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COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known



SEPTEMBER 2025

Worship Hours
Sunday,
September 7th
ONLY 9 a.m.

September 14,
21, & 28,
8:00 a.m. and
10:00 a.m.

Sunday Morning
Bible Study
10:15 a.m.

Pastor's Bible
Study
Thursdays 1:00 p.m.

Social Action
September 3,
10:00 a.m.

Worship & Music
September 4,
10:00 a.m.

Stewardship
September 4,
7:00 p.m.

Visitation Ministry
September 8,
10:30 a.m.

Christian
Education
September 8,
6:30 p.m.

Concert
September 9,
6:00 p.m.

Council Meeting
September 9,
7:00 p.m.

Worship Services
Available on the net
at
www.commofchrist.org

Church Office
Closed
Monday,
September 1

From Pastor Steve - With Jesus On the Margins

Here's a statement that will surprise absolutely nobody: there are no cool birds inside my house. Only four humans and one dog, but no interesting birds. They don't even come right up to my kitchen window or tap at the glass for me to watch when I'm doing the dishes after supper.

If I want to get to spot birds, I have to venture out of the house, through the sunroom, onto the back deck, into the yard, out into the neighborhood, or over to a Metro park. Once I get outside "my territory" and into the less familiar places further out from my home base, I see and hear all kinds of winged wonders. There's a hummingbird that has been drinking at the phlox in my back yard, and yellow warblers go dashing among the trees there, too. Or in the further reaches of the church yard, toward the prairie meadow, you can see swallows dive bombing and swooping like fighter jets on a training mission early in the morning, or if the conditions are right, you'll spot a turkey vulture or a hawk. And over at the river, if I am quiet, a heron just might emerge from the branches and float on big wide wings upstream. I've been noticing these days just how much unique beauty and unexpected difference are waiting to be seen, the further I get from the usual center places of my life. When I go to those spots on the margins—the edges of my yard, the wild corners of the church yard, or the untamed river—I discover wondrous things waiting to be encountered.

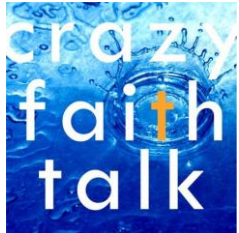
In this next phase of our year in discipleship, "Life on the Edge: Christianity Beyond Our Comfort Zones," our focus will be "With Jesus on the Margins," and I hope you'll hear that theme, not as something frightening, but rather as something full of beautiful possibilities. Like stepping outside the familiar bounds of my house to meet a hummingbird or a heron, Jesus is always going outside the bounds of polite company or closed social circles to meet people who have found themselves on the fringes. Sometimes they are on the margins because they are sick, and the wider society has pushed them out to contain the contagion. Sometimes they are outcasts because they are seen as sinners or sellouts—like Zacchaeus, the tax collector. Sometimes they are kept at arm's length because of their ethnicity, language, or way of dressing, like the Samaritan or the centurion whose paths cross with Jesus. Sometimes they are simply the folks who have been overlooked, left out, or left behind. But Jesus sees them all. He sees them, and rather than pitying or looking down on them, he names the beauty, the belovedness, and the infinite worth of every last one of them. Jesus doesn't go out to the edges of society holding his nose and scowling, like a roadside worker picking up litter; he goes out to the margins like he is ready to find herons, hawks, or hummingbirds. He goes to meet people where they are, to heal whatever places in them might be hurting, to restore anything in them that is lacking, and to declare that they are each beloved.

FROM PASTOR STEVE, CONTINUED.....

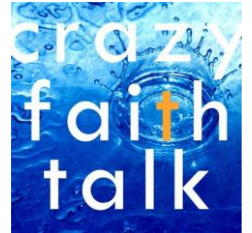
And of course, part of being disciples of Jesus is going where Jesus goes... among the people that Jesus meets... and to be prepared to be delighted and surprised. This month as we go *With Jesus on the Margins*, we'll be invited to go beyond our comfort zones to places off the beaten path of our daily routines, with folks who might be new faces, and to try new things that take us away from our home-base familiar places. We'll make sandwiches for *Food for Thought* to help engage neighbors on the streets of Toledo. We'll welcome new members into our church family. We'll hear from folks who are neighbors we might have overlooked, whether friends on the North End around Salem, Christians living and serving in Palestine and the Holy Land or caring for the needs of migrant workers in northwestern Ohio or school children near and far. But we don't go into those places to look down on anyone or pity them—we go as people seeking to meet neighbors, to follow Jesus, and to see signs of the wondrous diversity of God's creation. Who knows—we might even spot a heron along the way.

Join us this September as our year of discipleship take us *on the margins with Jesus*. We'll take these steps together.

