

Greensburg Church of the Brethren

August 2026



*“Let us not become weary in doing
good, for at the proper time we will
reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*
Galatians 6:9

Pastor's Reflection

"Knock Knock"

There is something about a knock at the door that gets our attention. It interrupts what we are doing and causes us to stop and wonder, "*Who is it now?*" Sometimes it is a friend coming to visit. Sometimes it is a neighbor needing help. Sometimes it is a delivery we have been waiting for. And sometimes it is someone we do not even know—a salesperson standing there with a message, a product, or an offer they want us to consider.

When a salesman knocks on our door, what do we do? Some people open the door right away and listen. Others look through the window first and decide if they want to answer. Some may politely say, "No thank you," while others may invite the person in to hear what they have to say.

The truth is we make decisions every day about what we allow through the door of our homes and that also applies to the doors of our hearts.

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." Revelation 3:20 (NIV)

Jesus is the One knocking at the door of our hearts. He is not forcing His way in. He does not break down the door or demand entrance. He patiently knocks and waits for us to respond.

The difference between Jesus and a salesman is that Jesus does not come to take something from us—He comes to give us something we desperately need. A salesman may offer a product that promises to make life easier, but Jesus offers forgiveness, peace, hope, and eternal life.

Sometimes we treat Jesus like an unwanted visitor. We become too busy. We say, "Maybe later." We convince ourselves we do not have time to listen. We allow the distractions of the world to become louder than the gentle knock of our Savior.

But what if today is the day we open the door?

What if we stop and listen to the voice of the One who knows us better than anyone else? What if we welcome Jesus into every room of our lives—not just the places we want Him to see, but also the areas where we need His healing and guidance?

The question is not whether Jesus is knocking. He has been knocking all along. The question is: Will we open the door?

When someone knocks on our physical door, we decide whether to answer, and it may not make a great difference either way. But when Jesus knocks on the door of our heart, that decision that can change everything.

So, today, listen carefully. There may be many voices trying to get your attention, many opportunities competing for your time, and many distractions pulling you in different directions. But there is only One who comes with the greatest gift of all, and we need to respond.

Who's knocking at your door? Open it and you may discover that the visitor you have been waiting for is Jesus Himself.

God Bless,
Pastor Stephen

Pastor Stephen and Cathy will be away beginning after church on August 30th - September 5. They will be out of contact during that time. Please call the Deacons of the Month (or any of the Deacons) if you need assistance. If it is an emergency, the Deacon will be able to reach the pastor. The Deacons of the Month are Amy Ramer (724-787-1781) and Carole Nedrow (724-244-2490).

JOIN US FOR OUR 5th ANNUAL



Community Picnic

Saturday, September 12, 2026
11AM - 4PM

FUN, FOOD, GAMES

All proceeds go to the Southwest Fire and Police
Departments and the Mutual Aid Society

Community Picnic Update

Michelle Lohr and Diane Swartz will be managing the basket raffle for the picnic and are asking for basket donations. If you or someone you know could donate a basket, please let one of them know. We also need baked goods for the bake sale.

READY, SET....SHOP!!!

It's that time of year again! We have an opportunity to bless children all around the world through **Operation Christmas Child** and the shoebox collection! Please read the story about Cristian on page 4 to see the impact this program can have and see the insert for shoebox gift suggestions. We also encourage you to consider a gift of \$10/box to help coverage the postage.

Mark your calendars for **October 24 & 25** for our annual packing party!

Service on the Lawn

*"Services on the
Lawn" are held
every Wednesday
evening at 7 p.m.
Please come and
invite your friends
and neighbors!*

Christian Education News

*An Adult Sunday School class is meeting on
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. on the book of Ephesians.
Carole Nedrow and Dale Struzzi are facilitating
this class. There is also a children's class that
meets weekly at the same time.*

*Plan to make this a regular part of your Sunday
morning! Spend the time with God and your
community of faith!*

Sunday Morning Opportunities:

9:30	Sunday School for children; Adult Sunday School--"Ephesians" - (Nedrow/Struzzi)
10:00-10:30	A Deacon and/or the Pastor will be available in the chapel every Sunday a.m.
10:30	The worship service will be live-streamed every Sunday to the Fellowship Hall

What's Going On at GBGCOB?



