



# Bridge Newsletter

September - October 2026

**Mission Statement: "To be a family of faith in Christ through caring, serving, and fellowship"**

## Speaking the Truth in Love

When I told a friend about my recent hospital stay. She said, "You had a liminal experience!" She was right.

By "liminal" she meant a boundary experience. I entered the emergency room between life and death. I was vulnerable. My life was in someone else's hands. In a spiritual sense, I was between heaven and earth. In the Celtic tradition "liminal" is often described as a "thin place"—a place of encounter with God.

"Liminal experiences" are often transformative. Mine was. And many of you may have had similar experiences.

I can't remember much about the first couple of days. I remember arriving at the ER in a wheelchair. And then I remember "waking up" tethered to a hospital bed, attached by IV lines, heart monitor, and oxygen. When I opened my eyes, I had only one view, toward a window.

My first thought was gratitude for those medical professionals who knew how to care for me with skill and compassion. They preserved my life through that liminal experience. I felt my wife, Diane's, constant loving presence. And then friends and family began to arrive, uplifting me. My window filled with flowers. I began to notice the changing colors and clouds in the sky behind the flowers.

I felt enlivened by an awareness of beauty. Beauty fills my life: the beauty of those trained to care for others, the beauty of loving companionship, the beauty of friendships, the beauty on display in the ever-changing natural world. In beauty God speaks to me.

A favorite Navajo prayer comes to mind.

"Now talking God . . .

Beauty is before me and beauty is behind me . . .

I am surrounded by it.

I am immersed in it.

In my youth I am aware of it.

And in old age I shall walk quietly the beautiful trail."

Life is beautiful. And in that beauty, I discover God's presence. I walk with beauty.

Pastor Bill

**WORSHIP SERVICE:  
Sundays at 9:30 am**

**Committee Meetings:**

**Finance & Trustees Meeting**

Thursday, Sept. 3 at 6:30 pm

**The Ad. Council**

Tuesday, Sept.22 at 7:00 pm

**UMM Breakfast Mtg.**

Sunday, Sept.13 at 7:30 am

Sunday, Oct. 11 at 7:30 am

**UWF Breakfast Mtg.**

Sunday, Sept. 27 at 8:00 am

Sunday, October 25 at 8:00 am

**Book Club** is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am. All are welcome, just show up in the library!

**Thank you to the Portage Faith congregation** for surrounding me with love during a time of illness. For your visits, prayers, cards, meals, and phone calls 'checking' on me, I am deeply grateful. Pastor Bill

**PASTOR'S walk-in Office hours at  
Portage Faith:**

Feel Free to walk-in or call ahead on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 to 11:00 am. Other times by appointment.

Check the weekly announcement sheet for any changes that may occur.

**Liturgists:**

**September**

6 Doris Gharky  
13 Kyree Kerkan  
20 Linda Weinkamer  
27 Terri Wilde

**October**

4 Ted Taylor  
11 Debbie Bahr  
18 Steve Weinkamer  
25 Bev Fletcher

**September Birthdays and Anniversaries:**

1 Jack and Dorothy Horner 58 years  
2 Emily Marek  
2 Claire Pierce  
2 Tim Pearce and Tammy Seljan 3 years  
3 Candace Gage  
3 Doug & Chris Kuhlke  
6 Keegan Rupnik  
8 Tom & Linda Shaulis married 42 years  
10 Olivia Pfost  
11 Debbie Bahr  
12 Doug Kuhlke  
12 Phyllis Peters  
13 Ethan Gharky  
15 Chris Mosher  
16 Mary Kay Hluch  
18 Beverly Fletcher  
18 Noah Shannon  
18 Madelynn Grudowski  
19 Tim Taylor  
19 Olivia Wilde  
19 Christopher & Tina Mosher 6 years  
20 Gloria Schrecengost  
20 Trinity Roberts  
21 Matt Ruchalski  
21 Dillon Soard  
23 Rick Bahr  
24 Steven Tibbs  
26 Caroline Tipton  
28 Randy & Kim Weingart married 41 years

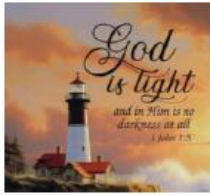
**ATTENTION BELL RINGERS!**

Hard to believe that our summer hiatus is about to be over! Thus, our Bell choir practices for the fall and holiday season will begin on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at 5:00 pm. If you have any questions, please call Doris at (330) 931-8391.

