



Bremen-Bethel Presbyterian Church
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Pastor: Rev. Larry Hoffmann; Clerk: Dee Mowry

Newsletter October 2023



FROM THE PASTOR: Rev. Larry Hoffmann

In the August edition of *The Christian Century* I came upon the reflection written by Dale Lee from Denver, CO on a familiar hymn we sing each week:

I take both solace and inspiration from an ancient Celtic prayer which, in modern times, has been transformed into a common blessing:

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

The wind, the sun, and the rain, each a primary dimension of the wondrous creation in which I find myself, are summoned to nurture me on my journey. The prayer recruits the untamed powers of nature to create an environment in which I can thrive. I am humbled by the magnificence of this all-embracing, otherworldly support on a road that meets me where I am and leads me to destinations beyond my vision. I can almost feel the sunlight warming my countenance and lighting the way ahead. I am gratefully nourished by the abundant growth of the fields upon which the rain has so softly fallen.

And then there is the wind. The shifting, unpredictable, gusting-out-of-nowhere wind. It is sometimes brutally harsh, other times playfully teasing. We see it not but are keenly aware of its presence.

The wind is frequently welcome but just as often a challenging burden. It can clear the air and cool a heated body, but it can also fan the flames of destruction and drive treasures out of sight. It is a physical, almost tangible, expression of uncertainty. We do not know its source or its destination or when it will make its helpful or disruptive presence known.

There are times when the wind is at my back, helping rather than hindering me. But I do not always welcome it. I do not unflinchingly want to move forward in the direction the wind seems to be pushing me. I would prefer to slow down, linger, procrastinate—but the wind will not permit me to make that internal downshift.

FROM THE PASTOR: Rev. Larry Hoffmann (continued)

As I think of the path I take to an awkward apology I must make, or long-overdue amends I must tend to, or a scary confrontation I can no longer avoid, I may need the wind at my back, but I do not necessarily welcome it. I approach these difficulties in ethical living much like Augustine in his Confessions: "Oh, Master, make me chaste and celibate—but not yet!" I want to be good, moral, and ethical. I just do not want to be rushed by a wind at my back.

FROM THE CLERK OF SESSION: Dee Mowry

As I look out my kitchen window, I see St. Mary's Catholic Church now sitting empty. It brings a bit of sadness to see such a magnificent structure such as this sitting empty. The church was built and dedicated in 1984, the year of the Bremen Village Sesquicentennial or 150th birthday. It was my honor to serve a general chairman, along with Bob Dowling, who unfortunately died prior to the actual celebration. The 'kick off' of the week-long celebration was at the newly completed catholic church. There was one large basket of celebratory flowers sent by the local Masonic Lodge which adorned the front of the church. The following week was one of all sorts of activities patterned after the 1934 Centennial Celebration of the village. Nearly 80 people made up the general committee.

It is sad to see any church close, we Presbyterians have had our share of closings. The closing of a Presbyterian Church is not the decision of any one person, but many are involved. This is a very positive feature of the Presbyterian faith. When a church faces closing, a commission is constituted to study the situation and make a recommendation to presbytery. This commission is made up of both clergy and laity, each person with an equal 'vote'. You will not see in the in Presbyterian Church any one person making major decisions. Presbyterians go the great lengths to avoid 'ostentatious' titles, in other words, no popes, cardinals, bishops, supervisors, etc. The Book of Order recognizes two officials, the moderator and clerk. The moderator conducts the meeting(s), and the clerk records the proceedings. Moderators of presbytery, synod and general assembly may be clergy and/or laity. The only place where an ordained Presbyterian minister is mandated is at the local session level. This is a wise provision as ALL ordained Presbyterian ministers are examined (in detail) in the provision(s) contained in the Book of Order. It is the responsibility of the moderator and the clerk to assure that the church is operating within the parameters of the Book of Order and that business is conducted 'decently and in order'.



Dates to Remember

Oct 8th – Zeta Alpha will meet at 9:30 am in the church basement.

Oct 22nd – Session will meet after the worship service.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Oct 7th – Kayla McCandlish

Oct 13th – Larry and Susan Hoffmann

Oct 18th – Cyndi Maley

Oct 21st – Dee Mowry

Oct 23rd – Brenda Winegardner

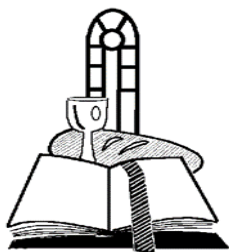
Oct 24th – Linda Embrey

Oct 27th – David and Brenda Winegardner

Oct 28th – Judy Turner

Anyone wanting to add a birthday or anniversary to the list, please send an email or call the church office.