Christ's Peace,
Pastor Steve



Crazy Faith Talk Highlights “Profiles in Courage”



Our weekly podcast, “*Crazy Faith Talk*,” offers conversation and insights looking at a variety of topics, subjects, and ideas from faith and church life to pop culture and everything in between. *Crazy Faith Talk* releases new episodes every Tuesday at noon, and you can listen for free, either by finding the link on our Facebook page or even asking your Smart Speaker (like Amazon Echo) to play the podcast “Crazy Faith Talk.” *Crazy Faith Talk* is now on Spotify! If you like to listen to music or podcasts using the Spotify app, you can find *Crazy Faith Talk* there! *Crazy Faith Talk* features our own Pastor Steve and Vicar Natalie, as well as Sarah Aasheim, an ELCA pastor serving in eastern Pennsylvania. We are also excited to announce the return of conversation partner and colleague Erica Wellner, who had to take time away from the microphone and her ministry life earlier in 2025 to deal with recovery from surgery and health issues. So now, with all four voices back in the conversation, we're ready to explore new topics and see where it takes us. Think of it like being invited around the table to listen in to pastors talking through their own faith, questions, and struggles, and being able to take the conversation with you, listen, and reflect on wherever you go—in the car, from your smart-speaker, or on your phone or tablet.

This September, “Crazy Faith Talk” has begun a new series we're calling “Profiles in Courage: Biblical Characters of Bravery.” We'll be exploring the stories of people in the Bible who showed courage in unique and often surprising ways, from a daring peacemaker that averted disaster in the story of Abigail to the action movie spy-thriller plot twists of Ehud the judge, to many more. And we'll discover, too, that there are many ways to be brave in our day and time, as we listen to the direction of the Spirit to spur us to act, to speak, to serve, and to love in our own lives. This series will both illuminate some lesser-known stories from the Bible and open up reflection about being courageous in our lives of faith, too. There's something for everyone, so listen in and check out this series with our weekly posts on our church Facebook page or Twitter/X (@BeingGraced), by searching for “Crazy Faith Talk” on Spotify, or on your smart speaker!

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

New for Fall Adult Forum: Who Is My Neighbor?

Our Adult Forum starts the fall season off with a new series we are calling, “Who Is My Neighbor?”, which is inspired, as you can imagine, from the question in the gospel that prompts the story we call the Good Samaritan, where Jesus shows us that anyone God sends across our path is a neighbor, and therefore someone for us to love and be loved by. During the weeks of this series, starting September 14 during the 9:00 a.m. hour (between services) we will get the chance to hear from voices who can speak to the experience of neighbors near and far whose stories and needs might be quite similar to our own, or very different. We’ll get to hear from folks like Pastor Mike Hanck about the community being built by the “Norf-End Neighbors” in the Vistula neighborhood of Toledo, Synod Staff member Calla Gilson who has spent time doing Young Adult Global Mission work in Israel and Palestine, and others who can share about different communities of neighbors around us in the world that God loves. Join us for these conversations throughout September and into October, beginning with our first Sunday back with two services, September 14!



Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in September: “Faithful Rebels—Case Studies in Devout Defiance”

This September, our Thursday Afternoon Bible Study begins a new series we’re calling “Faithful Rebels” that will look at stories of holy troublemakers who went against the flow, spoke up against the powers of the day, or witnesses in countercultural ways in their own times and places. From the Hebrew midwives in Pharaoh’s Egypt who saved the babies that the king ordered to be killed to prophets like Elijah challenging their own leaders, to the men in the fiery furnace refusing to bow down to a golden statue of an arrogant king, the Bible is full of stories in which God worked through people who bravely stood up against the expectations (or official decrees!) of the day as part of their way of living out their faith, caring for those in danger, or pointing to the presence of God in the world. If you have been looking for a good jumping-on point to join a Bible study, this is a great chance to join us! We’ll gather around the table in the Bible study/council room on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. starting on September 11, and we’ll be sharing video summaries each week on the church Facebook page and on YouTube in case you can’t be with us in person. Join us this fall to explore stories of devout defiance from faithful rebels!



Sunday School Year Kicks Off for Kids on September 14

We are excited for the return of a new Sunday School year for kids of all ages on Sundays, and we invite you to join us on Sundays in the 9:00 a.m. hour to learn about Jesus, explore stories from the Bible, and grow in faith together with friends! With the work of our Christian Education committee and Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Facilitator, Bryce Hinegardner, to select an exciting new curriculum to use this year called “WonderInk” that will open up some of the BIG stories of the Bible, we have a team of teachers who will be a real blessing for our kids! Our primary class (our preschool, kindergarten, and primary-aged kids) will be in the long classroom (also called the Library) once again this year for class, and the upper grades will be in our youth room (the room with the couches and comfy furniture and the uniquely painted walls). And no matter what, there’s a place for you! Hope you’ll join us on Sundays between services starting September 14!

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD



Blue Jean Sunday
September 7, 9:00 a.m.



