

Greensburg Church of the Brethren

September 2026



“This is the day the Lord has made...Let us rejoice and be glad in it!” Psalm 114:24

“In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.”
Proverbs 3:6

Pastor's Reflection

“Stepember: Take Another Step”

Before we rush toward the end of the year, perhaps God is calling us to stop and ask ourselves a simple question: “What is my next step?”

September may normally be called September, but this year, let's call it “Stepember”—a month of taking another step in our walk with Christ.

Maybe you have been walking with the Lord for many years. Maybe your faith has grown strong through difficult seasons. Or perhaps you have found yourself standing still, wondering what God wants from you next. Wherever you are in your journey, there is always another step we can take. Take another step closer to Christ.

Don't settle for simply knowing about Jesus. Seek to know Him more deeply. Spend more time in His Word. Talk to Him in prayer. Listen for His voice and allow Him to lead your life. We need to keep moving forward and not be content in standing still. Take another step in serving Christ.

There is always something we can do for the Kingdom of God. We may think our contribution is small, but God can use even the smallest act of obedience. Jesus didn't call us to simply sit in the church or be comfortable in the pews. He called us to serve. Take another step in sharing the Gospel.

There are people around us who need to hear about the hope, forgiveness, grace, and salvation found only in Jesus Christ. Perhaps your next step is inviting someone to church, encouraging a neighbor, or sharing your testimony (our testimony is showing God's glory).

Take another step in helping others. Look around you. Who needs a helping hand? Who needs an encouraging word? Who needs someone to listen? Sometimes being the hands and feet of Jesus doesn't require a sermon. Sometimes it simply requires us to notice someone who is hurting and take a step toward them. Take another step in your prayer life.

Maybe your next step is spending a little more time in prayer each day. Maybe it is praying for someone you have never prayed for before. Maybe it is learning to spend less time talking and more time listening for God. Take another step in faith.

You may not know exactly where the next step will lead, but faith means trusting the One who does. We don't have to see the entire road. We simply need to be willing to take the next step God places before us. The Bible tells us, “the Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him”—Psalm 37:23.

As we enter this season of “Stepember,” let's not look at how far we still have to go. Instead, let's look at the step that God is asking us to take today. We still have months remaining in 2026. There is still work to do. There are still people to reach. There are still prayers to pray, lives to touch, burdens to carry, and souls to encourage.

So let's not finish this year standing in the same place where we began it. And when we take one step, let's be ready to take another.

God Bless,
Pastor Stephen



As we head into the fall, we will once again be coming to the Lord's Table. Our Love Feast will be held on October 4, 2026. It is our hope and prayer that every one will share in this time of renewal—renewing our relationship with the Lord and also with each other. We are reminded of the example of servanthood and humility found in Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet and the ultimate sacrifice of His life which we remember through the bread and cup.

Let us prepare our hearts.



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

If you or someone you know can donate a basket for the Community Picnic raffle, please let Michelle Lohr or Diane Swartz know. Baked goods for the bake sale are also very appreciated.. Please contact Elaine Farnham or Wendy Muir if you can contribute goodies!

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 Shenika and Sherika to see the impact this program and review the list of needed items. 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!



Joyful Celebration
had their annual
picnic at Twin Lakes!
What a good turnout
and a
wonderful day!



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.

The August date for the Men's Fellowship gathering at Panera Bread, Greengate Center is on Tuesday, September 22. All men are welcome at 6:30pm!



Women's Faith & Friendship Dinner will be held at the Boulevard on September 24th at 6:30 p.m.



CAN YOU HELP? We still can use some assistance with cleaning the church on a weekly basis...please sign up at the back of the sanctuary.



Deacon Emeritus...David Hibbard

On Sunday, September 20th, we will be honoring David Hibbard by conferring on him the title of Deacon Emeritus. Please come and share in this special time with us and with him!

**Service on the Lawn
Summer, 2026**



Calling All Turkeys!

We'll be collecting turkeys to help Father's Heart Ministry with their Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for the children. They need 18 turkeys for Thanksgiving and 16 turkeys for Christmas. If you would like to donate one to help this wonderful ministry, please let Pastor Stephen know. We probably won't start collecting them until probably mid- to late October, but it would be good to know what kind of response we will have before that. Thank you!



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.

