

Trinity Trumpet

September/October 2026

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Trinity United Church of Christ

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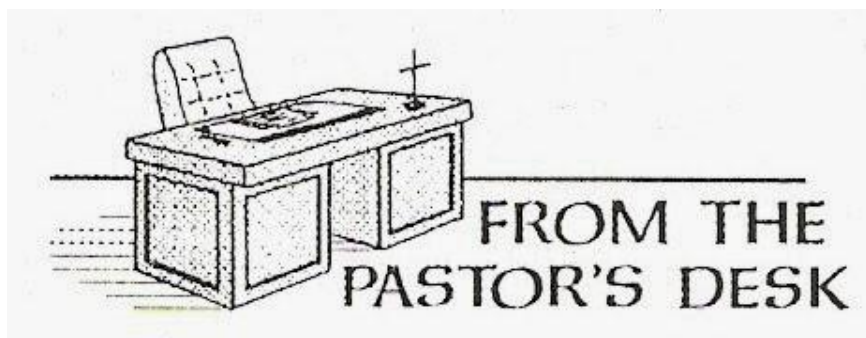
Vol. 31 No 5



"From Sun to Leaf"

The sun still burns, but golden light
Now spills in amber, soft and bright.
The air grows cooler, breeze more wise,
As summer's warmth begins to rise.
The sunflowers bow, their heads inclined,
To greet the breeze that stirs the wind.
They wave their gold, a hymn of praise,
To God who made them, strong and brave.
The heat recedes, a gentle sigh,
And morning mists now drift and fly.

The grass is greener, deep and wide,
A garden God has planted wide.
The birds return, with songs anew,
Their melodies a joyful view.
They weave their notes in autumn's air,
A praise that lifts the soul's desire.
The harvest fields, now ripened, call,
To gather in the golden all.
Like Christ's own harvest, rich and true,
We reap the blessings He has given to you.
So let us walk in God's own way,
From summer's blaze to fall's soft day.
With hearts that praise, and hands that work,
We find His grace in every spark.



A message from your Pastor

As your Pastor, I find myself doing lots of things. Some I am better at than others. Some I enjoy more than others. The one responsibility I have that I really don't like is my role in the Polity of

our church. It always seems to draw me away from tasks I have here at the Church.

Polity is the process our denomination, The United Church of Christ, has established to interact with the different settings of our wider Church. As some of you know the United Church of Christ has three other settings outside of our Congregation. There is a "County" Association, ours currently includes churches not only in Somerset but in Allegheny County Maryland, Bedford, and Cambria Counties. A statewide conference, ours recently merged forming the Key Stone Conference, which covers the entire Commonwealth of PA and a little bit of Maryland and New Jersey. And a national setting located in Cleveland Ohio.

There is a question before us, as to whether or not we, as part of our Somerset County Association, would like to merge into a larger association that would make up all of Western PA. This is a second attempt to do this. It was proposed, and failed to pass, last Fall. Since then, there has been effort made to change the proposal to make it more acceptable to all.

As you can imagine there are lots of things to consider. The County Association is the body that organizes support for the local Congregations. They support the committee that authorizes Pastors, supports Pastors in need, and helps Congregations that need to fill in the voids created by shrinking numbers of Pastors. With shrinking numbers all of those activities have become challenging for local churches and the Association.

There is a hope, that by merging into a "Western PA" Association (actually the old footprint of the former Penn West Conference) that a larger pool of willing individuals can fill the roles of these committees and better support the local church.

There are drawbacks to the idea. The values and principles we hold dear will be diluted into a broader cross section of counties. The people tasked with guiding and helping local churches and pastors will be hours away. There will still be a requirement of someone local to serve as liaison and provide back fill support to the broader association.

Will this merger help us at Trinity to achieve our purpose as it is set before us in the Gospels?

Your Consistory will have to decide how to vote on this matter. We could decide to vote to join in the proposed merger. We could

oppose it. There will be a meeting of the Somerset Association this Fall where our delegates, along with the other delegates from the sister Churches in the association, will vote. The Somerset Association requires a 2/3 majority to take such action.

If the vote passes, Trinity will become a member of the new "Allegheny Association" of the Keystone Conference. If the vote fails to meet 2/3 majority Trinity will remain in the Somerset Association as it is now. If the vote fails, the Somerset Association will continue to exist as it currently does.