CONFIRMATION CLASS

Blue Jeans Sunday—September 7

As we mark the anniversary of the founding of our congregation, we're once again having a special outdoor worship service in the back yard of the church. Here at Community of Christ, we call it "Blue Jean Sunday," and we celebrate it with special music, outdoor worship, and a host of food, fellowship, and activities following on Sunday, September 7th. Worship will be at 9:00 a.m. for the last time this summer (beginning on Sept. 14, we'll be back to our usual rhythm of an 8:00 a.m. and a 10:00 a.m. service with Sunday School in between), outside in the church yard on the back side of the building. All are invited to bring your own lawn chairs for the service and for time afterward for fellowship, although we will have several rows of chairs set up for those who don't bring their own seating. During the service, we'll be receiving new members into the congregation, so this is an extra special and joyful occasion! And then after worship, we'll have a brunch organized by the Fellowship Committee open to all! This year, we will invite all who bought one of our new "Be the Evidence of God's Love" shirts through Outreach to wear it to the service, and we will plan to get a BIG group picture between worship and brunch!

Confirmation Class Kicks Off for the Fall

Our new year of Confirmation Classes will kick off on Sunday, September 21, and once again, we are looking ahead to a great year in renewed partnership with neighbors at Zion Lutheran in Waterville! This year, our confirmation students will be exploring the sweep of the whole Bible and how we find our place in the wider story of God's "unfolding promise to mend the entire universe," as author Daniel Erlander puts it. This year will be a great experience for our young people to grow in faith and deepen their relationship with Christ, while learning to think theologically and live as witnesses! Our first confirmation class session will be September 21 at 12:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran in Waterville, with the rest of the year's classes rotating location between Zion and Community of Christ. Stay tuned for more news and moments from our year in faith together!

THE MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE BIBLE *Speak*

Attention Ladies! September is quickly approaching, so that means the **Tuesday Ladies' Bible study** will be starting sooner than we think! The first day of class will start on September 9th @ 8:30 am. This fall, we will be reading "The Mothers & Daughters of the Bible Speak" by Shannon Bream. Please purchase the book and the workbook that goes with it as soon as possible. I am asking you to read the first chapter, "Jochebed and Miriam," and complete the first chapter in the workbook so that when we meet on the first day, we can dig into the study. The workbook is not difficult and will enhance our discussions. Also, Vicar Natalie will be joining us for some of the lessons and will lead the discussion. This is a change from what we have done in the past, but I think it will be a great change of pace for us. Invite a friend & be sure to sign up on the kiosk so I will have an idea of how many will be attending. Questions or concerns? Call Becky King @ 419-349-7319. See you in September!

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

****Thank You!****

We are grateful to all who joined us this summer for our spiritual practices. Your presence and participation made these gatherings meaningful. Please be on the lookout for a survey in the coming weeks—we would love to hear about your experiences and receive your feedback.



**Spiritual Practices
Visual Arts
08/07/2025**



**Spiritual Practices
Praying with Beads
08/14/2025**



**Spiritual Practices
Praying through Legos
08/21/2025**



Worship Volunteer Schedule

September 2025



Week	Sept 7 – 9 AM only	Sept 14	Sept 21	Sept 28
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	None Needed	Theresa Loga	Theresa Loga	Theresa Loga
Acolyte/Crucifer 9/10:00	Laurie Mauro / Theresa Loga	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 9/10:00	Vince Mauro	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler
Camera Operator	Don Schroeder	Sarah Rockwell	Kevin Swagler	Rick Yokum
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Joseph Perkins	Sue Brown
Communion Prep/Clean 9/10:00	Bev Fischer	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Sue Brown
Greeter West 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Rick Metcalf
Greeter East 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Linda Metcalf
Greeter East 9/ 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Natalie Rilling	Rob Kohntopp	Volunteer Needed
Greeter West 9/ 10:00	Please Volunteer	Volunteer Needed	Jill Kohntopp	Volunteer Needed
Lector 8:00	None Needed	Josef Perkins	Becky King	Katherine Whitacre
Lector 9/10:00	Carol Wiemken	Volunteer Needed	Robin Fritz	Volunteer Needed
Worship Asst 8:00	None Needed	Josef Perkins	Cheryl Fischer	Theresa Loga
Worship Asst 9/10:00	Laurie Mauro	Dean Nofzinger	Don Schroeder	Kevin Swagler
Verger 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Becky King
Verger 9/10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

****Volunteer list as of 08/18/2025. If you need to cancel your scheduled date, please arrange for another volunteer to take your place and fill your time slot. Remember to cancel your slot on Sign-Up Genius so the person covering for you can sign up.**

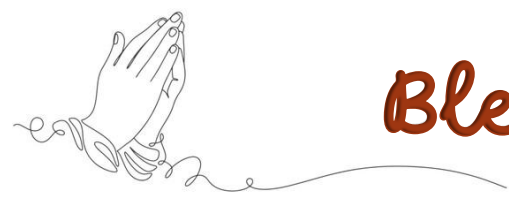
Lectors: The readings are available for preview on our website at www.commofchrist.org under “Worship and Bulletins” and then the appropriate bulletin date.

