

# OVERVIEW

OVERISEL REFORMED CHURCH



## Missionary Spotlight: Josue Ouano

My name is Josue Ouano, and I am from the island of Southern Mindanao in the Philippines. I am 56 years old and married to Sharlet, who is 45 years old. Together, we have been blessed with three children: Anaiah (18), Josiah Obed (16), and Jude Gideon (13). Sharlet and I previously worked together as cross-cultural workers for six years on an island, where we dedicated our efforts to reaching the Muslim tribe with the message of Jesus Christ. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior during my high school years and was disciplined through a campus ministry while in college. I graduated with a degree in Agricultural Business Management. After graduation, I served as an intern in the campus ministry, discipling students, and later volunteered in cross-cultural missions, a commitment I continue to uphold to this day. My hobbies include playing the guitar, raising chickens and goats in our backyard, and cultivating vegetables in a container garden. At present, I am deeply interested in studying the Bible and have enrolled in The Expositors Academy (TEA) to further enhance my knowledge and skills in preaching the Word of God. Recently, I have been actively involved as a volunteer, assisting with youth camps at my local church. I also attended a family reunion with my siblings. In the near future, I continue to volunteer in discipling Muslim believers to help them grow in their faith in Jesus Christ.



## 2026 Consistory

### Pastors

\*Rev. Mike Pitsenberger  
Pastor Ken Kleinheksel  
Pastor Kevin Kruizenga

### Elders

\*Steve Schrottenboer  
Glenn Kleinheksel  
Nate Genzink  
\*Bob Reimink  
Bruce Peters  
Jeff Snay

### Deacons

Lee Lubbers  
David Kraker  
\*Dean Jipping  
Craig Theodore  
Scott VanHaitsma  
Jonathan Hop

\*Executive committee

# A Note From Pastor Ken

Planted and Flourishing

Psalm 92:13-14a – They (the righteous) are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age.

As many of you know, Juella Schrotenboer recently passed away. She was the oldest member of our congregation at Overisel Reformed Church at 97 years old. The verses above remind me of her.

In my early years I remember her and her husband were the custodians at ORC. I remember one of the things they did was ring the bell in the steeple before every worship service. And they spent a lot of time in the church building cleaning and keeping things in shape. To me it seemed like they were “planted in the house of the Lord”. Now I know that is not what is being referred to in that verse, but it bears some reflection to think about what being planted means. We are to be rooted and grounded in the things of the Lord. We are to be taking nourishment from God’s Word and worship. We are to receive showers of blessings from the Bible to water our souls. That’s what it means to be planted in the house of the Lord.

When we live that way we can “flourish in the courts of our God”. To be in the courts of God means to be present in worship and other activities that happen at church. It means to take seriously the prompting to share in each other’s lives by assembling together. It’s hard to be part of a family when you rarely spend time together. It’s the same way in the church family. There are many blessings that come from being a part of a loving, Christian family. It is part of God’s design for encouraging one another and bearing each other’s burdens. A shared burden is much easier to bear.

Another thing that reminds me of Juella is the way she would still “bear fruit in old age”. The way she did that was by always telling of God’s goodness to her. Every time we would visit she would tell of the Lord blessing her with such good neighbors in the condo where she lived. How they would all gather for coffee at her place because she found it hard to get around. Or they would gather in the summer under a shade tree in their lawn chairs and just talk and share life together. She would tell of the Lord’s presence with her through the hard times of losing her husband and three of five children before God called her home. She was always quick to give praise to God for so many blessings even as her ability to get around was getting less and less and her body hurt more and more. In that way she continued to bear fruit for her Lord.

There are lessons we can learn from the older members of our congregation. We can see their faithfulness and commitment to the things of God even when living gets hard and mobility is decreased. We can learn from them when they tell us to be thankful for the opportunity to worship together every Sunday because many of the older folks know that is a privilege that can disappear quickly sometimes. Many of them would urge the younger to take advantage of that while it is possible.

So, as we go through the month of May 2026, let’s pledge to listen to the advice of those older than us. Let’s notice the blessings from God that we take for granted. And then let’s continue to bear fruit for our Lord and Savior in whatever place He puts us in. Have a great month and I’ll see you on the journey!

Pastor Ken

# may birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Charlie DeHaan Hazel Folkert	2 Clayton Velderman
3 Trevor Blood Henry DeWeerd Anna Nagelkirk Bruce Okkema Merritt Rathjen Roxanne Schans	4 Lester Eding	5 Sandy Kooiker Levi Koopman	6 Marcia Klein Abigail Laarman Mary Lubbers Chris Postma Hunter Smith	7	8 Andrew Caswell Bette Sternberg	9 Mary Buter
10 Sharon Veldhuis	11 Laurie Haveman Rose Moore Don Mulder	12 Judy Avink Lon Koops Scott VanHaitsma	13	14 Larry Naber	15 Erica DeJonge Kathy Jurries Hal Smith	16
17 Randy Kleinheksel Thea Stienstra	18 Gabe Klaasen	19 Andrea Essenburg Dave Jurries	20 Barron Dekker	21	22 Olivia Caswell Grant Immink Jessica Tubergen	23 Marilyn Essink Mary Nykamp
24 Autumn Flokstra Barb Laarman Alec Smith	25 William Valkema	26 Kim Dalman Roberta Mae Helmus Jeffrey LaFleur Aaron Scholten Steve Tubergen	27	28 Susan Lickley Jordan Tenpas Randy Vork	29 Matt Essink	30 Greg Pothoff
31 Elyse Genzink						

## Milestone Birthdays



5/03 - Henry DeWeerd (90 years)

# may anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Steve & Jessica Tubergen	4	5 Ken & Ruth Dannenberg	6	7	8 Michael & Brenda VanAanhold	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Jon & Suzanne Barnum	19 Rob & Amanda Flokstra	20	21	22	23 Tim & Jodi Boeve
24 Kyle & Kim Dalman	25 Arlyn & Erma Breuker	26	27 Steve & Amy Schrotenboer	28	29 John & Margo Wilson	30 Dan & Amber Velderman
31 Scott & Susan VanHaitsma						