"Snack Cake Sunday" - Please remember the need for snack cakes on the third Sunday of each month. We are now asking for packaged "snack cakes", i.e., Little Debbie, Tasty Cakes, etc. This makes distribution much easier for Meals on Wheels.

Women's Fellowship
Wednesday, August 5, 2026
Applebees Restaurant, at noon,
Rt 30 by Westmoreland Mall
ALL women are welcome to join us
for good food and great fellowship.
We'd love to see you there!

The August date for the Men's Fellowship gathering at Panera Bread, Greengate Center is August 25th. All men are welcome at 6:30 pm!

CAN YOU HELP? We still can use some assistance with cleaning the church and mowing the lawn...sign up at the back of the sanctuary.



Women's
Faith & Friendship
Dinner will be held at the
Boulevard on
August 25 at 6:30 p.m.

The **CHURCH PICNIC** is on **August 23rd** out on the lawn following the worship service (inside if there is bad weather). Bring covered dishes to the kitchen before church.



Friends and Family Christmas is scheduled for **November 29th** from 2:00-4:30 p.m. for the activities and crafts with a covered dish dinner at 4:30 p.m..

Dear Members of the Greensburg Church of the Brethren,
Thank you so much for honoring me by allowing me to share with you about my missionary experiences and also for the wonderful luncheon you provided following the worship service on June 28! Chuck and I enjoyed joining with you in fellowship that day.

I also want to thank the church for remembering our family on the death of Chuck's mom, and for the many ways you have expressed appreciation and support during the past two years of working here.



Blessings,
Ruth Fox



The most recent copy of Our Daily Bread (September-November, 2026) is now available on the table next to the mailboxes at the back of the sanctuary. Please feel free to take a copy of this devotional home to read.

A young boy in Santiago experiences the transforming power of the Gospel



Claudia had never been interested in attending church or learning about God. She did not grow up in a Christian family, and none of her friends or family members followed Jesus Christ. "I always fought with the idea of coming to church," she said. But Claudia would do anything to help her three children, even stepping out of her comfort zone and trying something for the first time—like going to church. "I was desperate. I came to church for my son Cristian," she said.

Claudia had done everything she could for 11-year-old Cristian, who struggled with extreme anxiety. The medications the doctors had prescribed were not working, and he continued to fall behind in school. "He was constantly having panic attacks and feeling like he was going to die," Claudia said. She wasn't sure what she was looking for or expecting by attending a local church—she just knew she had to go for her son.

A Special Day

One Sunday at church, Claudia learned about an Operation Christmas Child outreach event for boys and girls in the community. She took the invitation home and showed it to Cristian, who was excited to attend. The festive celebration included worship songs, a Gospel presentation, and a shoebox gift full of special items for every child in attendance. Cristian was glad to see all the fun toys in his shoebox, but his favorite item was The Greatest Gift—a Gospel booklet that colorfully illustrates 11 Scripture stories and is given out worldwide with gift-filled shoeboxes.

Cristian was captivated by the stories, especially Jesus feeding the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21). Cristian was eager to learn more about God and His Word and asked his mother if he could attend The Greatest Journey, our 12-lesson discipleship program for shoebox recipients.

Peace in Christ

"He learned the memory verses, asked questions during the lessons, and completed all the activities in his workbook," Salome, a church member, said. "I noticed a change in him. He was excited for every class. It certainly changed Cristian's heart, who prayed to receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior during The Greatest Journey. "I don't have as many troubles in my heart," he said.



Cristian wants to one day help lead worship at the church. Cristian now listens to worship music when he feels anxious. His panic attacks have decreased so significantly that he's been able to reduce his medication.

"When my son came to church, he found peace," Claudia said. Claudia and her husband now attend church with Cristian. As a family, they are learning more about the Savior and how to live in His peace and joy.



Can We Help?

The Community Closet at the Greensburg Free Methodist Church has clothing of all sizes available to those in need. It makes a difference in the lives of local children and families. They are open every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the public, and have partnered with the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau and a lot of other agencies in Westmoreland County.

Children will soon be going back to school, and there is a need for new or gently used clothing--any sizes will do. Also NEW underwear and socks will be helpful and appreciated. Help us to bless these children and given them a smile with something new to start the school year. A plastic bin will be available for drop off at the back of our church. Contact Lena Ferrero (724-388-0838). We will be collecting from August 2 - August 23.

