

ST. ANDREW'S TIMES

JULY/AUGUST 2026



"Desert Blooms"



Dear Church Family,

As we approach the hottest part of summer we can begin to imagine what we are in for: cracked dry ground; yellow, crunchy grass; and sunburns. Somehow, some plants will continue to blossom with bright orange and yellow faces turned toward the sun as if completely unaware that conditions are less than ideal.

It made me think of you. And of us. And of how often life hands us seasons that look a lot more like desert than garden.

We've all been there, haven't we? Seasons where our spiritual lives feel as parched as that cracked ground. Prayers that seem to evaporate before they reach the ceiling. Scripture that feels dry on the page. Faith that once bloomed freely now struggling to survive. If that's where you are right now, I want you to know something important: you are in very good company.

Moses spent forty years in the desert before God spoke from a burning bush. Elijah fled into the wilderness so depleted that he asked God to let him die. The Israelites wandered desert paths for forty years, learning things about God and themselves that simply couldn't have been learned anywhere else. Even Jesus began his public ministry not in the synagogue or the temple, but in the wilderness.

The desert, it turns out, has always been one of God's favorite classrooms.

Isaiah caught a glimpse of this when he wrote: "The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy" (Isaiah 35:1-2). He doesn't say the desert will be replaced or escaped – it will bloom right where it is. The transformation happens in the desert, not after it.

I think that's an important distinction for us. We often pray for God to remove our desert seasons, to quickly transport us back to lush and comfortable spiritual gardens. And sometimes God does exactly that. But often, the invitation is to discover what can only be found in desert places: A stripped-down, essential faith that isn't dependent on feelings or circumstances; a deeper awareness of God's presence precisely because other distractions have fallen away; a compassion for others in their desert seasons that only comes from walking through your own; and a resilience that smooth and easy paths simply cannot produce.



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Zinnias can teach us something this summer. They don't seem to be waiting for better conditions before they bloom. They've adapted, sending their roots deeper in search of water, conserving what resources they have, and still – somehow, defiantly – producing those bright, cheerful flowers.

What would it look like for us to be a little more zinnia-like in our faith? Not pretending the drought isn't real, but refusing to let it have the final word?

Here are a few things I've found helpful in desert seasons: Simplify your spiritual practices - When everything feels dry, don't abandon prayer – but maybe let it become simpler, more honest. Sometimes "Help" is the most powerful prayer we can pray.; look for small signs of life - Desert plants bloom unexpectedly and briefly. Train your eyes to notice tiny moments of grace you might otherwise overlook.; stay connected to community - The desert feels less vast when we journey together. Don't isolate yourself in dry seasons.; trust the roots - What you've built in greener seasons isn't gone – it's just working underground, going deeper, preparing for what's next.

John Wesley wrote that God "is in every place, and there is no fleeing from his presence." That includes our desert places. Perhaps especially our desert places.

So wherever this summer finds you – whether you're enjoying a season of abundance or pushing up through cracked and stubborn ground – know that the same God who makes deserts bloom is at work in your life. The drought doesn't last forever. The zinnias know it. And deep down, so do we.

Still blooming (mostly),

Pastor Ben (AKA: PB)

P.S. If you're walking through a desert season and could use some company on the journey, please reach out and I'll tag along.

HOSPITAL VISITS

Just a reminder that hospitals do not usually contact the pastor should you (or someone you know) end up in the hospital. Please contact PB directly or through one of the church offices to pass along that kind of information or to request a visit. Don't think, "I don't want to bother him because someone else will call." PB says, "I would rather hear two (or more) times than not at all."

MISSION STATEMENT: "To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known as Savior and Lord"



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Hours: Monday-Thursday - Regularly Available
Friday - Sabbath (Emergencies Only)
Pastor Phone: 570-351-1619 Email: blucas@susumc.org

Secretary Hours: Monday & Friday - 8:00am-1:00pm
Office Phone: 570-742-2000 Email: saumc@ptd.net

Need for Servants to help for "Ushers".
Please contact David Stahl if you can help.



SUMMER MUSIC

could you help provide
Special Music this summer?
For more information,
please see Julie Blanton

Mentor Search!

WANT TO COME TEACH SOME PRETTY COOL
KIDDOS WHAT YOU LOVE ABOUT JESUS AROUND 9
AM SUNDAY MORNINGS?
THEN CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND
NURSERY SUNDAY SCHOOL HAVE A JOB JUST FOR
YOU!
CONTACT ALAINA TAYLOR FOR MORE DETAILS!



