to the moment to share it with them,

and then brought me right back to it to witness what He had in mind for these birds. There were so many reasons I might not have ever seen this. I was humbled, blessed, excited. This whole morning honored me to be in small partnership with God in what He promised the birds.

And I was reminded Matthew 6:26 -

"Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to Him than they are?" (NLT)

Today the birds were given just what they needed, when they needed it. And God invited *me* to be a part of His deeper work in their life.

We must not let setbacks and inconveniences block us from our responsibilities to, for, and with God. We will miss what He has in store! Step out on a humid day, volunteer, approach a stranger, get uncomfortable. If He is doing this for the birds – how much more will He do for us?

Church Treasurer Opportunity

Serving as the church treasurer for the past six years has been both an honor and a joy. And I look forward to continuing in that role!

Over time, we have implemented technical improvements for greater efficiency. This includes setting up automatic utility payments from our checking account and managing insurance, as well as state and federal tax payments online.

Our current QuickBooks software, which has served us well for nine years, is beginning to show compatibility issues with newer operating systems. I have been researching options for upgrading to the latest QuickBooks version, which would involve new costs and require a learning period. The Stewardship team is aware of this situation and will help guide any future decisions.

The Stewardship team, including Ed Freel and Fred Whitmer, has been invaluable. Ed and Fred have offered wise guidance, and Fred, who originally set up our QuickBooks, continues to provide support and fill in during my absences.

I am reaching out because it is important for any organization to plan for the future. I am looking for someone interested in learning the duties of the Treasurer role. This individual would participate hands-on, working alongside me over time, and would be prepared to assist as needed, help with any software upgrades, and be comfortable with basic Excel, Word, and general computer use. This does not obligate someone to become the next treasurer—just to understand the tasks involved.

If you are interested in exploring this opportunity, I have a comprehensive list of treasurer responsibilities to share. Please contact me if you would like to learn more—there is no obligation.

Blessings!

Steve Frick
Treasurer



NIDCOB District Conference

The 166th District Conference for Northern Indiana is here! You are welcome and encouraged to come to Camp Mack on September 19th and 20th for this time of gathering, learning, building relationships, and taking care of some business together as we focus on the theme “Alpha and Omega: In our end is our beginning.” There will be worship, conversations, information, and equipping sessions.

Join us on Friday evening (the 19th) at 7:00pm for worship and fellowship (with ice cream treats provided by Eder Financial). Former Annual Conference Moderator, Paul Munday, will be bringing the message, DC Moderator, Herman Kauffman, will be leading the worship, and Kevin Ramer will lead the music.

On Saturday (the 20th), the day starts off with devotions by our Moderator-elect, Anna Lisa Gross, followed by delegate consecration before the meeting begins. The morning will be sprinkled with singing led by Jed Freels, informational reports, recognitions, table talk, and some business items. After lunch, there will be three insight sessions offered on Brethren Global Missions, the 2026 Annual Conference in Fort Wayne, and the new Anabaptist Bible. We’re excited to hear about these three areas from Sharon Norton, Joel & Donna Kline, and John Roth. Gathering again in the afternoon, we’ll finish up the reports, consider our budget for next year, and celebrate as we consecrate new leadership for the coming year!

It sure sounds like a lot to take in, but there is always good food and fellowship along the way. If you’re a regular attendee, we’ll be glad to see you again. If you’ve never been, come along and join us!

Hands of the King

"You have only one master now...But with this 'yes' to God belongs just as clear a 'no.' Your 'yes' to God requires your 'no' to all injustice, to all evil, to all lies, to all oppression and violation of the weak and poor, to all ungodliness, and to all mockery of what is holy. Your 'yes' to God requires a 'no' to everything that tries to interfere with your serving God alone, even if that is your job, your possessions, your home, or your honour in the world. Belief means decision."

-Deitrich Bonhoeffer

Don't preach to me.

Don't throw scripture like a shield while turning your back on suffering.

Don't lecture me with psalms while defending the powerful and ignoring the oppressed.

Show me.

Show me in how you treat people who have nothing to offer you.

Show me in how you speak up when it's uncomfortable, and stand firm when silence is easy.

Show me that your God walks with the poor, the wounded, the silenced — not just the saved.

Faith without justice is empty noise.

Holiness without compassion is just ego in a robe.

If you say yes to God, then say no — loudly — to everything that breaks what God loves: people, truth, peace, and dignity.

Don't tell me what you believe.

Live it.

#bringbackhumanity

#kindnessmatters

(Kindness for the Soul Facebook Post)

This benevolence ministry exists because our community is full of hurting people whom Jesus loves. We try to pay attention, and respond as God leads. The Lord was at work, so we have partnered with Him.

