

*September 2026*



# THE MUSTARD SEED

## September 13

**On Sunday, September 13, we will have a full day of activities. First, join us at 10:30am for Pastor Matt's final worship service with us.**

**Immediately, after worship we will stay in the sanctuary for a Congregational Meeting to adopt our updated Constitution and Bylaws and new policies. Drafts of the new documents were sent out on 8/24, and print copies are available from the Church Office.**

**Our day will conclude with a potluck luncheon downstairs. Please bring a dish to share as we have a time of fellowship and farewell.**



The Book Club will meet September 28 at 7 p.m. to discuss "The Scarlet Letter" by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The book for October is "The Guest List" by Lucy Foley. Any questions contact, Carin Kaag [cas207@yahoo.com](mailto:cas207@yahoo.com)



**Join the Creation Care Team for a FALL WALK and LUNCH on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>** in Mt. Gretna! Meet outside the Porch & Pantry to **WALK at 10am**, followed by **LUNCH at 11:30am** at the restaurant. Rain date is Saturday, October 3rd. Signup in the bell tower. Can't do both? You are welcome to join just for the walk or just for lunch!

## 10 ideas for how you could save both \$\$ and energy



1. Recycle older appliances for cash rebates and free pickup – fridges, freezers, dehumidifiers, AC units. See links below for more information
  - a. PPL - [PPL Appliance Recycling Program](#)
  - b. First Energy - [Appliance Recycling Program](#)
2. Choose Energy Star Certified appliances when you are purchasing new
3. Maintain your furnace and boiler - replace or clean your air filters at least every 3 months
4. Shade your AC unit – one operating in shade uses 10% less electricity
5. Adjust your blinds for the seasons – closed keeps summer heat out, open allows the winter sun's warmth in
6. Limit kitchen and bath exhaust fan usage – turn off 20 minutes after use
7. Set the proper temperatures for your fridge (36-38) and freezer (0) and keep them away from heat sources
8. Upgrade to smart thermostats – save up to \$180 annually
9. Seal air leaks in your house
10. Close your fireplace damper in the winter when not in use

Listen to the Creation Care Moment during the service on September 20 for more details on the above ideas.



The **Kiwanis Club of the Palmyra Area** will be hosting its **13th Annual Miniature Golf Fundraiser** on Saturday, September 12th, rain or shine at The Shack located at 662 South Oak Street in Manheim. Registration is at 9:00 AM and the starting time is 9:30 AM. The proceeds will be used to help fund the organization's School Nurses' Project and also to promote literacy in the community. Registration forms along with more information can be found on the bell tower bulletin board. Thank you for your support.



**Volunteers** are needed on **9/20/26** to help prepare, distribute and clean up at the free meal for the public which is being served by the **Lebanon Rescue Mission**. The meals are once again being served in the dining room. Those interested in carpooling will meet in the church parking lot at 1:30 P.M. We are scheduled to volunteer **from 2:00 P.M. to approximately 6:00 P.M.** In addition, there are items that are needed to make the meal extra special. There are two sign-up sheets on the bell tower bulletin board: one for volunteers for the meal; and a second to donate items. (Special Notes: If you are feeling sick or have a cough, please volunteer another time. Due to safety issues, children must be over the age of eight to volunteer. Volunteers must wear closed toe shoes.)



The **Kiwanis Club of the Palmyra Area** is selling **Sycamore Spring Farm's Apple Dumplings**. All proceeds will be used to help fund the organization's School Nurses' Project. This on-going project provides the school nurses in the Annville-Cleona and Palmyra School Districts with clothing, snacks and personal care items that are often needed by students. The proceeds will also help to promote literacy in the community. The cost is \$7.00 each with your choice of regular or sugar free. The sign up sheet is on the bell tower bulletin board. Orders are due by Tuesday, October 20. Pick-up date is Wednesday, October 28 from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM in our church parking lot. Payment made be made by cash or check (payable to the Kiwanis Club of the Palmyra Area). Thank you for your support

## **Salem UCC Council Meeting Agenda**

**6/8/26**

**Present:** Faith Bicksler, Jared Cooper, Michelle Alger, Tom Peiffer, Gretchen Monahan, Matt Kaag, Pastor Matt Hoover, Missy Weidler, Jim Flanagan, Barb Kaufman, Cindy Umberger, Megan Wheelden