Operation Christmas Child



We grew up in rural Jamaica sharing most things, not because we're twins but because it was a necessity for our family to make ends meet. Our parents had us in their late teens. They couldn't afford an ultrasound, so having twins was unexpected. Our mom and dad had to stop attending college in order to provide for us. They worked hard—our mom at home and our dad in sugar cane fields.

Both Christians, our parents had faith that the Lord Jesus would provide for our needs. Every morning, they gathered us together for devotions. To enable both of us to have something to write on at school, our father cut an 8- by 9-inch notebook in half. He also broke a pencil in two and sharpened the lead with a knife because we didn't have a pencil sharpener. We wished we could have full-sized notebooks and pencils like some of our peers. Our wish came true at age 8 when we heard shriek after shriek of delight in the halls of our school. Large cardboard boxes with a shoebox plane printed on them were delivered to each classroom. We were so excited about these huge brown boxes and were curious to see what was inside.

We rejoiced when we learned that they contained shoebox gifts for us. One of us received two full-sized notebooks! We shared what was in our shoeboxes so we would each have one. We also received our first calculator—a small, gray one we still love to use.

We received a pair of woolen mittens. We didn't need them for warmth, since we lived in the Caribbean, but we put them to good use as pot holders. Our parents still have them at home in Jamaica. We were glad to receive a game of jacks since previously we used stones or the balls from roll-on deodorant to play the game.

We also each received pencils and pencil sharpeners, as well as crayons, coloring books, and personal care items, such as combs, toothbrushes, washcloths, and soap. One of our younger brothers also received a shoebox gift. He still has the flashlight he received in his box.

At first, we wondered who we knew that would send us these gifts. We had learned the story of the Good Samaritan in Sunday School. So, when we saw Samaritan's Purse printed on the tape that held the shoebox closed, we knew that Good Samaritans had sent us these gifts. Through the shoebox gifts, we learned that you don't have to be close neighbors in order to help each other. These gifts came from strangers.

The boxes of gifts ultimately reflected the goodness of Christ, showing us that the Lord graciously provides for us. We felt God's love for us as we received them. Earlier that same year, we both made professions of faith in Jesus Christ during an evangelistic crusade. We each stepped forward that night to dedicate our lives to Him. The shoebox gifts and The Greatest Gift Gospel booklet that we received along with them helped us as new Christians to continue to grow in our faith. We read the booklet in Sunday School and together as a family before we went to bed.

We sisters still have morning devotions together. Our parents are so proud that both of us graduated last year with business administration master's degrees from Liberty University, a Christian college in Virginia. Our mom went back to school to earn a teaching diploma and our dad has certifications in food service, hospitality, and nutrition.

It wasn't until we saw an Operation Christmas Child video at our church in Virginia that we realized those were the gifts we received. We knew that logo—the shoebox plane. And there was that word again—Samaritan. We raised our arms in joy and praise. We exclaimed: "We're shoebox recipients!"

It meant so much to us to learn the background of how our boxes were sent—through churches! It also was moving to see how much church members appreciated hearing us talk about the lasting influence the gifts had on our Christian walk. That's when we knew we had to keep sharing our story, so the message of how God is working keeps spreading.

GBGCOB is committed to the sending of 400 shoeboxes again this year. Please help us continue this good ministry of outreach. Monetary donations are welcome (made out to the church and noted for Samaritans Purse). Here is a list of our current needs:

Socks - 315 pairs	Erasers - 1"x2" - 327	Glue sticks - 280
Toothbrushes - 347	Stuffed animals (med) - 265	Pens - 3000
Notebooks - 207	Pencil Bags - 87	Crayons - 317
Rulers - 160	Sewing kits - 50	Coloring books - 387

*Additional small toys, hair care items, make-up, baseball caps, small balls, etc.



Shenika and Sherika

Honored Person of the Month—Amy Ramer

Amy grew up attending a Presbyterian church near her home. When Amy was in college at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, she met Steve Ramer at Denny's Restaurant where they both worked. Amy began attending the Church of the Brethren when she and Steve were married 30 years ago.

Since attending the Greensburg Church of the Brethren, Amy has served in many capacities over the years: Sunday School teacher, Bible School teacher, Deacon and a member of various teams.

Currently, Amy is the chair of the Worship Team, Children's Story Coordinator, and Leadership Team Vice Chair. She is also a Deacon and helps to coordinate the Women's Faith and Friendship group.

