



# MAY 2025 CTC CONNECTIONS

## Countryside Trinity Church

### FROM THE PASTOR ---- REV. NATHANIEL ASPERGER

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Around Easter and Spring, I tend to get two hymns stuck in my head regularly. "My Lord, what a morning!" And "Morning Has Broken". Many people are thinking about spring cleaning, the sides of the road are full of signs of that already, as people clean out the buildup of things. I find myself reflecting as I hum about the beauty of Easter and new life. What of my discipleship practices need to be spring cleaned? Also, do I have space for those important practices in my day? So often in life we accumulate different practices, beliefs and habits that either we learned or were drawn to overtime. For some like my grandparents, it was reading from the devotional, "Our Daily Bread" while they ate breakfast. I invite you to consider what are your daily routines that build and support your discipleship journey?

Reading 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, it is a contentious section of scripture for some, because it starts with this idea of being equally yoked with unbelievers. Let me clear, I am not advocating to reject all those people in your life who do not believe as you do. I would certainly struggle to do so. There is a bigger picture here to understand in the context this scripture was written to. The people of Israel and the church in Corinth did struggle with other nations' idols, with letting in priests and priestesses from other religions. They struggled to stay true to the faith in Jesus Christ, by taking in these idolatrous practices. That being said, the context from then to now is both similar, and different. In today's age, American Christianity is prone to influence from the rest of American culture. Just as Roman Christians in Corinth. In reality, despite what some might say on the news, we are not a Christian nation. We can look at the decline of American church attendance as a whole over the last several decades as evidence enough of that. Perhaps in all reality, especially when we look around, it is time we all did some spring cleaning for ourselves and our discipleship practices.

Phyllis Tickle, in writing about church history, noted that about every 500 years, the church feels compelled to hold a giant rummage sale. What Phyllis is referencing is the reformation periods in our Christian tradition. We are different from those Christian's in Corinth in the way that we are able to reflect on a great history of Christian witnesses, writers, activists and the work of the Holy Spirit across time. It is also about 500 years since the last big reformation period ended, (1648).

Thinking about this in myself; I needed for a project in my doctoral program to keep track of where I spent all my time during a month. I tracked 15-minute periods of each day, and I was honestly a little disheartened reflecting on the results. I realized that somewhere along the way, I had stopped spending as much time in gratitude to God. Not thanking God for the little moments and the big ones in my life. I had stopped doing some other things that were important in my spiritual life over the years. Sometimes it takes some time for us to reflect and do some spiritual cleaning. Looking at where our discipleship journey is and where we might have become complacent in our routines and habits.

I invite you all to sit during the week, and consider when you are praying? Consider how much time you spend reading the bible each day? Consider other practices like did you/do you journal your prayers? Do you read commentaries or devotionals to help expand the scriptures? Do you pray for everyone, or just the people you like?

There are many little ways that we accumulate the little things that get packed into our spiritual life and sometimes push out the space to sit with God. I invite you to consider where that might be for you.

