

OCTOBER 2025

whisperings

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A Word from Pastor Kris

A Lens of Grace

Please forgive the delay in this month's newsletter — that's on me. I'm still adjusting to preparing a monthly message in this format while also stepping into the rhythms of fall ministry, including preparations for Charge Conference and all the many moving pieces that come with it. But in a way, that delay has inspired this message, because it touches on something I think many of us struggle with: grace.

True grace — the kind that reflects God's heart — is difficult to practice. In a world of division and deeply entrenched opinions, we are constantly faced with choices about how we will treat one another. Will my opinion take priority over my compassion? Will our disagreement matter more than our shared humanity? Too often, the answer is yes. And that's precisely what makes God's grace so powerful — because it is so rare and so difficult for us to master on our own.

Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:8-9, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."* This grace, shared with the church in

— CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Hope United Methodist Church

3474 Rothsville Road, Ephrata, PA 17522 (717) 738-3774

office@hopeumcephrata.gov ■ www.hopeumcephrata.org ■ www.facebook.com/hopeumcephrata

Sunday School 9 a.m. ■ Worship 10:30 a.m.

Ephesus during a time of deep division between Jewish and Gentile Christians, was a radical message. Since we are living in a time of deep division, we can receive this message well, too. The selection was a reminder that God's grace is not a prize to be earned, but a gift to be received — and that it is available to all people, no matter how different they are from us. Therefore, our good works and how we extend the grace God grants us *IS NOT FOR* our salvation but *BECAUSE OF* salvation.

You may respond by asking, if grace is freely given and not earned, then does that mean our differences don't matter? On one level, yes — our divides cannot cancel God's grace. But the deeper truth is that grace is meant to transform us. Our faith in Christ should shape the way we see and treat one another. It should help us look beyond disagreement to see the humanity in each other. Grace is not meant to erase diversity, but to help us embrace and even celebrate it.

I'll be honest — I'm still learning this myself. When I see people being harmed, individually or systemically, I grieve. Sometimes I get angry. But even then, I am reminded that God's grace is available to all — even those I struggle to understand or forgive. And that means I have to keep learning how to extend grace, even when it's hard.

So I ask for your grace and forgiveness for my delay with this newsletter — not because I deserve it, and not because I want you to see things my way, but because I hope that, even when I fall short, you can still see me as someone capable of receiving God's grace. And I hope you can see each other that way, too.

Because this is bigger than me or you — it's about how we see the world. If we begin to look at one another through a lens of grace, and if we encourage others to do the same, we might find new ways to live together even in our differences. We will disagree. We will see things differently. But grace allows us to see the image of God in one another before we see the argument. It helps us demand that our systems, our institutions, and even our government reflect that same grace in how people are treated. It helps us look across the aisle — politically, socially, spiritually — and still see a beloved child of God.

Grace doesn't mean we stop working for justice or speaking truth. Grace won't erase our differences, but it can transform how we live with them. And that's the beginning of something powerful. It means we do so with eyes that first see God's image in the person across from us. And maybe, just maybe, that's the starting point for healing the divides that seem so deep.

With hope for today and joy for tomorrow,

Pastor Kris

Pastor for Hope UMC and Wiest MUMC

► **SERMON SERIES:**

Choosing Faith: How Faith Defines and Refines Us

September 28 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

..... Part 1 - Faith to Change

..... Luke 17:5-10

October 5 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

..... Part 2 - Whole Faith

..... Luke 17:11-19

October 12 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

..... Part 3 - Persistent Faith

..... Luke 18:1-8

October 19 Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

..... Part 4 - Humble Faith

..... Luke 18:9-14

October 26 Laity Sunday Service

Hope UMC Staff and Office Hours

Pastor: Rev. Kris Pursel ■ Administrative Assistant: Laura Luciano

Director of Music: Lisa Helock ■ Organist: Dave Luck ■ Sexton: Doreen Deamer

Tuesday - Friday ■ 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

office@hopeumcephrata.gov ■ www.hopeumcephrata.org ■ www.facebook.com/hopeumcephrata

Office Notes

COLUMBUS DAY - MONDAY, OCTOBER 13 - Office Closed

FOR A USEFUL CALENDAR

Please fill out the yellow forms on the Administrative Assistant's desk to schedule meetings.