Honored Person of the Month—Diane Swartz

Diane grew up in Jeannette and was baptized in the First United Church of Christ. She is the better half to Jimmy Swartz and they have one daughter, Chrissy, and one grandson, Jackson.

Diane started coming to the Greensburg Church of the Brethren in 2019 and has been involved in Joyful Celebration, served as a Deacon and as the Deacon Team Secretary. She also is secretary of the Board of Directors of the Jeannette Public Library and a board member of the Westmoreland Library Network.

Diane's favorite song is "How Great Thou Art" and her favorite scripture is Micah 6:8. Diane has many interests such as coloring, reading, ping pong, and playing pranks on our pianist, Chuck.

We are blessed to have her as a working member of our church!

Thought for the Month

We cannot maintain a relationship with God while ignoring, denying or distancing ourselves from the rest of His children.

News and Notes from the Worship Team

We started the month by remembering our Veterans and their sacrifices. We thanked God for the country we live in and for the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for us.

We welcomed back Pastor Steve and Jimmy Swartz from Annual Conference. They both had good reports of their experience there.

Attendance for the Service on the Lawn has been great when the weather has cooperated. Please try to attend for some great music, prayer, sermon and, of course, wonderful fellowship! There is nothing like an evening on the church lawn with God.

The choir is working on new music and getting ready for more outreach dates. If anyone would like to join the choir, please do so--the pay is great! Thanks again to our dedicated choir.

A big "thank you" to Judy Walker for doing the duet for the prelude. We hope we can get her on the piano stool again!

Rev. Ron Beachley, former COB District Executive, graced our pulpit on July 26th when Pastor Steve was sharing his testimony at his home church in Irwin. We appreciate Rev. Beachley's willingness to join our fellowship for the day.

As the summer goes on, we wish everyone safe travels, and we hope that all are coping with the weather...

God bless,
Joy and Chuck

Beginning this month I will be contributing articles about Brethren history. Featured players in the articles will be ancestors and distant relatives of either Carole or myself. We are linked to numerous Brethren who played important roles that impacted Brethren history and its place in America.

Back in the day ... 1

A CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS by Jim Blair

Dunkers In The Wild

About 1762 the German settlers of the region referred to as Bruedersthal or Valley of the Brethren, established the first Christian congregation in the forbidden area of Stonycreek in what became Somerset County. It is noted here that the Treaty of Ft. Stanwix was not signed until 1768 and Pontiac's Rebellion was gearing up. Chief Pontiac would hold council fires where the Somerset Courthouse stands today. However, these colonists had little trouble with the Native Americans. Because of their peace-loving beliefs, the Indigenous tribal members had gained their respect.

The early settlers of this area were known as Dunkers or Fellowship of Brethren. The leader of this group was Elder George Adam Martin, a persuasive man, whose leadership style was simply "it's my way or the highway." You might say that the Stonycreek Church was somewhat of a spin-off from the Ephrata Cloister, because Martin adhered to the teachings of Conrad Beissel, who founded that society.

Initially there were 17 followers of Martin into the Bruedersthal wilderness. Martin had already been shunned and was in effect excommunicated at the Conewago Church near what became Hershey, PA, for, to put it mildly, failure to display a spirit of humility. He regained acceptance with some of his flock, through his continued following the teachings of Beissel. As a result the Bermudian Church in East Berlin was established with Martin as leader. However, in 1762 John Mack, son of Alexander Mack, founder of the Dunkers in Germany, took exception to some of Martin's principles and effectively blocked Martin's movement. This led to Martin's westward migration to the rough glades of Bruedersthal with his colonial followers in tow. In 1764 Martin began traveling back and forth between Ephrata and Stonycreek. *To be continued ...*

Deacons' Notes

Just a quick reminder that there will be a Deacon present in the chapel every Sunday morning between 10:00 and 10:30 if anyone would like prayer or a chance to talk to someone.

The prayer point for the pastor this month is to:

PRAY for the life-changing combination of:

- a) courage to proclaim what GOD says as the final word on any subject,
- b) compassion blended with the compassionate heart of JESUS.

Pray that the pastor will "feel the need behind the deed."

Blessings,
Dale Struzzi for the Deacon Team

Greensburg Church of the Brethren
554 Stanton Street
Greensburg, PA 15601-4074

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