May the Lord Bless you and keep you. -Rev. Nathaniel

# UPCOMING LECTIONARY READINGS FOR FEBRUARY

<p><b>May 4, 2025</b>            Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)            Psalm 30            Revelation 5:11-14            John 21:1-19</p>	<p>On the road to Damascus, Saul sees a blinding light and is converted.            O Lord, you brought me up from the grave; my soul praises you.            The choirs of heaven sing: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Amen!            A miraculous catch of fish; Jesus tells Simon Peter: Feed my sheep</p>
<p><b>May 11, 2025</b>            Acts 9:36-43            Psalm 23            Revelation 7:9-17            John 10:22-30</p>	<p>Peter raises Tabitha from the dead; many believe in the Lord.            The Lord is my shepherd, leading, protecting, and feeding me.            The redeemed worship at the throne of the Lamb, their shepherd.            Jesus says: My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.</p>
<p><b>May 18, 2025</b>            Acts 11:1-18            Psalm 148            Revelation 21:1-6            John 13:31-35</p>	<p>Peter has a vision about unclean food; God's gift of life is for all.            Praise the Lord, all creation! God is exalted in heaven and earth.            A new heaven and earth; a holy city; God's home is among mortals.            Jesus gives a new commandment; love one another as I love you.</p>
<p><b>May 25, 2025</b>            Acts 16:9-15            Psalm 67            Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5            John 14:23-29 or            John 5:1-9</p>	<p>Hearing Paul in Macedonia, Lydia and her household are baptized.            May God be gracious and bless us; let the whole earth praise God.            A vision of the holy city; the river of life flows from God's throne.            Jesus says: Keep my word; the Spirit will teach you; I give you peace.            At the pool of Beth-zatha in Jerusalem, Jesus heals a paralyzed man.</p>
<p><b>May 29, 2025</b>            Acts 1:1-11            Psalm 47 or            Psalm 93            Ephesians 1:15-23            Luke 24:44-53</p>	<p>Forty days after his resurrection, Jesus ascends into heaven.            Clap, shout, and sing with joy: the Lord reigns over all the earth.            The Lord reigns in majesty, high above the mighty waters.            Christ is seated at God's right hand, above every earthly power.            Jesus interprets the Scriptures, then he is carried up into heaven.</p>

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

We want to welcome our newest members to Countryside Trinity Church – Jane Strom and her son, David Strom, have joined our family – transferring their membership from their former UCC church in Wisconsin. We are so happy to receive them into our church family.



# TREASURER'S REPORT – MARI MCKENZIE

## Changes in Equity-January 2025-April 2025

Countryside Trinity Church

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Changes in Equity

January 2025 - April 2025

**CONSOLIDATED ALL FUNDS**

		Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Transfers	Ending Balance
NET ASSETS	3000					
UNRESTRICTED	3100					
Memorial Fund	3105	28,863.13	1,010.00	0.00	0.00	29,873.13
General Fund	3110	28,977.52	25,956.26	(57,824.25)	5,900.00	3,009.53
Bricks Fund	3115	1,335.85	600.00	0.00	0.00	1,935.85
Mission Fund	3130	37.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	37.50
Minister Compensation Fun	3140	81,614.52	0.00	0.00	(2,140.00)	79,474.52
Endowment - Expendable	3150	97,592.58	1,110.04	0.00	(3,760.00)	94,942.62
Subtotal Unrestricted	3100	238,421.10	28,676.30	(57,824.25)	0.00	209,273.15
DONOR RESTRICTED	3200					
Food Account	3220	(70.48)	975.00	(1,100.00)	0.00	(195.48)
Good Samaritan	3230	1,137.84	0.00	(125.00)	0.00	1,012.84
Youth Experience Fund	3241	455.81	30.00	(370.00)	0.00	115.81
Parking Lot Fund	3242	996.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	996.24
Muriel Lakey Scholarship	3290	5,827.45	676.39	(1,000.00)	0.00	5,503.84
Endowment Nonexpendable F	3310	153,000.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	153,000.50
Subtotal Donor Restricted	3200	161,347.36	1,681.39	(2,595.00)	0.00	160,433.75
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>399,768.46</b>	<b>30,357.69</b>	<b>(60,419.25)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>369,706.90</b>

### PER CAPITA DONATIONS

As church members we are reminded annually that we must pay a per capita tax to our denomination. This money usually goes toward paying expenses at the higher level than our own immediate church. Since we are a two-denomination church (Presbyterian and United Church of Christ), we receive two bills for per capita. . The denominations base the total per capita on the number of members that the church reports. Also, please bear in mind that since we are two denominations, all of our membership statistics that are submitted to the two denominations annually are divided in half. For instance, if we have 100 members, the report to each denomination will be 50 members. The Presbytery bill for us covers 50 members, so it is actually to our benefit. We also receive a bill for a lesser amount from UCC based on 50 members.