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM**

**Opening Devotions (Faith)**

**Approval of Agenda—by unanimous consent**

**Approval of Secretary's report (Bill)—by unanimous consent**

**Treasurer's Report (Tom)**

- Monthly receipts up 3.3% from the same first five months of 2025
- General Fund Receipts are up 3.3% from 2025 for the first five months of the year.
- When applying the transfers from the Moyer Fund and 2025's surplus, we only show a loss of \$3,500.
- The Cemetery Fund was the best performing of all the funds.
- Treasurer's report was passed by unanimous consent

**Pastor's Report (Pastor Matt)**

- Keystone Conference Annual Meeting was held.
- An overview of the upcoming funeral planning event "Know Before You Go" was given.
- Since the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the USA is approaching, Pastor Matt asked for a volunteer to ring the Salem church bell on July 4. Tom Peiffer volunteered.

**Old Business:**

- **Update on Horseshoe Pike Lot and discussion of most recent offer (Jared and Tom)**
  - An overview of the offer was presented to Council.
  - A motion by Cindy Umberger (seconded by Barb Kaufman) was passed: We shall move forward to put the offer to a congregational vote,
  - A motion by Cindy Umberger (seconded by Gretchen Monahan) was passed – The sale is to be signed off by both the President and Treasurer with the money going to the General Fund.
  - There was a discussion of bylaws and procedures to ascertain the approval process. It was verified that at least two thirds of the members present in the upcoming congregation meeting must approve the sale.
- **By-laws Update and Policies and Procedures Discussion (Pastor Matt and committee)**
  - It was determined that the By-laws and Policies and Procedures documents should go to the congregation for separate votes.
  - A motion by Michelle Alger (seconded by Missy Weidler) to take the By-laws Update to the congregation for a vote was passed.

- The Policies and Procedures document is to be worked on further with regard to child safety. An as-is draft is to be shown to the congregation for information purposes.

## **New Business**

- **The Search Committee had a request for guidance for the Council to consider.**
  - The Council went into executive session between 7:50pm and 8:00pm to discuss the request.

## **Committee Reports:**

- **Building, Grounds, Cemetery (Jared) –**
  - A/C repairs in the sanctuary were completed as of June 8. There are two more units to examine. (Delta)
  - The week of June 22, we will be loaning out tables and chairs with the stipulation that they be returned by Friday evening June 26 as they are needed over the weekend for setup and use on June 28.
  - Louise Adams and Tom Peiffer are working on cemetery requests.
- **Christian Education (Jim) –** No meeting during this time-frame
- **Fellowship (Michelle) –** May 31 is next fellowship event for Graduation Sunday; refreshment are to be served at the June 28 “Know Before You Go” event.
- **Finance Stewardship (Tom) –** Met on April 16 and discussed a change in the budget report format.
- **Membership (Bill) –** June 28 noon at the church – “Know before you Go: Burial and Funeral Options” - Donna Buse
- **Missions (Matt) –** Last meeting 5/12/26, 61 health kits
- **Creation Care (Cindy) –** Successful May 16 plant exchange in the parking lot. June 23<sup>rd</sup> next meeting
- **PACC (Tom) –** As PACC is to wind down and operate under a different agenda, it will meet on June 10 in executive session to determine the path forward.
- **Women’s Fellowship (Faith) –** Kitchen Kettle Village event held on June 5.
- **Pastoral Relations (Missy) –** No meeting
- **Music and Worship (Faith) –** No meeting
- **Youth Fellowship (Sarah) –** No report

## **Open Comment period (off the record)**

## **Meeting adjournment by unanimous consent at 8:10 PM**

**Closing: Mizpah Benediction**

**Next Meeting: July 13, 2026 7:00 PM**

## **Salem UCC Council Meeting Minutes**

**7/13/26**

**Present:** Faith Bicksler, Tom Peiffer, Missy Weidler, Jim Flanagan, Cindy Umberger, Megan Wheelden, Pastor Matt Hoover,

**Virtual:** Barb Kauffman

**Missing:** Michelle Alger, Gretchen Monahan, Bill McNamara, Sarah McNamara, Matt Kaag, Jared Cooper

**Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM**

**Opening Devotions (Faith)**

**Approval of Agenda**

- Added to begin discussion about updated equipment needed for livestreaming
- Approved by unanimous consent

