

PROCLAIM

A publication of Northminster Presbyterian Church

Summer 2022

“FEED MY SHEEP”

Northminster kids/youth issue

Feed My Sheep

The lectionary New Testament passage for Youth Sunday was from John 21 verses 1-19. In the second portion of the passage, Jesus challenges Peter with the same question, three times. Peter, the one who betrayed. Peter who chose three times to not claim Jesus as his Lord and Savior...or even as his friend. Three times Peter answered, “Yes.” Three times Jesus responded, “Then feed my sheep.”

This challenge, this calling, this command ... calls all of us. *Feed my sheep.* Take care of them. Make sure they are fed. Make sure they are healthy. Make sure they are well. We are called to do the same. Each time we offer a Summer Fun evening of learning and growing, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we volunteer to be kitchen help or play games with our children or youth, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we serve as a driver for an event, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we are a mentor for the confirmation

class, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we donate cookies or donut holes, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we serve as a church-school teacher, we are feeding the sheep. Each time we host at the front door, we are feeding the sheep.

Many times, we think it will be a glamorous job. Feeding sheep is not glamorous. Often, it is exhausting and inconvenient! Jesus calls Peter to do it anyway. Jesus calls us to do it, too. Are you willing? Do you want the sheep of this flock to be nourished and healthy? Do you want them to grow and thrive? Then, follow Jesus’ challenging words: *Feed my sheep.* They are sitting all around you. Often you will find them eating donut holes after worship! You cannot miss them. They are an amazing group who want to make a difference in our community and in our world! Let’s go feed the sheep. They are waiting for you. ✦



Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Nancy Fortenberry



The 2022 confirmation class on Youth Sunday, May 1, 2022.

On the cover:
Luca Goncalves enjoys Summer Fun in the Gathering Space

A Welcoming Church Welcomes a New Pastor

One week before the Pastor Nominating Committee proposed Rev. Brian Shivers as Northminster’s next pastor-head of staff, Carol McDonald preached on “Welcoming the Messenger” and invoked a verse called the Celtic Rune of Hospitality:

*We saw a stranger yesterday.
We put food in the eating place,
drink in the drinking place,
music in the listening place.
And in the sacred name of the triune God
he blessed us and our house,
our cattle and our dear ones.
As the lark says in her song:
Often, often, often,
goes the Christ
in the stranger’s guise.*

While the Christ-in-Stranger’s-guise message has deep implications for us, including for Northminster’s role as a Matthew 25 congregation, Carol borrowed its hospitality theme in calling us to welcome our new pastor nominee. And the congregation delivered a big and joyful welcome on Nomination Weekend—hospitality that, as Brian described it, was “a wonder to behold.”

That next Friday evening, a special host group turned Barb Angotti’s home into the Eating Place and the Drinking Place, giving Brian and the currently serving Elders and Deacons a chance to meet over drinks and appetizers. On Saturday, the Eating/Drinking Place shifted to a packed Gathering Place, as the Congregational Life team organized an old-fashioned pitch-in for NPC members to greet Brian, his wife Jennifer, and their daughter Allison. And on Sunday, the sanctuary served as the Listening Place, both for Brian’s first Northminster sermon and for the congregation’s unanimous action to call him as our new pastor and head of staff.

As strangers go, however, Brian already seems remarkably familiar. He’s a native Hoosier (recognizing that proper tenderloins are pork and flattened and deep-fat fried), a long-time Presbyterian (with 35 years of pre- and post-ordination service to Marion’s Westminster Presbyterian and Indianapolis’s Second Presbyterian, as well as his current term as Moderator and other roles for Whitewater Valley Presbytery), and a decades-long resident of northside Indianapolis (who’s already found a new barber in Broad Ripple).

And we’re learning of many personal contacts Brian has long had with the Northminster family. One of our number was in his college graduating class. One member family are his long-time neighbors and friends. Some of our former pastors have worked with him for years, and one taught him in seminary. At Synod School, Brian first met one of our eventual youth directors, launching a supporting ministry that lasted for decades. And some of our members knew him well from their earlier days as Second Presbyterian members. (Extra credit if you can name those NPC folks.)