It is not something that should be taken lightly. If you try to look for indications of what this merger would look like you naturally would consider the recent merger of the state wide conferences into the Keystone. While that organization is in its infancy you can see some of the struggles it is facing. We have included in this Newsletter an article written by our Conference Minister, Dr. Carrie Call. It is from an online newsletter from July 2026.

I personally think Dr. Call is working diligently to unite a diverse Church, you can see from the article the struggles she faces.

A decade ago, it simply would not have mattered what other churches under the banner of the UCC did. The local "Autonomy" of the United Church of Christ allowed each of the individual congregations to celebrate God's Love, rejoice in his gifts, and help each generation to embrace the Gospel Message as they receive it. That has changed as with all things as time carries us forward.

The internet, social media, and a growing connection throughout the world to everyone's hometown make it matter. Especially if you are concerned, as we all should be, about embracing younger generations. "Youth" use their phones to connect, interpret and understand the world around them. A quick Google search now unintentionally connects Trinity and Unity UCC to distant churches nationwide, and the decisions being made by the other settings of our church suddenly become relevant to our activities.

I know that God speaks to us through the voices of those around us. His Spirit an ever-present guide. We have to learn to hear, feel his direction. Prayer will make a difference. As you consider these things, do it in prayer. Should we vote to merge into a larger county association?

If you have questions don't hesitate to call or reach out to me to discuss.

Pastor Dave

A message from your Consistory President

It's hard to believe that the end of August is near and the kids are going back to school, the Somerset County Fair is over and to the pleasure of many and the disgust of some, football is back on TV. With all the hustle and bustle that surrounds our daily life, it is gratifying to reminisce on the church activities over the past summer. A lot has been accomplished on our church, as a building; installation of the HVAC system, painting in the sanctuary, remodeling of the kitchen, new lighting in the activities room and general house cleaning. A lot has been accomplished in our church, as a congregation; a joint effort with the Berlin churches in the 250th "I Love America" choral celebration in our Sanctuary, a summer picnic with our sister church Unity, our first and successful Bible Blast Christian outreach program, a rummage sale supporting our community with the remaining clothing going to the Plus Springs Women's Club and their Back-to-School Swap, excellent "Special Music" from very talented vocalists during our worship services, numerous activities organized by our Hugs and Kisses including field trips, Cornhole tournament and the raised garden beds. Honorable mention should go to the Trinity Ladies, who meet on the first Monday of every month, for their support across all the church Christian outreach activities.

Besides supporting the above-mentioned activities, your consistory has been working on several administrative activities. Most recently our Pastoral and Personnel Committee has conducted a mid-term review of our student pastor David. During that review Pastor David proposed several changes to his present statement of work for him to go from quarter time to half time, starting in January 2027. To form an alignment and consistency in the statement of work, the committee met with members of Unity to discuss this change in commitment and financial responsibilities. We are now finalizing his statement of work. The 2027 budget process has started, incorporating changes realized

this year and projecting where our facilities, Christian outreach activities and operating expenses will affect our revenue outflow vs projected income. All this will be presented to the congregation in December. Our church Constitution and By-Laws have not been updated for many years. We will be proposing several updates to this document. Changes will be made available for the congregations review prior to a member vote to formally update the By-Laws.

The HVAC system has been installed for several months and providing a pleasant environment to worship and attend Christian outreach activities. Our maintenance crew continues to fine-tune the system for cooling and air flow throughout the first floor rooms. As a reminder, we are still requesting contributions to cover the HVAC system.

Enjoy fall, reach out and help someone in need. A friend in deed is a good listener.

Bill Landis, President of your Consistory
Trinity United Church of Christ



Consistory Corner
Trinity United Church of Christ
July 20, 2026

Attendance

X Carrie Croner (2028) Deacon
X Allison Zimmerman (2027) Elder
X Shawn Hart (2028) Deacon
X Pam Bush (2026) Deacon

X Amy Saylor (2028) Deacon
X Jim Darr (2026) Elder
X Sue Coughenour (2028) Elder
X Bill Landis (2026) Deacon
X Lori Gindlesperger (2027) Deacon
A Jean Hart (2026) Deacon
X Jeanne Hillegas (2027) Deacon
X Pastor Dave Creamer
X Allen Strasser (2027) Deacon
X Renee Gindlesperger Fin. Sec.