Bulletin Assistants: Arrive 15 minutes before service to pass out bulletins. Count the number of people in attendance (including worship volunteers and all in the nursery if applicable) and mark this number on the chart inside the kiosk.

Door Greeters: Arrive 15 minutes before service to greet members and visitors at the doors of both entrances of the church.

The Verger: is a caretaker role who keeps their eyes and ears open to lend a hand for any need that arises with congregants or worship providers during the service.

Should you have any questions, please contact Laurie Mauro at (419) 877-5366. Thank you all for your time and attention to helping make our Worship Services run smoothly!



Blessings & Prayers

Prayers

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN OUR DAILY PRAYERS FOR ALL WHO ARE ILL, SHUT IN, RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED, MILITARY, OR IN NEED OF PRAYER:

GREG AUBELL, MARTINA BENTON, SHIRLEY COFER, VIRGINIA DILLON,
JIM & SUE ENK, LARRY GEER, PAULA GRUHLER, RON HETHERWICK, LUKE HOLTZ, ART INGMIRE, TOM
JENNINGS, MATT JURRUS, TRISTAN KIMMEY, CAROL MASON, SANDY MCPHERSON, AMY MEAGHER,
FRANK O'KONSKI, DOROTHY PETRELL, CHRISTAL & CHAD PRITCHARD, STACI,
NATALIE RILLING, DICK RISON, AND PHYLLIS STURGEON
MILITARY: JAY RASMUSSEN, NOAH PITZEN, AUSTIN CUNNINGHAM, JAKE COPE

Prayer Requests



Prayers of the Church

To keep our prayer requests current and fresh in worship, we update our prayer list every two weeks. The names you provide will be included in the congregation's prayers for two weeks. If you want to renew your prayer request, please use the form available in the gathering area or contact the church office. Thank you. Continue to pray for one another!



Children's Sermon

Kids of all ages, please join Pastor Steve for a Children's Sermon at the 9:00 a.m. service. This is the Pastor's time to share the good news of Jesus with our younger friends! He'll even have a sticker waiting just for YOU!!!!



IN LOVING Memory

We hold in our prayers the family of Amelia Hartbarger. May the Lord surround them with peace and comfort in the days ahead.

Prayer Shawls

If you are interested in making a prayer shawl or know of someone who would be blessed by receiving a prayer shawl, please contact Cheryl Fischer 419-345-3033.



Thank You! We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have so generously provided salads and desserts for recent funeral luncheons. Your gifts of time, care, and food have been a true blessing to the families we serve during their time of loss. If you brought a dish, your containers are ready for pick-up on the cart located in the kitchen.

CoC Ministry Dates to Remember



Next Meeting Date

September 3 @ 10:00 a.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 4 @ 10:00 a.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 4 @ 6:00 p.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 8 @ 10:30 a.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 8 @ 6:30 p.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 8 @ 6:00 p.m.



Next Meeting Date

September 8 @ 6:00 p.m.



Bryce is learning how to quilt!



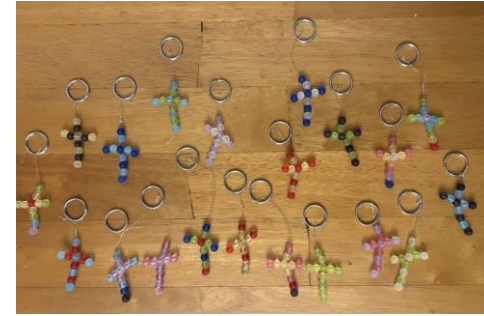
For our last Summer Story Hour, Mr. Bryce read us the final part of the story of Jesus in Miracle Man. Thanks to all who were a part of this fun summer event!



Thanks to all who joined us to build with LEGO and meet our children and youth facilitator Bryce today! So much fun!



Youth AND TEENS!



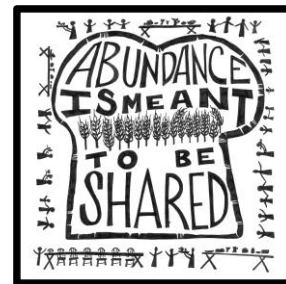
Blessing of the Backpacks and bead crosses for backpacks, bookbags, briefcases, or jackets, as a reminder that God's love is with you wherever you go throughout the new school year. 🙏❤️✝️



Thanks to all who came out for our Back to School Yard Party—we had more than thirty-five friends from across several congregations and a great time!