## Milestone Anniversaries

 5/29 - John & Margo Wilson (50 years)

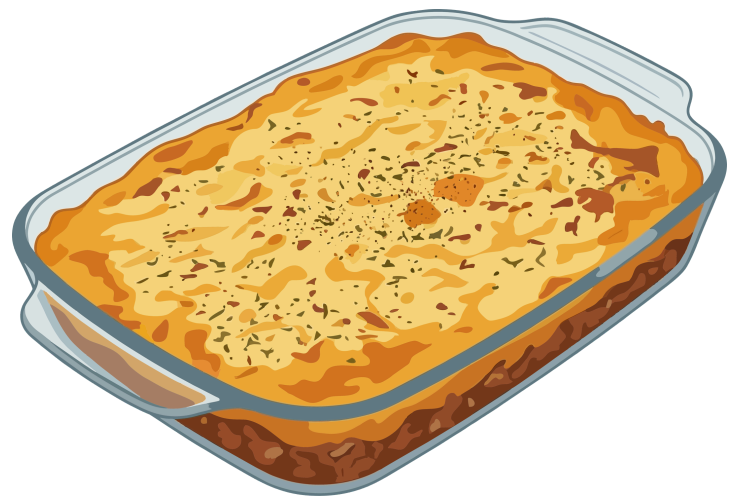
 5/23 - Tim & Jodi Boeve (40 years)

# Mary's Monthly Meal

## Creamy Velveeta Beef

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 16 oz. box Velveeta, cubed
- 1 8oz. cream cheese, softened
- Cream of chicken soup
- Canned Rotel tomatoes/chilies, undrained
- 2.25lb. ground beef
- 1 box bowtie pasta
- 1 cup reserved pasta water - to adjust sauce

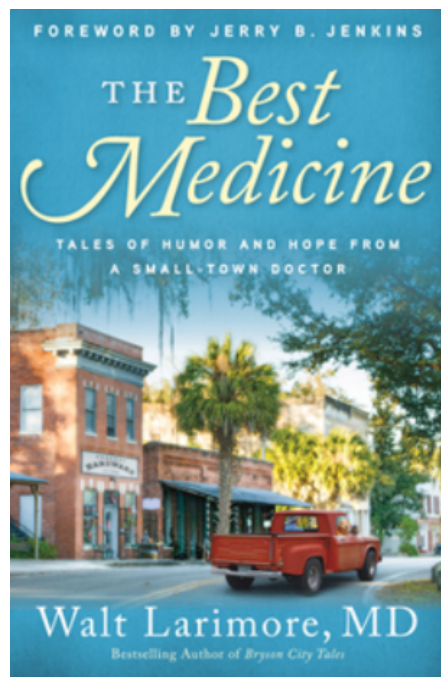


### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Cook pasta al dente - reserve 1 cup pasta water
- Cook ground beef until brown, drain grease
- Add Velveeta, cream cheese, soup, and undrained tomatoes. Heat until all heated and melted
- Add the cooked pasta
- Optional: add Parmesan cheese on top before serving

# The Best Medicine

Walt Larimore  
Non-fiction



## Book Review:

When the young Christian doctor moved his family to a small town medicine practice in Florida, he began an adventure that would change his life. These captivating stories glow with warmth, love, and humor.

# Welcoming New Families



Our family lives in Bentheim and we have attended Overisel for about two and a half years. We both grew up in Hamilton and love that we are able to raise our family here as well. We have 3 kids: Gideon (7), Selah (4) and Caleb (2). We homeschool our kids and our oldest attends Hamilton's part time program. We enjoy spending time outside together as a family completing various projects, riding bikes, playing at parks and swimming. We look forward to growing and serving with this church family!

We are excited to be joining the church as we begin this new season of life together. Derrick attended Calvin University, and Saydee attended Hope College. Saydee also has a meaningful family connection to the church, as her great aunt Cel Klienheksel was a member here. We are getting married this June and look forward to building a life and strong church community together. We enjoy watching and playing sports, especially basketball. Derrick serves as a basketball coach at Calvin, and Saydee works on the executive team at Cottage Home.





# The Well in Overisel



The Well opened on July 2, 2023, as a space for you to come and connect with friends or meet new friends. The drinks, snacks, and Wi-fi are all complimentary!

Our operating hours are M-F, 7:30 AM - 11:00 AM, but we are currently closed for a large remodeling project. We look forward to serving you again sometime in the middle/end of May. Watch our Facebook page for updates on the project and our reopening date!