Carol’s hospitality charge went beyond welcoming our new pastor – that we have more strangers to welcome. We look forward to Brian’s own welcoming nature to help us live our creed faithfully. He brings exceptional listening, teaching and motivational skills, and a deep commitment to interfaith cooperation and to exploring, in his words, “what it means to be a welcoming community of faith.”

After all, “often, often, often, goes the Christ in the stranger’s guise.” ✦



New pastor, Rev. Brian Shivers with his wife, Jennifer.

Big thanks to everyone who helped coordinate and host the events to welcome Brian and the Shivers family!

- Friday evening:**
Jill de las Alas
Carol Frohlich
Allison Gritton
Susan Holewinski
Roz Lancaster
Melodie Sarver
- Saturday picnic:**
Emi Johnson, *Chairperson*
Barb Angotti
Norma Arend
Heather Banks
Christie Call
Nancy Fortenberry
Carol Frohlich
Susan and Chris Holewinski
Melissa Hopkins
Janet Indgram
Joyce Mallette
Dorothy Moos
Adam and Andrea Newsom
Cheryl Plunkett
Emily Plunkett
Tony Ricchiuto
Blake and Lori Schlabach
Evan Schlabach
Susie and David Scott
Linda Theobald

YOUTH SUNDAY 2022



From Keane Ricchiuto –

I remember in 2020 I was hosting right before Pastor Teri left. A couple walked in during the sermon and looked at her and said, “their pastor is a woman,” and didn’t know or agree that women could be pastors. Now here I was thinking that only women were pastors! This really opened my eyes to why I love being a Presbyterian because we believe that everyone has the right to be a minister or an Elder or Deacon. In the Presbyterian church we try to be welcoming to everyone.



From Annie Robinson –

I believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. I grew up encouraged to go to church and to believe in these things because of the family environment I grew up in. My family has encouraged me to be more involved in the church but they aren’t the only ones. Nancy has also helped be more involved in the church because she has given me many reading opportunities in the church services. I feel that God is always there for me and always guides me in the right direction. I think the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the work God does in our lives. It shows God guiding and shaping our lives.

From Sam Banks –

A time in my life when I have routinely used God to help calm me or talk to God is when I started a prayer journal. I wrote a paragraph a day on people or things that need prayers and stuff on that day that I am thankful for. Doing this helped me feel closer to God and to connect with Him. I believe that He is my guide through life.



From Jackie Gritton –

My favorite thing about the church is definitely the community and the people in it. Everyone is just so welcoming and kind; I’ve made so many friends here. When I’m here I feel safe and accepted. NPC is a safe space for me. I know that whatever happens the people in this church will help and comfort me during hard times.



From Kate Ronco –

The meaning of church within my life has definitely changed. In the past it may have felt like more of an obligation, but I feel more motivated to be a part of our community here at Northminster. Throughout middle school, and now into high school, it has become a place of comfort. A place that constantly reminds me of what truly matters and a place where I can just be myself. And it has been over the last few years that I have come to better understand who Jesus is.

Giving New Meaning to The Gathering Space

You may have heard that Northminster’s Vision statement, as adopted by Session a few months ago, is *Engaging with Neighbors Near and Far in Christ’s Love*. We do this in many ways, but one of the most direct has been the series of Midtown Market events Northminster has hosted over the past few months.

Starting in late 2021 and then again in April 2022, on July 16, 2022, and on November 5th, 2022, Northminster opened/will open the southeast parking lot and Gathering Space to local artisans and vendors for a friendly and active market. With booths offering a lovely variety of items, including baked goods, beeswax body care, dog bandanas, hand-painted stationery, bug-off plant spray, houseplants, jewelry, cookie-decorating kits, locally roasted coffee and more, the Midtown Market is fun for all ages.