ANNOUNCEMENTS



New Tote Bags from Social Action Support Salem

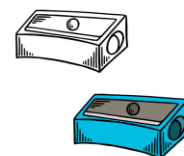
One of our ongoing mission partners in the Toledo area is Salem Lutheran Church, the oldest Lutheran congregation in Toledo and an ongoing presence for good in the Old North End neighborhood of Vistula. You may well have read or participated in their weekly Tuesday night meals for the community, helped with Trunk or Treat in their parking lot, planted trees across the street, or participated in the Angel Tree gift giveaway for kids in the North End. You might have also seen or heard about their new monthly initiative called “Breakfast Church,” where they offer a free breakfast as part of Sunday worship once a month. In other words, our friends at Salem are doing good work all the time to feed neighbors, invite them to worship in ways that nurture both body and spirit, and care for their community. And we are blessed to get to connect with that good work where Christ is present at a number of points throughout the year.

We are continuing our partnership with Salem in a number of ways this fall, and one of them is to once again plant some additional fruit trees in the growing arboretum adjacent to the church, and we are inviting your support of the costs for those trees with a new tote bag that can be great for carrying groceries, wrapping gifts, or holding your personal items on a day’s errands. These tote bags have the same design as the stickers we made available earlier this August, with the message, “Abundance is meant to be shared,” echoing the Scriptural call to use our resources for the good of all, and Jesus’ teaching that “To whom much is given, much is required” (Luke 12:48). You can still get stickers in the gathering space while supplies last, and you can get one or more of these tote bags on Sunday mornings at the table in the gathering space as well and know that you are directly helping to feed neighbors, to plant trees, and to share the good things God has placed in our lives—which is exactly what those good things are meant for. We hope you’ll boldly put one of these stickers on something you carry around with you or use one of these tote bags as a way to start a conversation, prompt a moment to share your faith with someone, or to remind you both of God’s generosity and our call to share the abundance God puts in our lives.



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

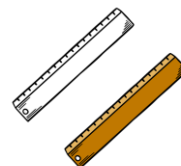
School Kits



Project Promise – Build Kits of Care” through Lutheran World Relief. These kits allow students of all ages in third-world countries to attend school. Donations will be collected through September.

Items Needed for each bag: *(New Items Only Please)*

- ❖ 4 – 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper, approximately 8” x 10 ½”; no loose-leaf paper
- ❖ 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches
- ❖ Pencil sharpener
- ❖ 1 pair of **BLUNT** scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- ❖ ~~5 unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers~~ (we have plenty, thank you!)
- ❖ 5 black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)
- ❖ Box of 16 or 24 crayons
- ❖ 2 ½” long eraser



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GENEROSITY!!**



ANNOUNCEMENTS



LADIES' LUNCH



The Ladies' lunch will be held at MaMa Theresa's Italian Restaurant, located at 24099 Front Street in Grand Rapids. They offer wood-fired pizzas along with traditional Italian dishes. Please register at the kiosk and let us know if you need a ride. See you in September! For questions, call Becky at 419-349-7319.

Ladies Book Club



Our first book will be *The Women* by Kristin Hannah. Vietnam has haunted many of us through the years. This book follows one woman who served as a nurse, making lifelong friendships and coming home with many of the same problems experienced by her male counterparts...PTSD, addictions, and a sense that she no longer knows who she is or is supposed to be. This is a tale of friendship, adversity, and eventually growth. We meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. Come if you loved or hated the book, if you finished it or not, it all makes for great discussions! Bookmarks with the upcoming dates and book titles are available on the information table in the gathering space



Choirs Start in September!

Vocal Choir begins on Wednesday, September 10th!

Bell Choir begins on Thursday, September 11th!

Both Choirs start at 7:00 p.m.

All are INVITED to JOIN!!!



Choir will be starting up again on Wednesday, September 10, at 7:00 p.m.

Looking for new ways to serve the church and also be filled up by the church? Singing in the choir is the perfect balance between giving and receiving. You give the gift of your participation; you receive connection with the gospel message as you join your voice with others to Make Jesus Known.

Choir rehearsals will be starting up again on Wednesday, September 10th, with our first Sunday morning anthem being Sunday, September 28th. Lisa and Eric are excited to reconnect with returning members and eager to welcome anyone who is interested in giving the choir a trial run.

We will be operating on sessions again through Christmas. You are free to participate in as many or as few sessions as your schedule allows. The sessions are listed below. Signing up through Sign-Up Genius or on the gathering space kiosk helps us in our planning.

Session 1 - 9.10-10.12, Session 2 - 10.15-11.2, Session 3 - 11.5-11.23, Session 4 - 12.3-12.21

ANNOUNCEMENTS



You're Invited: Conversations 'n More and Lunch – Friday, September 12

Join us for a meaningful afternoon of connection and community at Conversations and More, happening on **Friday, September 12**, in the **Fellowship Hall**.

We'll begin with a **delicious lunch at noon**, followed by engaging **conversations and activities from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.** This is a wonderful opportunity to share stories, enjoy fellowship, play games, and explore thoughtful topics together in a warm, welcoming environment. Please sign up at the kiosk so we are sure to have enough food 😊

Whether you're a regular attendee or coming for the first time, we look forward to seeing you there! The kiosk has a signup sheet. Please sign up so we know how many to plan for.