Amy and Steve have two sons, Tyler and Wyatt, and a daughter, Kayla. Tyler works as a Physician Assistant, Wyatt is an Electrical/Mechanical/Computer Engineer, and Kayla is a sophomore at IUP studying Exercise Science. Amy is mother-in-law to Megan, Tyler's wife. Wyatt's girlfriend Tia also attends our church frequently.

Amy has several favorite Bible verses. Her favorite hymn is "How Great Thou Art." Amy enjoys hiking to spend time outside in nature. She enjoys walking her dog Duke in all kinds of weather.

Amy looks forward to continuing to serve our congregation. We are grateful for the involvement of Amy and the entire Ramer family!

Thought for the Month

God asks the same of us now as He always has—to believe in something greater than ourselves.

News and Notes from the Worship Team

August was another hot and wet month, but God allowed us to worship both on Sundays and at Services on the Lawn. Thank you, Lord!

The last Service on the Lawn, as you now know, was on August 26th. Thanks to all who made those summer nights special.

August 3rd—Chuck and the choir did another outreach to Hempfield Manor to perform...Wow...What a great day! I'm not sure who enjoyed it more, the residents or us!

August 16th—We were blessed to have a guest speaker, Pastor David Zona. His sermon, "Be Still," was appreciated by all. God is our refuge and strength. Be still and know that I am God. Pastor Stephen, you have a great friend, indeed.

As August ends and schools have begun, we hope the beginning of the school year will mean ongoing learning and seeing more of God's wonders.

God bless,
Joy and Chuck

Featured players in these articles about Brethren history 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 ... 2

A CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS by Jim Blair

George Adam Martin was considered a non-resident due to his efforts to establish a society similar to Ephrata in another jurisdiction and travels to other colonial churches. He left his valley followers in a state of neglect. Just like their location of wilderness, they were abandoned spiritually. Martin's followers then fell out of favor with him. They, therefore, sought new leadership. A motivating force, known as Philip Kimmel, Jr., emerged. Kimmel was Carole's maternal 8th great-grandfather. His term as presiding elder lasted for 30 years ending in 1794. Although the group was in an uncultured area, Philip was God's representative in providing them with stages of cultivation beyond spiritual infancy. During the Revolutionary War, Philip (1724-1796) was also a tax collector for the Continental Congress.

The Boone Family

In 1748 Squire Boone, Sr., his wife, the former Sarah Lincoln Morgan, and their son Israel were disowned by the Quakers. Squire and Sarah were also the parents of Daniel, the famous frontiersman. Sarah and her children had already joined the Dunker Society. Another nail in their coffin was the fact that their daughters, Sarah and Mary, had married outside the Quaker faith. Moreover, their son, Israel, had become a "roommate" with an unwed woman. Sarah was also the sister of Abraham Lincoln's great-grandfather.

In 1750, Squire, Sr. led his family south from their Berks County homestead to Carlisle where they waited for sons Daniel and George (1724-1815) to return from an exploratory trip to Bruederthal. By this time the Boones were already acquainted with Martin and Beissel. The Boones settled in North Carolina, but years later a Cherokee tribal uprising forced them to return as far as a strategic area in Maryland, later named Boonesboro. However, Daniel fled to Eastern VA and returned to his old trade as wagoner. He was not far removed from his experience as a young teamster in Braddock's defeat.

To be continued ...

Deacons' Notes

The Deacons continue to find ways to support the members of the congregation. Be watching your mailboxes during September for more information on our current project. Also, remember that one of us and/or the pastor will always be available from 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings...for prayer, counsel, etc.

On Sunday morning, September 20th, we will be taking the opportunity to honor our longtime and faithful Deacon, David Hibbard, as Deacon Emeritus. He has served us well for many years and we are grateful!

Please keep in mind that the Love Feast is coming up--October 4th. Please be in an attitude of preparation as we approach this very special time of remembrance and renewal at the Lord's Table.

This month, we will focus on PRAYING for ENCOURAGEMENT for our pastor! We should be PRAYING for our pastor but also PRAYING with him. "Now we ask you brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. (Thessalonians 5:12) Go beyond just appreciating our pastor, empower him, protect him, care for him, by faithfully PRAYING for him.

Blessings,
Dale Struzzi for the Deacon Team

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