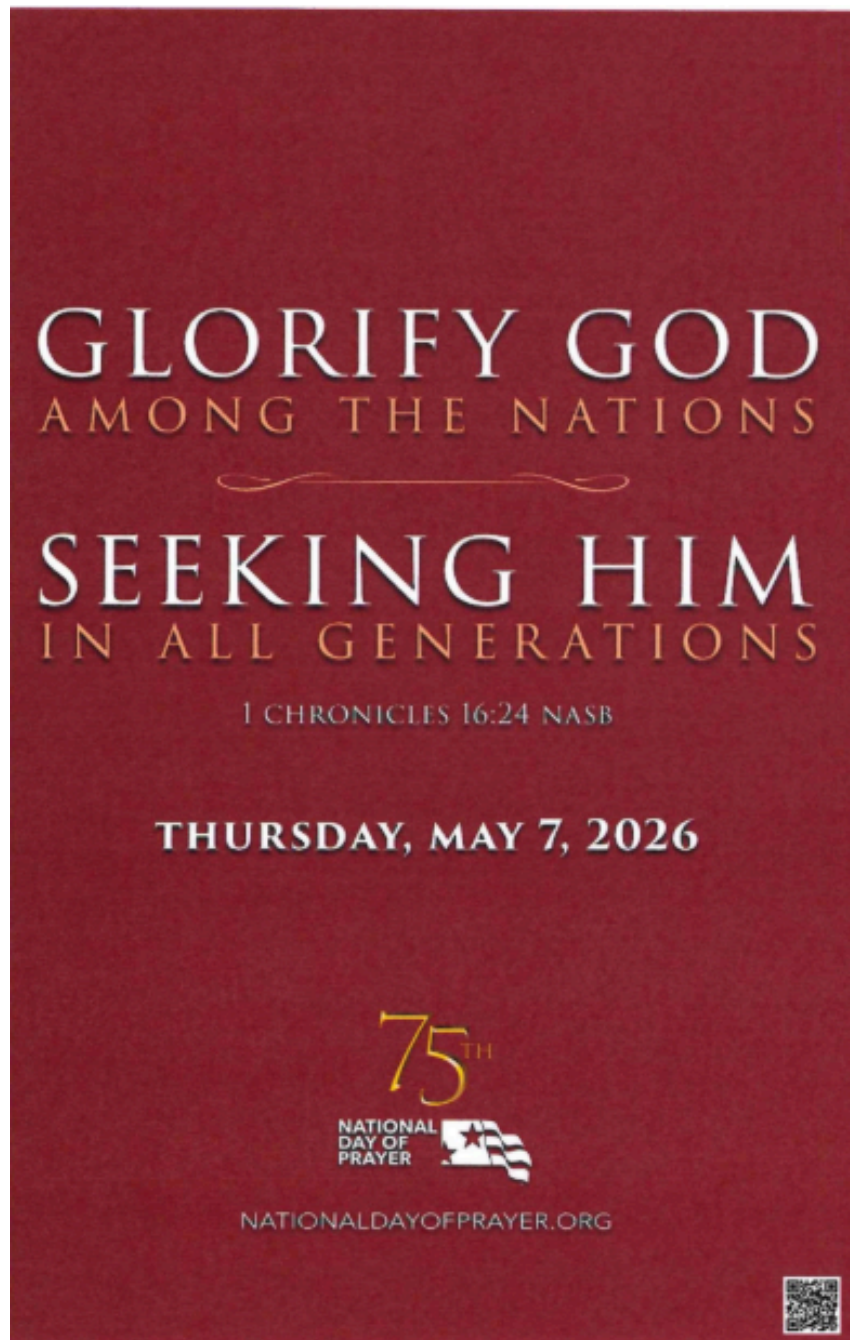
The Well couldn't be operated without the help of many (about 40!) volunteers. From those who helped with the start-up of our gathering place, as well as those who volunteer to greet and serve you.



In the summer, The Well hosts a Thursday night ice cream social.



# National Day of Prayer



**National Day of Prayer – “Gather ‘Round the Flagpole”**

**May 7 | 11:50 AM-1:00 PM**

All are welcome for a unified, non-denominational time of prayer led by area pastors.

**Photo From:  
The Riley Grove Journal**



Roger Slotman and Joan Voorhorst

# Missions Updates



Spreading the Good News of  
the Gospel around the world.



# Life. The Other Choice!

Volume 37 April 2026

607 Heritage Court, Holland, MI 49423 ~ 616.396.1037 ~ [rtlholland@egl.net](mailto:rtlholland@egl.net)  
[www.rtlhofholland.org](http://www.rtlhofholland.org) ~ <https://www.facebook.com/RighttoLifeofHolland>

## Six Important Reasons to Oppose Legalizing Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)

1. Insurance companies will deny life saving treatment: Stephanie Packer was told her insurance company wouldn't cover her life-saving treatment, but was instead offered assisted suicide drugs for a \$1.20 co-pay.
2. No screening for depression: Ruthie Poole experienced severe depression and could relate to the desire of a "painless and easy way out."
3. Life expectancy after terminal diagnosis unreliable: Jeannette Hall from Oregon was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2000 and asked for assisted suicide. Her physician convinced her treatment could be beneficial, and she is alive today.
4. Suicide contagion is real, targeting seniors and veterans: A Veterans Affairs Canadian staffer brought up the topic of assisted suicide when one veteran sought assistance to treat his PTSD and TBI.
5. People with disabilities fear coercion and abuse: Stephanie Woodward fears assisted suicide for people with disabilities like herself: "Any doctor could prescribe a lethal dose and any person could administer that dose to kill a person, with medical confidentiality preventing any oversight. No independent witness is required. In a world where abuse of people with disabilities and seniors is rampant, this alone is cause for concern.
6. Proponents of assisted suicide quickly move to eliminate safeguard like eliminating waiting periods, residency requirements, self-admin. of lethal drugs, and the requirement that the person is terminal.

## 2026 Annual Focus on Life Dinner

When: Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Where: The Pinnacle Center

Time: Doors open at 6:30pm



### Guest Speaker:

Lydia Taylor Davis— Lydia is a Christian pro-life activist, social media influencer, and national spokesperson for Students for Life of America.

Based in North Carolina, she first gained recognition as president of Campbell University's Students for Life chapter - where she became known statewide as "the pro-life girl" - and later won a widely attended campus abortion debate in 2023.

Lydia is known for her pro-life content on TikTok, reaching tens of millions and educating Gen Z on the truth about abortion.

Her investigative videos exposing late-term abortion facilities have surpassed 50 million views across platforms. She has been featured on Fox News, the Wall Street Journal, ABC, Newsmax, the BBC and more.

*This night is a great opportunity for teens and young adult to feel inspired!*

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

~ March/April - HS Student Essay Contest

~ May 16th - Annual Walk/Run will be held at City on a Hill in Zeeland 9am-Noon.

~ October 20th - Annual Focus on Life Dinner with guest speaker Lydia Taylor, she is a pro-life activist, social media influencer, and national spokesperson for Students for Life of America.



To visit our website directly: Use your cellphone camera, center on the QR code below (should see a yellow square) and press OPEN on your camera screen.



Join us for our Annual 5k Walk/Run

Where: City on a Hill, 100 Pine Street, Zeeland, MI

When: Saturday, May 16th

Registration: 9:30am

Walk begins: 10:00am

### Instructions:

1. Use the pledge sheet to gather pledges.  
One person/family per pledge sheet.  
*(a pledge sheet can be downloaded at [www.rtofholland.org](http://www.rtofholland.org) or scan the QR code at the bottom of this page).*
2. Wear a prolife shirt!!
3. Pay the day of the walk; \$30 per person or \$60 per family (children under 15 MUST have a parent/guardian - 18 years or older) is require if you do NOT have any pledges.
4. Registration begins at 9:30am at City on a Hill - bring your pledge sheet and any money you have collected.
5. The approximate 3 mile walk will begin at 10am after prayer. You will be walking on the sidewalks or if you choose to run, you may do so on the side of the road. **Both options are at your own risk!**
6. Light luncheon will be served after the event at City on a Hill in the conference room to the right of the Café.
7. If you have a conflict with May 16th you may still participate by walking at your convenience.

