

West Berlin Presbyterian Church

The MESSENGER July 2026



The mission of West Berlin Presbyterian Church is to follow God's law and act in true faith by being a welcoming place where community members come to learn, take part in worship, find fellowship, and serve those in need, for the glory of God.

The Small Strong Church with a Big Heart



From the Pulpit

I am looking forward to a couple of sessions at my upcoming engineering society meeting that are related to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and ethics in engineering practice. Whether we want it or not, like it or not, AI is making inroads into many areas of life and professional practice, even the church.

Our Synod Executive Chip Hardwick did a recent piece on AI and how the Synod is establishing a sponsored project on use of AI in churches. (See it at <https://www.synodofthecovenant.org/post/from-your-synod-executive-35>). Chip notes Pope Leo has released an encyclical is called Magnifica Humanitas [Magnificent Humanity], on "Safeguarding the Human Person in the time of Artificial Intelligence," and it's 42,300 words (the length of approximately twenty-five 17-minute sermons). (It is available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html>)

Interestingly, Pope Leo states that "technology should not be considered as a force antagonistic to humanity...Over the centuries, technological development has significantly improved the living conditions of humanity.

Lest you think this is not an issue of concern for us. The following is a prompt I entered ChatGPT and the response I received:

Prompt: "Help me prepare a pastoral message for a congregation facing AI-driven job anxiety. Honest about the disruption, grounded in Scripture, and ending with a specific call to community over fear in 300 words or less."

ChatGPT Response : Facing the Future Together

Artificial intelligence is changing the way many people work. Some see exciting possibilities, while others worry about losing jobs that have provided purpose, stability, and security. Those concerns are real, and the church should never dismiss them. Behind every job is a person created in the image of God

Scripture reminds us that our deepest identity is not found in our occupation but in our relationship with God. Before we are teachers, farmers, nurses, mechanics, or office workers, we are God's beloved children. The psalmist proclaims, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). Jesus tells us, "Do not worry about tomorrow... but strive first for the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33-34).



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Christians do not ignore change. We prepare, learn new skills, and seek wisdom. But we also refuse to let fear define us. Our hope rests not in the economy or in technology, but in the unchanging love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

In a rapidly changing world, the church offers something no machine ever can: a community where people are known, loved, encouraged, and supported. When someone loses a job, we bear that burden together. When someone faces uncertainty, we pray, listen, and help. When new opportunities arise, we celebrate them together.

Technology will continue to reshape our world, but it cannot replace compassion, faithfulness, or the fellowship of God's people. Whatever changes lie ahead, let us choose community over fear, hope over despair, and trust over anxiety, confident that Christ walks with us and calls us to walk together.

Interesting response in 259 words. I think we will need to think about how this capability will impact our own futures and that of the church.

Pastor Bob

Spring Cleaning

In preparation for our Sesquicentennial event, a team of volunteers did a wonderful job of cleaning all our spaces. Thanks to Cottrills for supplying much needed pizza. Thanks to the Donovans for arranging floor cleaning. Thanks to Ed Cox for outside preparation. The place looked great!



June 14th Sesquicentennial Service, Lunch and Program:

The day started with seventy-seven persons in worship. Those arriving early had opportunity to ring our church bell with instruction from Roy Cottrill. We heard an inspiring message from Rev. Charles Hardwick, Executive of the Synod of the Covenant.

This was followed by a wonderful luncheon prepared and served by a team from Deacon and Mission Board and Women's Society. Luncheon included historically appropriate foods of baked ham, chicken, potatoes and rolls with green beans. Of course, we had cake for dessert!

The program to follow included a historical overview from John Jordan. Memories and performances from founding family representative and sharing of great memoirs at West Berlin Presbyterian Church.

Thanks to all who helped make this program a reality!!!!

Important Dates!!! July 2026

July 1

Deacon & Mission Bd
12:00 PM

July 4

Independence Day

July 5

Worship*
Communion

July 7

Session Meeting
7:00 p.m.

July 12

Worship*

July 19

Worship*
Rev. Betsy Rice
leading worship

July 21

Education Committee
7:00 PM

July 24

Ice Cream Social
4:30 – 6:30 PM

July 26

Worship*

*Worship is

Hybrid
10:30 a.m.