UPDATES

Please inform the church office whenever you set your next meeting date or select your next book or topic for your Sunday school or study. Thank you!

DEADLINES

Please submit all items for the bulletin by **12 p.m. Wednesdays** and by the **15th of the month** for the next Whisperings.

FLOWERS & BULLETINS

Contact Sandy Muckle if you want to sponsor altar flowers less than a week in advance.

You may share an altar flower order with a friend, so that each person keeps one bouquet of flowers after the service and the total price still equals \$50. Two dedications may go in the bulletin.

Sponsor Flowers - \$50.00

Available: October 5, 12, and 19

Sponsor Bulletins - \$10.00

Available: October 5, 12, and 26

CAN WE HELP?

For financial assistance, please contact Pastor Kris at 717-738-3774

Please notify the office of any changes to your contact information.

GAME DAY - SEPTEMBER 6



Outdoor Service & Fellowship Sunday Picnic





Church Council Update on Apportionments

At our July Church Council meeting, members revisited a decision first made in 2024 regarding the payment of apportionments to the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Last year, the council voted to withhold payments out of concern for not knowing clearly how these funds were being used. During that time, the Finance Committee continued to honor our church budget by setting aside the money into a separate account. After a season of prayer and discernment, the council unanimously voted to release those reserved funds and send them to the conference as budgeted.

Currently, our church is contributing 50% of our apportionments due to financial limitations, and this plan will remain in place through 2025. All points will be revisited again in 2026 as part of the budgeting process.

It is important to remember that apportionments support *connectional ministries*—the work of the conference on behalf of all churches, reaching far beyond our own community. Just as our congregation serves God by serving people locally, the conference organizes and resources ministries regionally and globally to transform lives in the hope of Jesus Christ. By moving forward in trust and unity, our council affirms that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, relying on the faithful stewardship of our conference leadership and celebrating the opportunity to join in ministry together.

Bruce Tucker, Church Council Chair

News and Meetings

One Great Year of Sharing Good Samaritan Ministries

Through Sunday, December 28, we will be collecting for Good Samaritan Ministries.

The donation jar is in the Sanctuary. As of **October 5**, we have collected a total of **\$256.00**. Thank you!

August - 5th Sunday Giving

The total collected on August 31 for Water Street Missions was **\$264.00**.
Thank you!

October Dates

- 5** World Communion Day
Holy Communion
Charge Conference
- 13** Columbus Day
- 15** Newsletter Deadline
Operation Christmas
Child Shoeboxes
Available in the Church Lobby
- 18** Bingo Night
- 19** Fellowship Sunday
Saints' Submission
Deadline
- 26** Harvest Home Sunday
- 31** Halloween

Weekly Events

Bells of Hope

Wednesdays at 6 p.m.
Sanctuary

Senior Choir

Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m.
Choir Room

Women's Book & Bible Study

Thursdays at 10 a.m.
Wide Awake Room 221

Men of Hope

Fridays at 7:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall
(First Friday of each month is
at Gus's restaurant.)

Fellowship Sunday

Fellowship Time follows morning worship service on the **3rd Sunday of each month**. Do you have a special snack that you enjoy? Bring it for all of us to enjoy on Fellowship Sunday! As a congregation, we are all responsible for the goodies we munch on while we visit and catch up with each other.

Write it on your calendars: "Bring a snack to share at church!" (In lieu of a snack, donate drinks and paper products.) – Thank you for taking part in Fellowship Sunday!

Church Administration Meetings

(All meetings are at 6:30 p.m. unless specified.)

- 5** Charge Conference - 12 p.m. (tentative)
- 6** Trustee Meeting
WPCM Meeting
- 14** Finance Meeting - 5 p.m.
- 21** SPRC Meeting - 5 p.m.