Please mark these dates on your calendar for future Conversations 'n More events: These meetings will be from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. on September 23, October 10 and 28, and November 14 and 25. We will not meet in December and will start back up on the second Friday in January.

If you have questions or if you need a ride, please call either Cheryl Fischer at 419-345-3033 or Cinda Pontsler at 419-356-9290.

JOIN US for our Youth Group Kickoff – September 14

We're launching something NEW! All students in **grades 7–12** are invited to join us for the **Youth Group Kickoff on Sunday, September 14th at 7:00 p.m.** This is the start of an exciting year of fun, friendship, faith, and Kingdom living with youth from both **Community of Christ** and **Providence**.

Come meet Bryce, make new friends, play some games, hear what we're all about, and help shape what's next. You won't want to miss it!



Save the Date - Corn Maze Craze October 19



This fall, the Anthony Wayne Area Youth will be kicking off a brand-new tradition—the Corn Maze Craze! On Saturday, October 19, from 2:15–5:15 p.m., youth in grades 7–12 are invited to meet at Community of Christ, where we'll load up the buses and head out to Gust Brothers Farm for an afternoon of autumn fun.

We'll tackle the corn maze, enjoy a classic hayride, climb the giant straw bales, visit with the farm animals, and, of course, treat ourselves to some delicious doughnuts! This is a perfect chance to bring a friend and enjoy the best of fall together.

Sign up at the kiosk or through the Sign-up Genius on the church website so we can plan for buses and treats. Bundle up for the fall weather and get ready for a fun afternoon—we can't wait to see you there!

Prairie Meadow Update



Showy Tick Trefoil



Sneezeweed



Tall Ironweed with
Gray-headed Coneflower



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Offering Our Time, Talent, and Treasure for 2026

If you're given a gift—say, for your birthday or at Christmas—it's a terrible thing to leave it wrapped in the paper. It's a shame if someone has gone to the trouble of choosing something for you that they hope you will enjoy, and you leave it in the packaging forever unopened. And on the flip side, when you receive a thoughtful gift and use it, well, everyone's lives are enriched. Your relationship with the giver is deepened, your joy is increased, and the same is probably true of the people around you whose lives are made better because you are using your gift well.

It's the same, really, in our relationships with God and with one another: when we use the gifts we have been given by God, our relationship with God is deepened, our joy is increased, and we make the world a better place for the people around us, too! That's why this fall, we are inviting everyone at Community of Christ to prayerfully consider how YOU will use your time, *talent*, and treasure—all gifts from God—in the year ahead, with our Time and Talent forms, and our invitations to Financial Commitment for the year 2026! You've already been given incredible gifts by God: the hours in each day, the abilities and interests that make us unique, and the resources we live on. Those are already in your hands, like a present waiting to be unwrapped and taken out of the box. This September, when you and your household receive the Time and Talent forms and Invitation to Financial Commitment forms for our church family, you have the opportunity to use those gifts with joy and gratitude! We're asking for you to complete those and return them to the church by October 12, so that we can get new volunteers connected with the ways they are being led to serve, and so that we can make our proposed 2026 budget grounded in realistic expectations of our planned giving.

Now, maybe you're wondering, "How do my gifts and talents fit in our church family, and where do we need volunteers here at Community of Christ?" Well, good news there, too! At our October 11-12 Festival of Talents weekend, we'll have displays representing each of the areas of ministry in our congregation so you can learn more about what we do and how you can be a part of it. Think of it like a career fair or college expo, but for serving God and God's people—check out the displays for each ministry at Community of Christ and let that help guide where you might serve in the year ahead! It's all about opening up the gifts God has already given us!





Calling All Talented Saints (That's You!)—2025 Festival of Talents on Oct. 11 at 7:00 p.m.

We need YOU—or better yet, we want to celebrate and honor *your* talents and abilities together with our whole church family! As we did last year at our first-ever “Festival of Talents,” we are once again inviting YOU to share your talents and celebrate the talents of others this October at our second annual Community of Christ *Festival of Talents!* On the weekend of October 11-12, we want to celebrate the many kinds of talents in our church family from people of all ages, from kids to great-great-grandparents, and everybody in between! That will include an evening program on Saturday, October 11, at 7:00 p.m., where we can perform and show talents of any kind.

Do you have a musical talent? Bring a song to sing, a piece to play, or share an ensemble with some other folks from Community of Christ! Are you a poet? Would you share a poem you have written? Are you exploring drama as a hobby or class at school? You could share a performance of a monologue, poem, or scene! Would you share a piece of artwork you've made, or a quilt or afghan you've sewn or knitted? Are there handcrafts or wood projects you've built, or skills you can showcase? We want to share them all—whether performed like in a talent show or displayed in our fellowship hall and gathering space like a gallery—all of it will be a part of this special weekend! Sign up at the kiosk and let us know about what you'd like to share as YOUR talent!