How To Get Involved:

If you would like to be a friend to our neighbors and aren't sure where to start, please reach out to someone on our committee. It would help us tremendously to know you are willing to be called on. God's work needs

all kinds of gifts, talents, & skills.

If you have a neighbor or meet a stranger in need and desire assistance, our committee is committed to helping you with resources and can try to walk alongside you as you walk alongside them.

We also accept monetary donations any time to further this Kingdom work - you can drop an envelope in the offering plate on any Sunday marked for "Hands of the King" or mail a check to the church. Our ministry is entirely donation-based and is used exclusively for these needs outside the congregation.

Here are some of the ways the HotK ministry impacted our neighbors in August:

We responded to several immediate financial needs and directed individuals to resources that would meet their deeper concerns.

Researched area ministries and resources for additional help.

Navigated getting a non-local individual connected with a faith community.

Offered emotional support for several of our neighbors.

Shared encouragement and Biblical support to those going through hard situations.

Please PRAY for:

The hurdles and tensions within our relationships to those we are walking alongside.

Wisdom and best solutions to the many, many needs.

More people willing to step in, and our better communications to reach out as a committee.

Healing and assurance to recovering accident victims.

Jesus changing hearts and attitudes.

Patience: for the hurting, the hopeful, and the helpers.

Thanks & Blessings,

Hands of the King Committee:

Brent Zumbrun, Jenn Adams, Jess Gordy, Katie Hipsher

As I spent time in the hospital and two and a half years after my wife's death, this is how I feel.

- Phil Carlisle

SPLIT GOWN

"I was sittin' here mindin' my business,
kinda lettin' my mind go slack,
When in comes a nurse with a bright, sunny smile.
And a gown that was split down the back.

"Take a shower," she said, "and get ready,
and then jump into this sack."
What she was really talkin' about was
the gown with the split down the back.

"They're coming to do some tests," she said. They're
gonna stretch me out on a rack,
with nothin' twixt me and the cold, cruel world but
a gown that's split down the back.

It comes only to the knees in front,
in the sides there is also a lack.
But by far the greatest shortcoming
is that bloomin' split down the back.

Whoever designed this garment,
for humor had a great knack
But I fail to see anything funny 'bout
a gown that's split down the back.

I hear them coming to get me,
the wheels going clickety-clack.
I'll ride through the halls on a table,
in a gown with a split down the back.

When I get to Heaven it'll make me no odds
if my robe is white, red, or black.
The only thing I will ask is, "Please,
give me one with no split down the back."

I do not know who the author is of this bit of verse,
but I find it amusing, hilarious.

Yet, we who have been in the hospital wearing this
"gown with a split down the back" find it rather
embarrassing.

Maybe, I should say the experience is humbling. The
"gown with the split down the back" brings us all
down to earth. It stripes us of our pride.

It is too bad that it takes this "gown with the split
down the back" to make us realize that we will all
stand before God, naked, not even with a "gown
with the split down the back." Nothing can we take
with us when we go to meet God, but in Jesus, He
will dress us in Heavenly clothing and you can rest
assured it will not be with a "gown with the split
down the back."



Jesus' Precious Blood

Poem By Ed Freel

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year.
The precious, redeeming blood of Jesus will be our
Salvation.

There is no other way that leads to salvation,
You can't earn it, buy it, or win it; only the precious
blood will make you worthy.

All your sin will be forgiven if you seek this precious
blood.

For the blood of the Lamb has been redeemed to all
who believe and love Him.

Jesus, with His blood, purchased everyone when He
was slain;
we are to reign and serve Him.

Worthy is the lamb and glory to Him forever.

Church of the Brethren Annual Conference **Shepherd's Heart Fellowship Delegate Report**

This is my official report from the 2025 Church of the Brethren annual conference as your delegate.

In an earlier email, I sent out a list of the business items which also included the recommendations of the Standing Committee. I also included links to the annual conference website where you could view the entire set of business items in detail. If you would like to see any of this in hard copy print, I can lend you the Annual Conference booklet which contains all the business items, reports, and all the information for the annual conference.

In this report I will briefly present the business items covered and how I voted on your behalf. Hard copies of this report are available in the library.

Unfinished business 1: People of Color

The committee presented a report on the recommendations for diversity and inclusion of people of color within the Church of the Brethren. Standing committee recommended that these recommendations and suggestions be adopted within each district and congregation as appropriate. I voted in favor of this recommendation.

Unfinished business 2: Breaking down barriers between denominational events

This was a study to look at ways for more people to attend Annual Conference and to reduce costs. The annual conference is losing money every year due to a lack of attendance. Several options were presented including having the Conference every two years; alternating between an online virtual and in-person conference; or hybrid model where smaller venues are used and more people attend virtually.