President Bill Landis called the regular meeting of Trinity United Church of Christ Consistory to order at 6:30 pm. Pastor Dave offered prayer.

Minutes for June Meeting

Minutes for the June 15, 2026, meeting were sent to the consistory members electronically before the July 20, 2026, meeting. A motion was made by Amy Saylor, and seconded by Lori Gindlesperger to approve June 15, 2026, minutes.

Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was given to the consistory prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Jeanne Hillegas and seconded by Sue Coughenour to accept the treasurer's report and file for audit. **Motion approved.** The Audit Committee will be doing a 6-month financial review on August 8, 2026, in Fellowship Hall. So far, the HVAC campaign has only received approximately \$30,000. Money to replenish funds is coming in very slowly.

Student Minister's Report

Pastor Dave Creamer reported that he is still working 3 days per week for Penn State. His Sunday work is progressing as usual. He had the privilege to perform the wedding of Sam

Marker and Grace Romesberg on July 11, 2026. He continues to serve one day per week, for two hours as a Chaplain at the UPMC Somerset Hospital as one of his requirements. Seminary classes will resume in August.

Standing Committee Reports

Trustees – The HVAC is being tied into the Wi-Fi so that it can be accessed by phone.

Old Business

Christmas Tree – There are many discounts offered on Christmas trees in the month of July, with coupons currently on hand. Pastor Dave Creamer, Bill Landis, and Jim Darr will meet with the Berkley's daughters to make sure these discounts are taken advantage of.

Bylaw Review – The Elders met prior to this meeting to discuss possible changes to our Church Bylaws. Membership was always partly counted by record of communions taken, which is no longer being tracked since 2020. There are many people who consistently watch the church service online through either Facebook or YouTube. With these considerations, what does membership look like today? Pastor Dave encouraged the consistory to be thinking about this. He hopes to present changes in the Bylaws to consistory at the next meeting.

Bible Blast – Sue Coughenour reported that everything is progressing well for this children's event planned for August 2, 2026. Volunteers will be meeting this Thursday, July 23, 2026, to get their assignments and go over what is involved, and to make sure they have clearances done. To date committee has spent \$826.61, with many things being donated, and have received \$913.94 in donations. There are still expenses to be paid for, such as Bible booklets at

approximately \$500. Donations are still needed to cover these expenses. We are planning for 100 children.

New Business

Semi-Quincentennial (250th) Anniversary Committee –

Reon Engleka attended the meeting to give an update on what is being done for the celebration, and to submit requests for funds on three separate needs. Consistory provided \$1,000 towards the celebration to the committee last year, and \$90 of that money was used to date; 2 banners were purchased for various parades. Rental of Borough Building for the covered-dish meal to be held on Heritage Sunday, June 6, 2027, will be use up more of that money.

First request for funds was for the printing of anniversary booklets to be printed by Beggs Printing. We would be ordering 200 booklets at a cost of approximately \$1,296.63. Mount Zion and Unity UCC, our sister churches, have been invited to events so they are included in the 200 count we have. Trinity Lutheran Church would be ordering an additional 300 booklets at their own cost.

Second request was for a catered meal at the Borough Building on October 10, 2027, at a cost of between \$14-16 per person. The Firemen's Axillary may be available but that has not been determined. Otherwise, we would get an outside caterer to provide this meal. The church would pay for the meals, as this is a special celebration that only comes around once. People would be asked to sign up a couple months in advance for the meal, with the understanding that if they sign up, they are expected to be at the meal. We would have to pay for their meal even if they don't show up. Reon is thinking possibly 200 might show up.

Third request is for a monument with an inscribed bronze plaque, mounted on a large rock and placed on the Humble House property. Permission has already been granted by the Berlin Historical Society for this. Both churches would share in this cost. Our cost would be \$2,000-2,200.

After discussion on this matter, a motion was made by Jim Darr to approve all three requests, but separate requests as monies would be needed at different times. Motion was seconded by Allison Zimmerman. **Motion approved.**

Personnel Committee Review – According to the contract made up with Pastor Dave Creamer, a yearly review is to be done to evaluate his work and to also review his cost-of-living increase. The Search Committee is recommending that Pastor Dave be given more than the usual 3% increase due to the amount of time he has been serving the church. He gives much more than just 1/4-time as outlined in his contract. Bill Landis will be contacting the Personnel Committee to put this in motion.