Mark your calendars for
the coat giveaway this fall.

Donations will be
accepted August 30th -
October 4th

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

WITHOUT YOUR PRAYERS, DONATIONS,
AND WILLINGNESS TO SERVE, YOS 2026
COULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED!



Scripture Reading

- July 1 - Psalm 47; Isaiah 51:1-3; Matthew 11:20-24
- July 2 - Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 25:19-27; Romans 7:1-6
- July 3 - Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 27:1-17; Romans 7:7-20
- July 4 - Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 27:18-29; Luke 10:21-24
- July 5 - Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67 and Psalm 45:10-17; Zechariah 9:9-12 and Psalm 145:8-14; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
- July 6 - Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 27:30-46; Romans 1:18-25
- July 7 - Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 29:1-14; Romans 3:1-8
- July 8 - Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 29:31-35; John 13:1-17
- July 9 - Psalm 119:105-112; Exodus 3:1-6; Romans 2:12-16
- July 10 - Psalm 119:105-112; Deuteronomy 32:1-10; Romans 15:14-21
- July 11 - Psalm 119:105-112; Isaiah 2:1-4; John 12:44-50
- July 12 - Genesis 25:19-34 and Psalm 119:105-112; Isaiah 55:10-13 and Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
- July 13 - Psalm 142; Micah 1:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
- July 14 - Psalm 142; Jeremiah 49:7-11; Ephesians 4:17-5:2
- July 15 - Psalm 142; Obadiah 15-21; Matthew 13:10-17
- July 16 - Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Isaiah 44:1-5; Hebrews 2:1-9
- July 17 - Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Ezekiel 39:21-29; Hebrews 6:13-20
- July 18 - Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Exodus 14:9-25; Matthew 7:15-20
- July 19 - Genesis 28:10-19a and Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Isaiah 44:6-8 and Psalm 86:11-17; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
- July 20 - Psalm 139:13-18; Genesis 32:3-21; Revelation 14:12-20
- July 21 - Psalm 139:13-18; Genesis 33:1-17; Galatians 4:21-5:1
- July 22 - Psalm 139:13-18; Genesis 35:16-29; Matthew 12:15-21
- July 23 - Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Genesis 29:1-8; 1 Corinthians 4:14-20
- July 24 - Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Genesis 29:9-14; Acts 7:44-53
- July 25 - Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Genesis 29:31-30:24; Matthew 12:38-42
- July 26 - Genesis 29:15-28 and Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; 1 Kings 3:5-12 and Psalm 119:129-136; Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
- July 27 - Psalm 65:8-13; Genesis 30:25-36; James 3:13-18
- July 28 - Psalm 65:8-13; Genesis 30:37-43; Ephesians 6:10-18
- July 29 - Psalm 65:8-13; Genesis 46:2-47:12; Mark 4:30-34
- July 30 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Isaiah 14:1-2; Philippians 4:10-15
- July 31 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Isaiah 41:8-10; Romans 9:6-13



Servants July 2026



Acolytes	
5	Grant Richie
12	Ryker Stover
19	Lilli Butler
26	Laikyn Stover

Greeters	
5	Barry Bowers
12	Steve Berinage
19	Terry & Mona Napp
26	Larry & Bonnie Lloyd

Ushers	
Gary Fullmer, Chief	
Rich Neilson	Dennis Delcamp
Bob Layton	Debbie Haulman

Altar Stewards
Carol Layton & Bev Sawyer

Financial Stewards
Carol Layton, Debbie Simon and Sharon Wert

Tech Department			
July	Soundboard	Power Point	Video
5	Bob	Barry	Lauren
12	Bob	Carlene	Sam
19	Bob	Colton	Sue
26	Barry	Carlene	Sam

July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 6pm Noah's Ark Board Meeting	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 6-8pm Camp Fire @ God's Lot Office Closed	18
19	20 Susan Off	21	22	23	24 Office Closed	25
26	27 Leadership Team Mtg - 3pm	28	29	30	31	

WAYS TO GIVE



ONLINE



TEXT



CASH/CHECK



St. Andrew's
united methodist church
332 Lincoln Market Street, Millers PA 17047
(717) 333-1381

