

So. Otsevic Methodist News

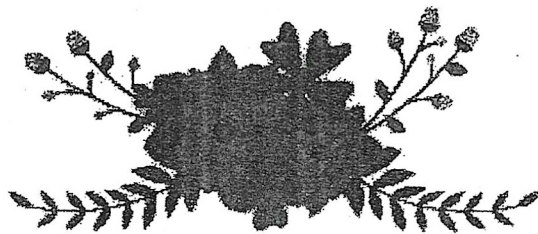
Pastor Melanie Simmons

(church) 315-653-7728

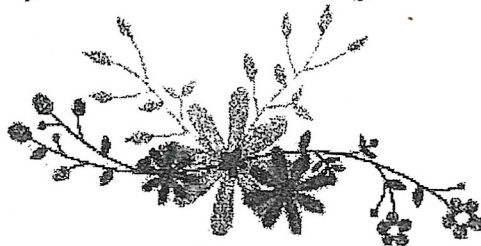
(home) 607-674-9527 ... (cell) 607-371-0431

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May 2026



*The loveliest
masterpiece of
the heart of God
is the heart
of a mother.*



ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

Ann Campbell, Editor



MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

May 2026

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good..

Genesis 1:31a (NRSV)

Happy May!

I'm always struck by how pretty the world gets in May. Flowers bloom everywhere and the greening of the trees happens. What was bare mud and rocky dirt becomes full of things growing abundantly. Eggs hatch and young critters may be seen. Bugs of all kinds come out, as well as various reptiles and amphibians. The days grow longer and sunnier; with the warmer weather, the sound of peepers may float through an open window. There are signs of new life everywhere, renewing hope for the future.



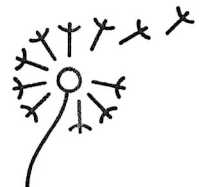
I took my granddaughter for a walk around the block the other day. At three years old, she is fascinated by all there is to observe in and learn about the world. I got to show her blooming cherry trees and leaves coming in on maple trees; she was proud to spot and identify several different flowers – and to only pick dandelions, as no one ever complains about those getting ruined. Most people see dandelions as weeds, not really wanted.

My mother-in-law, Pam Simmons, has said for years that dandelions (just the heads) should be the official flower of Mother's Day because young children always bring their mothers a handful of them. Dandelions also have many uses: Bees and many other things rely on dandelions for food. Every part of a dandelion is edible for humans; in addition to its use in salads, it has been brewed in soups, wines, and teas. The roots have even been roasted for a coffee substitute. Dandelions have also been used in tonics for various conditions, not to mention as decorative garlands when woven together. They grow deep roots very quickly, naturally aerating the soil and preventing erosion. When they go to seed, they become wishing balls, ready to carry our dreams on the wind.



Because dandelions are common and familiar, we tend to look at them with disregard and contempt. We mow them down and plant other blooms in our gardens. Yet, if we were desperate for food, most other blooms would be useless to us, where the dandelions could feed us. They are a critical part of our world biosystem.

In the garden of humanity, generally we would all love to be seen as a rose or an orchid or whatever beautiful bloom we favor. How much more helpful we are when we live like a dandelion – putting down deep roots in our community, putting all our energy into living fully, helping the world around us to thrive, enabling our children with love to flourish wherever life takes them. The “weeds” of humanity are a critical part of our societal systems.



If you ever start to feel unimportant or not wanted, remember: God created you in the divine image, sees you as very special, loves you very much, and calls you good – *very good*. May you live into that divine perspective throughout this season and always, through the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

With love in Christ,
Pastor Melanie



“The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ.”

Reflections

Reflections



My introduction to the fine art of lawn-mowing came in the thirties during my early teens. Lawn mowers in those days all looked alike:

Generally, they consisted of a revolving set of four iron blades, mounted as a reel between a pair of small iron wheels. This contrivance was then attached to a quite substantial wooden handle about four feet long. When in use, the upper end of this handle was usually attached to a teen-age boy.

Actually, those machines were very advanced ecology-wise -- there were no noxious exhaust fumes, no noisy motor sounds, not even danger of oil or gas spills... Aside from a whirring sound, there was no other disturbance to the atmosphere than an occasional grunt or groan from its one-boy-power motor. (And I use the term, motor, in its broadest and most painfully remembered manner.)