People selling their wares at the booths and people attending continuously commented on how beautiful our space is — especially the natural light — and how much they appreciated our opening the church to the community in this way. Join us for a scone, a candle, and some neighborliness! ✨



JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT
MIDTOWN MARKET
SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 5



Summer (Vacation Bible School) Fun

You might call it VBS 2.0. Or even VBS 2.1 (since a pilot program ran in the summer of 2021). The content is familiar, but the name and schedule are new. A “different spin on the way VBS has been done at NPC in the past,” as CE Team co-chair Heather Banks described it, the program has morphed from a Vacation Bible School concentrated in a single week to a Summer Fun series spread across four consecutive Wednesday nights in June. (A related program, on the first Wednesday evening in July, was designed as a stand-alone event for kids gearing up to return to school.)

For Summer Fun 2022, the central theme was God’s powerful and loving presence, told through the Genesis story of Joseph in four phases: for Wednesday One, Joseph’s famous coat and brothers who sold him into slavery; for Wednesday Two, his enslaved service and imprisonment in Egypt; for Wednesday Three, his elevation to power by Pharaoh; and for Wednesday Four, his reunification with family.

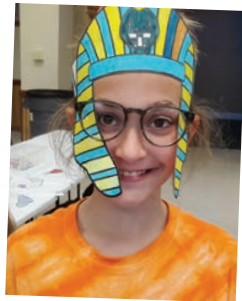
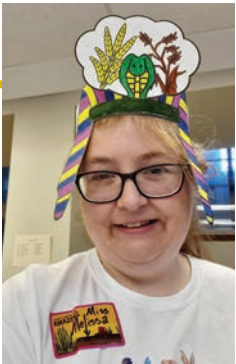


On each evening, activities ran from 5:30 to 7:30, with programs designed for children from age 4 through 5th grade. Each evening schedule routed the kids through four activity stations, two indoors — the Dinner Station and the Bible Station — and (weather permitting) two outdoors in the south parking lot — the Game Station and the Craft Station. When the weather didn’t cooperate, Calvin Hall provided the backup venue for games and crafts. The kids also took home a Bible Memory Buddy for each evening, in the form of an animal character with the day’s key Bible verse printed on its base.

Directors for the Wednesday evenings were Kathryn Goncalves, Chad Kincaid, Liz Higgins, and Heather Banks. Melissa Hopkins delivered the Bible stories and, along with Nancy Fortenberry, led the design and implementation of Summer Fun 2022.

Why the change in format? A lot of it, in Nancy’s words, was about “just coming together” after the separation of the pandemic years. As she reported from her recent participation in Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators workshops, “we’re all trying to understand how people are re-engaging, with church and with each other.” The revised format also tracked some long-term trends in school and family scheduling, as well as Northminster’s growing emphasis on Wednesday night programming.

Summer Fun 2023 (VBS 3.0) may well see more adjustments, but the goal will be unchanged — to offer the children a summer stopover for fun and faith. ♦



My Montreat Youth Conference Reflections



Sophia Johnson (right) with Jessie Gritton (left) and Lily Banks (center) at Montreat, June, 2022



From left: Nancy Fortenberry, Sophia Johnson, Jessie Gritton, Kate Ronco, Jackie Gritton, Keane Ricchiuto, Will Ronco, Ryan Kim and Andy Longo

Before going to Montreat, I was very nervous and unsure about going because I did not know much about the conference. My opinion quickly changed after going to the first worship service on the night that we arrived where all of the staff, pastors, and small group leaders were so welcoming and excited for the week ahead. After the first full day I understood more on what Montreat was really all about, I met my small group made up of people I didn't know from all over the country and hoped we would all bond through our love of God. Although I didn't know anyone in the group, it was easy to get to know people the same age as you, who were all nervous and excited to be at Montreat. Despite what I expected about the church services, which I anticipated to be very long, each one was catered to be meaningful and even included other kids from different groups reciting bible verses and leading us in prayer each night.

Every morning and evening each of the two pastors would give a sermon, both knew the exact topics that would interest their high school age audience and messages that we could take with us through our lives. Our morning keynote speaker, Gale Henderson Belsito gave a sermon that our group talked about for the whole week. The sermon talked about "flipping the table", which meant standing up for what you believe in even if it is unpopular or uncomfortable for yourself. Nancy led our group all week in conversations about what "tables" we could "flip" in our daily lives. I enjoyed these discussions because I could see everyone really thinking about their answer and how passionate they each were about standing up for what they believe in.