Adult Sunday Schools & Studies

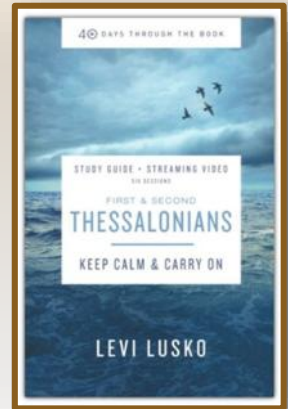
Seekers - Bruce Tucker

Sundays 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

September 7 thru October 12

Studying ***First & Second Thessalonians: Keep Calm & Carry On*** by Levi Lusko

Join Levi Lusko on a journey through Paul's words to the Thessalonians that will encourage you to stay grounded, remain faithful, and keep being diligent as you wait for Jesus' return. To the believers in Thessalonica, Paul addresses many of the core beliefs and practices that Christians of all maturity levels need to know to honor Jesus and impact *the world*. In this six-session study (streaming video included), bestselling author and pastor Levi Lusko guides you through these short letters from Paul, revealing how to press on and not become discouraged in your faith.

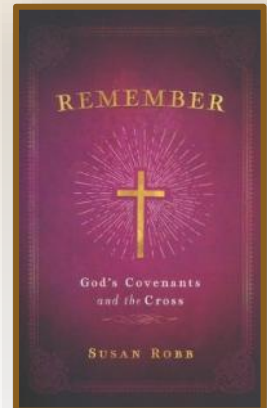


The Way - (*a name given to the earliest followers/disciples of Jesus*) - Rev. Kevin Readman

Sundays 9 a.m. in the Conference Room (Room 226)

October 5 and October 12 - Studying ***God's Covenants and the Cross*** by Susan Robb

October 19 - Studying ***the book of Jude, and exploring it's call and challenge to our following of Jesus.***



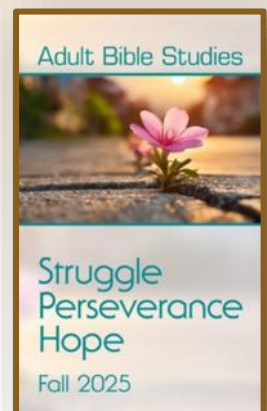
Wide Awake - Melissa Readman and Sandy Schmid

Sundays 9 a.m. in Room 221

Starting on **September 7**

Studying ***Adult Bible Studies - Fall 2025 - Struggle - Perseverance - Hope*** by Kevin Baker

This fall, our Bible lessons follow the theme "Struggle. Perseverance. Hope." They reacquaint us with Hebrew women whose faithfulness helped further God's plans; challenge us with Jeremiah's commitment; and offer us insights into living in love, faithfully imitating what is good, and praying with confidence. Our class is a traditional adult Sunday study class. All ages are welcome. We start the class with devotions and then have an adult study.



Men of Hope Book & Bible Study

Fridays at 7:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

(First Friday of each month is at Gus's Restaurant)

Starting on **September 12**

Studying *City In Shambles* from the book of Nehemiah

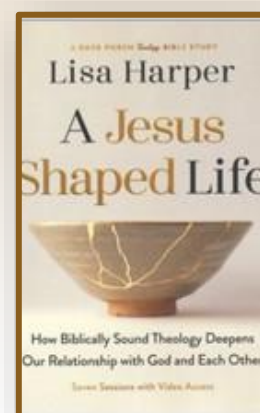


Monday Night Bible Study - Bruce Tucker

Mondays at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room (Room 226)

September 8 thru October 20

Studying *A Jesus Shaped Life* by Lisa Harper



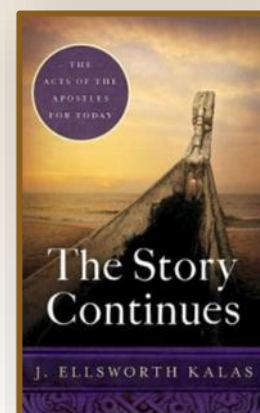
Women's Book & Bible Study - Sandy Schmid

Thursdays at 10 a.m. in Room 221

Starting on **September 25**

Studying *The Story Continues* by J. Ellsworth Kalas

At the very beginning of our faith, the Christian population numbered a few thousand, measuring only one percent of the world population. Today a single mega-church can boast a comparable number, and together, Christians now number more than two billion people. It all began with this little body of believers who knew a secret that needed to be shared. How did they do it? And what can we learn from them? Join best-selling author and beloved pastor, J. Ellsworth Kalas, as he explores the book of Acts to uncover the ministry motivations of the first followers—ordinary people who accomplished the extraordinary and who can serve as a guide for today's believers to carry on. Because the work is not done.