Facility Security – There was some discussion as to actions that should be taken to safeguard our congregation. There would need to be training done no matter which option we chose so it was suggested that perhaps Tim Sprowls could share his insight into the matter.

The meeting was adjourned by President Bill Landis at 7:52 pm.

The next meeting of the consistory will be on **Monday, August 17, 2026, at 6:30pm.**

Respectfully submitted, Susan Coughenour



CURRENT	MAINT.	BENEVOLENCE
Beginning Balance: \$228,981.01	\$37,039.15	\$2,760.00
Receipts \$23,974.24	\$1,440.00	\$4,121.00
Distributions \$20,323.96	\$7,540.00	\$5,989.00
Ending Balance \$232,631.29	\$30,939.15	\$892.00

Benevolence Distributions: Berlin Food Pantry (Individual Donations) – \$799; Pastor's Discretionary Fund - \$125; Nathan Spangle Eagle Project \$150; Global Ministries - Child Sponsorship - \$120; Hoffman Homes - \$460; Disaster Relief - \$150; JB Schrock Playground - \$50; Trinity Outreach (Benevolence Budget) - \$702.50; Camp Living Water - \$50; Operation Christmas Child (Hoagie Sale) \$955; Food Pantry (Benevolence Budget) - \$477.70; One Great Hour of Sharing - \$320; Our Churches Wider Mission - \$1,629.80

Memorials (through 8/1/26)

A memorial gift was given to the Hugs & Kisses in memory of Wayne Potter's Birthday.

--Jim Darr, Treasurer



Those Remembered in prayer:

God's guidance and protection for Armed Forces.

Shut Ins:

Mary Jane Harding, Cynthia Kelly,
Debbi Luteri, Lillian Potter, Lois Saylor

Healing Concerns:

Mark Amyot, Donnie Baxter, Paige Boyer,
Chris Brant, Rhonda Brown, Debbie Chafin, Tim Clites,
Susan Constantino, LaVerne Coslic, Tammy Coughenour,
Eric Custer, Lauren Davis, Tracy Dickey,
Judy DiPasquale, Deneen Eutsey, Linda Gallick, Dennis Griffith,
Karen Griffith, John Halverson, Andrea (Shaulis) Harris,
Joe Harris, Michael Harris, Joy Hay (Dwayne), Larry Hay,
Marilyn Heiple, Gary Hillegas, Karen Hittie,
Barry Landis, Wendy Leister, Richard Lilliston,
Jim Little, Nick Lorson, Blair and Phylis Lyons, Judy McCullen,
Larry McCullen, Joyce Miller, Laura Miller, Robert "Lee" Miller,
Carl (Edison) Paul, Kathy Picking, Easton Pritts, Brian Robb,
James Robb, Brett Sarver, Kayla Sarver, Tammie Saylor,
Nancy Schrock, Curt Shaulis, Missy Shaulis,
Dawn Edmiston-Strasser, Chuck Sullivan,
Larry Tinkey, Audrey Twombly, Barbara and Peter Usher,
Carl and Matthew Walker, Faye Walker, Robin Walker,
Nancy Weighley, Echo Kincaid Yoder

If you have information regarding the people on this list, please contact the office to make any revisions.

A New School Year

As a new school year begins, our church family has a wonderful opportunity to surround our students, teachers, administrators, staff, and families with prayer and encouragement. A new school year brings excitement and new opportunities, but it can also bring uncertainty, challenges, and change. We can remind our young people that they do not walk into their classrooms alone—God goes with them.

A Prayer for Students

Gracious and loving God,
We place our students in Your care as they begin a new school year. Give them curious minds, willing hearts, and the courage to face new challenges. Help them to learn, grow, and discover the gifts You have given them.

When they feel nervous, give them peace. When they struggle, give them perseverance. When they are tempted to give up, remind them that they are never alone. Help them to be kind to their classmates, respectful to their teachers, and willing to stand up for what is right.

Protect them each day as they travel to and from school. Surround them with good friends and caring adults. May their words and actions reflect Your love and grace.

Guide them in their studies and in the choices they make. Above all, help them remember that their worth is not measured by grades, achievements, or accomplishments, but by the immeasurable love You have for them.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

A Blessing for Educators

We also give thanks for the educators and school staff who pour their time, knowledge, patience, and compassion into the lives of our children and young people.