See email invite for Zoom link and bulletin. Mailed copies of bulletin and sermons are available upon request from Pastor Bob

June 14th Sesquicentennial Pictures:



July Birthdays:



1-Jerry Stein
6-Christine Cox, Ruth Cogar
10-Sierra Sparks
11-Mary Howell
13-Adam Glenn
16-Becky Donovan
27-Jaymi Roll
30-Penny Ford

Anniversaries:

7-Rex & Leigh Coldren,
12-Micah & Mica Sparks
20-Frank & Jennifer Hinkle

PRAYER LIST:

Rodger Glenn, John & Debbie Rucker, William Nierman, Linda Fields, Krista George, Alice Coy, Michael Jordan, Eloise Eschbaugh, Debbie & Carl Gustafson, Joyce Harmen, Sandy Bell, Richard Johnson, Greer Family, Tiffani, Arlene Thompson, Terry Bischoff, Kelly Cedarquist, Dana Carmack, Pam Evener, Michael & Jeannie Jordan, Sue Glass, Ray Bob Foster

Community Ice Cream Social - Friday, July 31, 2026

Our traditional Community Ice Cream Social will be held from 4:30 to 6:30 PM at the church on Friday, July 31st. The "Ice Cream Social" will focus on food and fellowship for all, and of course ice cream! Be sure to start inviting friends. Volunteers are needed!!!!

Sign up at church or through Diane Cox – fairtime15@icloud.com or 740 -369-4187. Fliers that you can use to invite others will be available at the church.



From the Treasurer

June 2026 Stats

Attendance:

June 7 - 28
20 On-site
8 On-line

June 14 - 77
73 On-site
4 On-line

June 21 - 28
20 On-site
8 On-line

Contributions:

June 7 \$1,365
June 14 2,499
June 21 1,092
June 28 TBD
\$4,056

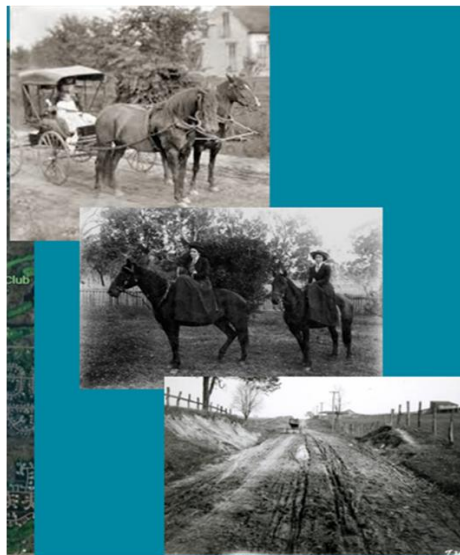
Please make your contributions via mail to Church Treasurer Edmund Cox, 257 Pennsylvania Av, Delaware, OH 43015. On-line giving through westberlinpc.info

Education Committee Summer Updates:

The current focus of the Storybook Walk is the celebration of the Sesquicentennial (150th) Anniversary of West Berlin Presbyterian Church. The stations briefly tell the story of the people who settled in Delaware County, and specifically Berlin Township, leading to the establishment of the church in 1876 and continuing through the growth of the church and the community around it through our sesquicentennial year, 2026. Please enjoy the displays. For those who are remote or cannot physically do the walk, we hope to have a version on our church website (WestBerlinPC.info) shortly.

Sample of the displays/

They found it was quite a drive and some times difficult to make their way to the church which was located south of Chesire about one mile. They drive and rode horses or walked to church. The roads were mud and many times almost impassable."



Guest Preachers on July 19

On July 19th Reverend Betsy Rice, Pastor for Member Ministries, Worthington Presbyterian Church will be guest preacher for the day. Bob And Yvonne will be away the week of July 12 for his annual engineering meeting.

Member Information Class

If you are or someone you know is interested in membership at WBPC please let Pastor Bob know. He offers a member information class tailored to the potential new member either in person or online.

Those of you who worship with us online each Sunday can become a member of our church as in person presence is not required for membership.

Please refer potential families to Yvonne (ygustafson3@gmail.com or 614 595-1069.

Information cards for this program are available on the information table.

Deacon and Mission Board - Two Calls for Help

Summer is not a low time for need for food, hygiene products, and clothing. Please consider donations to the Open Table through our Matthew 25 initiative. Drop of items any Sunday. The Red Wagon is available to consolidate our giving.



Notebooks

For several years now, the Deacon and Mission Board has been supplying Composition Notebooks for a Franklin County corrections program in which Yvonne Gustafson teaches parenting classes. We received the following thank you note.

Dear Yvonne, Thank you for providing the Franklin County CBCF residents with writing journals. Your generosity offers them more than a place to write — it gives them space to heal, reflect, and rebuild hope. These journals become a quiet place where they can process their journey, set intentions, and rediscover their voice. We are deeply grateful to the congregation for your compassion, your prayers, and your willingness to pour into the lives of those who are working hard to change their future. Your kindness reaches further than you know, and it truly touches hearts.

Thank you so much, Cynthia A. Walter, Vocation Manager

We usually try to collect enough soft bound (no metal spirals) Composition Books (9.75" x 7.5") during the summer back to school sales (when they are marked down dramatically) to supply the year. If you would like to help support this program, now seems to be the time. (Walmart has 6-packs for \$2.28, Staples for \$.50 each.) They can use 400 to 500 of the booklets.