I really can't be too hard on those devil-designed machines, for they were also my introduction to the World of Capitalism. Every Saturday, I would walk a couple of blocks to the home of a neighbor, where I would share much of that day with one of those mowers. After four or five hours, when every blade of grass on that rather spacious lawn had been reduced to a respectable size, I would collect my fee and head for home. At twenty-five cents an hour, that fee, a generous one for those Depression days, represented most of my early-teen income.

That pioneer style of lawn mower reigned king for suburban homes for several decades preceeding World War II. Almost immediately following the close of that regrettable event, the old mowers came once again to the forefront of lawn care, but now with a small gasoline motor perched atop the reel.

A newly power-conscience society welcomed, with open arms, this boon to formerly aching backs and muscles. The big question in those late-forties years was whether to purchase a belt-driven or chain-driven model. The chain-drive machine was admittedly more reliable, but did cost more...

This question soon became a moot point when, with the brilliance of American ingenuity, someone came up with the concept of a rotary mower. The rotary mower, after its appearance during the decade of the fifties, initially struggled against the longtime rule of the reel-type machine. Home-owners believed the reel mowers left better looking results, and anyway, who wanted to go back to pushing a mower by hand!

But again, that argument too, was nullified when rotary mowers began to appear in self-propelled versions, the result of inventiveness following need!

Today the reel-type mower has disappeared from most of our suburban home landscape, relegated to use only in big gang-mowers serving such spacious areas as golf courses and large estates. Almost everyone with any size lawn at all, has in their garage, a motorized rotary mower complete with

steering wheel and comfortable seat -- a "LAWN & GARDEN TRACTOR" capable of laying down a three or four foot strip of lawn with every pass!

A year or so after coming back to civilian life, I became a home owner myself in 1947. My newly acquired homestead came complete with considerable lawn area. (Especially after we converted a former potato patch, esthetically located in front of the house, to a more appropriate appearing lawn).

Faced with the task of keeping rapidly growing grass in some semblance of respectability, I purchased a monstrous and ancient machine, once used on some rich person's large estate, long before the advent of smaller home-care mowers. This formidable contraption had no wheels, but instead was a wide reel mounted ahead of a large steel roller. The machine, weighing probably four or five hundred pounds, was propelled by a water-cooled motor and steered by pushing down on a pair of handlebars while swinging the front end one way or another.

The water-cooled motor, perched on top of and squarely in the middle of the rig, was theoretically cooled by an open-topped reservoir and a radiator. Its flaw was the fact that it was designed to operate without any waterpump to circulate the cooling water, thus depending solely on convection.

The folly of this engineering scheme, my folly in purchasing the machine, and the wisdom of the person who sold it to me, became evident every time the mower was operated for more than twenty minutes. That's about the time that was required for the water in the cooling system to reach the boiling point...

After reaching the boiling point myself a few times, I finally gave the monster to someone who thought he could solve its problem behavior. As I recall, he was no more successful than I.

The grass, along with an occasional volunteer potato plant, kept on growing of course, and I had to come up a mower or start raising sheep. There weren't any sheep handy, and anyway I didn't want to put up fencing, so I went over to Sears and bought one of the little rotary mowers that had recently appeared on the scene.

This little mower with its 16" cut, not only did a good job on the lawn, but was able to handle much taller and tougher grass than did the reel machines.

With the success of many such hand-propelled machines during the intervening years, our present lawn continued to grow in size until it became obvious that a riding mower was not only practical, but really necessary.

Now, at long last, our John Deere Lawn Tractor not only performs its duties with efficiency, but makes mowing actually fun.

Looking out the window, I see that the grass is already a little too high, so I guess I better leave this and start on that!

George Ortiz

Treasurer's Corner

Happy May! It has been a wild roller coaster ride with regards to the weather - one day 70 and the next 40... Welcome to CNY! But we are seeing a bit more sun than before and makes everyone feel better! Speaking of feeling better - do you have a place where you feel peace or safe? Believe it or not - I can find peace in a few places... one is a cemetery. I talk to those I have come to visit even though the conversation is one sided, I just feel peace. Another is my church where I always can feel peace... no matter what is going on in my life. Church is the one place I can always count on to reflect, pray, think and sometimes shed a tear. Everyone needs a quiet place to regroup and think about things that matter to oneself. May you each have that certain place to ease your mind and soul... just remember that the church, any church, does not judge why you are there - but if you need to find that inner peace - I pray that you can feel peace and feel free to do that in His house.

Here is the report for April 2026. Please keep our little church in your prayers.