May God bless you with wisdom when answers are difficult, patience when days are long, and strength when responsibilities feel overwhelming. May God give you creativity to inspire, compassion to understand, and courage to lead. May you recognize the lasting impact of your work, even when you cannot immediately see its results.

May your classrooms be places of learning, safety, belonging, and hope. May you be encouraged by the lives you touch and reminded that your work is a meaningful ministry to the next generation.

As a church, let us commit to supporting our schools throughout the year—not only with our prayers, but also with our encouragement, service, and presence. May this new school year be filled with growth, discovery, friendship, and God's abundant grace.

Blessings to all our students and educators as a new school year begins!

Larry and Gale Hay would like to thank everyone for their calls, cards and prayers during Larry's ongoing back pain and other medical issues. It is heartwarming to realize that we have a

church family that cares for us and shares our heartaches. God Bless You!

Update on Adult Sunday School: The Fall semester will soon be upon us, and Sue Coughenour will once again be teaching the adult Sunday school class and will continue until the end of May 2027. Some of the topics we will be discussing are:

- How we got the Bible
- The Feasts of the Lord, with an emphasis on how it relates to Jesus
- A short Christmas series in December
- Study on the book of James
- A look at the Seven Churches mentioned in Revelation.
- Carry the Flame – a study about the Holy Spirit by Jim Cymbala
- Plus, more and not necessarily in this order!

If you have a topic or question about Christian life or the Bible, Sue is always open to ideas. Watch the bulletin for which of these studies she will be doing first.

In the meantime, Tom Calvert is teaching a Ray Vander Laan series on the life of Paul. These are great videos you should check out! The videos give you the back story of life in Paul's time, and challenges he faced that we don't see in the Bible. This series will end on September 13th.

VBS Sunday School

We are going to "ROAR" into VBS Sunday School starting on September 20th with a Rally Day and Back to School Celebration starting in Church with Children's time. Children will go down to Sunday School after Children's time and enjoy VBS Style Sunday School until 11:00am. The next VBS Sunday School will be on October 18th, "When life is unfair... God is Good" Come join us for a lot of fun, learning, snacks, games, crafts and more!! Mark your calendars.

Hugs & Kisses

Late August/September- ongoing community service- we will be picking corn at a local farm and picking vegetables from the raised garden beds to take to the food pantry on Tuesday evenings. Watch for text messages when ready.

Sunday, September 27th 12 PM- meet at church for lunch and bring bikes/helmets for bike and hike on the trail afterwards. Come join us for some fresh air and exercise!

Sunday, October 11th 12 PM- meet at The Alley in Central City for lunch and activities such as a golf simulator, air hockey, and pool tables. Join us for fun and fellowship together!

Trinity Ladies' next meeting will be held Monday, September 14, at 11:30 a.m. at Cup of Soul. We will be discussing the food we want to sell at the Historical Society's and Lions Club event.

We will be participating in the Historical Society's event on Sunday October 18. We will be selling food (what type, yet to be determined). We will need help making and selling these items. Please watch the bulletin for further information.

Thank You from Trinity Ladies to everyone who made the Rummage Sale a huge success. The profits will go to our Prayer Blanket project and other needs in the church.

Tips from the Bag Lady – Please remember that the plastic bags being donated are going to be used at the local food pantry; so, do not donate bags that are soiled or contain glitter or other debris. Do not donate bags that have tears or big holes in them. We don't want your receipts, flyers, bubble wrap, and other miscellaneous items. PLEASE ONLY donate grocery sized bags; small and larger bags cannot be used. Every bag that comes in must be double bagged for use at the food pantry. If you really want to make me happy, donate them already double bagged. If that isn't possible, then please don't wait to bring in bags until you have a large garbage bag full. It takes a lot of time to prepare these bags

for use. Please just use good common sense and courtesy when donating your bags. Thank you!

The Berlin Community Center



Trinity UCC has partnered with local Civic groups and active community members to create a community room using the Fellowship Hall on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 4:00. All folks from the community are welcome for socializing, sharing information, fellowship and much more. Stop in and play a game of chess, enjoy a cup of coffee, and learn about what is going on and how you can be a part of future activities. We hope in the future to have informational opportunities from the Agency on Aging and local volunteer groups.

Online Giving (Tithe.ly)

If you are giving through our recent online Tithe.ly and no longer need donation envelopes, please contact the office. There is a slight delay in the receipt of your online donations to the bank. Therefore, in order to give you a more accurate picture of our budget goals, we will be posting the giving information once a month as opposed to weekly. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the office or Renee.