► Hope Preschool Prattle

October?!

The start of school has been fun and exciting for all of our students and staff. The weather has been beautiful and there has been a lot of outside time and activities. As the children have adjusted to schedules and routines they are also building little classroom families. It is amazing to watch the bonds form between students and between teachers.

The classes have been studying apples, families and sharing about themselves during the All About Me unit. Our Caring is Sharing event was a huge success as always. We had so many grandparents come in and share lunch with their student.

As always, the Brecknock Orchard field trip for our Pre-K classes was lots of fun. The children really enjoy the wagon ride, pumpkin and apple picking and the special fall snack they receive. October also brings Fire Prevention Week to the preschool. As you can imagine, the arrival of a firetruck and firefighters brings big eyes and squeals of excitement. We are so thankful to the Akron Fire Company for coming each year. We practiced our first fire drill and everyone did well.

October will wrap up with Trunk or Treat. Families decorate their cars so that the classes can trick or treat through the parking lot. It is so much fun to see everyone dressed up.

As always we appreciate the church's support and if you are looking to donate we are always in need of paper towels, clorox wipes, foaming hand soap, paper plates and napkins. The preschool also has a scholarship fund that you can contribute to at any time.

Happy Fall!

Mrs. B.

HOPE PRESCHOOL



THANK YOU NOTES...

- ❖ **Thank you** from the staff of the preschool for the gift bags that were given from the church members. They feel so appreciated and are truly touched by the generosity of the congregation.
- ❖ **Thank you** for all the cards that we received for our 65th anniversary on September 10 - Dave & Sandy Schmid
- ❖ **Thank you** for all the prayers - Dave Luck

Remembered with Love

August 26

Franklin (Frank) Widder - † Member

September 2

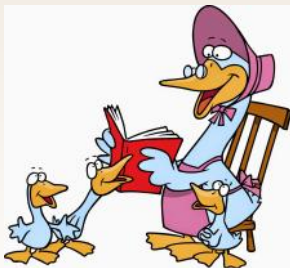
Barry Fair - Classmate of Diane Hornberger

September 27

William Ronald Fulton - Father of Kelly Martin

Volunteers Needed

for the Standby Nursery Team. Please see Laura if you are interested. Thank you.





Wild Church

Partnership with Hope Meadow

“The seasons change, and you change, but your Lord abides evermore the same, and the streams of His love are as deep, as broad, and as full as ever.”

— Charles H. Spurgeon

Upcoming Gatherings:

October 26 at 5pm

November 23 at 3pm

Our gatherings include reflections, observations, poetry, and your input!

Upcoming Events

► **Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes** - Wednesday, October 15

We will be participating in this annual mission project of Samaritan's Purse. Now might be a good time to start shopping for items to fill a box or two. Shoeboxes and literature will be in the lobby by **Wednesday, October 15** and shoeboxes are due back by **Sunday, November 16**. If you have any questions, please see Sandy Schmid.



Harvest Home

Sunday, October 26

Hope Church will be collecting
for our annual Harvest Home event.
Please bring canned and boxed food items
along with paper products for Ephrata
Area Social Services.



► **The Gap Male Chorus** - Sunday, October 26 at 7 p.m.