**With this in mind, the Session has approved a request to be made to the members to pay \$30.00 per capita for 2025. Just a gentle reminder that the per capita is per member, not per household.** So, if you have four people in your household that are members of Countryside Church, you are asked to pay for all four people a total of \$120.00. In order to defray the expense of the per capita, the Session is asking that members assist the church by paying their own per capita of \$30.00/member for 2025. We do not want to put a hardship on anyone, but these bills must be paid whether our treasury gets help from the members or not. There will be an envelope marked "per capita" in your box of contribution envelopes that you will be receiving in the next few weeks that you can use.

The Session appreciates your help in this matter.

## GET INVOLVED!



Express yourself and your faith by joining the worship, music, or usher team today.

There are so many meaningful and fun ways to get involved, and there is something for everyone to do and **YOU** are needed for CTC to continue to grow and move forward. If you are interested in becoming a worship helper, singing in the choir or have any questions about how you can help, please speak with Darren Woodke or Dan Groom. If you can occasionally usher, talk with Pat Denno or Ron Platt.

### Choir Practice

The choir meets at 9:30 a.m. prior to worship most Sundays. Come join us!

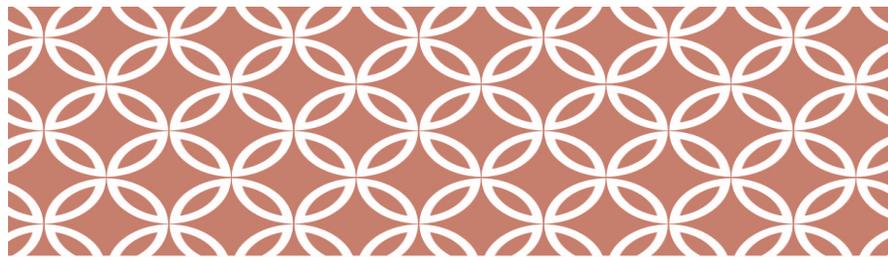


## SAGINAW COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

**Senior Center Activities:**  
There are many centers in the Saginaw area offering continuing weekly activities from dancing and exercise to cards. I have placed the December Newsletter for the Commission on Aging on the table in Fellowship Hall. You can also go online to view a list of each month's activities.

Go to [www.saginawcounty.com](http://www.saginawcounty.com) and hover on the tab "Community Resources" and then click on the drop-down item "Commission on Aging". Look for upcoming events and there will be a link for Senior Center Events & Activities. Check it out - there are some fun activities that continue throughout the year.

# HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC?



**MISSIONS SUPPORTED BY  
COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY  
CHURCH**

**HOW DO I  
CHOOSE?**

At CTC we support many different Missions through "Special Offerings" including **One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost/Strengthening the Church, Peace & Global Witness/Neighbors in Need** and **Christmas Joy/Fund** as well as our "Missions of the Month" throughout the year.

It is not necessary to contribute to each of the Mission's CTC supports. If you are able and wish to do so, we invite you to select those missions you are most passionate about and donate to them. Any contributions you make are greatly appreciated. **THANK YOU.**

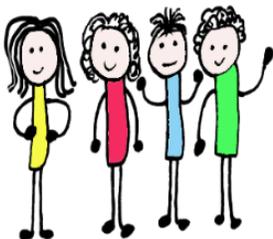
The CTC Women's Association held its "Baby Shower" on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. It was a **GREAT SUCCESS!** We had so much fun and collected lots of beautiful items to be distributed to the Baby Pantry and Underground Railroad. Below is a summary of items received:

376 Diapers; 1,000 baby wipes; 1 blanket; 3 burp cloths; 1 sleep sack; 8 onesies; 7 onesie outfits; 5 rompers; 6 2-piece outfits; 3 sun suits; 3 hat/sweater sets (1 with booties); 1 short outfit; 3 dresses; 7 sleepers; 3 play outfits and \$165.00 in cash.

# HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC?

## CTC WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The next  
CTC  
Women's  
Association  
Meeting  
will be  
Saturday,  
May 10<sup>th</sup> at  
11:30 a.m.  
Hope you  
can attend!