October Lay Readers, Communion Servers and Ushers:



Oct 1st – Cinda Keller: Lay Reader, Communion Server & Usher

Linda Embrey: Usher

Oct 8th – Sharon Ankrom: Lay Reader & Usher

Tom Ankrom: Usher

Oct 15th – Mark & Tracy Embrey: Ushers

Cinda Keller: Lay Reader

Oct 22nd – Judy Turner: Lay Reader & Usher

Jane Griffith: Usher

Oct 29th – Scott Bergreen: Usher

Ila Bergreen: Lay Reader



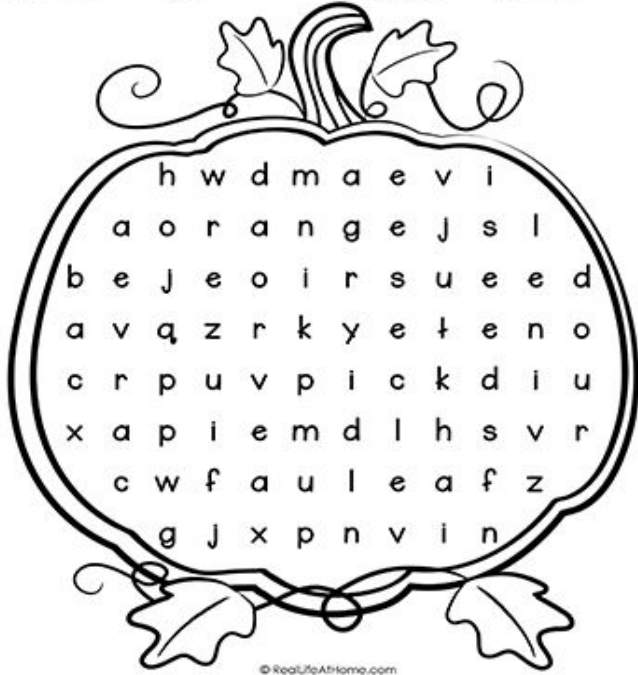


Kids' Page



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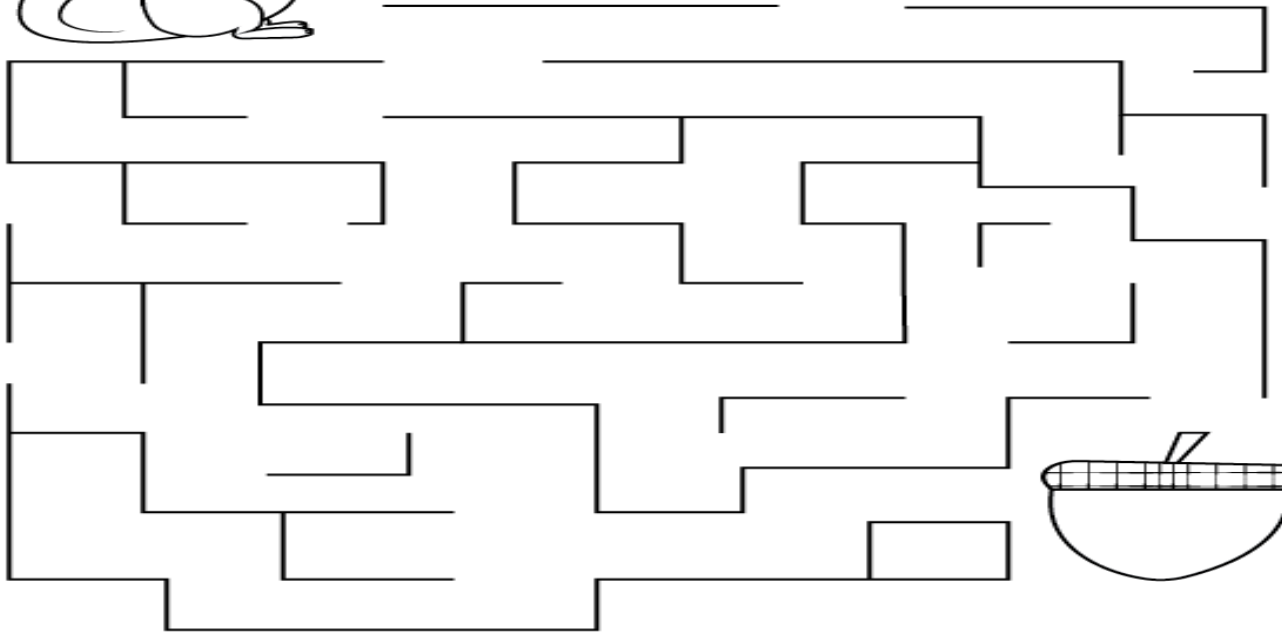
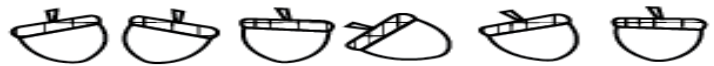
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