

Greensburg Church of the Brethren

October 2026



“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6:8

Fall is Almost Here—Preparing for the Journey

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” — 2 Corinthians 9:15

As we begin the month of October, we will gather around the Lord’s Table for our Love Feast. It is a special time for us to slow down, remember, and reflect on what Jesus Christ has done for us. As we share together in this sacred service, we remember the love that took Jesus to the cross, the sacrifice He made for our sins, and the grace that continues to sustain us each day.

The cross reminds us that our faith is not simply about words. It is about a Savior who gave Himself for us. When we come to the Lord’s Table we remember His sacrifice, but we also remember His invitation to live as His people with humility, love, forgiveness, and service toward one another.

Then comes November and our hearts naturally turn toward Thanksgiving. What a wonderful opportunity to stop and count our blessings! In a world where it is easy to focus on what we don’t have, Thanksgiving reminds us to recognize all that God has already given us.

There is always something for which we can give thanks. We can thank God for our families, our church family, our homes, our friends, our community, and the countless blessings that we sometimes take for granted. Most of all, we give thanks for Jesus Christ, whose love and grace are greater than anything this world can offer.

And then, almost before we realize it, December arrives and Advent begins. Advent is a season of anticipation. We look back and celebrate the first coming of Jesus—the baby born in Bethlehem, the Savior who came into the world to bring salvation and light. But Advent also causes us to look forward, to be prepared as we await the day when Christ will come again.

In Advent, we remember that He came, we celebrate that He is with us, and we look forward to the day when He will come again. Christian Advent observances commonly hold together both the celebration of Christ’s first coming and anticipation of His second coming.

So, as we move through these coming months, perhaps we can see them as one continuous journey of faith:

October —Remember.

Remember what Christ has done for us.

November — Give Thanks.

Give thanks for God’s blessings and for the greatest gift of all—Jesus Christ.

December — Anticipate.

Celebrate the Savior who came, and look forward with hope to the Savior who will come again.

From the Lord’s Table, to Thanksgiving, to the manger, our hearts are continually being directed back to Jesus. May these coming months not simply be another turn of the calendar. May they be a time when we draw closer to Christ, appreciate His sacrifice, recognize His blessings, and renew our hope in His promises.

The leaves may fall, the seasons may change, and another year may come to an end—but Jesus Christ remains the same. May our hearts be ready, not only to celebrate His birth, but to live every day in the hope and expectation of His return.

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.



Steeler Night at Joyful Celebration!



MERRY Christmas
Friends and Family
Day
29 NOVEMBER, 2026
Children and Adults Welcome
.....
LET'S JOIN THE FESTIVITIES
Craft and Activities
2pm to 4:30 pm
Dinner at 4:30 pm
.....
drinks provided, please bring one of your favorite dishes to share with everyone

Community Picnic Reflections



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.

Ackerman
campfire
Fri., October 9
6:30 pm
weather
permitting



The August date for the Men's Fellowship gathering at Panera Bread, Greengate Center is on Wednesday, October 21. All men are welcome at 6:30pm!

Women's Fellowship
Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Applebees Restaurant, at noon,
Rt 30 by Westmoreland Mall
ALL women are welcome to join us
for good food and great fellowship.
Please note the change of day/date!



Women's
Faith & Friendship
Dinner will be held at
the Boulevard.
(Date TBA)



*Our church family
extends our deepest
sympathy to Don Wian,
his family & friends in
the loss of his wife,
Wendy Wian, 84, who
died on Thursday,
September 17th at home.
Services were held on
September 22, 2026.*

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. You may drop off your donations in the back of the church. We also encourage you to consider a gift of \$10/box to coverage the postage.

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



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...

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 16 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!



**Forum
reports are
due to Ruth
in the office
by October
18th!!!**

Operation Christmas Child



“Growing up in a dump site you smell smoke and other unpleasant things, but the shoebox gifts smelled so good.”

I grew up on a small island in the Philippines. There were five kids in my family—I’m the second oldest. My parents were both young when they got married—my mom was 16 and my dad was 17. They didn’t know what they were doing, so my grandmother raised me and my older brother. When she passed away when I was 6, my parents took me and my older brother back and started living together permanently. They started having more kids, and I was 9 years old when my mom got pregnant with my younger sister.