Questions? Call Ann at 616.396.1037

### Prizes:

- 1st Place - \$200 Gift card to a hotel/waterpark/ amusement park of your choice.
- 2nd Place - \$100 Gift card to a gas station of your choice.
- 3rd Place - \$50 Master/Visa Gift card

Winners will be announced after pledges/money is turned in by Tuesday, June 2, 2026. All money must be turned in to qualify for the prizes.



# Sí a la Vida

## Facts to know and share

**People of Hispanic origin in the United States account for 18.7% of the total U.S. Population—62,080,044.**

Las personas de origen hispano en los Estados Unidos representan el 18.7% de la población total de EE.UU.—62,080,044 (U.S. Census 2020).

**Hispanic women are having a disproportionate number of abortions. 25% of all abortions are being performed on Hispanic women, but they represent 18.7% of the female population.**

Las mujeres hispanas tienen un número desproporcionado de abortos. 25% de todos los abortos se llevan a cabo en mujeres hispanas, sin embargo ellas representan el 18.7% de la población femenina (Guttmacher Institute 2014).

**More than 230,000 unborn Hispanic babies die each year as a result of legalized abortion.**

Más de 230,000 bebés hispanos no nacidos mueren cada año como resultado de la legalización del aborto (Guttmacher Institute 2014, 2020).

**Today, more than 630 Hispanic women will make the choice to abort their unborn child.**

Hoy, más de 630 mujeres hispanas tomarán la decisión de abortar a su hijo por nacer (Guttmacher Institute 2014, 2020).

## Find help near you

**There are 150+ pregnancy help centers in Michigan to serve you.**  
Hay más de 150 centros de ayuda en Michigan para atenderla.

1-800-57WOMAN · RTL.org · HelpintheD.org

## What do pregnancy centers offer?

Pregnancy centers provide free and confidential pregnancy testing, limited ultrasound exams, material support programs, free baby clothing, diapers, wipes, and toys, free maternity clothes, counseling and emotional support, parenting classes, and community referrals. Contact your local pregnancy center to make an appointment and to ask which services they provide.

## ¿Qué ofrecen los centros de ayuda?

Los centros de ayuda ofrecen pruebas de embarazo gratuitas y confidenciales, exámenes de ultrasonido limitados, programas de apoyo material, ropa para bebés, pañales, toallitas y juguetes gratuitos, ropa de maternidad gratuita, asesoramiento y apoyo emocional, clases para padres y referencias a la comunidad. Comuníquese con su centro local de ayuda para hacer una cita y preguntar qué servicios brindan.



Dear Church,

With hearts full of gratitude, we give thanks to God for you those who, with faithfulness and love, have sustained the work of the Lord through your support during the year 2025. Your generosity has been a visible expression of your faith, your commitment to God, and your desire to see His Kingdom advance. Through your faithfulness, we have been able to continue proclaiming the Gospel, serving our community, and strengthening the ministry of the church. Every contribution has been a blessing and an instrument in God's hands to accomplish His purpose.

We pray that the Lord will continue to strengthen His Church, filling your hearts with joy as you serve Him. May He reward your faithfulness.

God's Word reminds us: Philippians 4:19–20

Thank you for walking together with us on this mission. We continue trusting that God will keep guiding us and blessing His Church.

With gratitude and prayer, La Casa de Mi Padre Fennville Throughout this past year, 2025, we have explored inspiring stories and experienced meaningful progress in several areas of the church, including continued growth in leadership development. The enthusiasm to learn and grow has also been strengthened through Global Coffee Break, a ministry of the CRC. At the same time, the dedication and hard pastoral work have been challenged by fatigue, especially due to an issue that continues to resonate deeply within our culture—the ongoing immigration situation. The support and prayers of our partners have been essential, and yes, we have truly felt those prayers being heard by God, even in the midst of intense moments within the immigration system that continue to impact our area of Fennville, Bravo, and Pullman.

We would like to share with you a few testimonies...!!

One thing we cannot overlook is the joy of seeing a positive transformation in the life of a young disciple in whom we have invested time to reach with the Gospel—perhaps for a little over two years. Today, she is growing in her knowledge of God, actively participating in Bible study times, and has left behind a life of addictions that once kept her from the right path in God. She now celebrates two years of sobriety.

Both her family and those of us who share life together in the church are filled with hope and deep faith, trusting that God is doing a beautiful work in her life as we continue walking alongside her, growing together in the knowledge of God. During this time, she has experienced God's favor, the support of the church, and the encouragement of her family—and you are also part of this through your support and prayers. There is still much work to be done as we continue growing together in the knowledge of God. We would greatly appreciate your continued prayers for her and for this ongoing work.

## !!Empowering Leaders...!



**We have launched a two year initiative involving dynamic tools for church improvement.**

This season, we are primarily focused on two areas: training more leaders and practicing intentional discipleship. We are convinced that the future health of the church depends on the development of new leaders. A healthy church is not sustained by a few, but by many who are equipped and firmly rooted in the Word. At this time, we are investing in personal mentorship, in-depth study of Scripture, and practical leadership training. This includes theological training, pastoral development, and Christ-centered character formation.

We are continually encouraging a deeper level of commitment and a growing enthusiasm for serving both the church and the community. This has been a great blessing to us and brings much-needed stability to La Casa de Mi Padre Church. Please pray for volunteers and leaders as we seek to maintain the proper balance within the church: establishing the structure needed to care well for our disciples and community, while remaining open to God's guidance as He calls us to grow in every area. We sincerely appreciate your continued partnership and commitment to the work of the Lord. Your support makes a lasting impact.