**Approval of Secretary's report (Jim)**

- Adjustment requested to move 2 motions related to the sale of the lot together in the minutes
- Approved by unanimous consent

**Treasurer's Report (Tom)**

- First 6 months down .7% from last year
- General fund -
  - nothing unusual
  - Some large building and grounds bills being paid in July
- \$19,912 deficit for 6 months
- Funds report - change between months is due to change in market value
- Items that were not budgeted for 2026 due to not knowing when the search process for a candidate would be completed
  - Moving expenses (line is in budget but no amount was budgeted for 2026)
  - PTO/sick time pay out for Pastor Hoover
- An item to budget for 2027 - mileage
- Passed by unanimous consent

**Pastor's Report (Pastor Matt)**

- Pastor Matt did all of his normal things
- He preached at the Annville Home for Wednesday service
- The question Pastor Matt is asked most currently is, 'what will be your next job?'

- Due to a Salem's successful candidate search, Pastor Matt doubts he will be with us until 11/1, (Pastor Julia's tentative start date)
- Pastor's Matt's wife, Becky, has offered to sub for Salem on any Sundays in the void, she is keeping the fall open for Salem

### **Old Business:**

- Pastor Matt updated the church policies about fees
- Child Safety, clearances, safe church and relational covenant policies were pulled together by Pastor Matt
  - Used templates from other churches
  - We will move all of the policies forward to the congregation along with the bylaws
  - We will take the bylaws and policies to the church for approval at a meeting after the service on 9/13
  - Council members should review the full by laws and policies one more time before the August meeting -
  - Pastor Matt will send updated/clean copies of all
- Another policy could be added for financial procedures (see church profile for a start)

### **New Business:**

- Council moved into executive session 7:35 - 7:47pm
- (Tom) Repair of the organ chimes (Tom)
  - \$4700 estimate from organ company to repair
  - A member was contacted that repaired the chimes previously - he and Karen are in contact
- Budget for computer equipment (Jim)
  - \$1500 budget was for tripod camera, microphone and laptop for YouTube streaming
  - Tripod camera and microphone would make a difference in the streaming, Jim will look into purchasing these
  - He will hold off on the laptop now as using his own
  - Jim noted that a change to stable volume in YouTube settings would make the music sound better - this is something every individual must do on their end
    - It was suggested that Jim write down instructions on how to do this so members could have a better streaming experience of the Salem services

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **1. Building, Grounds, Cemetery (Tom) –**

- A/c repair with upcoming bill of \$3875 (includes 500 maintenance contract) - AC fixed



- Lift had a malfunction - \$760 upcoming bill to correct door not opening
  - With heavy rains, had some water at bottom of the ramp - stones were added
  - Neighbors bushes need to be trimmed
  - Sale of parking lot is moving forward
1. **Christian Education (Jim) – no meeting**
  2. **Fellowship (Missy) –**
    - Hosted new pastors weekend along with the search committee
    - Next event is church picnic - 8/2
  3. **Finance Stewardship (Tom) –**
    - Need to order new envelopes for 2027 - cost was \$309 for last year
  4. **Membership (Pastor Matt) –**
    - Meeting next Sunday
    - Know before you go went well
    - Kids and National Night Out have been advertised (Aug 4 and 12)
  5. **Missions (Matt) – no report**
  6. **Creation Care (Cindy) – Met June 23 and planned events for the fall,**
    - Hoping to hang our creation justice church banner outside on the ‘entry’ toward Hinkle Rd (per Tom this isn’t feasible)
    - Creation care moments planned
    - Will write UCC climate postcards to legislators
    - Using season of change during some Sept services
    - 9/26 (rain date 10/3) - will walk at Gretna and eat at the Porch and Pantry
    - Will plan a more challenging hike for Oct/Nov
  7. **PACC (Tom) –**
    - Winding down the formal organization this year
    - After the formal organization is gone - Churches plan to meet quarterly to update one another and support one another
  8. **Women’s Fellowship (Faith) – no meeting**
  9. **Pastoral Relations (Missy) – no meeting, meeting next Monday**
  10. **Music and Worship (Faith) – next meeting 8/17**
  11. **Youth Fellowship (Sarah) – no report**