*Ann P Campbell,
Treas.*

<i>Receipts:</i>			<i>Beg Balances:</i>
Envelopes & Pledges	4705.00		Chng: 5972.40
Loose Offerings	498.00		Savings: 8921.72
Int on Savings	2.20		
Interest (Wells Fargo)	1184.97		
Easter Bake Sale	463.50		Receipts: 6893.67
Easter Flowers	40.00		Payments: 5740.83
			Balance 1152.84
	TOTAL	6893.67	
<i>Payments:</i>			<i>Ending Balances:</i>
Minister's Salary	312.00		Chng: 7083.94
Housing	1670.00		Savings: 8921.72
Continuing Education	0.00		
Treasurer	169.00		
Travel	0.00		
Organist	0.00		
Secretary	0.00		
Tech Support	156.99		
Postage	0.00		
Fuel Oil	702.00		
NYSEG	213.73		
Apportionment	1005.11		
Telephone	89.09		
Copy Paper & labels	66.92		Year to Date: +530.78
Penny Stone	30.00		
Website	19.00		
US Treasury (1st qtr - FICA)	164.17		
Bill Wentworth (12 snow plows)	240.00		
Lightwell Ins. of NY (work's comp 2nd qtr)	82.31		
Envelopes	26.73		
Ponto's Greenhouse (Easter flowers)	492.10		
So. Otselic Water District	116.00		
Great America Fin. Services (copier)	185.68		
	TOTAL	5740.83	

Up to the minute...

Bake Sale Update...

We want to thank everyone that helped in any way with our Easter Bake Sale! It was a huge success, and the ladies were busy all morning long! Our bakers did not disappoint, and we hope we helped you with your Easter preparations!

SERVICE AT THE VET'S HOME!

Mark your calendars for June 14 as that is the tentative date we have to go to the Oxford Vet's home and have service with Dave Wentworth! We have such a good time catching up with Dave, hold a nice a service and then we have a dish to pass luncheon! So, pencil in the date and we will keep you posted!

The Annual 17th Fishing & Heritage Day

If you are local to South Otselic, pick up a brochure and see all the great events scheduled for May 16th. If you are at a distance, and can't decide whether to attend or not, check out the events on ww.ovfish.org. You'll be convinced instantly that it is a great free family event!

In addition to the ever popular fishing clinics for youth at both 9am and 12:30pm, vendors and delicious food, this year's live music is "Melanie and the Boys" from 10am to noon, Mike Mullenax from 12 noon to 2pm, and then the Eddie and Bird-Dog from 2pm to 4pm. It is an all new line-up for music so bring your chairs and be ready for a great day!

The new 17th annual special cancellation stamp will be making it's debut Saturday the 16th at the South Otselic Post Office from 8am to 11:45 am. Designed by Charity Gipp, the cancellation stamp is only available for 30 days!

If you are interested in learning about the origins of lacrosse, be at the South Otselic Fish Culture Pole Barn at 10am to hear Oneida Indian Ron Patterson do a presentation on the origins of lacrosse and stick making, and to demonstrate the game.

Doris Wilkins-Wilt from the Oneida Indian Nation Cultural Center will explain the making of the "Friendship Feathers" and assist participants in making them! Her program will begin at 11am and again at 1pm.

It is going to be another fun filled event so please invite your family and friends and neighbors to join you in South Otselic. Enjoy the free shuttle bus to transport you to all the activities!

Thursday Luncheons

Thursday lunches at the UMC are open to everyone, but please reserve your spot with Betty at 315-751-1535. Lunch is served at noon followed by a program. This past Thursday, April 30th, the group enjoyed a pulled pork sandwich, baked beans, mac and cheese and snicker-doodle cookies. The group then visited the South Otselic Fish Culture Center and had a great tour by Mike. He explained about feeding and raising the fish, the importance of the consistent water temperature, and their final destination. Both Atlantic land locked salmon and brook trout are raised in the hatchery tanks! Stop in and see what's happening at the hatchery any day, Monday through Friday, from 8am to 4pm!

The next lunch will Thursday May 14th at noon. Menu is yet undecided, but it is always delicious and provided by Apple Creek Country Club! Thank you! Following lunch, there will be a demonstration of fire extinguishers and fire prevention in your home! Hope you can join us!

Georgetown UMC News

Greetings from the Georgetown United Methodist Church. We are preparing our "fish" for the Kiddie Fishing Pool at the Fishing Heritage Day. We so enjoy seeing their happy faces. If you happen to see the brochure distributed by the Fishing Heritage Association, the picture of our booth is on the first page when you open it up!