Lake Susan at Montreat Conference Center in Montreat, North Carolina

Montreat not only taught me more about Jesus Christ, it also taught me what we can do as young people to help our neighbors and ourselves, give back, and be welcoming to all. I would really like to thank Nancy and Mr. Longo for giving us the opportunity to go to Montreat, the long hours of driving, conversations each evening, and teaching us more about God. I also want to thank all of the staff at Montreat for making sure we had a fun experience and for teaching us valuable life lessons. Finally, I want to thank all of the friends I made there that I enjoyed getting to know and will miss until next year, as well as our group from Northminster who I got to know better each day and enjoyed spending that week with!

Sophia



Unheralded Youth Angels:
Lily Banks

The first observation I noted about Northminster young adults is my difficulty in pinning them down, for an interview, or even a conversation. They all seem to have things to do, places to go, roles to play. That might be the major positive sign from NPC young adults: They are out in the world acting according to the first of Northminster’s mission directives — SEEK.

Another sign — finding a willing interviewee the very weekend the Montreat Music and Worship conference gets underway. For those unfamiliar with this event, it is a retreat part meditative, part sharing, part inspiration. For NPC youth (and adults), Montreat is a recharging of the soul and spirit that those who attend — young and young-at-heart — look forward to with great anticipation each year.

Being a strong parental model in volunteerism herself, member Heather Banks established in her daughter, Lily, a willingness to accept the call herself. Heather’s seat on Northminster’s Christian Education board served as a foundation and inspiration when 8th-grader Lily received a recruiting call in 2019.

“My first reaction was excitement at even being asked to be Youth Elder on Session,” Lily recalls. “My next feeling was one of anticipation and looking forward to jumping in, even though I had no real idea of what to expect.”

Following her introduction to Session as an observational invitee, Lily admitted she was a bit nervous at the next couple of Session meetings.

“It was a time of lots of changes,” she recounts, “Time of discussions about the new organ, Pastor Terry’s retirement and looking for a new pastor. And also a changing of the roles of youth in Northminster. So, I had lots of talks with others in my [peer] group about all the

changes. There was a whole lot of sharing among ourselves.

“Then there was the end of the Christmas Lite service, which we had basically grown up with as a tradition. And of course, with the Pandemic, came the halt to all youth leadership—and all levels of leadership—involving in-person participation. The time of virtual meetings and Zoom calls began.”

Even with all these ch-ch-ch-changes, Lily’s time on Session served up several benefits in her personal growth.

“It [Session time] solidified how positive decisions are made; how much people care about the Church, their actions, and how those decisions influence others; being a part of something greater than yourself; and being positive and staying positive while keeping moving forward, even if the path ahead isn’t clear. Probably most importantly for me, I was hesitant about speaking up at the beginning, about anything. As time went on, I gained more experience, and as I felt more accepted by the adult Session members, I became more confident about speaking up for myself and my peers.”

Developing a confident, brave young person who feels strongly about issues and is practiced in the art of conversation and civil discourse — what a gift we give unwittingly, perhaps even unknowingly, to those watching our every step.

Some of Lily’s best memories are a collage of moments: seeing her grandparents at Sunday services; meeting her BFF’s at Northminster group activities, Sunday School and VBS; being included with adults and other church members in activities like Italian Night. And perhaps most notably, her time as a Northminster confirmand.

“Mrs. Dzwonar was my confirmation mentor, which I’ll always treasure. And



our group was amazing. Meeting and getting to know my fellow confirmands is something I cherish. We’ll be friends forever. My best memory is of our confirmation retreat at Jerry and Sally Gray’s lakeside cottage. We really got to know each other as people. Our time together pulled our entire confirmation class into one cohesive group based on our faith.

“I feel bad that my younger brother wasn’t able to have that same experience with his confirmation class because of COVID. I think that the retreat is a really important piece of confirmation.”

Lily feels strongly about her connectedness to NPC now and for the immediate future.

“Staying close to Northminster is one major consideration in my plans for college,” Lily offered. “Right now, I want to continue to be nearby, as I work in the Nursery on Sunday morning and at Wednesday night choir practice childcare.”