## CTC'S MISSIONS OF THE MONTH FOR MAY ARE THE FOLLOWING

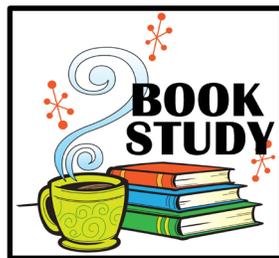
BLANKET SUNDAY, CELEBRATED ON MOTHER'S DAY, MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, CELEBRATED ON MAY 25<sup>TH</sup>  
PENTECOST SUNDAY, CELEBRATED ON JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>

### MARK YOUR ENVELOPE ACCORDINGLY

Please donate to the one or ones you have an interest in supporting. If you have a suggestion for a Mission that we can support, please let Kathy in the office know. Mark your donations accordingly.

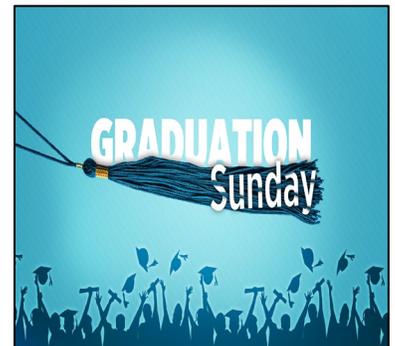
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

## Lunch with Pastor **BOOK STUDY!**



Pack your lunch on Wednesday and join Pastor Nathaniel for Book Study. We are discussing *"The First Nation's Translation of the New Testament"*

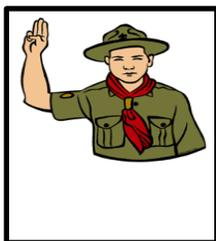
CTC will be celebrating our graduates on Sunday June 8th. If you have a family member graduating this year from high school, college or a trade school and would like to see them recognized, please contact Sandy Redfield (989) 482-9609 and she will fill you in on the details. Thanks.



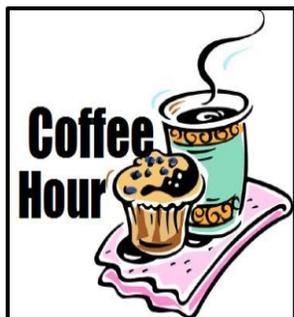
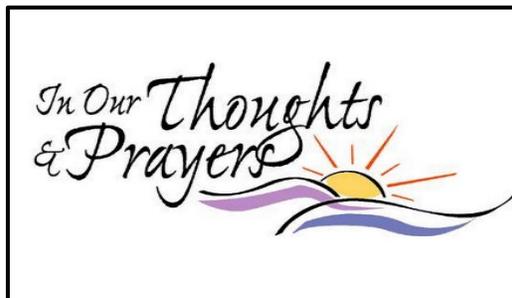
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## BOY SCOUT TROOP #304

Our Boy Scout Troop continues to do well and wish to thank us for the ongoing donation of our returnable bottles and cans. These donations have been an excellent source of income for the boys. Please continue to bring bags of your returnable bottles and cans to the church and leave in the back hallway for the troop. Thank you.



**Facebook Prayer Group:** Don't forget we have a Facebook Prayer Group on our FB Page. It is a private group where only those who are invited can see the messages posted for those in need of prayer. If you are on Facebook and would like to be invited, please call Kathy in the office so she can invite you to join. If you would like to add someone to the prayer list, please contact Kathy in the office to do so.



Please consider hosting a coffee hour following worship service. There is a chart on the Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall – check for available dates if you can be a coffee hour host. For those who would like to help, but don't think they would be able to handle it – help is always available. Check with Kathy Loviska, and Marcia Lacker. Thank you.

**WARMER WEATHER IS COMING**, and we are beginning to look at Summer Camp for the children of CTC. If you would like to help with their costs, please submit your donation marked "Summer Camp" which can be dropped in the plate at church or mailed in, whichever you prefer.



If you have a family member who would like to go to camp, please contact Sandy Redfield for more information. There are also brochures on the table in the Fellowship Hall for those who may be interested.