A couple of our members are looking forward to going to Annual Conference at the end of month. One member had such a good time last year reconnecting with friends, he couldn't wait to go this year.

Now that the warmer weather is finally here, maybe we won't have to purchase fuel oil for a few months! We are also looking forward to a church picnic this summer. We thank God we are able to get together and enjoy a fellowship luncheon with one another.

Best wishes for a Happy Mother's Day and a successful Fishing Heritage Day!

Until next time.....

Happy Mother's Day!

Side notes

Trustees Report - May 2026

Installation of the exterior church basement doors by Madison Doors and Windows was completed on February 27.

Trim boards were mounted on some of the church balcony walls as to hang/store various banners when not in use in the Sanctuary.

Efforts continue to search appropriate grants for funding the stained-glass windows. One grant which Jackie Hakes and Cal examined offered a 50/50 match and required the grantee to put up new money through a fundraising campaign. Existing funds were not permitted to be used as part of the grantee's match. The grant search continues.

The Trustees have received two estimates so far for the painting of the roofs on the Sunshine Shop and food pantry entrance.

According to Stewart Signs, the possibility of retrofitting the lighted church sign with digital LED panels, can be done with their conversion kit. This would allow the church to keep the current sign structure and switch out the manual lettering boards for the LED display at a cost saving of about 25% vs. replacing the sign with a new one. The price at is \$13,305.50.

A huge thank you do the 'brain trust' for erecting and taking down of our Easter flower cross. If there are any interested fellas out there (or women) that would like to pitch in on Thursday mornings to help clean His house, just speak to Cal. The more the merrier!

The Sunshine Shop News

April was the Sunshine Shop's 16th anniversary month. Customers entered a drawing for an Aldi's gift card, and the winners were: 1. Virginia Bartholomew of Pitcher, and 2. David Bero of Earlville. Congratulations and thank you for shopping at the Sunshine Shop! We are very grateful for our customer base which extends from Oneonta west past Cortland and north from Syracuse and south to Binghamton.

The Shop is packed with a great inventory of clothes for the entire family! Stop by and check out the selections. You will not be disappointed!

The Sunshine Shop is one of many sponsors of the Otselic Valley Fishing and Heritage Day event. The Shop will be open Saturday May 16th from 9 to 2. Stop in and say hello and see what is NEW! (Many of the items throughout the shop still have their original price tags still on them!)

Open again June in 4th and 5th (10 to 4), and the 6th (9 to noon), and then again on the 18th and 19th (10 to 4), and 20th (9 to noon). See you then!

Fishing Heritage Day!!!

Please join us at the park on May 16th for Fishing Heritage Day! The ladies of the UMW will have their food booth and plant and flower tent ready for everyone. We are almost famous for our fried dough and homemade pie slices... who can resist a good piece of pie along with fried dough, *plus* ice cream? Please stop by and say hello - we always have time to meet and greet

Dates to remember

May 10 - Mother's Day

14 - Free luncheon 12-2 at the church

16 - Fishing Heritage Day from 9-4

24 - Administrative board after worship service

25 - Memorial Day

30 - Deadline for newsletter items due

June 4 - Free luncheon from 12 -2 at the church

14 - Tentative date for service at the Oxford Vet's home

Talk is cheap because supply exceeds demand.

Memorial Day ... *All* gave some and some gave *all* ...

'SHIPWRECKED: JESUS RESCUES US'

--- VBS 2026 – HELP NEEDED! ---

During the 1st week in August, the church will once again come alive with grade school kids who will enjoy learning how Jesus can rescue us. Every year it takes a small army to put this wonderful week together. Please see all the details on our flyer in this newsletter.

Please consider helping us out that week. We need adults to help in all areas: lunch, snacks, crafts, games, skits, music, crowd control, front desk, custodians, etc. As we get closer to VBS week, we will be sending out a list of needed supplies, so keep an eye out to see if you can help us in that capacity.

Please help spread the word of VBS! We will have a table at Fishing & Heritage Day and a float in the Memorial Day parade in May, and banners, etc. as the summer progresses. However, a personal invitation from people you know always seems to be the best publicity.

If you are interested in helping us out, please see me in church or by giving me a call at home (315-653-7701).

Thanks so much for considering!

