



**Coffee with a Cop
The Assembly Room**

Wednesday, October 2 is National Coffee with a Cop Day. We are inviting North Manchester Police Officers to join us for the Midweek Break in the **Assembly Room from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

This is a great way to express our appreciation and support for our local law enforcement team. We will have home-baked goods from Beth Sollenberger, per usual, as well as cookies from Nordman's Nook. You are welcome to supply additional cookies for the afternoon if you wish. You are also welcome to send some back to the station with the officers.

Because we are expecting a larger-than-usual turn out for this event, we have moved it to the Assembly Room. Please see Carol or Adrienne with any questions.

Camp Mack Festival

The annual Camp Mack Festival is being held on **Saturday, October 5 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**

Enjoy a wide variety of entertainment, demonstrations, crafts and food on a beautiful fall afternoon. Proceeds from the day help to support the mission of Camp Mack. There is no charge to attend.

The Timbercrest bus will leave from the Hub at 10:00 a.m. **Sign up in the Notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**



Trick or Treat

Last Halloween we did a test run on Trick or Treating and what that might look like for Timbercrest. We opened the invitation for employees and their goblins to come in while residents gathered in the Health Care Family Room with candy and treats to pass out.

A great time was had by all! Employees got to show off their kids and grandkids that we hear so much about; kids got to dress up and collect candy; and residents experienced the joy brought by small children living their best lives.

We're going to expand on that this Halloween. This Halloween we will extend the invite to North Manchester Elementary Students. Join us on **Wednesday, October 30 from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.** Health Care and Crestwood residents will once again, assemble in the Health Care Family Room. From there, trick or treaters will be directed to the Hub and the Assembly Room where residential and neighborhood home residents may gather with their bowls of candy. The Nook will be the final destination of the evening where craft stations will be set up.

Participation is completely optional! You are responsible for purchasing any candy or treats that you'd like to pass out. **You are welcome to send a list with the Wal-Mart shopper on the 10th or with the weekly shopper on Tuesday.**

We will gladly take any volunteers that would like to assist with crafts in the Nook, as well. Let Adrienne know if you'd like to help out!

SHEPHERD'S CENTER PROGRAMS

OCTOBER 2

Current Events – Jason Kissel, Executive Director, Acres Land Trust, “**Acres Nature Preserves**”

AiL – Dennis & Carol Horn, “Cooperatively Addressing Homelessness in Wabash County, the Story of Housing Action Wabash County (HAWC)”

OCTOBER 16

Current Events – Michael Staudenmaier, P.H.D. MU History Department, “**Gangs, Government, and the People in Latin America Today**”

AiL – Jeff Lehman, Professor of Computer Science, Huntington University, “**AI Unveiled: The Journey from Amazing to Ordinary**”

The meetings begin at **9:30 AM** for Current Events and **10:30 AM** for Adventures in Learning. Transportation will be available **leaving from the Hub at 9:15. Sign up in the Notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**

Contemporary Book Club

The Contemporary Book Club meets **every Friday at 3:00 p.m. in the Conference Room.** They are currently reading “His Truth is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope” by Jon Meacham. It’s the story of John Lewis, the Civil Rights Activist. The book is available on Amazon for \$4.96. Contact David Doudt with questions @ 260-578-4748.

Weekly Bingo Games

Join the fun at Bingo in the **Resident Activity Room Mondays and Fridays at 11:00 a.m.**

Knit for Kids

Knit for Kids meets **Tuesday, October 10 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Education Room. Contact Marie Willoughby if you have questions @ 260-982-6970



Oasis

Come for inspiration and reflection every **Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.** the Chapel.

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| October 2 | Brian Daniels – St. Francis & St. Clare |
| October 9 | Jenny & Frank Ramirez – assisting Ukraine Refugees |
| October 16 | Delora & Gene Roop - EvenSong |
| October 23 | Graham Groombridge – Friendly New Zealand |
| October 30 | Guy Studebaker – “Sowing seeds in today’s soil” |

Oasis is also broadcast live on the Timbercrest Senior Living YouTube Channel. It can also be viewed at a later time on the YouTube channel.

What is this “Oasis”?

For 10 years the devotional held in the Chapel on Wednesday afternoon was called EvenSong. For some, the word denotes a liturgical worship, and for others it is simply unfamiliar.

In January of 2023 the Chapel Committee and Spiritual Life Committee decided on a new title for the activity, while seeking to continue the same kinds of creative, musical, inspirational, reflective presentations that have made EvenSong so loved by those who attend.