► **Preschool Trunk or Treat** - Wednesday, October 29 and Thursday, October 30

► **Hanging of the Greens** - Date TBD (In November)

► **The Giving Tree** - Date TBD (In November)

HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESENTS



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18 @5:30PM

**HOT DOGS, BAGGED SNACKS, SODA AND WATER
WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASING**

Doors open at 5pm

*Come join our Bingo Night event! Get a chance to win prizes
while having fun with friends.*

Bring a wrapped prize worth up to \$5.00

3474 Rothsville Road, Ephrata

► **Daylight Saving Time Ends - Fall Back** - Sunday, November 2



► **All Saints' Sunday** - Sunday, November 2

On Sunday, November 2 we will remember family and dear friends who passed away in the last year. Our list includes the names of those mentioned in our Sunday bulletins and Whisperings since the previous All Saints' Day. If you would like to add a new name, please submit it along with your connection (e.g.: a family member, friend, etc.), and the date of their passing to the church office by no later than **Sunday, October 19**.

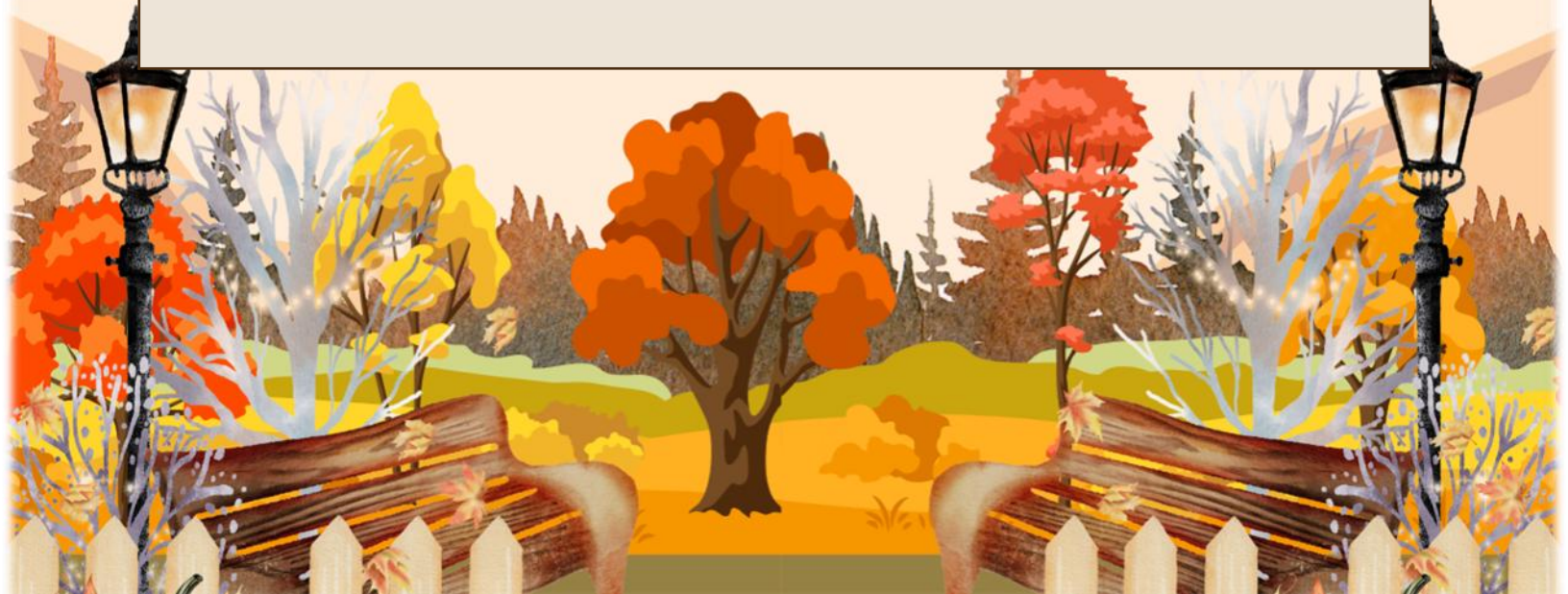
► **Veterans Day** - Sunday, November 11

We plan to honor our veterans on **Sunday, November 9** and do not want to miss anyone who attends or visits Hope Church. We have information on V. Bear, L. Bickhart, J. Gerhart, E. Lapp, R. Lindberg, B. Peters, J. Seifert, J. Smith, S. Smith and B. Tucker. If you know of anyone else or have more to add, please submit it to the Church office no later than **Sunday, November 2**.

