

June 2026, Volume 49, Number 7

BIBLE SCHOOL – PROVIDING HOPE TO A FEARFUL GENERATION

In a world filled with worry and confusion, kids need to know there is a God who cares for them. Exploring the powerful words of Psalm 23 at this year's VBS, nearly 140 students discovered the life of the shepherd-king David and learned how to cross from worry to peace, from fear to faith, and from uncertainty to a firm foundation in God's Word through a relationship with the Good Shepherd.

"A truly great week happened at Emerald Crossing," shares Chris Hyman, program director. "The kids were enthusiastic and the 70+ volunteers were amazing!" Newcomer to the planning phase, Josie Pfister, agreed. "They all did so much to make VBS such a great experience for the kids in a way that resulted in lots of laughter and learning."

She went on to express her personal enjoyment of the skit and recalled looking around at all of the kids on Friday, noticing that all of them were attentively watching the actors on stage.

Over the course of the five days of Bible School, June 1-5, the children worked to commit to memory the 23rd Psalm. A large portion of them succeeded in memorizing it entirely by Thursday! This was evident when they were asked to turn around (facing away from the screen) and proceeded to very loudly and without peeking recite the wonderful words of this Psalm...

A Psalm of David. (ESV)

23 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

³ He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Crafts, games, snacks, science, and even a visit from Duncan the Highland Cow made the week full of variety, lots of fun, and so many biblical truths. The kids were also given the opportunity to partner with Children's Hunger fund to contribute to the physical needs of children around the world, while also giving them an opportunity to hear the Gospel. A lofty goal of providing 10,000 meals was set. At 25 cents per meal this meant raising \$2,500. With a little added incentive on Thursday of a pie being thrown in Chris's face and Katie Fisher's face (B.E.C.) if the goal could be reached, the money came pouring in: some bills, some checks, and lots of change that had been emptied from the belly of many a piggybank. A total of \$2,592 or 10,368 meals was raised.

It was reported and celebrated that many of the children's hearts were open to the Spirit's leading and seven made decisions for Christ during the week. Praise the Lord! When asked if there was one particular memory that stood out from the week, Chris shared, "Honestly, Sunday morning, watching the fifth graders participate in worship on the front row (after spending the week at VBS) brought tears to my eyes." She continued, "I also loved watching volunteers pour into the kids all week—loving on them and showing them His love."

Josie added a big "shout out" to the kitchen staff and all the people who donated food. "The snacks looked and tasted great, and the lunches for all the volunteers were greatly appreciated!" If you participated or helped in any way at this year's Bible School (combined with Berne Evangelical and Bethel Brethren churches), we say thank you! †



A SPECIAL INVITATION

June 21, 2026, marks 15 years of ministry for the Cline family with Freedom International Ministries in the Dominican Republic. God's provision and continued faithfulness are evident in their lives and in the many lives that have been impacted through the ministry of Freedom. To celebrate this milestone, we want to gather together and praise the Lord for all the great things He has done. You are invited to join us on Saturday, August 1, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. in the Family Life Center. It's going to be a time full of reflection, laughter, gratitude, worship and more. God deserves all the glory, and we are excited for the opportunity to come together. Please join us as we celebrate the goodness of God! †

FROM THE EDITOR

Father's Day will take on a different meaning for me in 2026. This is the first time I'll celebrate the *memory* of my dad, rather than his physical presence. No card or hug. Just some quiet reflection and a faint smile to accompany those memories spilling out of my eyes and down my cheeks. My heart is full of gratitude! My dad was among the faithful; a good man who valued family, the church, and hard work. His faith was evident to anyone who knew him.

The history of Father's Day in the United States isn't as ancient as one may suppose. It was actually President Richard Nixon who in 1972 (within my lifetime) established a permanent national observance of Father's Day. Credit for the origins of this occasion as we know it, however, goes to Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington. It was she at age 27 who first proposed the idea of a "father's day" in 1909 when she wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran, who had been widowed and left to raise her and five siblings alone. Her choice was June 5, Mr. Smart's birthday, but the ministerial association selected the third Sunday, allowing more time after Mother's Day to prepare their sermons.

Later, in 1924, President Calvin Coolidge expressed his support of the idea of a national Father's Day, although it took time for the idea to be widely accepted. The holiday was officially recognized in the U.S. by a Joint Resolution of Congress in 1956, and a decade later, President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day.

Interestingly, the white or red rose is the official flower for Father's Day. It was Mrs. Dodd who once suggested that people wear a white rose to honor a father who was deceased and a red rose for a father who was living. Today, this holiday is celebrated in many various parts of the world. Besides the U.S., Canada and several countries in Asia recognize it on the third Sunday in June, too. However, in Spain and Portugal, as well as other traditionally Catholic countries in Europe and Latin America, it falls on March 19, which is the Feast of St. Joseph.