There is an option on Tithe.ly to donate to the AC/HVAC fund in the drop-down menu.

Church World Services Disaster Kits.

Church World Services (CSW) assembles disaster kits to provide essential items to those in need, especially during natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty. These kits aim to restore Dignity and meet a critical yet often overlooked need. This is an ongoing mission as disasters have no expiration date.

CD's are available for the "I Love America" Choral Concert.

Please contact the church office if you are interested. A Free Will donation would be appreciated and will go to the Berlin Food Pantry along with the offering collected the night of the concert.

Pastoral Care: For those in need of pastoral care please contact Pastor Dave Creamer at 814-777-2280. If Dave is not available, please contact Tom Croner at 814-442-6740. If neither is available, contact Pam Bush at 541-990-0832

Worship Assistants

September 6

Sound: Lori Gindlesperger, Chris King

Organ: Nancy Bittner

Flowers: Larry McCullen Jr. & Cynthia McCullen-Janicki

Bulletin: Anonymous

Ushers: Pam Bush & Allen Strasser

Acolyte: Nathan Spangler

Lector: Cohen Clark

September 13

Sound: Pam Bush, Cohen Clark

Organ: Jean Ann Darr

Flowers: Dave, Missy, Matthew & Kaityn Miller

Special Flowers: Anonymous

Ushers: Sue Coughenour, Sheron Engleka

Acolyte/Lector: Cora and Lucy Wright

September 20

Sound: Bill Landis, Colton Custer

Organ: Amanda Custer

Flowers: Pam Bush

Ushers: Alissa Wright, Carrie Croner

Acolyte/Lector: Colton Custer

September 27

Sound: Pam Bush, Cohen Clark

Organ: Amy Clark

Flowers: Michelle Romesberg

Special Flowers: Allen Strasser

Ushers: Bob Brown, John Wisler

Acolyte/Lector: Avery and Isla Hillegas

October 4

Sound: Pam Bush, Cohen Clark

Organ: Nancy Bittner

Flowers: Nancy Bittner

Special Flowers: Bill & Barb Landis

Ushers: Jim and Jean Ann Darr

Acolytes/Lectors: Liz Hart, Riley Beckwith

October 11

Sound: Lori Gindlesperger, Chris King

Organ: Jean Ann Darr

Flowers: Mark & Lori Gindlesperger

Ushers: Shawn and Jean Hart

Acolyte/Lector: Truitt and Callum Ogburn

October 18

Sound: Jim and Jean Ann Darr

Organ: Ann Slifco

Flowers: Larry & Gale Hay

Ushers: Bill Landis, Jim Walker

Acolyte/Lector: Colton Custer

October 25

Sound: Bill Landis, Colton Custer

Organ: Amanda Custer
Flowers: Renee Gindlesperger
Ushers: Lori Gindlesperger, Jeanne Hillegas
Acolyte/Lector: Kaitlyn Miller

The Whole Congregation in Ministry and Assisted by

Dave Creamer, Student Pastor
Church Secretary: Pam Bush & Jean Ann Darr
Financial Secretary: Renee Gindlesperger
Chancel Choir Director Emeritus: Linda Gallick
Handbells: Jeanne Hillegas
Virtual Organist: Rick Kimmel

Consistory Elders:

Sue Coughenour, Secretary, 814-233-5413
Jim Darr, Treasurer, 814-267-5260
Allison Zimmerman, 814-267-4324

Consistory Deacons:

Pam Bush, Carrie Croner, Lori Gindlesperger,
Jean Hart, Shawn Hart, Jeanne Hillegas,
Bill Landis President 814-521-6800, Amy Saylor, Allen Strasser

Church Office Hours – Tuesday through Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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Blessings as Fall Approaches

As autumn deepens, the crisp air, golden leaves, and shorter days invite a season of gratitude, reflection, and gentle letting go. Fall blessings are heartfelt expressions that capture the beauty of change, the warmth of connection, and the quiet strength found in stillness.

Fall blessings are more than seasonal greetings—they are invitations to slow down, notice beauty, and find comfort in the quiet wisdom of change. They help us embrace the season's balance of rest and readiness and carry that peace into the coming months.

God Bless the Person Reading This Bulletin