Sincerely,

Pastor Ricardo Tranquini

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Facebook: [lacasafennville.com](http://lacasafennville.com) Phone: 616-426-1498 Donate: My Father's House Bravo  
Mailing address: 5587 113<sup>th</sup> Ave. Fennville, MI 49408 Zelle: [myfathershousecc2017@gmail.com](mailto:myfathershousecc2017@gmail.com)

“MORE THAN A CHURCH, WE ARE A FAMILY. TOGETHER WE ARE BETTER”

# THE HITCHING POST



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## Upcoming Ministry Highlight

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### Sporting Clays Fundraiser Thursday, May 14, 2026

Support CranHill's Youth Camp Programs

Join us on Thursday, May 14, 2026 at Two Hats Ranch for CranHill Ranch's Sporting Clays Fundraiser. Proceeds from the event directly support our Summer Youth Camp programs, helping us continue to provide life-changing, Christ-centered experiences for children and families.

Teams of four will compete across 14 shooting stations, including a special "flurry" shoot.

- Individual: \$225
- Team (4 Shooters): \$900

The Gun Raffle will be an event highlight, and tickets will be available for purchase during the fundraiser.

Tickets: \$25 each - 5 for \$100 - 12 for \$200

Registration closes May 10, 2026!

Register Here!

<https://www.ultracamp.com/info/sessiondetail.aspx?idCamp=575&campCode=chr&idSession=577386>



Multiple Sponsorship  
Opportunities Available!

Contact our  
Advancement Director,  
Joel, to get started!

[joel@cranhillranch.com](mailto:joel@cranhillranch.com)

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# Other Upcoming Events

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## Refresh Women's Retreat April 17-19, 2026

Ladies! Take a break from the demands of daily life and join us for a weekend of rest, renewal, and connection. Be refreshed and encouraged in your faith through meaningful chapel sessions, time in God's Word, and Christ-centered community, along with great meals and comfortable accommodations. Attend for a night or for the full weekend, whatever works best for your schedule.



For more information, and a link  
to register:  
<https://www.cranhillranch.com/womens-retreat>

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## Spring Clean Up Day! Saturday May 2, 2026



We need your help!

Join us at CranHill as we prepare for the 2026 camping season! Bring your family, friends, church group, or coworkers and serve alongside our staff during this important workday.

Enjoy a free lunch, plus ice cream at 4:00 PM at the Barn Store for all volunteers.

Projects range from raking leaves and clearing trails to building, painting, and more—there's something for everyone, no matter your skill level.

**More Information:**  
<https://www.cranhillranch.com/clean-up-days>

Free camping is available May 1-3 for volunteers. Reserve your site using code SPRINGCAMPING26 when booking.

Click the link below for more information and to register!

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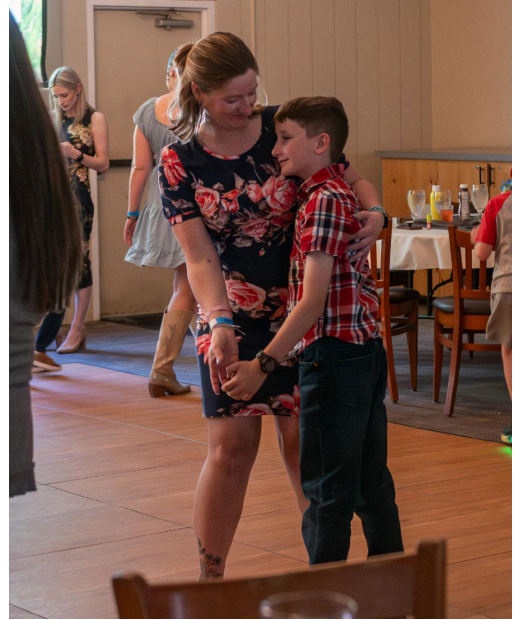
## Mother-Son & Daddy-Daughter Days! Register Today!



### Daddy Daughter Day: May 16

Make meaningful memories in a Christ-centered setting while celebrating the unique relationships between dads and daughters. Take a ride on a pony, work on target sports, and make some crafts - then wrap up the fun with our "Denim & Pearls" banquet dinner with the Daddy-Daughter Dance.

<https://www.cranhillranch.com/daddydaughterday>



### Mother Son Day: May 9

Come celebrate the bond between moms and sons through fun, fellowship, and faith-filled community. Enjoy target sports, going on pony rides, and climbing our rock wall - then end the day with our "Denim & Pearls" banquet dinner along with the Mother-Son Dance.

<https://www.cranhillranch.com/mother-son-day>

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## Now Hiring Summer Staff 2026!



Apply Now!

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/CranHillRanch/cranhillsummerstaffapplication>

### Department Highlight: Food Service Staff

Do you know a motivated young person who would thrive in a camp setting? The Food Service team at CranHill plays a vital role in serving campers and staff each day. They help create a welcoming environment through meals that fuel both the body and the experience of camp. The Food Service Team lives on-site and works together to prepare and serve meals, keep the kitchen running smoothly, and build relationships with campers and fellow staff along the way.

### Other Positions Include:

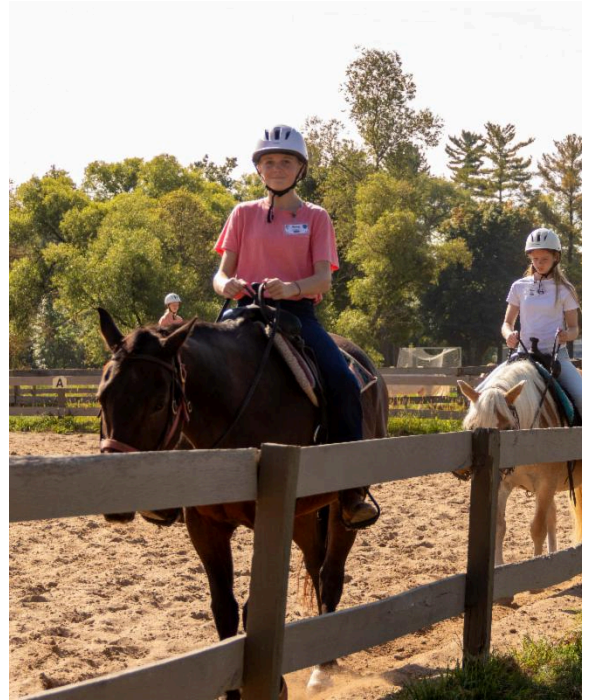
Male Cabin Leaders, Accommodations/Housekeeping, Worship Leader, Health Officer, Photographer, Videographer, Adventure Staff, Beach Staff, Barn Store and more!