**October Birthdays and Anniversaries:**

2 Doug McIntosh  
2 Ann Bowker  
3 Elinor Rae Cope-Taylor  
3 Holly Pfost  
4 David & Bev Fletcher married 10 years  
6 Tom & Gera Kennedy married 53 years  
10 Dorothy Horner  
11 Torrey Taylor & Lora Cope married 12 years  
15 Bill Schrecengost  
15 Carol McIntosh  
19 Lori Davis  
20 Drew Pfost  
21 Sam Grudowski  
22 Jeff & Samantha Kennedy married 15 years  
23 Larry & Jeanine Kuhlman 55 years

**Attention Ladies: The United Women of Faith's annual Retreat at Camp Asbury will be held on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.** The theme will be "Keeping the Light" and will focus on the history of lighthouses and God's light in our lives. Cost is \$45.00, which includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Registration Forms will be on the narthex table, and deadline to register is **October 11<sup>th</sup>**. Any questions, please see or call Terri Wilde at 234-525-7561. We hope you will be able to come and enjoy a fun-filled day at Camp Asbury.



## WOMEN'S RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

### "Keeping the Light"

### Saturday, October 17, 2026



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Fee: \$45 / Person Saturday Only**

To help us schedule meals, please mark an "X" below to indicate which meals you will attend. Please also indicate if you have special dietary needs.



|            | Saturday |
|------------|----------|
| Breakfast: |          |
| Lunch:     |          |
| Dinner:    |          |



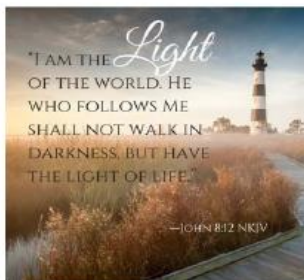
Special Dietary Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to:** Portage Faith Women in Faith and return completed registration form for each participant to: Debbie Bahr, 6960 Streeter Road, Windham OH 44288.

**Deadline for reservations is Sunday, October 11, 2026**

If you have any questions, please contact Terri Wilde at (234) 525-7561.

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## "Keeping the Light"

### WOMEN'S RETREAT INFORMATION

### Saturday, October 17, 2026

Lower Level of Camp Asbury Lodge (room under dining hall)  
 10776 Asbury Road, Hiram OH

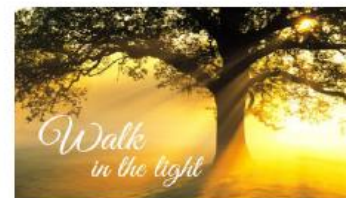


#### Items Needed:

A lighthouse item you may have  
 (i.e., statue, photo, postcard, ornament, etc.)

#### Other Suggested Items to Bring:

Board Games, Puzzles, Cards, etc.  
 Camp Chair (optional)  
 Walking Shoes for hike



Bring a friend for  
 this fun and  
 inspirational  
 one day get-away

**Saturday Arrival, Breakfast in Asbury Dining Hall: 8:00 - 8:45 a.m.**

**The first session will begin in Lower Level of Lodge at 9:00 a.m.**

**The last session will be held prior to dinner. You may then leave whenever you wish to.**

**If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.  
 (1 John 1:7)**

**Thanks to all who made our 2026 Vacation Bible School "Rainforest Falls," July 28-31, 2026, so successful. We are grateful for the dedication and hard work of many in our church. Thanks especially to Erika Barnett, Linda Weinkamer coordinating and directing this year's VBS. Thanks to:**



**Music, Opening and Closing Programs: Erika Barnett**

**Recreation: Sue Hoover and Kyree Kerkan**

**Crafts and Science: Mary Tipton, Kathie Baumgardner**

**Teachers: Kim Weingart, Linda Weinkamer, Jean Kuhlman, Diane and Bill Graham**

**Mission Offering to Crestwood Weekend Meals: Larry Kuhlman and Debbie Bahr**

**Youth Leaders: Ayden Barnett, Olivia Pfof, Harper Thiel, Wolf Weinkamer, Rowan Kerkan, Carmen Grant.**

**Meals: Gera Kennedy, Debbie Sike, Recia Ragle, Debbie Bahr, Sharon Wright, Diane Graham PF United Women in Faith, PF Men's Group, volunteers who baked and cooked.**