The most vivid Memory Keeper for Lily will always be participating in Northminster’s Christmas Lite programs. However, the greatest impact she feels most in her bones and in her heart? She is aware of becoming more extroverted, as she expands her surroundings from family, friends, school, and church.

“I’m more comfortable now going out, and I feel more confident in other facets of my life.” What a blessing our youth are to our congregation and to our community and the world beyond. ✦

Book Recommendations for Tweens and Teens



For Tweens (ages 9-12):

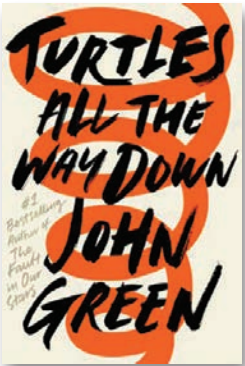
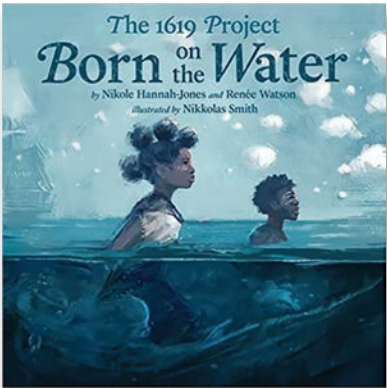
- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Black Boy Joy</i> | 9. <i>Flora and Ulysses</i> |
| 2. <i>Fast Pitch</i> | 10. <i>Fish in a Tree</i> |
| 3. <i>Midnight at the Barclay Hotel</i> | 11. <i>The Cardboard Kingdom</i> |
| 4. <i>Starfish</i> | 12. <i>Wonder</i> |
| 5. <i>The Dollhouse: A Ghost Story</i> | 13. <i>The Apothecary</i> |
| 6. <i>Harbor Me</i> | 14. <i>Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer</i> |
| 7. <i>The Night Diary</i> | 15. <i>All He Knew</i> |
| 8. <i>Merci Suárez Changes Gears</i> | 16. <i>Hidden</i> |



You can read reviews of each book on the Brightly website:
<https://www.readbrightly.com/books-for-fifth-graders>

For Teens (ages 13+):

- *The 1619 Project: Born On the Water* by Nikole Hannah-Jones



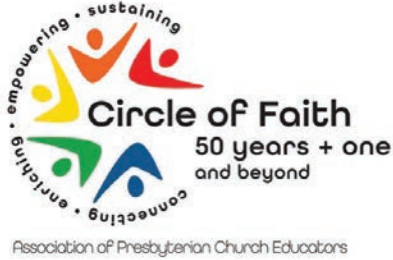
- *Turtles All the Way Down* by Indianapolis YA author, John Green, soon to be a major motion picture

- Three books by Indiana YA Author Helen Frost:
 - *Crossing Stones*
 - *The Braid*
 - *Keesha’s House*



Answers to Bible verse jumble on page 15:
...but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them."
Matthew 19:14

Charting Our Christian Education Programming Future: A Discussion With Nancy Fortenberry, Director of Youth and Family Ministries



Earlier this year, Nancy Fortenberry attended the APCE annual event in Chicago, IL, where she gathered with friends and colleagues from around the country to celebrate an opportunity for continued faith formation and discovery of new ways of living as a faith-filled servant in the world. Together, attendees at this event explored common areas for growth and development as Christian Educators. Nancy shared her thoughts and reflections from this meeting, focusing especially on how she can take what she learned at the event and apply that knowledge here at Northminster as we continue to evolve as a church family.

What is the APCE?

APCE, formerly “Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators, now stands for Association of Partners in Christian Education. It’s an association made up of those who are serving or have served in educational ministries, as ministers, professional or volunteer educators, or students, in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Moravian Church in America, and the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

The purpose of the Association of Partners in Christian Education, Inc. is to advance educational ministries in the Church and increase the ongoing witness of our faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. APCE encourages professional recognition through certification and/or designation, provides opportunities for improvement of professional skills, supports personal enrichment, actively advocates for church education, serves as a channel to and from denominational structures, and recognizes achievements and innovative contributions of church educators. The annual event provides an outlet for attendees to connect, enrich, empower, and sustain the ministries of educators, pastors, volunteers, and their faith communities.