► **Servant Stage - A Christmas Carol** - Sunday, November 23 at 7:30p.m.

Servant Stage's original adaptation of Charles Dickens' A CHRISTMAS CAROL returns to Lancaster County in 2025! A faithful rendition of the timeless holiday tale of redemption, charity, and the spirit of Christmas, A CHRISTMAS CAROL follows the classic tale of Ebenezer Scrooge and his fantastical journey through Christmas Past, Present, and Future! **No tickets required**. All shows are Pay-What-You-Will in keeping with Servant Stage's mission to make exceptional performances accessible to everyone. www.servantstage.org.

► **Christmas Poinsettia Sales** - Sale and Due Date TBD



Traditional Hymns & Spirituals

Singing for 100 years!

Come hear the Gap Male Chorus
sing a musical tribute to the glory of God



The Gap Male Chorus

Sunday, October 26 at 7:00 PM

Hope United Methodist
3474 Rothsville Road, Ephrata, PA 17522

Apple Dumpling Days

At Historic Ephrata Cloister



Friday, October 10

9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 11

9:00 a.m. until Sold Out

Apple Dumplings - \$5.50 each

Cash or credit accepted at drive-through tent in the Cloister parking lot

Support the Historic Ephrata Cloister's

Back to the Cloister Fund

*Made by Achenbach's
Bakery*



*Sugar-Free Dumplings
Available by Request*

FREE DELIVERY ON ORDERS OF 20 OR MORE

Within 10 miles of Ephrata Cloister

Arrange for delivery details at

EphrataCloister@gmail.com by October 8

Historic Ephrata Cloister

632 West Main Street, Ephrata, PA 17522

www.EphrataCloister.org ❖ (717)733-6600



Historic Ephrata Cloister is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
with Support from the *Ephrata Cloister Associates*



United
Women
in Faith

**52nd Eastern PA
Annual
Celebration**

Saturday, October 18, 2025
Palmyra First United Methodist Church
520 E. Birch St, Palmyra PA
10:00am-2:00pm
Refreshments and Sign-In at 9:00am
Cost \$20 (Lunch included)

Guest Speaker: David Garlock
"Mass Incarceration: Should the Church Be Involved?"



*****REGISTRATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 10*****

Mail check, payable to EPA UWFaith, for \$20 to:

Lillian Mannon
958 Jeffrey Lane
Langhorne, PA 19047
lillianmannon@gmail.com

Include name(s) and phone number with your registration



AUTUMN LEAVES

Senior Adult Day at Gretna Glen

Tuesday October 21st, 2025

9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Doors open at 9 am



Enjoy a day planned just for adults! Experience the fall colors, enjoy morning refreshments, guest performers, hot lunch, and camp fun! Join us for a day drawing closer to Jesus & friends.

To register, call our office at 717-273-6525

\$25.00 per person

or email us at camp@gretnaglen.org

Pay at the door cash or check.



Do you want to enjoy even more faith, fun, and fellowship? Stay even longer with our **Autumn Leaves Overnight** option! Guests will sleep in our comfortable Retreat Lodge for the evening and enjoy options of games, campfire snacks, devotions and worship, stargazing, and more until Wednesday after lunch.

Tuesday dinner, and Wednesday breakfast and lunch are included.

Autumn Leaves Overnight costs an additional \$65

Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center

87 Old Mine Road Lebanon, PA 17042



you're invited!

CITY GATE'S GIVE BACK GALA

The countdown is on!

Join us on Saturday, November 8, 2025 for an unforgettable evening of inspiration, celebration, and impact at the City Gate Gala.