We'll also be using that weekend to let our congregational committees have displays and tables to share more of what they do, and how *you* might want to be a part of their ministry. Want to find out more about what the Toolbox ministry does? Interested in learning more about Social Ministry or Fellowship? This will be a chance to hear, see, and learn more, too.

But wait! Here's more! Our Festival of Talents weekend will also be a chance to share stories of what each of us has done with the *dollar* that was given to us back last October, when one Sunday morning, there were dollar bills stuffed secretly into all of our worship bulletins, and the dare to use them somehow for the Reign of God. (Didn't get your dollar, or weren't in church that day? See Pastor Steve, and we'll get you set!) Maybe you've already used your dollar somehow—maybe you bought stamps and sent a card or letter to someone who needed a note of caring; maybe you bought a flower for someone who could use a pick-me-up. Maybe you bought some sidewalk chalk and drew designs with children or grandchildren on a sunny day. Maybe it bought an item of canned food to be donated to the food pantry. Whatever you did—or whatever you might yet do this summer with it—we'll have a chance to share stories of how we used those dollars for the sake of good in God's world.

All of this will make for a great weekend between our Saturday program on October 11 at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday worship on October 12, and we hope you can plan to be with us for all of it to share in the excitement and to celebrate our various talents and gifts from God!

Community of
Christ's GOT
T★LENT



Loving Our Neighbors



Food For Thought Outing on September 12 for God's Work Our Hands

Every year, each September, congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), our church body, are dared to take on a service project of some kind to help celebrate the anniversary of the ELCA. In recent years, we have planted trees at the growing park and arboretum across the street from Salem Lutheran Church on the North End, and we had an outing to Urban Wholistics garden in downtown Toledo. This year, we are renewing a partnership with the organization "Food for Thought" that makes simple meals and sandwiches to give out to people in downtown Toledo. Sign up at the kiosk to join us on the evening of Friday, September 12, departing from the church at 5:15 p.m.! We hope you can join us to help feed neighbors and to let ourselves be instruments for God's grace to flow through us and into the lives of others as part of our witness to the world!

Special thanks to the hands from Toolbox who got to do a couple of projects in Toledo last week: our guys completed a plumbing job for the Office of Aging (referred by Salem) and the electrical outlet replacement for a home referred by Salem. Thanks to all who give their time and talent for the Toolbox and all who support this ministry with your treasure and energy!



Thanks to Community of Christ members who donated items and who helped bring them, along with donations from Maumee United Methodist Church, to be distributed to migrant workers through Bridge of Hope in Fremont! We appreciate your generosity!



Bridges of Hope

Clothing Drive: As the seasons change, Bridges of Hope needs warmer clothing! If you have any gently used or new adult-sized hoodies or sweatshirts, your donations would be greatly appreciated. Please place items in the collection box located in the hallway. Thank you!!



Loving Our Neighbors



Community of Christ
Congregation,

As the Coordinator of
The Bridge of Hope I would
like to thank you all.
Without your continued
support the work this ministry
does would not be possible.

When the world seems to be
getting darker everyday you
continue to be a source of
light & love.

Thank you for all
your support!

Destinee Chapa



With Gratitude...

We Celebrate YOU!

Please join us for an evening of appreciation,
honoring the generous hearts who bring our Mission to life.

Hosted by Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation

Thursday, September 18, 2025

5 - 7 pm

Providence Lutheran Church

8131 Airport Hwy, Holland, OH 43528

Please RSVP by September 10 to Mickey Ross

Email: MRoss@Genacross.org - or - Phone: 419-861-4965

This event is **free to all**, thanks to the generous sponsorship of:

Presenting Sponsor

Trust Company Family Offices



Supporting Sponsor

United Medical Supply Company

We look forward to celebrating **YOU** - our valued partners, supporters,
and friends - whose dedication makes all the difference.



Program:

5:00 - 6:00 pm: Reception/Fellowship Hall

* Mocktails & Heavy Appetizers

6:00 - 7:00 pm: Program

* Keynote speaker **Alesia Frerichs**, President & CEO, Lutheran Services in America

* Inspiring updates from:

Rick Marshall, President & CEO, Genacross Lutheran Services

Mike George, Executive Director, Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation

Please Note: Use Door E for the Reception and Door C for the Program



LOVING OUR MEMBERS AND NEIGHBORS

The freezer is full again! A huge thank-you to everyone who gave their time, treasures, and supplies to make it possible!



VISITATION MINISTRY

LOVING OUR MEMBERS AND NEIGHBORS

Special thanks to Vicar Natalie, Cinda Pontsler, and Cheryl Fischer for baking cookies as part of our back-to-school care packages for 18 college students and their friends as they prepare for a new semester! We appreciate your baking talents on what was a rainy day!