Sweden celebrates its fathers in November and in New Zealand they recognize dads on the first Sunday of September. Perhaps the most humorous I found are the Taiwanese who celebrate Father's Day on August 8—the eighth day of the eighth month—because the Mandarin Chinese word for eight sounds like the word for "Papa."

Sadly, the trend has become that Father's Day isn't typically a big family day overall, but more of a day that celebrates what Dad likes to do, whether it's going fishing, hiking, preparing a great BBQ, or napping. It's also not usually very high on the church attendance roster, especially when compared to Mother's Day (perhaps summer vacations play a role in that statistic as well). Regardless, the annual recognition of dads should remind us of their importance, their God-given role in society, and their spiritual responsibility in

the home. *"He who fears the LORD is secure in confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge."* Proverbs 14:26

My dad was humble, forgiving, faithful, generous, and patient. He really never drew attention to himself and was content to be a man of few words. Over the course of Dad's passing my brother came across the word "altruistic" in efforts to describe him in one word. He shared its definition at the funeral: Altruistic describes the unselfish concern for the welfare of others, characterized by actions that benefit others, often at a cost or risk to oneself. It involves motivation to increase another's welfare without expecting external rewards, acting as a cornerstone for empathy, charity, and social cohesion, often contrary to self-interest.

That is a high bar, but one of worthy pursuit. One final thought... it was the intangibles my dad left behind that matter most. His final request to us in the hospital was that we all follow where he was going. "I want to see you all there someday," he said through the tears of those final hours. Dads (and moms), may we strive to impart to our children and grandchildren a faith firmly built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. All else pales in comparison. Truly, it is the *only* thing you may "take" with you into eternity! †

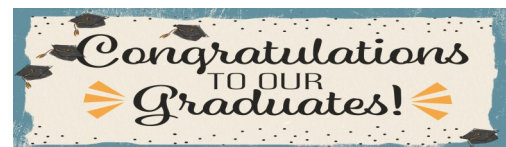
CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Congratulations to our graduating seniors from high school and college as they turn the page on an important chapter in their lives.

Recent high school graduates include: Ella Bluhm (Jim & Amanda) – plans to attend Huntington University to study Ag Education; Ethan Crockett (Brian & June) – plans to attend Taylor University to study Exercise Science; Bella Fox (Kevin & Lydia) – plans to work at Parkview Regional F.W. as a Patient Care Technician; Alyssa Fruechte (Brandon & Elizabeth) – plans to attend Trine University to study Exercise Science; Calah Hill (Brandon & Jess) – plans to attend Indiana Wesleyan University to study Nursing; Josh Linthicum (Jeff & Megan) – plans to participate in the REACH Program this fall; Artur Lynnyk (Oleksandra) – plans to join the work force; Kristina Lynnyk (Oleksandra) – plans to attend cosmetology school; Derek McKean (Craig & Erin) – plans to attend Taylor University to study Math & Finance; Haden Meyer (Joe & Jen) – plans to attend Franklin College to study Business and play football; and Will Sheets (Jamie) – plans to continue welding at Poseidon.

Recent college graduates include: Maggie Bluhm (Jim & Amanda); Camden Hyman (Brent & Chris); Caroline Keim, Spencer Keim (Dave & Kelly); Josh Mosser (Michael & Melinda); and Vivian O'Dell (Jessie & Jaci).

We ask God's blessing on each of these young people as they explore what God's plan is for the next season of their lives. †



HOMEGOING

Sandra Kay (Zimmerman) Kloepper was welcomed into the loving arms of Jesus Christ, her Lord and Savior on May 14, 2026, surrounded by her family, after a 30+ year courageous battle with lupus. She was the heart of her family—a loving wife, devoted mother, cherished grandmother, and proud great-grandmother whose gentle spirit touched everyone who knew her.

She was born to Gerald & Madeline (Hart) Zimmerman on October 16, 1944. She had two older brothers Charles (Chuck or Danny) and Phil. They lived on a small family farm near Rome City, Indiana. She graduated from East Noble High School and received a degree as a Hair Stylist from Fort Wayne Beauty College. She met the love of her life in the summer of 1960, and they married on July 3, 1965, in Kendallville, IN. In December that same year, they moved to Berne, IN. She held a job at CTS for a short time before becoming a full-time homemaker and mother in 1967.

As her children grew, she took a part-time job at Swiss Village which turned into a full-time 22-year career. Her kindness and tender heart fit well with the atmosphere there. During her years there she made lasting friendships of her co-workers and residents alike. She truly loved all the residents that she served each day.