**Open Comment period (off the record)**

**Meeting adjournment by unanimous consent at 8:20 PM**

**Closing: Mizpah Benediction**

**Next Meeting: Aug 10, 2026 7:00 PM**

**THE MUSTARD SEED**

*Published By:*

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|           |              |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday | September 2  | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.                                                                                                                                       |
| Thursday  | September 3  | Stewardship Committee 3 p.m.<br>Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.                                                                                                       |
| Sunday    | September 6  | Sip & Chat 10:00 a.m.<br>Family Worship 10:30 a.m.                                                                                                                                          |
| Wednesday | September 9  | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.<br>Choir Rehearsal 7 p.m.                                                                                                             |
| Thursday  | September 10 | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.<br>Creation Care Committee 7 p.m.<br>Manestreamers 4H 6 p.m.                                                                          |
| Sunday    | September 13 | Sip & Chat 10:00 a.m.<br>Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Pastor Matt's last Sunday<br>Congregational Meeting immediately after worship followed<br>by a pot luck luncheon in the fellowship hall. |
| Monday    | September 14 | Council 7 p.m Hybrid                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Wednesday | September 16 | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.<br>Worship at Londonderry Village 7 p.m.                                                                                              |
| Thursday  | September 17 | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.                                                                                                                                       |
| Sunday    | September 20 | Sip & Chat 10:00 a.m.<br>Family Worship 10:30 a.m.                                                                                                                                          |
| Wednesday | September 23 | 511 R.E.S.T. Group 10 a.m<br>Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.<br>Choir Rehearsal 7 p.m.                                                                                |
| Thursday  | September 24 | Sanctuary Being Used by Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.                                                                                                                                       |
| Saturday  | September 26 | Creation Care Walk Mt. Gretna 10 a.m.                                                                                                                                                       |
| Sunday    | September 27 | Sip & Chat 10:00 a.m.<br>Family Worship 10:30 a.m.                                                                                                                                          |
| Monday    | September 28 | Book Club 7 p.m.                                                                                                                                                                            |

*All Worship Services will also be livestreamed on YouTube*





**September 6, 2026**

**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 12:1-14

Psalms 149

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

**September 13, 2026**

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 14:19-31

Psalms 114

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

**September 20, 2026**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 16:2-15

Psalms 105:1-6, 37-45

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

**September 27, 2026**

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalms 78:1-4, 12-16

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

**October 4, 2026**

**Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Psalms 19

Philippians 3:4b-14

Matthew 21:33-46

**October 11, 2026**

**Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 32:1-14

Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23

Philippians 4:1-9

Matthew 22:1-14

**October 18, 2026**

**Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 33:12-23

Psalms 99

I Thessalonians 1:1-10

Matthew 22:15-22

**October 25, 2026**

**Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost**

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Psalms 90:1-6, 13-17

I Thessalonians 2:1-8

Matthew 22:34-46

### A Letter from Christ

Paul the Apostle gave a beautiful compliment to the believers in Corinth. He wrote:

“And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Corinthians 3:3, ESV).

What a meaningful picture. A letter carries a message, and Paul reminded the church that their lives were sharing the message of Christ with others.

The same is true for us today. Through our words, actions and faith, people can see evidence of God at work in our hearts. None of us is perfect, but living faithfully can point others toward Him.

What a wonderful goal for every Christian: to be known as “a letter from Christ.”

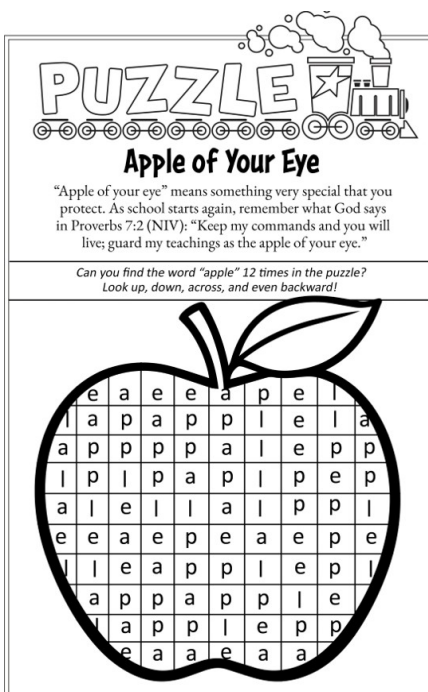




|    |                     |
|----|---------------------|
| 2  | David Kaag          |
| 2  | Fran Shepler        |
| 7  | Pat Steely          |
| 6  | Bill Long           |
| 9  | Madelyn Miller      |
| 15 | Aaron Albright      |
| 15 | Shirley Burkholder  |
| 16 | Jennifer Bear       |
| 16 | Andrea Cooper       |
| 19 | Stephanie Borremans |
| 19 | Lisa Burnett        |
| 23 | Blaine Kerr         |
| 24 | Corey Bear          |
| 24 | John Burnett        |
| 20 | Tessa Flanagan      |
| 20 | Kevin Monahan       |
| 27 | Gloria Garrett      |
| 30 | Brandon Risser      |