## Camper Scholarship Need:

Summer is just around the corner, and our Camper Scholarship Fund is at a critical point.

By this point in the year, we typically have \$80,000 available to aid families who couldn't otherwise afford a week of camp. Today, we have only around \$34,000. This means that right now, only half of kids needing scholarships will be able to come to camp.

Annually, CranHill gives away over \$50,000 in scholarships because every child deserves the chance to encounter Jesus, regardless of their family's financial situation. Our scholarship fund exists solely through the generosity of donors who join us in the push to get every kid to camp.



### Will You Help a Child Get to Camp?

Right now, some families are facing the possibility of telling their child that they can't attend camp this summer.

### Your Gift Helps Campers Meet Jesus and Grow in Faith

- \$1,050 sends two children to camp
- \$525 covers one full week for a camper
- \$213 covers half a week of camp

Please consider giving to CranHill Camper Scholarship Fund today. Together, we can open doors for kids to be here this summer have the opportunity to experience Jesus!

To give, click the donate button or contact Joel Russcher, Advancement Director, at [joel@cranhillranch.com](mailto:joel@cranhillranch.com).

**Every gift, no matter the size, helps us reach our \$80,000 goal and welcome more campers this summer!**

**Donate Today: <https://www.ultracamp.com/donations/DonationSelection.aspx?idCamp=575&campcode=chr&lang=en-US>**

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## CranHill Family Minute: With Scott Barger – President

Many of you know that in addition to my role at CranHill, I'm also a musician and a worship leader. I often tell people I get to do the two things that I love the most... CranHill and leading people into God's presence in worship.

Well, I'm sure you're familiar with the book of Psalms and how beautiful, poetic, inspiring, and impactful that book can be on our faith and life. Within the book of Psalms are 15 chapters (Psalms 120–134) that were written for pilgrims to sing together as they ascended the temple mount on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem during their once-a-year pilgrimage for the various feasts and festivals.

This is the mountain where God told Abraham to take Isaac and sacrifice him to the Lord, and where the Lord provided a ram in his place. This same mountain became the central place of rule and worship for the Hebrew people under King David, and also the place where King Solomon built the temple where the Lord's presence dwelt among His people. It is the highest point in the region. The Bible often speaks of people going up to Jerusalem and going down from Jerusalem. The ascent to Jerusalem led families to the pinnacle of worship on the temple mount where the Lord's presence dwelt.

Their gaze was set on the holy city and the joy of worshiping the Lord. David describes this beautifully in Psalm 121:1–2 when he proclaims, "I lift my eyes toward the mountains. Where will my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

The main theme of the Songs of Ascent is the very Presence of God. By singing these songs on their pilgrimage to Jerusalem, God's people were reminded that His presence was what they needed most.

One of my favorite Songs of Ascent is Psalm 127 — because right in the middle of these songs, halfway up the mountain, they're singing about **family!**

### Unless the Lord Builds the House

#### A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

127 Unless the Lord builds the house,

those who build it labor in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city,

the watchman stays awake in vain.

2 It is in vain that you rise up early

and go late to rest,

eating the bread of anxious toil;

for he gives to his beloved sleep.

3 Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,

the fruit of the womb a reward.

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior

are the children of one's youth.

5 Blessed is the man

who fills his quiver with them!

He shall not be put to shame

when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

Right in the middle of these songs, halfway up the mountain, they're singing about family!  
How cool is that!

Imagine climbing a mountain. Each step matters, but the path only leads to the summit if you trust the guide who knows the way. Leading our families is like that mountain climb. Family matters to God and He is present in our family life. We can plan, work, and provide all we want, but without God at the center, the journey is harder and the view far less meaningful.

Psalms 127 reminds us that the Lord must be the foundation of our families. Children are not just responsibilities, they are gifts, arrows in God's hand, entrusted to us to shape and guide for His purposes. When we place Jesus at the center, He strengthens our family, gives us rest amid the work, and blesses us in ways we could never accomplish on our own.

Family life is a pilgrimage in the very presence of God.

- Is God the foundation of your home and family?
- Are you trying to "build" in your own strength, or are you inviting Him into the work daily?
- How can you celebrate and steward the gifts God has entrusted to you this week?

You can make one intentional step this week to acknowledge God in your family today. Pray together, share a God Sighting or gratitude around the dinner table, or encourage your child or spouse with a verse of Scripture. And trust that as God builds, your family's faith, joy, and relationship with Jesus will grow and thrive.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't remind you that the ministry staff here at CranHill desire to be a part of that journey with you and your family. Yes, of course, we'd love to have your family here in the campground ministry, in one of our cottages, or your kids here for summer camp growing closer to Jesus. But we truly desire to go deeper with you. We'd love to pray with you and for you.

We would count it a privilege to walk that pilgrimage journey toward Christ with you in any way we can. Please let us know how we can join you and be a blessing to your family. Email me directly at [scott@cranhillranch.com](mailto:scott@cranhillranch.com) and I will connect with you.

May God bless you and your family on the journey in Christ. Sometimes it feels uphill both ways... but what a blessing to grow closer to the Lord each day.