Around that time, my dad was working in a factory that caught on fire. He was the lead supervisor and the blaze started in his department. After that tragedy, he didn’t want to be a father to us, but instead became an alcoholic and a drug addict. This happened at the same time that the government of the island decided to make the land close to my parents’ house a dump site. This turned into our livelihood. After my father lost his job and didn’t want to deal with us, my mom and my older brother would go to the dump site and look for things they could sell so they could buy food for us. That’s how our rough life began.

DISCOVERING CHRIST

When my younger sister was 3, she would sneak out of our house and go to a church at the dump site. Every time I would look for her, I would always find her there. They were teaching the kids Bible stories, singing Bible songs, and giving food to the children. I thought it was all a scam, but God showed me otherwise.

One of my neighbors invited me to help cook food for the children. The first or second time I assisted, the pastor introduced Christ to me. While I was not initially receptive, I know there was a seed planted in my heart right away. After that, I became really involved with the church. Every week I would help them cook the food. I’d read Bible stories to the children and sing the Bible songs. It became my routine every Saturday and I really enjoyed it.

Around Easter, my pastor invited me to attend a youth camp where I accepted Jesus into my heart. That was the start of my journey with the Lord and it has been amazing since then.

A HOPE REALIZED

That December, Samaritan’s Purse came to the dump site. I was tall for a 13-year-old and tall for a Filipino, so they asked me to help distribute shoebox gifts to the kids. I helped, but every time I handed a shoebox to a child, I would shake it and smell it. Growing up in a dump site you smell smoke and other unpleasant things, but the shoebox gifts smelled so good. I was praying that God would give me one of them.

As I was handing out the boxes, the pile was disappearing one by one. The kids just kept coming and coming. I thought, I’m not going to get one. My younger brother and sister got theirs and sat down outside the church with their boxes and waited for me to finish.

To my surprise, a lady from Samaritan’s Purse saved a box for me at the end. When she tapped me on the shoulder and handed it to me, I was amazed. This was the first gift I had ever received. It was precious. It was special. I was 13 and had never received a gift. It was really meant for me.

Inside I found school supplies and my favorite was the pink, glittery notebook that I used that year at school. I remember pretending to be a writer with it. I also received pencils, towels, a toothbrush, and two kinds of fresh-smelling soaps. That was the good scent in the boxes.

I received my shoebox gift the same year I accepted Christ, and it really solidified my relationship with Him. Since then, I’ve been able to introduce Christ to many of my family members—to my cousins, to my younger siblings, to my aunts and uncles. But unfortunately, my older brother, my mom, and my dad have not yet received Christ. I still believe that they will come to Him, but I am grateful the rest of the family has accepted Jesus into their hearts.

Honored Person of the Month—Carole Nedrow

Carol began attending the Center Hill Church of the Brethren, in Kittanning as a young girl and was baptized there at age ten. Memorizing Isaiah 40:31, "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint," had transformed her life and led her to this decision.

At age 14, while at summer camp at Camp Harmony, she met her future husband, Paul. They started dating at age 16 and married six years later on June 1, 1968. They raised their three children, Heather, Carrie, and Amy, in the Greensburg Church of the Brethren, where they grew into very successful, but even more importantly, very faithful women. Carol is now delighted to have three wonderful sons-in-laws and the blessing of 3 granddaughters and 3 grandsons.

She has great memories of Paul driving the church bus, loaded with children from the community as well as their own, every Wednesday and Sunday, as well as Jodi Casteel's Bible studies held in her neighborhood. Carol truly cherishes her church family as her own.

Carol was a IUP graduate, majoring in Speech Therapy, and was able to serve in both schools and rehab centers over the years. She was fortunate to be able to take time off to raise a family and then return to IUP, earning her master's degree there and becoming a certified Speech Therapist.

Carol has served our church over this time as a Deacon, teacher, member of the Christian Education and Outreach teams, and she has also been involved in the District. Carol is a member of the choir and though she considers "How Great Thou Art" her favorite hymn. Another favorite Bible verse is, Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

We appreciate the many ways that Carole shares her gifts with the church family!