|    |                    |
|----|--------------------|
| 1  | Zachary Ott        |
| 2  | Jan Peiffer        |
| 3  | Samantha Beahm     |
| 5  | Donald M. Umberger |
| 6  | Emma McNamara      |
| 9  | Audrey Woomer      |
| 10 | Blair Kerr         |
| 10 | Chad Shenk         |
| 11 | Stephen Hitz       |
| 11 | Kristin Vines      |
| 12 | Brendan Monahan    |
| 14 | Mary Risser        |
| 15 | Elizabeth Gingrich |
| 17 | Zach Kindt         |
| 19 | Aaron Steely       |
| 20 | Tessa Flanagan     |
| 20 | Kevin Monahan      |
| 21 | Myka Lechleitner   |
| 22 | Timothy Kreider    |
| 23 | Thomas Peiffer     |
| 24 | Dave Bushnell      |
| 26 | Audrey Miller      |
| 27 | Tiffany Broaddus   |
| 27 | Patricia Young     |
| 30 | Jeffrey Albright   |
| 31 | Sheila Gingrich    |



## SALEM COLLECTIONS -

**The Caring Cupboard** is a community food pantry, that has grown into a community necessity, that currently serves over 350 families living primarily in the Palmyra and Annville-Cleona School Districts. Products to be given to the Caring Cupboard may be placed on the designated shelves found at the end of the northwest hallway of Salem Church.

**Pop Tab Collection Program (Matt Waller) Ronald McDonald House.** The collection of aluminum beverage tabs began in 1996. The aluminum tabs are sold to a local recycling company and their proceeds help with daily operating expenses at the Ronald McDonald House. The generous amount from the tabs collected has been very beneficial to the House and the families they serve. They are averaging \$1,000 monthly just from these tiny tabs. You can help raise money by pulling tabs from any aluminum container. Pop Tabs may be placed in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance.

**Redner's Cash Register Receipts (Cindy Steger)** By using the Save-A-Tape card you picked up at Customer Service Desk each time you purchase merchandise at Redner's Warehouse Markets, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape customer receipt. When you come to Salem Church, place your **entire register/sales receipt (DO NOT CUT!)** in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance. Salem Church will receive a check for 1% of the total amount of tapes submitted, excluding items controlled by the government, such as tax, milk and tobacco products.

**Clothing Recycling** Old clothing and material that are too worn to use can be recycled. If possible, take to an Goodwill (mark the bag Recycling) otherwise put it in the box in the west narthex and we'll take it for you. Thank you!

**Writing Tool Recycling** You can recycle old writing tools – crayons, markers, pens, and pencils. Staples Store will recycle these items as well as many other items (check their website!). Feel free to take to a Staples or place in the "Crayola marker" collection tube in the west narthex. Thank you!

**Battery Recycling** Salem now has a battery recycling collection bin in the West narthex (shaped like a battery!). Place used rechargeable or single-use batteries there and they will be taken to Staples for proper disposal.

### Rest for the Soul



Studies show many Americans don't get enough sleep, and the effects can take a toll on both body and mind. Whether it's a packed schedule or restless nights, a lack of rest makes it harder to think clearly, stay focused and care for our overall well-being. Over time, that constant fatigue begins to wear us down.

Our spiritual lives follow a similar rhythm. When we rush from one task to the next without pausing to spend time with God, we can feel just as drained. We need consistent, quiet moments with Him to stay grounded, encouraged and strong in our faith.

Even Jesus made space for this kind of rest. Luke 5:16 tells us that He often withdrew to quiet places to pray. If He needed that time with the Father, how much more do we? When we step away from the noise and listen for God's voice, we find the renewal our souls have been longing for.