She was a wonderful cheerleader and supporter of her childrens' and grandchildrens' many sporting events, school and church activities. She was a member the First Mennonite Church in Berne.

Her legacy will live on through the family she loved so deeply. She will be remembered for her tender heart and loving kindness. She is survived by her husband - David Kloepper, daughter - Lisa Kuhn & husband Michael, son - Darren Kloepper & wife Heidi (Baumgartner), daughter - Karna Burry & husband Jeff, her brother - Charles Zimmerman & wife Rita, sister-in-law - Carole Kloepper, brother-in-law - Joel Kloepper wife Kathy, grandchildren - Madison Hidalgo and husband Sam, Cassandra Karas and husband Sotere, Caroline Kloepper, Cody Kuhn, Sarah Kloepper, Kayla Kuhn, Kayen (Burry) Mays & her husband Austin, Joseph Kloepper, Porter Burry, Daniel Kloepper, Guner Burry, Will Kloepper and Tate Kloepper, great-grandchildren - Elliot, Savannah, Delany & Adeline Hidalgo and Arthur Karas. †



With deepest sympathy

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

Stan Von Gunten had a heart procedure at Lutheran.

Alvin Lehman had a heart procedure at Lutheran. †

ON TO JESUS

In 1527, two years after the birth of the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland, people already wondered about its secret. Their wondering (with minds just coming out of the Dark Ages) led them to suspect magic. Somewhere in the deep valley of the River Inn, between the snow-capped mountains of Austria, a strange story began to circulate. People said the Anabaptists had a magic container, a little vial, filled with a liquid about which the devil himself had no clue. They said the Anabaptists forced their converts to drink from the vial. One little sip of its contents was enough to bring anyone completely under their power. Just one sip and a person became serious-minded, no longer able to do what he used to do, and no amount of money, nothing that life had to offer could bring him back to what he used to be. Once a person tasted from the vial he would die before giving up his strange beliefs. Leonhard Schiemer, in prison before his beheading at Rattenberg on the Inn, took the time to answer this foolish story in 1527:

“Well, you godless crowd, let me tell you how it is. Let us say you are right. Let us say it is true that we must all drink from a little vial. And like you say, it certainly is true that the devil does not know what is in it. If you do not know it either, you are also devils... but if you want to know, I will reveal the liquid's secret proportions to you!

Like Caiaphas, you speak the truth without knowing it. You say that whoever takes a sip from the vial is permanently changed. How true! For the liquid in the vial is made from nothing else than a struck down, ground up, rubbed apart, and sorrowful heart pulverized in the mortar and pestle of the cross... and it is the liquid which our dear brother and friend, Christ Jesus, drank—mixed with vinegar and gall. The vial is the one he offered to the sons of Zebedee. It is the one he drank from in the garden. It is the one that caused him to sweat until he sweated drops of blood, and until he trembled and fell into a faint so that angels had to lift him up. Truly the liquid in it is such an awful liquid that no one can drink it without his neighbours taking note that he is totally changed!

Whoever takes a sip from the vial indeed becomes willing to forsake everything he has... because the Spirit of Christ teaches him and reveals to him things that no man can express and which cannot be written onto paper. Nobody knows what those things are, save those to whom they have been revealed...”

A broken heart and fellowship with Jesus—Leonhard Schiemer answered the foolish story in a truly Anabaptist way. The first Anabaptists followed Jesus. It was so simple that people could not understand it. It was so easy to explain it seemed mysterious.


The Secret of the Strength – What Would the Anabaptists Tell This Generation? by Peter Hoover, p.33 – 289 HOO †

Update is the publication of the First Mennonite Church, Berne, Indiana. It is published once a month to keep our people informed about the news and events in the church.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>JULY 2026</h1> 			1 NO WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES	2	3	4 Happy 4th of July!
5 10AM: "When Fasting": Pastor Jeff Linthicum (Matthew 6:16-18) COMMUNION NO EVENING SERVICE Offering	6 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	7 6:30PM: Sunshine Hour	8 NO WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES	9	10	11
12 10AM: "Don't Store": Pastor Jeff Linthicum (Matthew 6:19-24) 6:30PM: DTS Trip Report Offering for Global Disciples	13	14 6:30PM: Sunshine Hour	15 NO WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES	16	17	18
19 10AM: "Don't Worry": Pastor Jeff Linthicum (Matthew 6:25-34) 6:30PM: Eldon Claassen Offering	20	21 6:30PM: Sunshine Hour	22 NO WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES	23	24	25
26 10AM: "Don't Judge": Pastor Jeff Linthicum (Matthew 7:1-6) 6:30PM: Swiss Days Community Praise & Worship Service (sanctuary) Offering	27	28 6:30PM: Sunshine Hour	29 NO WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES	30	31	