In Christ,

Scott Barger  
President, CranHill Ministries



# THE HOVINGS

## Photo Review of 2025



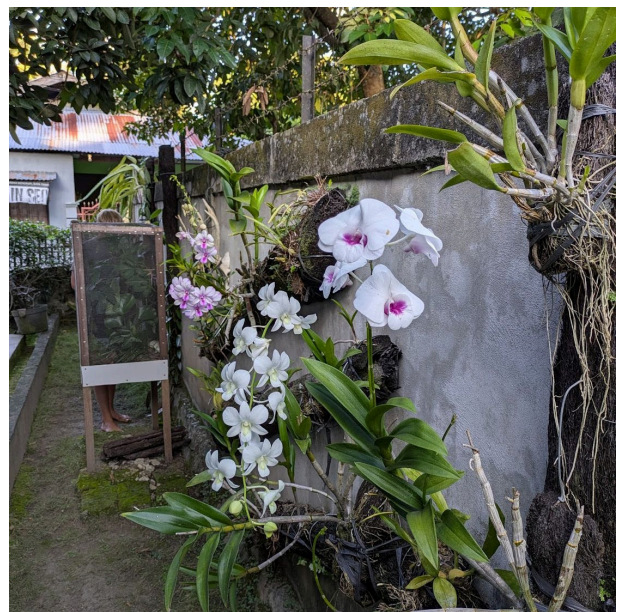
Our Family!



In May we took a family vacation with friends to Nabire to see the whale sharks. While there, Levi caught this black-tip reef shark. (The whale sharks were much bigger!)



Levi helped me teach English to Yajasi maintenance employees this past summer. He's showing them how to fly X-Plane.



Mark designed this beautiful orchid wall in our yard! He enjoys eating breakfast in front of it. Levi's snake cage is in the background.



A big project over the last year was the total stripping and repainting of one of our PC-6 airplanes. Also, the Caravan in the background received a whole new avionics upgrade.



*Celebrating the life of*  
**IANAE LOLA**

In December one of Levi's classmates passed away from complications connected with dengue fever. It has been a difficult time and a season of grieving. Please remember her family in your prayers.



Levi was baptized this past fall. He is in the turquoise water shirt facing this way.



We spent a lot of time exploring new places to dive last June and July. It was fun to watch the boys use their spear guns.



At the beginning of 2026, Mark and I both turned 50! This was the head of the big grouper Mark grilled for me!



Over Christmas we took a much needed break with some friends to Biak, an island off the coast of Papua.

# Mark & Bernadette Bennett

## Thrive Retreat Update

A couple of weeks ago, I (Berny) I had the privilege of serving at a Thrive Retreat in Rome. I was so encouraged after spending time with such faithful missionaries ladies who are the 'cream of the crop'. There were 86 cross-cultural missionaries in attendance, serving from over 30 countries, with a combined 1,112 years of service! There were also 40 volunteers who provided life-giving care to those who spend their lives caring for others

### Women of the Thrive Conference

The Holy Spirit worked powerfully during this retreat to refresh their hearts, give them with courage and filled them with love that will impact many all around the world. Jesus blessed me with many opportunities to encourage and love on these women. Several appointments stick out to me. First was a life-coaching appointment with Becky that gave her insight into a huge decision that she needed to make. Second was a prayer appointment with Lisa who broke down crying after admitting to me that she recently went through a nervous breakdown. These are a few of the many memorable moments that I hold in my heart.

Another blessing was the small group that I helped lead throughout the week. The ladies in that group bonded in a super deep way. The Holy Spirit broke down walls, allowing Marci to share some of her pain and anger with us through deep weeping and tears. As we gathered around her to pray over her, I sensed the presence of the Father in one of the deepest times of intercessory prayer that I have ever experienced. I can not share a photo of them, as they are all ministering in countries that are closed to the gospel, but here is what Becky shared regarding this Retreat.

You have made me feel so seen, loved, and cared for. Thank you! My small group has become family (and our new signal group will become a lifeline!) I have had some beautiful breakthroughs while here with you and away from my host country. This has been the breath of fresh air I didn't know I needed. Thank you x100! All my love, Becky (Turkey)

What a sweet surprise it was for me to walk up the stairs of the hotel and stand face to face with one of the Thrive Alongside ladies that I mentored online 5 years ago. I immediately hugged Lauren and kept saying, 'I can't believe I get to actually hug you and meet you in person.' We shared a sweet moment together catching up and praying together in the hotel lobby before the retreat officially started. What a special memory!

### Here is what Lauren shared regarding this Thrive Retreat:

Wow! I have been so blessed and so grateful for this time. The timing of it was so needed and necessary. The details and intentionality blew me away. Thank you for loving me (us) so incredibly well. I have been encouraged, loved, resourced and I am returning with joy, hope, and many new friends. I can't wait to return in the years ahead. Thank you, thank you, thank you! – Lauren (N. Africa)

Berny praying with Lauren

Thank you so much for making it possible for me to serve at this Thrive Retreat. Your partnership allowed these women to head back to their country of service deeply encouraged. Here are a few other 'thank yous' from various attendees.

I feel rejuvenated and filled, like I can go back to answering emails and juggling calls and ministry and scheduled with joy and even excitement. I feel seen, understood, and celebrated! This – what Thrive puts together for international workers – is what we all secretly want and need, but it feels selfish and self-serving to ask for it. Thank you for being the answer to prayer, filling the gap, supporting a deepening of faith so that we can continue to do the same for others!

This retreat is unlike anything I have experienced before – the love and generosity can be seen and felt in every aspect. Thrive is intentionally helping women receive care for their entire being; spirit, soul, and body. I have felt seen and valued this week from a team who has sacrificially given above and beyond at every opportunity. I came empty and I'm leaving full – thank you and may God bless you abundantly. All for His glory. Anna

Coming into this retreat I was at a very low point after one of the hardest years of my life. I had felt invisible. From the moment I arrived at check in and was told "we are so thankful you are here." I felt so loved. I have been overwhelmed by the way we have been loved + cared for. I was ready to quit but now I am leaving with a renewed passion and the reminder of why we do what we do! And worshiping in English has been a gem! Thank you will never be enough. This retreat and organization is truly making a difference in the world. – Bethany

Thank you so much for your prayer and support that make it possible for me to be there loving on and encouraging these missionary ladies!!

Bernandette

Please Pray for:

- These missionary ladies to be walking in Spirit daily and to be deeply refreshed in their times with the Lord so that there would be an overflow into the lives of those they minister to.
- \* K (single woman) who I met 5 years ago on a Thrive. Difficult family situation. Pray also for her visa. (works in closed country)
- \* For the college ladies I disciple to go deep in their walks with Jesus.