What were some key takeaways for you at this conference?

I heard repeatedly that our churches and ministries will look different in this time of post-pandemic. Families and individuals are viewing the activities of their lives differently. Many people are not returning to what had been their ‘normal’ routine. We expected people to slowly re-engage, that families would re-evaluate their time and energy and choose what is

near and dear to their hearts – the church and all that it stands for in their lives... but that is not what is happening. Many children and families are more than ready to recommit to athletic teams. Almost every youth leader in every session voiced the decline in numbers in worship, Christian Education, and youth programming. More than ever before, leaders are challenged to think outside the box and find new ways to approach ministry!

What did you learn that is applicable to your work at NPC?

I continued to think about how we can find new ways to do things that have been a tradition over the years, such as VBS. I had already been thinking and collaborating with others that we might want to try something new. Instead of doing a traditional VBS, we offered a “Summer Fun” night. This was a way to offer a program similar to VBS in the past, but at different times, and using a one-at-a-time methodology. It seemed to work well. So, after this conference in February, we began proposing ways to re-think old traditions that needed to better “fit” the changing needs of our NPC families and adults.

Did you find similarities among your peers with challenges they are facing?

Yes. APCE gave me the opportunity to meet many Christian Educators from the PCUSA, and I was incredibly blessed to travel to this conference with Carol McDonald, who introduced me to so many individuals at the event. I was able to meet even more people at each break-out session that I attended and was able to connect with them for meals or coffee between sessions. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities that I had on many levels during this conference to network, listen, worship, learn, and grow!

How can you apply what you learned right here at NPC?

The conference opened my eyes to more resources and opportunities that can help us grow as we continue to move forward in the life of NPC. I plan to continue to use resources that I discovered and will network with others in the Presbyterian Youth Workers Association. It’s a great network of people who are working together to lead our youth and ministries forward!

Should others from NPC consider attending future APCE events?

APCE is a wonderful event that can help keep our team and Christian Education volunteers sharp and open to the many resources that are available for ideas and growth for our ministries. It is my hope that this will be an annual event for me and any others that work with our children, youth, and family ministry pieces of Northminster. Our children, youth, and family ministries are vital areas in NPC’s mission, values, and vision statements. For us to continue to grow and learn in these areas of ministry, it is important for us to attend and grow from these learning opportunities.

Any other thoughts?

I have worked in Presbyterian Churches for over 30 years, but I was unfamiliar with APCE. Soon after I arrived at NPC, both Ruth Moore AND Carol McDonald advised that I consider making time to attend this conference. I am so glad they did! The event was valuable and beneficial for me both personally and professionally. 💎

All of Them, Children of God

Below you will find a coded Bible quotation mentioning children. Can you decipher it?

CLUE: A = E

X	Q	P

F	A	O	Q	O

O	W	E	Z

H	A	P

P	D	A

H	E	P	P	H	A

Y	D	E	H	Z	N	A	J

Y	K	I	A

P	K

I	A

W	J	Z

Z	K

J	K	P

O	P	K	L

P	D	A	I

Find answers to the Rhyme Time puzzle at the bottom of page 13.



NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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This year's Easter Egg Hunt was a big success with dozens of families from the church and non-church folks from the neighborhood participating. The Tinker House Coffee truck was a popular addition, and some attendees said they were there just for the coffee! With our vision to *Engage with Neighbors Near and Far in Christ's Love*, we hope to offer more events like the Easter Egg Hunt that welcome neighbors into our beautiful space and show Christ's love in a variety of ways — caffeinated and decaffeinated.



Proclaim is a quarterly publication of Northminster Presbyterian Church celebrating the stories, people and work of our church. It features more human interest than timely information. Let us all *Proclaim* the good news! Please send interesting story ideas and photos to jennifer.dzwonar@borshoff.biz. We cannot guarantee publication of all submissions, but we appreciate recommendations. Thank you for reading and for all you do to support Northminster.

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