Pictured from left to right: Emma Abraham, Mariah Britsch, Kyle Gebhart, Emily Pollock, Mallori Pollock, Spencer Reid, Zoe Reid, and Anna Swartz. Not pictured: Avery Jones, Ali Moser, Gracee Pitchford, Amanda Kohntopp, Josh Kohntopp, Anna Rasmusson, Lucas Ray, Hailey Reid, John Sokoloski, Luke Yokum



Thank You email: 😊
Dear Michelle,
Please let everyone know I appreciate the cookies dropped off for me to take to Ohio State. It means a lot that my church family is thinking of me in college.
Thanks,
Josh Kohntopp





STEWARDSHIP

A Disciple's Way of Life



Exciting news from our church! We are offering you more options to support our church's financial needs. Council and Finance Committee (as well as the Synod) have recommended the use of a new online safe and secure tool to be able to give online electronically. The program is through Tithe.ly company used by many other churches and organizations. It has several options to be able to give as noted below:

- Your donations are recorded for your giving records, and confidential to the financial secretary.
- When you donate, you designate the fund you would like your monies to go toward e.g., building loan, general, thank-you, or other.

-There are four methods to give:

1. On the church website - @ <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2746426>
2. Online (through the tithe.ly website, search for Community of Christ)
3. By text: simply text the word **give** to get started.
Community Of Christ Lutheran Church: (833) 985-2568
4. Download the app and give.

2025 Building Loan Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
June	\$16,323	\$12,563	\$3,760
YTD	\$87,407	\$79,878	\$7,529
2025 General Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
June	\$33,139	\$34,088	(\$948)
YTD	\$207,273	\$220,606	(\$13,333)



Notes:

- The app and the web link allow you to input credit/debit card information. The text method will charge through your existing cell phone bill.
- There is a fee for this service for the convenience that it offers:
 - You can choose to cover this fee in addition to your donation, OR if you don't, the fee is deducted from the donation to the church.
 - This fee is a percentage typical of this type of service.

SIMPLY GIVING PROGRAM

PLEASE REMEMBER ---we also offer an **electronic offering**, (**Simply Giving**) that will withdraw your offering automatically from your bank account. THANK YOU FOR GIVING TO THE LORD'S WORK AT COMMUNITY OF CHRIST AND THE ENTIRE CHURCH!

Stewardship Committee Introduces "Community of Christ: In Focus" Video Series

The Stewardship Committee invites you to explore our new series of short videos, released monthly, that highlight various aspects of our ministry life here at Community of Christ. We're calling it *Community of Christ: In Focus*. Each video provides a deeper look into the many facets of our congregational life. You can watch the videos on our website by clicking on the "Community of Christ: In Focus" tab on the homepage or find them on our Facebook page and YouTube. Future videos will spotlight how our gifts of time, talent, and treasure support the work we do, giving you a clearer understanding of the many ways God is active in our community. We encourage you to check them out, share them with a friend, and discover how our shared resources are used for God's work in the world!

Community of Christ LUTHERAN Church



Brenda Druschel	09/01	Chad Ackerman	09/12	Lainie Davis	09/21
Don Heilmann	09/01	Chris Campbell	09/12	Gavin Rardin	09/22
Joan Bierley	09/01	Laurie Dewitz	09/12	Tracy Brosten	09/22
Stella Fifer	09/01	Lou Crippen	09/12	Cody Steinman	09/24
Larry Battles	09/05	Declan Stewart	09/13	Grant Schuchmann	09/24
Karen Oden	09/06	Caleb Leonard	09/15	Beverly Fischer	09/28
Kyler Dorton	09/06	Andy Ollerenshaw	09/16	Catherine Sautter	09/28
Leila Sheidler	09/06	Elaine Schubert	09/16	Lisa Papenfuss	09/28
Cherryl Stout	09/07	Joseph Perkins	09/17	Sandy McPherson	09/28
Jacob Detwiler	09/07	Donna Cochran	09/18	Susan Kaplan	09/28
Andrew Taylor	09/09	John Schuchmann	09/18	Kara Yokum	09/29
Beth Stewart	09/09	Taylor Johnson	09/18	Kevin Swagler	09/29
Larry Druschel	09/09	Amanda Kohntopp	09/19	Lucas Ray	09/29
Leanna Swartz	09/09	Matthew Rardin	09/19	Karen Meyer	09/30



Worship Schedule Update

Beginning **Sunday, September 14**, we will return to **two worship services** each week:
8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. with Facebook Live at 10:00 a.m.



**The church office will be closed
on Monday, September 1, 2025**



Like us on Facebook

Community of Christ Lutheran Church

Church Office Hours
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
(Monday through Friday)

419-877-0607
secretary@commofchrist.org
www.commofchrist.org

6517 Finzel Rd, Whitehouse, OH 43571