The title “**Oasis**” invokes words like **refreshing, calm, relaxing, interesting, different, peaceful, wellspring, deep** and **vibrant**. We intend Oasis to be a space of inspiration and reflection that soothes and nourishes the spirit. We hope you will attend on Wednesdays at 4 p.m.! Oasis is open to the entire community.

Sewing Sisters

Join us on the **first Monday (October 7)** of **each month at 1:00 p.m.** to "tie" comforters for the Linus Project - no experience needed. Quilts and comforters go to children in hospitals and other facilities. (projectlinus.org). As of the end of August we had donated 100 quilts this year!

You can also volunteer to make quilt tops, or finish quilts at home Stop by the Quilting Room, weekday mornings for details.

Memoir Writing Group

We meet on the **second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 2:00 p.m. in D Wing Lounge**. We choose topics to write about in between times, and then we read to the group at our meetings. Sometimes a member might write about some other topic, or just come to listen. We always have a good time. Questions? Contact Eileen Flory, 982-0088, eflory@peak.org.

Fall Communion

The Timbercrest Community gathers for Fall Bread and Cup Communion, **Thursday, October 3, 10:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room**. Timbercrest Chaplain Karen Eberly is scheduled to lead the service with assistance from several Timbercrest Residents.

Jim Smith, retired educator and member of North Manchester United Methodist Church, is serving as speaker. The Timbercrest Choir is scheduled to sing. Fall Communion is made more meaningful as we gather from the Manor, Health Care, Crestwood, and Neighborhood Homes.

Please mark your calendar and plan to join in communion as we come together at the table that reaches all the way around the world.

Table Tennis for Fun and Fitness

Table tennis in the Recreation Room is each **Tuesday and Thursday at 2:00 p.m.** All skill levels are welcome, and new players are encouraged.

Giant Crossword is Back

Do you enjoy crossword puzzles? Join Carol in the **Resident Activity Room on Thursday, October 3 and October 17 at 2:00 p.m.** for Giant Crossword.

Manchester Symphony Orchestra

The Manchester Symphony Orchestra returns for their 86th Season on **Sunday, October 6 at 3:00 p.m** at Manchester University's Cordier Auditorium.

The orchestra will look a little different this year as they look to hire a part-time Conductor. They are going "Back to the Classics" with their first performance of the year. Pieces will include Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Symphony No. 40 and music from the Pulcinella ballet by Igor Stravinsky.

The bus will leave from the Hub at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 each and may be purchased online or at the door. **Sign up in the Notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**

Nature's Best Hope

Manchester University's Lecture Series is honored to host Dr. Doug Tallamy on **Monday, October 7 at 11:00 a.m. in the Cordier Auditorium**.

Dr. Tallamy is a professor of agriculture at the University of Delaware that has taken a special interest in Wabash County's biodiversity. He will discuss the simple steps necessary to reverse the declining eco system. The presentation is supported in collaboration with Bringing Nature Home Wabash County.

The bus will leave from the Hub at 10:45 a.m. **Sign up in the Notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**



The Fastest Fingers in the Midwest John Denner

Our friend John Denner will be back in town on **Monday, October 7**. He will perform in the **Assembly Room at 6:00 p.m.**

John is a pianist from Michigan that has been dubbed the "fastest fingers in Michigan". He is very personable and plays from the heart with a true passion for Seniors. He tells engaging stories and adds humor to his shows.

Vaccine Clinic

Tis the season of influenza and other nasty respiratory illnesses! Timbercrest Nursing staff will host a vaccination clinic on **Tuesday, October 8 from 9:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the west side of the Rose Garden.**

The pharmacist will have influenza, RSV and the updated Covid vaccine available. If you have already received the RSV vaccine, you do not need it again. It is not yet an annual vaccine.

Consent forms were issued in September however will be available at the Reception desk or the day of. Please be sure to bring your insurance cards to the clinic. The covid vaccine will be billed through your prescription part D plan if you have Medicare Advantage or through your Medicare part B plan if you do not. The RSV vaccine will be billed through your prescription part D plan.

Friends of Manchester University



Friends of Manchester will resume presentations for the 2024-2025 academic year. Come to hear Dr. Stacey Young, Manchester's 16th President, as she enters her second year in this leadership role. She will provide an overview of her first year and updates on the current status of the University.

She will speak in the **Timbercrest Chapel at on Tuesday, October 8 at 6:30 pm.** Meetings are open to all who share an interest in Manchester University.