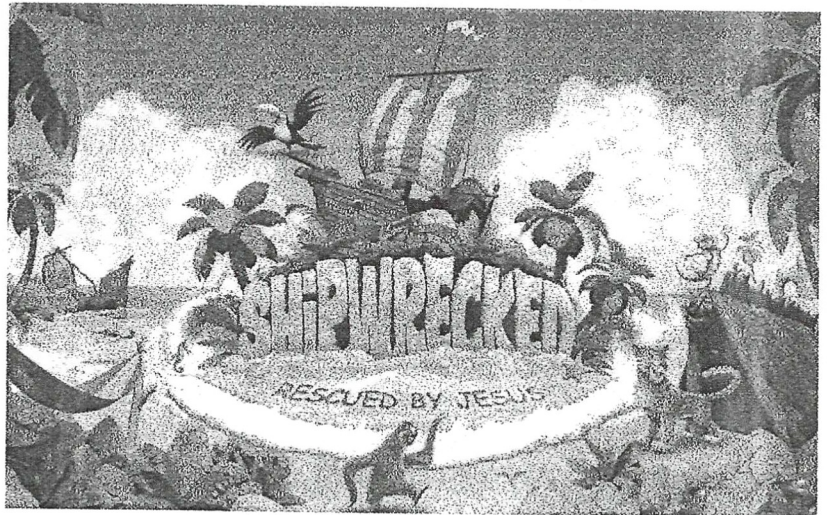
Chris Kalin

SAVE THE DATE ~ SAVE THE DATE ~ SAVE THE DATE ~ SAVE THE DATE ~ SAVE THE DATE

VBS 2026

August 3-7

12:30-4:30 pm



**South Otselic United
Methodist Church**

Noon – Lunch provided prior to program

First day – parents must register children

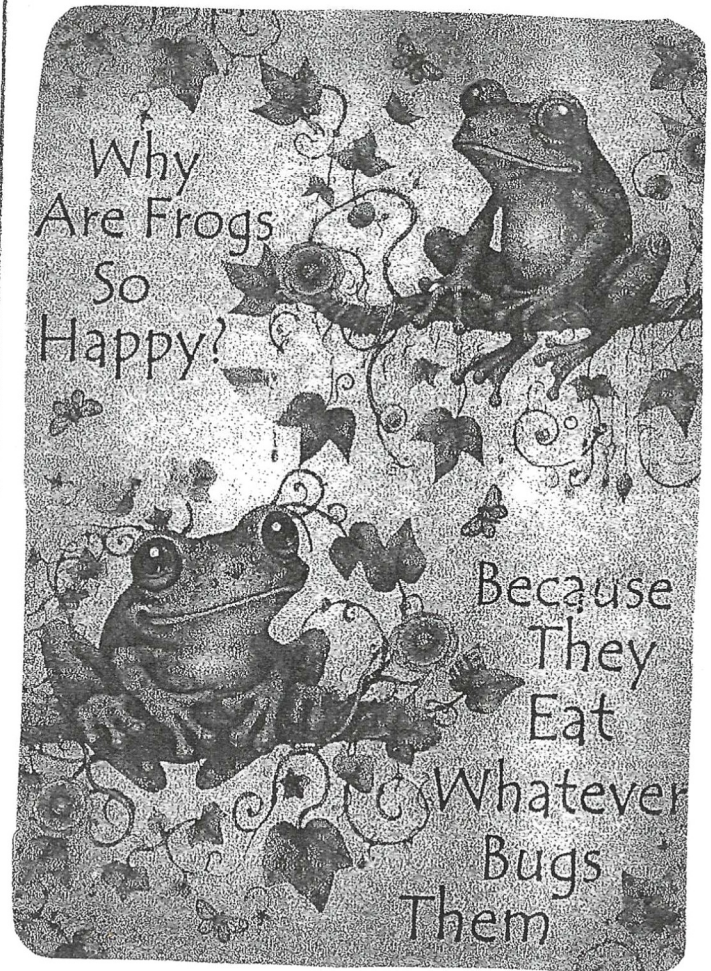
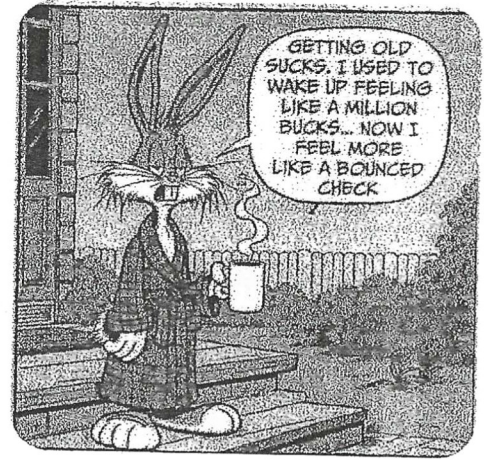
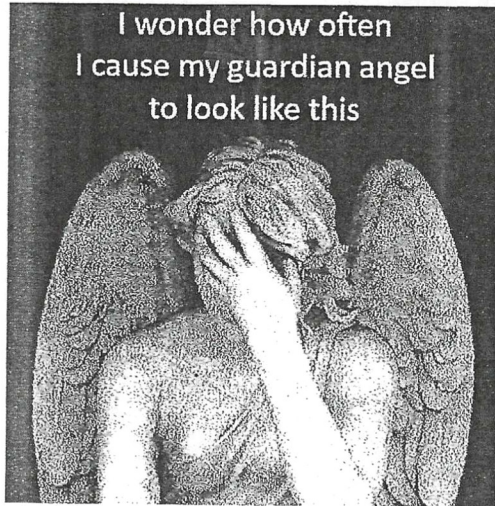
Mission project – making hygiene kits to help those in crisis