SCAN TO GIVE ONLINE



TEXT "GIVE" TO
570-563-5676



Recent Loss:
Lois Wagner - 6/18/26

JULY

Happy Birthday

Amber Katalinas - 1st
K. Michael Keefer - 1st
Karen Herman - 2nd
Randy Schorr - 2nd
Braxson Baker - 3rd
John Meckley - 3rd
Richard Noaker - 3rd
Mary Richie 3rd
Ryan Bastian - 5th
Bill Gibson - 6th
Jerry McKee - 7th
Willard Paul - 7th
Richard Neilson - 9th
Shirley Weisenberger - 9th
Sandra Fultz - 10th
Jerry Wilver - 10th
Jean Hause - 13th
Rebecca Napp - 13th
Jessica Ritenour - 14th
Michael Coup - 15th
Tami Wands - 16th
Kay Mathias - 17th
Carole Mitchell - 18th
Joan Sampsell - 18th
Charles Fama - 19th
Denise Till - 19th

Braden Bastian - 22nd
Rodney Blanton - 22nd
Kelly Everitt - 22nd
Mark Shearer - 22nd
Wanda Walls - 24th
Mary Dick - 25th
Linda Thomas - 25th
Lindsay Dunkle - 26th
Madeline Bowers - 27th
Charles Gundrum - 27th
Lamar Keefer - 28th
Michele Pijanowski - 28th
Melissa Ritter - 28th
Michael McManus - 29th
Bryan Noaker - 29th
Mindy Barrett - 30th
Sharen Coup - 30th
Michael Simon - 30th
Susan Slother - 30th
Nelson Wertz - 30th
Tim Hippensteel - 31st
Rachel Merwin - 31st
Dawn Snyder - 31st

HAPPY
Anniversary

Craig & Mary Richie - 7th
Ralph & Karen Croman - 10th
Todd & Tina Noll - 10th
Gary & Elaine Lloyd - 11th
Sam & Debbie Haulman - 16th
Jerry & Linda McKee - 16th
Michael & Jessica Snyder - 17th
Terry & Kay Mathias - 19th
Richard & Gloria McSwain - 29th



Scripture Reading

- August 1 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Genesis 31:1-21; Matthew 7:7-11
- August 2 - Genesis 32:22-31 and Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Isaiah 55:1-5 and Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21
- August 3 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Genesis 31:22-42; Romans 1:8-15
- August 4 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Genesis 32:3-21; Acts 2:37-47
- August 5 - Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Isaiah 43:1-7; Matthew 15:32-39
- August 6 - Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b; Genesis 35:22b-29; Acts 17:10-15
- August 7 - Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b; Genesis 36:1-8; Acts 18:24-28
- August 8 - Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b; Genesis 37:5-11; Matthew 16:1-4
- August 9 - Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 and Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b; 1 Kings 19:9-18 and Psalm 85:8-13; Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33
- August 10 - Psalm 28; Genesis 37:29-36; 2 Peter 2:4-10
- August 11 - Psalm 28; Genesis 39:1-23; Romans 9:14-29
- August 12 - Psalm 28; Genesis 40:1-23; Matthew 8:23-27
- August 13 - Psalm 133; Genesis 41:14-36; Revelation 15:1-4
- August 14 - Psalm 133; Genesis 41:37-57; Acts 14:19-28
- August 15 - Psalm 133; Genesis 42:1-28; Matthew 14:34-36
- August 16 - Genesis 45:1-15 and Psalm 133; Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 and Psalm 67; Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28
- August 17 - Psalm 130; Genesis 43:1-34; Acts 15:1-21
- August 18 - Psalm 130; Genesis 44:1-34; Romans 11:13-29
- August 19 - Psalm 130; Genesis 45:16-28; Matthew 8:1-13
- August 20 - Psalm 124; Genesis 49:1-33; 1 Corinthians 6:1-11
- August 21 - Psalm 124; Genesis 49:29-50:14; 2 Corinthians 10:12-18
- August 22 - Psalm 124; Genesis 50:15-26; Matthew 16:5-12
- August 23 - Exodus 1:8-2:10 and Psalm 124; Isaiah 51:1-6 and Psalm 138; Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20
- August 24 - Psalm 8; Exodus 1:1-7; Romans 2:1-11
- August 25 - Psalm 8; Exodus 2:11-15a; Romans 11:33-36
- August 26 - Psalm 8; Exodus 2:15b-22; Matthew 26:6-13
- August 27 - Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b; Exodus 2:23-24; Ephesians 5:1-6
- August 28 - Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b; Exodus 3:16-22; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12
- August 29 - Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b; Exodus 4:1-9; Matthew 8:14-17
- August 30 - Exodus 3:1-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b; Jeremiah 15:15-21 and Psalm 26:1-8; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28
- August 31 - Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18; Exodus 4:10-31; Revelation 3:1-6