# News + Updates



April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we're celebrating the incredible volunteers who serve through Love INC Allegan County.

Their compassion, generosity, and willingness to show up make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors. Whether they're answering phones, serving in a pantry, working at the Heart to Heart Resale Store, mentoring, praying, or offering practical help in another way—they are the hands and feet of Jesus in our community.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace.” — 1 Peter 4:10

We are so grateful for the time, love, and faith our volunteers pour into this ministry.

Thank you to all of our volunteers for serving and for being part of the mission of Love INC!



## Stock our Snack Supply

a few easy clicks on Amazon

Each week during our Tuesday LIFE Skills classes, participants are learning, growing, and enjoying community in a welcoming and supportive environment while investing in their futures.

You can be part of that experience in a simple but meaningful way.

We're currently in need of shelf-stable snacks for participants in this program. By shopping our Amazon wish list, you can have snacks shipped directly to Love INC Allegan County—making it easy to meet a real, immediate need and help foster that welcoming and supportive environment for our participants.



Amazon Wish List:

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3TS6PSQ1MC6AK/ref=hz\\_ls\\_biz\\_ex](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3TS6PSQ1MC6AK/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex)

## Harding's Shoppers

help feed neighbors in need



Attention Harding's shoppers in Allegan! Did you know that with your Harding's Rewards app, you can redeem points for a donation to **The Vine Food Pantry** hosted by Love INC Partner Church, **Christ Community Church of Allegan**?

After shopping Harding's in Allegan, simply log into your Rewards app, select "\$10 charitable donation to local Food Pantry with 500 points!" and click "REDEEM REWARD".

This is an easy way to put food on your table and the tables of those in need. Thanks for your support!

## Quarterly Update

January-March, 2026

In the first quarter of 2026, our volunteers served 2,220 hours, answering 73 requests for help through our Connection Center (including 29 requests from new families), and meeting 524 needs in our community.

Our LIFE Skills, 10 Homes for 10 Families, and Homes of Hope volunteers served (collectively) 161 hours.

21 LIFE Skills class sessions and 72 mentor meetings were held.

### Brian's Testimony

a LIFE Skills Graduate

Because of faithful volunteers, donors, and community partners, lives are being changed through the LIFE Skills Program at Love INC Allegan County. Participants are building relationships, setting goals, and taking steps toward greater stability and hope. Together, we are seeing stories of transformation unfold, like Brian's, below.

Brian is a recent LIFE Skills Graduate and was recently baptized! But he wasn't always the guy he is today...

This past Sunday, a friend said something curious to me. He told me that I was different than I was even four months ago.

But you see, that guy from four months ago isn't me, although he apparently bears a remarkable resemblance to me.

I've heard about that guy, and by all accounts, he was walking around with a chip on his shoulder the size of a cinderblock. He was angry all the time and did not have control of his temper. He had low self-esteem yet was arrogant to a fault. How does that work out? The poor guy must have been conflicted and confused all the time.

I understand that he offended others. I've been told he was critical and judgmental. He was outspoken to the point of disruption in the groups he involved himself in. Some found him obnoxious and wanted him to just shut up (and told him so). But he apparently couldn't bring himself to do that.

But that guy hasn't been seen around here lately. I don't know what happened to him, but I think he might have gotten lost or was told to get lost.

I feel sorry for that guy, and I'll pray for him, but I can't say I'll miss him, as I, myself, never met him.

Four months ago, I hadn't even been born yet. By the time I arrived, that guy was already gone. I'm a whole new person and it doesn't feel possible that I could have been him. I am somebody else now.

Now, I'm taking the first few steps in a brand-new life with a clean blank slate. Praise the Lord!

I won't be angry.

I won't be bitter.

I won't disregard others for my own sake.

And in turn, Jesus doesn't seem to remember my sins.

So I am at peace with myself. I am at peace with the world around me. I am at peace with my Maker and Lord. I am at peace... I am at peace.

My friend told me that I reek of the Holy Spirit. If that's a backhanded compliment, I'll take it and keep it in my pocket. I hope he's right.

Because people like you pray, give generously, and are willing to serve, stories like this are possible. Thank you for being part of the Love INC family and helping bring hope to our neighbors in Allegan County.

## Store Hours

shop our Heart to Heart Store

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9:30am-5pm  
First and Third Saturdays of each month, 9:30am-2pm  
Friday-Monday, Closed

# Dear Friends at Overisel Reformed Church,

For many kids, summer camp isn't even an option.

Not because they don't want to come, but because they simply can't afford it or have barriers standing in their way...

Each spring, Camp Beechpoint works to change that narrative by raising scholarship funds on behalf of our campers and families.

Throughout the month of April, our community is coming together to make camp possible for hundreds of campers who need it most. And on April 27th, we'll gather to celebrate what God has done, and invite others to be part of it.

I'd like to personally invite you to join us for this special evening.



20 **BEECHPOINT** 26  
*Annual Fundraiser*

**MONDAY, APRIL 27 | 6-8PM**

*Camp Beechpoint*

3212 125TH AVE, ALLEGAN, MI 49010

This will be a night of dinner, stories, and celebration. You'll hear firsthand how camp is impacting lives—and you'll have the opportunity to help send more kids to camp this summer.

We are seeking to raise \$150,000 to help 375 campers in need of a scholarship this summer! It's a big goal and we need your help!

We've seen what happens when people step in, kids experience belonging, truth, and transformation in Christ!

Would you consider joining us? Your presence and support makes a difference!

Lives are changed at Camp, where Christ is Hope!  
Gratefully,



# GIVE

A SCHOLARSHIP



\$30  
1959 JUST  
GETTING  
STARTED

\$100  
FIRESIDE  
FUND

\$800  
BEST  
FRIEND  
PASS

\$50  
LIT  
SCHOLARSHIP  
(LEADERS IN TRAINING)

\$200  
BRIDGE  
THE GAP  
SCHOLARSHIP

\$1,600  
HALF  
A CABIN

\$85  
CULTURE OF  
GENEROSITY

\$400  
ONE CAMPER

\$3,200  
ENTIRE  
CABIN