<https://umcmmission.org/umcor-hygiene-kit/>

MOMS NOW vs. MOMS THEN

"That word is inappropriate."	"Say that again and I'll wash your mouth out with soap."
"Good job trying one bite of the dinner I made. Now you can have Mac & Cheese."	"You'll eat what I make, whether you like it or not. There are starving children in the world."
"I can see you're upset. Take a deep breath and use your words."	"You better stop crying or I'll REALLY give you something to cry about."
"You can't walk around the block by yourself. I'll drive you. Text me when you need a ride back."	"You want to go out? Take your bike. Be home before dark."
"I packed your bento box with almond butter on whole grain, kale chips, and an organic smoothie."	"Take a brown bag with a bologna sandwich on Wonder Bread. Grab a Twinkie and a Hawaiian Punch too."

I wonder how often
I cause my guardian angel
to look like this



Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



Our online giving at
<https://www.sotselicumc.org/>
now has a QR code:



If there is anyone that would like to be added and/or removed on our newsletter mailing list please contact:

So. Otselic Methodist News
Editor: Ann Campbell

(home) 607-674-9355
E-mail: deerknoll1948@gmail.com

Sunday Worship:

10:30 AM
11:30 AM

Worship
Coffee Hour

This Month:

Office hours: Wednesday 11-2
Thursday 1-4
(Bible study from 1-2 ... Sept - June)

Check us out on Facebook:

South Otselic United Methodist Church / The Sunshine Shop

The Sunshine Shop

Contact: Sarah Hite
(home) 315-653-7490
(shop) 315-653-7728
Hours: Thurs: 10 - 4
Fri: 10 - 4
Sat: 9 - noon
(Donations at back porch)

Care & Share Pantry

Contact: Deb Williams
315-653-0040
3rd Thursday: 3:00 - 6:00 PM

"The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love in words and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ"

PRAYER LIST: (Short Term): Nikko Baker, Betty Benson, Lonnie Hakes, Robert Harris, Dr. Kalil & family, Fran Knickerbocker, Chris Marquard, Brad & Justine Moyer, Lisa Prentice, Matt Sheldon, Travis Sheldon, Jim Slocum Melody Smith,, Harvey Stalker, family of Paul Carson, family of Isaac Cook, family of George Dobson, family of Dan Faulkner, family of Dan Phillips family of Sharon Stevens, victims of fires (south) & tornados (west)

PRAYER LIST: (Long Term): Jonna Bartlett, Richard Bishop, David Boyer, Ron Colasudo, Kaity Davis, Doug Evans, Linda Excell, Ted Gargas, Kevin Grewe, Roger Hakes, Chuck Hathaway, Patti Lamandia, Diane MacGregor, Cassandra & Christopher Marquard, Chris Marquard, Maverick Mesko, Aaron Miller, Phil Mudge, Mitch Mullenax, Jenny Naber, Elaine Perkins, John & Carole Roalef, Kate Robinson, Justin Sheldon, Matt & Annette Sheldon, Cathy Silver, Ella Simmons, Jim Slocum, Harvey Stalker, Normajean Stark, Kenneth Sullivan, Angela (Graves) Szlamczynski, David Wentworth

Travel mercies for family and friends
Our men and women in the military, world leaders, our country, & the need for peace

Ms. Elva White
Ms. Dawn White
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