Servants August 2026



Acolytes	
2	Brantley Butler
9	Ryker Stover
16	Lilli Butler
23	Laikyn Stover
30	Grant Richi

Greeters	
2	Nate & Lauren Richie
9	Sharon Wert
16	Bob & Cindy Snyder
23	Fred & Debbie Simon
30	Mary Richie

Ushers	
David Stahl, Chief	
Steve Bennage	Jeff Diggan
Bob Snyder	Sam Haulman

Altar Stewards
Rich & Julie Neilson

Financial Stewards
Mercy Gray & Debbie Haulman

Tech Department			
Aug.	Soundboard	Power Point	Video
2	Barry	Colton	Sam
9	Bob	Carlene	Sue
16	Bob	Colton	Sam
23	Bob	Carlene	Sue
30	Bob	Barry	Lauren

August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 <small>9-8pm Camp Fire ☉ God's Lot</small>	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

UPHOLDING OUR MEMBERS IN *Prayer*

In keeping with HIPPA privacy regulations, we list only the names of Members and active Attendees who agree to be listed. Please help us keep the list updated with additions, removals and any corrections by contacting the church office. Thank You!

Linda Emery	Janet Lee	Craig Richie	Sylvia Smith
David Everitt (Navy)	Jane Lentz	Bonnie Rute	Marion Steese
Sylvia Hendricks	Sean Neilson (Navy)	Lou Ann Sheets	Kathy & Gary Wieand
			Jean Zartman
Milton N&R - Mary Scholl, Ward Walter			
Riverwoods - Nancy Stahlnecker, Edna Walter			
Watsonstown N&R - Lucille Zellers			
Missionaries we support and their missions:			
Red Bird Mission, Dr. Christiana Hena and her ministry with Healthy Women/Healthy Liberia.			
Faith Promise Groups we support: Child Evangelism, Expectations Women's Center & Love INC			
Prayer Chain: Please call Mercy Gray @ 570-701-7948 (home) 570-939-5225 (cell) or			
Church Office (Susan Bastian) 570-742-2000 ext. 300 Monday/Friday 8am-1pm			

AUGUST

Happy Birthday

Christie Anderson - 1 st	Joshua Earnest - 20 th
Faye Zehner - 1 st	Dane Neilson - 20 th
Melissa McKee - 2 nd	Nichole Taylor - 20 th
Addison Kraus - 3 rd	Steven Erb - 21 st
Brian Lucas - 3 rd	William Miller - 21 st
C. Andrew Thomas - 3 rd	Alice Murray - 23 rd
Keith English - 4 th	Cheri Farst - 28 th
Joey Hassan - 5 th	Jennie Keefer - 28 th
Lindsay Yerg - 5 th	Elaine Lloyd - 28 th
Amanda Smith-Derck - 6 th	Devin Reedy - 28 th
Linda Cook - 8 th	Bertha Frey - 29 th
Cindy Hoffman - 8 th	Gary Fullmer - 29 th
Arnie Wilver - 8 th	Stephen Bowers - 31 st
Dale Miller - 9 th	
Deb Simon - 10 th	
Andrew Shreck - 11 th	
Vickie Leech - 12 th	
Scott Chrismer - 14 th	
Angela Geiger - 14 th	
Layla Richie - 14 th	
Cathy Bennage - 15 th	
Kinlee Lytle - 15 th	
Jean Zartman - 15 th	
Donald Wirth - 16 th	
Jayrene Molinero - 17 th	
Gary Snyder - 18 th	
David Bastian - 19 th	

HAPPY Anniversary

Rich & Julie Neilson - 10th
Jeffrey & Jessica Ritenour - 12th
Mark & Kelly Shearer - 13th
Adam & Alaina Taylor - 13th
Nathan & Lauren Richie - 22nd
Bob & Carol Layton - 24th
Gary & Rebecca Napp - 25th
John & Sandra Fultz - 28th