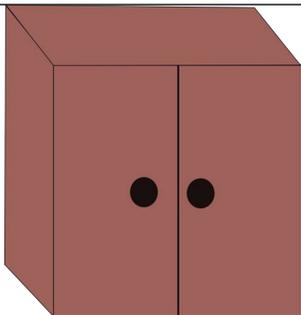
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SESSION COUNCIL	DEACONS
<b>Class of 2025</b> Darren Woodke Becky Pequignot Bethany Scovill	<b>Class of 2025</b> Pat Denno Ronda Otway Duncan Redfield
<b>Class of 2026</b> Roger Scovill Kathy Loviska Chuck Davis	<b>Class of 2026</b> Dan Groom Paige Pequignot Lori Halase
<b>Class of 2027</b> Sidney Diggs Debbie Davis Sandy Redfield	<b>Class of 2027</b> Lynne Groom Jackie Williams Ron Platt



<b>John &amp; Leore Bethune</b> Traditions of Saginaw, West, Formerly New Hope Valley	<b>Dawn Curtis</b> @ Home	<b>Floyd &amp; Lois Krzak</b> Floyd @ Hoyt Nursing Home Lois @ Home
<b>Avis Leach</b> Roosevelt House/Hemlock	<b>Marilyn Leffler</b> Traditions of Saginaw, West Formerly New Hope Valley	<b>Marie Lemmer</b> Wellspring Assisted Living
<b>Fern Evon Little</b> Swan Haven Manor	<b>Elaine Miner</b> @ Home	<b>Elaine O'Keefe</b> Great Lakes Rehab

**Our Homebound members and friends would all love to hear from you. Please drop them a card or give them a call. Their contact information is in the Church Directory.**



**IN SEARCH OF:** Session is looking for a cabinet to be used to hold miscellaneous toiletries, personal items, and possible canned items which will be placed in our Parking Lot area for the community to take as needed. Our members and friends may donate items, and our Christian Outreach Committee will oversee the mission going forward. If you have something you think might work, please contact Kathy in the office at 989 793-0125. Thanks.



# **BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

## **BIRTHDAYS MAY**

- 1 Gwen Henderson
- 4 Joshua Gonzales
- 5 Sue Smith
- 6 Marcia Lacker
- 18 Doris Ruth
- 21 Seth Diggs
- 24 Katlyn Hanson
- 26 Charles Ohmer
- 26 Lore Woodke
- 28 Sue Paterson

## **BIRTHDAYS JUNE**

- 2 Michael Groom
- 3 Eric Smith
- 11 Robert Bortner
- 11 Dana Hansen Cooper
- 19 Kitty Blehm
- 20 Marilyn Leffler
- 30 Darren Woodke

## **BIRTHDAYS JULY**

- 2 Elaine O'Keefe
- 5 Dawn Curtis
- 11 Graham Parker
- 13 Jean Bortner
- 18 Sidney Diggs IV
- 23 Bobby Diggs
- 24 Zayden Evans (Alexa Mahan)
- 24 Dick Mallette
- 26 Nathaniel Asperger
- 29 Holly Furlo
- 30 Lynne Groom
- 31 Rachael Barerra

## **AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**

- 2 Taylor Hansen (M=Dana Woodke Cooper)
- 4 Marianne Bird
- 5 Daniel Groom
- 8 Chad Parker
- 8 Rylan Hanson
- 10 Randy Jacob
- 13 Kyle Redfield
- 15 Ainslee Mahan
- 15 Aubree Mahan
- 21 Karla Parker
- 21 Casey Redfield
- 31 Jim Lorenz

## **ANNIVERSARIES MAY**

- 4 Tom & Chong Ladner
- 7 Floyd & Lois Krzak
- 18 Randy & Lynne Groom

## **ANNIVERSARIES JUNE**

- 11 Rylan & Katlyn Hanson
- 21 Edward & Lori Halase
- 29 Ronald & Jean Anne Miller

## **JULY ANNIVERSARIES**

- 28 Charles & Irene Ohmer

## **AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES**

- 17 Dallas & Jackie Williams
- 29 Darren & Joann Woodke
- 29 Duncan & Sandy Redfield

# Countryside Trinity Church

4690 Weiss Street  
Saginaw, Michigan 48603  
(989) 793-0125

**"HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!"**