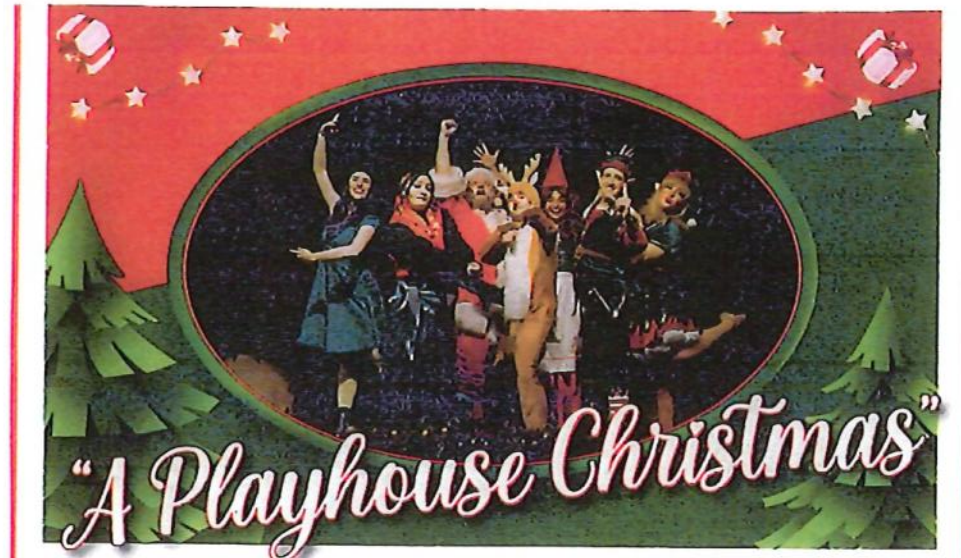
Enjoy a beautiful evening with dinner, connection, and powerful words from our guest speaker, LaVerne Kreider — a spiritual leader with a heart for healing, growth, and revival.

All proceeds benefit the work of City Gate Ministries to serve those in need right here in our community.

Let's gather for a night of purpose.
RSVP today to secure your seat!

Saturday, November 8, 2025
4:00 PM - 7:30 PM
The Foundry48, Lititz

FRIENDLY CIRCLE PRESENTS
HUNTERDON HILLS PLAYHOUSE
CHRISTMAS AT THE PLAYHOUSE '25
NOVEMBER 20, 2025



Departure: 9:00 a.m. – Approximate Return: 5:30 p.m.

Akron Community Church - 613 Main St., Akron, PA

Price per Person: \$130.00 Deposit due with registration: \$25.00

Final Payment due October 14, 2025

Price includes motorcoach, driver tip, dinner, tax and gratuities. After your delicious meal, stroll over to the Atrium and help yourself to over 30 varieties of dessert miniatures.

Friendly Circle Reservation Form – Hunterdon Hills Christmas Show

Christmas at the Playhouse '2025 NOVEMBER 20, 2025

\$25.00 Deposit Due with Reservation/Final Payment Due: October 14, 2025

Complete and mail to:

Linda Fahnstock, 30 Bethany Road Apt. I, Ephrata, PA 17522 Tel: 717-733-4414

Please make check payable to **FRIENDLY CIRCLE**

Name (S) _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Total Payments _____ Deposit _____ Balance Due _____

Donations & Assistance

► City Gate Needs:

Individually wrapped snacks like granola bars, cookies and chips. Kitchen sized garbage bags, paper towels, 7 inch paper plates and bowls.

► Ephrata Area Social Services Needs:

Donations of non-perishable items can be made Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

They are in urgent need of the following: canned corn (do not need mixed vegetables), tomato sauce (not pasta or spaghetti sauce), canned fruit (they already have a lot of pears & apricots), egg noodles, reman noodles, flour, sugar, salt and pepper, condiments, personal hygiene items (body wash, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant), and paper towels. All donations are great appreciated!

► Good Samaritan Services Needs:

Paper towels (high need), twin sheet sets and comforters (high need), pillows, twin/queen winter blankets, cleaning supplies, laundry detergent and gift cards (\$25 gas, groceries, etc.).

Good Samaritan Services

Please place your donations in the basket underneath the visitor table in the lobby. Thank you!

Ephrata Area Social Services (EASS)

Please place your donations under the coat rack in the lobby. Thank you for your continued support of EASS and the work they do for our local community

Autumn Word Search

Can you find the words hidden in the puzzle?