The study was approved and the options are being considered by the Missions and Ministry Board and Annual Conference Administrators. My recollection of the discussion among the delegates seemed to be in favor of having the conference alternate between in-person and virtual. I voted in favor.

Unfinished Business 3: Request for a study by Annual Conference on calling of Denominational leadership

The purpose of this study and the recommendations is to improve the fairness of calling potential leaders who may be passed over for a variety of reasons. Also to make adjustments in the required number of nominations presented to standing committee. For most positions, a minimum of four nominations are required but only two are selected for the ballot. To meet that requirement standing committee often has to search for additional nominations and then many of those never make the ballot. And it was suggested by many who came to the microphones that there is some bias towards who is selected to be on the ballots. I voted in favor of all the recommendations.

New business 1: Renewing the agency status of Bethany Theological Seminary

It was approved and I voted in favor.

New business 2: Renewing of Agency status of Eder Financial Services

The renewal was approved and I voted in favor.

New Business 3: Renewal of agency status for On Earth Peace

The renewal was approved. I did not vote in favor of approval.

New business 4: Reducing harm: interim steps to address suffering

This query essentially addressed outdated language in previous statements on human sexuality within the Church of the Brethren, primarily replacing the word homosexual with LGBTQ+.

The standing community acknowledges the concerns and recommendations, however, the language in the statements cannot be changed as they are a matter of record. So all that could be done is to acknowledge and confirm the concerns until a new statement is drafted and approved by Annual Conference with the updated language.

The query was approved and I voted in a favor.

New business 5: Concerns about current practices regarding matters of sexuality

This query was proposed to move the discussion forward on how the Church of the Brethren as a whole will address the division and discrepancies throughout the US on how matters of human sexuality are addressed, primarily the practice of officiating same sex marriages and installing LGBTQ+ pastors.

The query was approved. I voted not to approve as it was pointed out by Torin Eikler that this is essentially the same query that was brought forth last year and that we should pursue under that previous query.

New business 6: Recommendation cost of living adjustment to the ministerial cash salary table for pastors.

This was approved and I voted in favor .

I consider it a privilege to represent our church at Annual Conference and I am available to discuss any of this information individually.

Faithfully submitted,
Jeff Tuholski
2025 Annual Conference Delegate for Shepherds Heart Fellowship

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KEEP PLANNING for our annual
Cookie walk & Craft Sale 2025
Sat., Dec 6th from 9am-12pm
Asking each member to supply 4-dozen cookies
or as much as you can. We would love if you have
anything else you would like to donate: crafts,
baked goods, treats, snacks, etc.

Set up will be on Friday, Dec 5th but will be in the
afternoon after the Real Services luncheon on
that Friday.

Raised funds will be split to Paper Pantry,
Community Meals, Hands of the King, and St.
Margaret's House.

We will have a meeting in Oct. to discuss details.

Any questions, please reach out to
Cindy Carlisle.

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C A M P M A C K

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Come to Camp this fall! Upcoming Events:

- September 1 Family Day:** Kick off September with your family at Camp Mack. This is a 100th anniversary event, so bring everyone you know. Swimming, boating, fishing, wagon rides, chalk drawings, croquet, nature hikes, scavenger hunts, and more. The Kona Ice truck will be here! Spend an afternoon of fun with us from 1:30–4:30p.
- September 14 Galen's Retirement Party:** Come celebrate Galen's 29 years at Camp Mack with a 2 to 4 p.m. open house (3 p.m. program). We so appreciate his service and heart for sanctuary at Camp! Light refreshments provided.
- Sept. 15/17 Homeschool Outdoor Ed Days:** Monday or Wednesday for "Let's Paddle." Ages 7–14. \$25, or \$30 with a sack lunch. 10a–5p.
- October 4 Camp Mack Festival:** Food, fellowship, and fun for the whole family. Enjoy music, demonstrations, crafts, food, and more. Proceeds support the mission of Camp Mack. Join us from 10a to 2p. Handicap transportation available. Free admission!
- October 6/8 Homeschool Outdoor Ed Days:** Monday or Wednesday for "Dutch Day." Ages 7–14. \$25, or \$30 with a sack lunch. 10a–5p.
- October 7 Senior Living Community Day:** If you are experienced in your years (regardless of where you live), please join us for a day of camp experiences. Mark your calendars, and plan to come out to fellowship and enjoy!
- October 11–12 Father/Son Weekend:** Spend quality father & son time at Camp Mack! 9a Saturday to 1p Sunday. Includes lodging, meals, and so many fun activities to do together.
- October Fall Break Day Camps! Choose from 10/13–17 or 10/20–24. 9a–3:15p, with additional options for before & after care.**
- October 23–26 Scrap & Craft Retreat:** Registration open!
- October 25 Get-A-Way Days: Knit/Crochet or Scrapbooking**
- October 27–28 Pastor's Sabbath**
- October 27–29 Volunteer Work Days**
- November 1 Annual Dinner: Save the date!**
- Also, sign up for Women Creating Community and Men Creating Community. They meet monthly.**

Thank you for your continued support! We are sincerely grateful that you volunteer, donate, and pray.