Chili Cook-Off

Do you have a chili recipe that will knock our socks off? Everybody has a different idea of how "chili" is supposed to look and taste. Let's put your recipe to the test during our first-ever Chili Cookoff on **Wednesday, October 9 at 2:30 p.m. in the Nook.**

You may sample as many recipes as you like. A panel of 3 judges will taste each sample and vote for the best in categories **Spiciest, Most Unique and Best All Around.**

If you wish to participate, please let Carol Gebert know by Tuesday, October 8. If you are a chili lover and would like to be part of the judging panel, let Carol know as well. She can be reached by phone (982-3925) or email (cgebert@timbercrest.org).

Our Grocery Cart Food Delivery System

Food distributed on the second Wednesday of the month comes from the Second Harvest Tailgate at the Manchester Church of the Brethren. This is a resident-sponsored program.

The schedule for food delivery on **Wednesday, October 9** is:

- 1:30-2:30 p.m. Distribution in the Manor
- 2:00-3:00 p.m. Neighborhood Home residents may pick up food in the Resident Activity Room before or after the snack in The Nook.

If you won't be home, ask a friend to get some food for you. We can use more volunteers to drive a car to the church to get food or to deliver food in the Manor. We can use both regular and substitute volunteers. If you would like to help, please call Mary Ebey at 982-2366.

TUG

The Technology Users Group (TUG) will meet on **Thursday, October 10, in the Conference Room at 10 A.M.** Our meetings are both for getting technology help/answers and for education about technology usage. All residents who use personal technology devices (computers, printers, smart phones, tablets, etc.) are welcome to attend our monthly meetings. This month's topic will be Windows' built-in Defender anti-virus program and other third-party anti-virus programs to protect your devices. Zach Erbaugh will present!

Walmart, Here We Come!

Shop at Wabash Walmart on **Thursday, October 10 departing from the Hub at 1:00 p.m.**

Shopping lists for those unable to go must be in **CAMPUS MAIL ONLY** by **NOON, October 10.** Remember to include a phone number where you can be reached in case the shopper has questions.

Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden or Courtyard.

Storyteller Showcase

October is "Spooky Month" for storytelling. Carol will host a story swap of spooky stories during the Storyteller Showcase on **Friday, October 11.** Health Care and Crestwood residents at **2:00 p.m.** in the **Health Care Family Room**; for Residential residents, the program is at **2:45 p.m.** in the **Assembly Room.**

Serendipity Bible Study Groups

Everett Shattuck leads Serendipity Bible studies, incorporating sharing and discussion in the context of Bible passages. These low-key studies are geared for people new to Bible study and long-time Bible students. "Serendipity" comes through mutual discovery and reflection.

- **Fridays, October 11 & 25 at 9:30 a.m. in G Wing Lounge**, led by Everett Shattuck.

Eel River Community CoB Lunch with the Pastors

The Eel River Community Church of the Brethren gathers for lunch with the Pastors on the second Friday of every month. They meet at **12:30 p.m. in The Nook**. This month's luncheon is **Friday, October 11**.

Anyone is welcome to attend, especially those with any connections with Eel River Community CoB. The meal includes a salad, entrée, dessert, and beverage. Indicate special dietary needs when you sign up. Cost is \$12 per person, paid to the Timbercrest Receptionist. Residents that have a meal contract do not have to pay! You can call Carolyn Bollinger with any questions at 260-982-2722.

Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard by Wednesday, October 9.

Timbercrest Book Club

The Timbercrest Book Club will meet **Monday, October 14 in the Conference Room at 2:00 p.m.** October's book is titled "The Friendly Persuasion" by Jessamyn West. If you are interested in joining, text or call Marilyn at 260-578-5008. We love new members!

Game Night with Mike and Lucy

Join Lucy and Mike McKinley for an evening of cards, billiards, dominoes, board games and refreshments **Wednesday, October 16 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Recreation Room. Please note that we have moved to Wednesday evenings to better suit Mike and Lucy's schedules.

No sign-up needed. Just come for a great evening, and maybe learn a new game.

Teaching Kitchen Coming Up

Dining Services will host a Teaching Kitchen **Thursday, October 17 at 3:00 p.m.** in the **Nook**, for both Manor and Neighborhood Home residents. Group size is limited. **Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**

Mackenzie Niccum Piano Recital

Fellowship Hour this month will feature the re-scheduled piano concert with Mackenzie Niccum **Friday, October 18 at 2:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room**.

Unfortunately, Mackenzie was unable to be here in August as planned and we are happy to welcome her in October. Mackenzie is from the Akron area and teaches piano to students in a wide range of ages. She also does guest performances for several area churches throughout the year.