LEAVES

TREES

BASKET

SCARECROW

ACORN

APPLES

BOOTS

MUSHROOMS

PUMPKIN

WIND

HARVEST

CRANBERRIES

A Beautiful, Bountiful Time

by Clyde McMillan-Gamber

Autumn in Lancaster County is a beautiful time for us and a bountiful time for wildlife, all created by God. Fall is colorful with green lawns and winter rye fields, lovely, roadside wildflowers, and striking autumn leavers on deciduous trees, shrubbery, certain vines crawling up trees and fences, and tall grasses and weeds in fields and along roadsides.

Stands of goldenrod and Jerusalem artichoke, with their striking, yellow flowers, various kinds of asters that have lovely white, pale-lavender or deep-purple blossoms and other species of appealing wildflowers with pretty blooms decorate certain farmland roadsides and abandoned fields. Goldenrod and aster flowers are abuzz with multitudes of honey bees, bumble bees, pearl crescent butterflies, yellow clearwing butterflies, a small variety of skipper butterflies and other insects that sip those blooms' nectar into mid-October, pollinating the lovely blossoms in the process. Pearl crescents are particularly numerous fluttering around aster flowers because their larvae eat the stems and leaves of aster plants.

In fall, red maple trees and staghorn sumac trees have red foliage by September. Sugar maples have orange leaves, while hickories and tulip trees have yellow ones. Those leaves, with sunlight shining through them, brighten many woods. Colored foliage is THEE most striking part of fall in northeastern North America. It offers much beauty, entertainment and inspiration to us humans. Reds, yellows and the other colors in foliage is visible to us when green chlorophyll dies and fades away because the trees shut off the leaves' water supply, allowing them to die and fall from the trees, as part of the trees' preparing for winter.

Tall foxtail grasses turn yellow in autumn, while equally high redroot, lamb's quarters and pokeweed, which are types of weeds, have red foliage that is especially attractive when low-slanting sunlight shines through them, brightening many fields. The grasses, redroot and lamb's quarters produce many tiny seeds that field mice and small, seed-eating birds ingest during fall and winter. Pokeweed is loaded with dark-purple, juicy berries that robins, starlings, cedar waxwings and other kinds of berry-eating birds consume in autumn and winter.

In autumn, using that colorful, invigorating season's abundance, several kinds of wildlife have different ways of preparing for winter. Wood chucks fatten on greens so they can sleep through winter down their underground burrows. It's entertaining to watch gray squirrels, eastern chipmunks and blue jays stash acorns, beech nuts and other types of nuts in tree hollows and soil in lawns and woodland floors for winter use when food is scarce. The blue feathers of the jays are especially striking among the reds and yellows of the tree foliage as those birds dart in and out of the nut-bearing trees. White-tailed deer and black bears fatten on acorns and beech nuts to help them get through winter.

Many kinds of birds and some species of insects migrate through Lancaster County on their way south to warmer areas for the winter. I have seen migrating hawks, eagles, geese, blue jays, crows, hummingbirds and other kinds of birds during the day. And I have witnessed the migrations of small, woodland birds, including thrushes, warblers and others at night by focusing a scope on the full moon that silhouettes the birds flying in front of it. Two side things I noticed while doing that is the moon moves rapidly across the scope and silhouetted birds sporting ears are really local bats.

I also have seen bald eagles, ospreys, broad-winged hawks, a peregrine falcon, two ravens, black vultures, tree swallows, ruby-throated hummingbirds, a few warblers, which are small, woodland birds, monarch butterflies and green darner dragonflies from our back deck in the past few years. Interestingly, tree swallows feed on flying insects as they migrate, while some of the south-bound hummers and monarchs stop to feed on nectar in neighborhood flowers.

Autumn is a lovely, exciting time of year, with much God-created beauty that we enjoy, and an abundance of God-created food that wildlife consumes in preparation for the coming hardships of winter.

**Check out Clyde's nature blog: NaturesWondersByClyde.blogspot.com.
Each short story is like taking a walk with your very own park naturalist!**