Prayer Requests: Please pray for positive guest experiences



September's **Worship Service** *Ministry Volunteers*



Children's Life Application Class Teacher Schedule

Early Elementary (4yrs-pre-K)- Cheryl Frick
Elementary (K-5th grade) - Denise Tuholski
Youth Leader (6th grade-1st year college) - Jeff Tuholski
Attendance Schedule - Sally Whitmer

Prelude/Offertory

9/7 Donna
9/14 Teresa
9/21 Cindy C
9/28 Donna

Praise Team

9/7 Steve, Darrel, Marcia
9/14 Rick, Sue, Dawn
9/21 Rick, Darrel, Dawn
9/28 Rick, Marcia, Sue

Welcome Center

9/7 BZ
9/14 Jeff
9/21 BZ
9/28 Denise

Projector

9/7 Nicole
9/14 Katie
9/21 Marcia
9/28 Nicole

Praise Prayer

9/7 Marcia
9/14
9/21 Jeff
9/28 Marcia

Stewardship

9/7 Ed & Fred - Cindy C
9/14 Ed & Fred - Cindy C
9/21 Fred & Sally - Marcia
9/28 Fred & Sally - Marcia

Livestream

9/7 Nate
9/14 Jayden
9/21 Scott
9/28 Brian

Worship Leader

9/7 Denise
9/14 Cindy C
9/21 Steve
9/28 Marcia

Nursery

9/7 Sally
9/14 Jess
9/21 Denise
9/28 Marcia

Sound

9/7 Ron H
9/14 Jensen
9/21 Ron W
9/28 Darrel

Greeter - Door A

9/7 Melba
9/14 Fred
9/21 Melba
9/28 Vern

Bible Fun Day

9/7 Denise
9/14 Marcia
9/21 Katie
9/28 Melba

Chorister

9/7 Steve
9/14 Rick
9/21 Rick
9/28 Rick

Greeter - Door B

9/7 Vern
9/14 Sally
9/21 BZ
9/28 Melba

Message

9/7 Len Smith
9/14 Len Smith
9/21 Len Smith
9/28 Len Smith

2025 SEPTEMBER

**please pray for the names in italics*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	01	02	03	04	05	06
					6pm Hobby Night	
	<i>Pam Hipsher</i>	<i>Laura Wiley</i>	<i>Dick Dicine</i>	<i>Angela Kling</i>	<i>Terry Kling</i>	<i>Gail McKinney</i>
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
Special Congregational Meeting After Worship 5pm Hymn Sing			 6-7pm Paper & Hygiene Product Pantry Open			9am Ladies Ministries- Men's Breakfast
	<i>Michelle Gee</i>	<i>Curtis Gee</i>	<i>Mike Maes</i>	<i>Kathy Maes</i>	<i>Kevin Bernaert</i>	<i>Dawn Bernaert</i>
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Friendship Day! Carry-In Lunch after worship 5pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting					7pm District Conference Worship & Ice Cream	8am-3pm District Conference
	<i>Chuck Davies</i>	<i>Vern Beckman</i>	<i>Melba Beckman</i>	<i>Nik Hipsher</i>	<i>Danielle Sheldon</i>	<i>Chris Stachowski</i>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
2pm CROP Hunger Walk 5pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting			 6pm Community Meal <i>Serving: Lasagna & Salad</i>	1:30pm Milton Adult Day Services Worship		5pm Chili Supper
	<i>Joel Victor</i>	<i>Jim Schmucker</i>	<i>Austin Schmucker</i>	<i>Sharon Schmucker</i>	<i>Carissa Hipsher</i>	<i>Clara Hipsher</i>
28	29	30	01	02	03	04
5pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting						
<i>Ethan Hipsher</i>	<i>Sue Ann Miller</i>	<i>Peggy Miller</i>	Interim Pastor Len Smith is available upon request on any Friday, Saturday, or Sundays in September. Please call or text him to set up a time and place. Cell Number: (574) 535-4269// Email: lensmith@tkimail.com			