Joe Reilly

Timbercrest is happy to partner with Manchester Church of the Brethren and welcome artist in residence, Joe Reilly, on **Saturday, October 19 at 2:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room**.

Joe is a singer, songwriter, social worker and educator from Michigan. He writes songs from his heart that are playful clever, engaging, and meaningful. The heart of his message is an invitation to heal our relationships with ourselves, others, and the earth.

Joe will also be performing at North Manchester Public Library, The Firehouse, and Manchester Church of the Brethren.

Crafting with Molly

Molly returns to Timbercrest on **Monday, October 21 at 2:00 p.m. in the Resident Activity Room**.

Molly Magnus is the Programming Coordinator at North Manchester Public Library. Molly comes up with fun craft ideas for us every month. There is no cost to participate and fun is had by all!

To ensure that we have enough supplies, please **sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden or Courtyard**.



October Chapel Schedule

Come to Chapel to hear thoughts from scripture, prayer and other inspiration. Devotions are **Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 9:00 a.m.** Oasis (see pg 2) is **Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.** weekly. **Worship Service at Manchester Church of the Brethren is live streamed in the Chapel at 9:30 every Sunday morning.**

October Speakers:

October 1 – Beth Sollenberger – Creekside CoB
October 3 – Mary Riccius – Liberty Mills CoB
October 4 – Nan Erbaugh – Timbercrest Resident
October 6 – Les Cooper – Church of the Brethren
October 10 – Father Daniel Koehl – St Roberts
October 11 – Bruce Dunk
October 15 – Cliff Kindy – Eel River Community
October 17 – Dennis Beckner – Columbia City CoB
October 18 – Phil Boone – Wabash Friends Church
October 22 – Steve Bahrt – Manchester UMC
October 24 – Suzanna Hicks – First Brethren
October 25 – Herman Kauffman – Nappanee CoB
October 29 – Jim Mishler – First Brethren
October 31 – Tim Morphey – Creekside CoB

Thanks to the Chapel Planning Committee for scheduling these dedicated speakers!

Dementia Learning Group

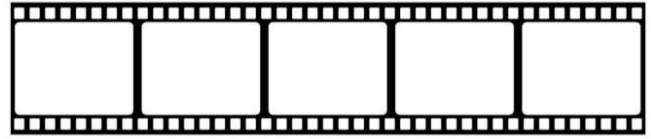
Family, caregivers and friends of persons with dementia are welcome to the Learners' Group, **Monday, October 21 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Nook. This group is open to Timbercrest and the general public. The mutual sharing and support is positive and helpful for those involved. The group moderator is Mari Adkins, from Bickford Cottage, Wabash.

Breakfast Out with Carol

Adventure with Carol to Silver Lake, Indiana for breakfast at Lakes Grill and a tour of Whetstones Woodenware on **Tuesday, October 22 leaving from the Hub at 8:00 a.m.**

Lakes Grill offers breakfast dishes all day and all at a very reasonable rate. I didn't see a menu item over \$9! You are responsible for the cost of your meal and gratuity.

After breakfast, we will stop for a tour of Whetstone Woodenware, a local family owned wood shop that specializes in kitchen items. The items are handmade from local sugar maple supplied by Pike Lumber. **Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**



Timbercrest Film Committee Presents
October Films
Come to the Chapel for our films

Friday, October 4: Ordinary Angels

7:00 p.m. – Chapel

Run Time: 118 minutes

A struggling hairdresser (Hilary Swank) finds a renewed sense of purpose when she meets a widowed father (Alan Ritchson) working hard to care for his two daughters. With his youngest critically ill and waiting for a liver transplant, the fierce woman single-handedly rallies an entire community to help.

Friday, October 18: The Bucket List

7:00 p.m. – Chapel

Run Time: 97 minutes

Two elderly men, blue-collar automotive mechanic Carter Chambers (Morgan Freeman) and billionaire Edward Cole (Jack Nicholson), meet for the first time in a hospital owned by Edward after both men are diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. For fun, Carter started writing a list of activities to do before he "kicks the bucket." The two escape the hospital and embark on the journey of a lifetime!