**Publicity: Jeanette Ryman, Erika Barnett, Linda Weinkamer,**

**Photographer: Amy Reish**

**Decorations: Sue Hoover, Erika Barnett, Linda Weinkamer, Kim Weingart, Jean Kuhlman, Diane Graham, Kathie Baumgardner, Mary Tipton, Bev and Dave Fletcher.**

**"Navigator": Kyree Kerkan**

**"Dr Flutterby": Rowan Kerkan**



**And thanks to all rainforest adventures – kids , youth, and adults – who participated in this year's VBS. Special thanks to grandparents who made sure their grandchildren received the opportunity to experience VBS.**

### **Annual Bazaar & Country Store**

**Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>**

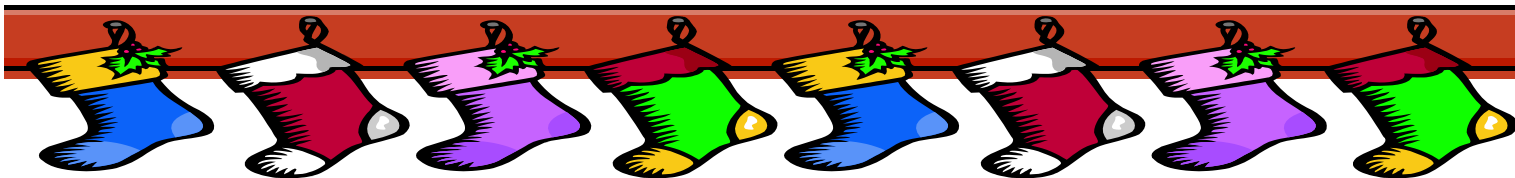
**9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

It doesn't seem possible that the Annual Bazaar is just around the corner! All donations of homemade crafts, ceramics, 3D items, paintings, wood products, jewelry, ornaments, gift baskets, quilts, etc. will be appreciated along with baked and canned goods and pots of homemade soups.

If you can make a pot of fresh homemade soup, please sign up in the Narthex and indicate if it's gluten free. We will prepare labels in advance and package your soup in quarts and pint containers. We will also have a sign-up sheet for baked goods for Rhonda's Country Corner.

Please drop off non-perishable items with suggested prices in the Youth Room any time after church starting Sunday, 11/1. Baked goods and pots of soup may be dropped off Friday, 11/6 before 6:00 p.m. or Saturday 11/7 after 9:00 a.m. Please contact Debbie Bahr at 216-408-5278 if you can help price items Friday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. or set up in Goodell Hall after 5:30 p.m. ALL help will be greatly appreciated!

Please stop by Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> to purchase a wonderful assortment of gifts, stocking stuffers, tasty treats, and more. Final sales will be Sunday morning.



# ANNUAL BAZAAR & COUNTRY STORE

Sponsored by Portage Faith's United Women in Faith

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2026**

**9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**FREE ADMISSION**

## **PORTAGE FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

9922 State Route 44, Mantua



HOLIDAY ITEMS, CRAFTS, CERAMICS, DIAMOND ART,  
3D ITEMS, JEWELRY, TEACHER/SECRET SANTA GIFTS,

"RHONDA'S COUNTRY STORE"

featuring:

BAKED GOODS, JAMS, JELLIES, CANNED GOODS,  
FRESH HOMEMADE SOUPS, and MORE!!



**PORTAGE FAITH UMC**  
**9922 ST. RT. 44**  
**MANTUA, OH 44255**  
(Address Service Requested)

**Pastor Bill Graham**  
**Email: [pastorportagefaith@portagefaith.com](mailto:pastorportagefaith@portagefaith.com)**  
**Office - 330-274-8987**  
**Email: [officeadmin@portagefaith.com](mailto:officeadmin@portagefaith.com)**  
**Website: [Https://Portagefaith.com](https://Portagefaith.com)**



We extend our **sympathy, love and prayers** to the friends and family of **Anne Spence** who died on August 25, 2026. A **celebration of life** will be held at Portage Faith UM Church on **Saturday, October 3 at 11:00 am.** A luncheon and an opportunity to share memories will follow immediately in Goodell Hall.



**Children's Church** begins **Sunday, September 13** from **9:15-11:00 am** every Sunday except for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month when children are to attend Communion Sunday with their families.