Thought for the Month

"God never said that the journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worthwhile." — Max Lucado



Thank you to Pastor Steve Parfitt and the Greensburg Church of the Brethren for partnering with us to open the 100th Christian Counseling Associates (CCA) location in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania! This milestone has special meaning for CCA. Greensburg is where our organization began 16 years ago, and today it remains home to our headquarters and several CCA programs and locations. It seems especially fitting that, after expanding into communities across multiple states, our 100th location would open right here where the journey began.

We are grateful to celebrate this full-circle moment with the Greensburg Church of the Brethren as we continue our mission of providing professional counseling from a Biblical worldview. We are also grateful to our faithful clients. By seeking help in times of need, you enable CCA to extend the reach of Christian counseling across Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Kentucky, New York, Ohio, and West Virginia.

Together, the Lord is leading us to make the church, more than any hospital or clinic, known as the place for healing, growth, and life-changing relationships. Are you facing challenges? Struggling emotionally? Do you know someone in need of help? Christian Counseling Associates is here to provide compassionate, faith-based care for you and your family. Call us today. Help is just a phone call away! May God bless you!

Richard Hoffman, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Christian Counseling Associates

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 ... 3

A CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS by Jim Blair

The Boone Family

Boone brothers George and Squire, Jr. returned to Brothersvalley Township in 1764 and built a grist mill. George later had a tannery there and the community developed into a village known as Boone. George became a Dunker elder in 1770 at the Stonycreek Church. In 1785 he began preaching the Gospel in Kentucky. George was a Revolutionary War soldier and early settler of Boonesborough KY.

Bittner Ancestry

In 1757 Carole's paternal 5th great grandfather, Heinrich Buttner (Bittner), as part of a military unit, was captured by Shawnee warriors during the French and Indian War and taken to Ohio. He was later accepted by the tribe and its Chieftain. However, a quarrel ensued with a brave, who resented Buttner's intrusion of his relationship with a squaw. In fear for his life he escaped to York County, PA. He later married Dorothea Brallier in 1770 and they eventually settled in Brothersvalley Township on 220 acres of land known as "Homestead Plantation," where Heinrich (1727-1794) became a schweinherder (pig farmer). About 1774 they became parishioners of the Stonycreek Church. The Bittners' neighbor was Sebastian Shallis (1723-1808), another of Carole's paternal 5th the great grandfathers. Sebastian's nephew, Jacob Schallus (1750-1796), was a Philadelphia calligrapher, who once penned an original document beginning with the words "We The People ..."

Anabaptists Multiply

The county was primarily settled by church people. Another similar congregation was established in 1772 in the area of what became known as Salisbury. The founder of this group was Peter Leibenguth (Livengood). Peter was the first man to cross the Allegheny Mountains in a Conestoga Wagon. Peter (1730-1826) was also Carole's paternal 6th great grandfather. Additionally, at the age of 51, he was a member of the local militia during the Revolutionary War. *To be continued ...*

Deacons' Notes

The Deacons have been working on getting Care groups in place. If you have a question or need or maybe just feel the need to talk to a Deacon, please reach out to one of us. Some of you maybe have already heard from a Deacon. We do want to hear from you.

John: 6-8 " He came to Simon Peter who said to him, "Lord are you going to wash my feet?" JESUS replied, "You don't realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "You shall never wash my feet." JESUS answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

We will celebrate the LOVE FEAST and COMMUNION on October 4. Some of you may be uncomfortable washing another's feet, and for you, we do have hand washing. We do want to encourage everyone to come. You can participate in whatever manner you feel comfortable.

We are available for prayer in the Chapel on Sunday mornings 10:00 – 10:30.

On September 19th we were able to honor one of our lifetime Deacons, Dave Hibbard. He was given the honor of Deacon Emeritus. He has shown us through his actions what being a servant really means. From the bus ministry to making sure everyone has a seat in Gods house. In Dave's words we need to live "ONE DAY AT A TIME." We thank you, Dave! MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU ON THE NEXT PART OF YOUR JOURNEY!

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

Address Service Requested