Pre-school Visitors

Our pre-school friends will be back on **Tuesday, October 22 at 1:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room.**

It's hard to remember the time when our own children were tiny tots but I'm sure you have so many loving memories of your grandchildren during their inquisitive years. The joy and laughter that these little people bring to our afternoon is beyond measure! Give them an hour and you will forge a connection to span the school year. Join us for a fun Halloween craft, snacks, and laughs! **Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.**

Manchester Church of the Brethren Luncheon with the Pastors

Timbercrest residents who are members and friends of Manchester Church of the Brethren are invited to have lunch with their pastors **Wednesday, October 23 at noon, in the Assembly Room.**

The meal includes a salad, entrée, dessert, and beverage. Indicate special dietary needs when you sign up. Cost is \$12 per person, paid to the Timbercrest Receptionist. Residents who have a meal plan do not have to pay. Guests are welcome and should be listed on the sign-up sheet. Cost per guest is \$12.

If you need to cancel your reservation, please do so as early as possible. Contact the Timbercrest Receptionist or Amy Gall Ritchie. If you do not cancel in advance, you may incur a meal charge if you do not have a meal contract.

Sign up in the notebook at Courtyard by Wednesday, October 16. Contact Amy Gall Ritchie, 765-967-0657 or amymcob@gmail.com, with any questions. We hope to see you there!

Quilting Circle

Quilters, past, present and ant-to-be, will gather on **Wednesday, October 23 at 3:00 p.m. in the Resident Activity Room.** Come share a project you have completed, or an idea you have found. This is a “sew and tell” to share your ideas!

Harvest Party

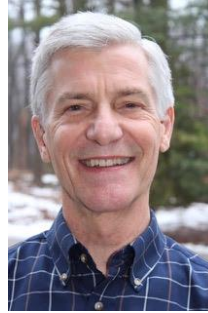
Let's celebrate fall colors and sweater weather! Timbercrest Harvest Party will be **Wednesday evening, October 23 beginning at 5:30 p.m.**

Fall evenings are best spent enjoying each other's company around the fire. Of course, no fall fire is complete without Smores! The debate will be rather the marshmallow is best golden brown with a warm center or flaming black. I prefer mine golden.

Ben Angle will be onsite with his pulling team offering horse drawn wagon rides through the campus. Unfortunately, the wagon is not set-up to accommodate wheelchairs and you must be able to climb steps.



Tim McElwee Seniors for Peace



Join us in the **Chapel on Thursday, October 24 at 10:00 a.m.** as the Seniors for Peace Committee welcomes Tim McElwee.

Tim will offer a presentation, “Do We All Belong? Christian Nationalism and the Inclusive Love of God”. Tim is a Manchester University graduate and served the University as campus pastor, as a fundraiser, and on the faculty as director of the Peace Studies Institute. He has also served in a number of national leadership roles in the Church of the Brethren.

Squirrel Creek /Doud's Orchard

It's time for our annual fall trip to Squirrel Creek Grocery and the apple orchard. Come along on **Thursday, October 24 leaving from the Hub at 1:30 p.m.**

Squirrel Creek is located in rural Roann and specializes in bulk foods. They offer a wide range of spices, flours, cheese and deli items. All of your holiday baking needs!

The second stop along the way will be at Doud's Orchard along State Road 19. Doud's houses acres and acres of apple trees. Their apple cider is pressed on-site and is very good. Try an apple cider slushy while you are there!

Sign up in the notebooks at Rose Garden and Courtyard.

Your Opinion Matters!

Did you know there are suggestion boxes located near the Courtyard Dining Room and the former Rose Garden Dining Room?

These boxes are checked routinely and shared with Resident Council at their monthly meetings.

Be sure to include your name when you turn in a suggestion or idea. That helps us follow up with you if more information is needed or, when a change is made, we can find out how things are going.

Tuesday Matinee



Enjoy an afternoon movie and popcorn on **Tuesday, October 29 at 2:00 p.m. in the Chapel.**

“Sweet Land”, starring Elizabeth Reaser and Tim Guinee, is the story of a young German woman (Reaser) immigrating to Minnesota to meet her

arranged husband (Guinee). The couple run into road blocks as they discover that Inge does not have the proper paperwork.

Not being able to legally wed, the couple continues to live together and farm together, causing a considerable rift within the community.

Sweet Land is based on the book “A Gravestone Made of Wheat” by Will Weaver.

Shopping Guidelines

Weekly Local Shopper

- 1) **Tuesday is the only day for local shopping.**
- 2) Shopping lists are due at Jennifer Gearhart’s office **by 8:00 p.m. Monday evening.**
- 3) Shopping pick-up time is **after 2:00 p.m.** on Tuesday.
- 4) Items will be clearly labeled and available for **pick up in the Resident Activity Room.**
- 5) **All purchases will be charged to your Timbercrest account.**

Maintenance Request Line

For Maintenance concerns, call the Work Order Request Line @ 982-1147. Questions? Call Maintenance!

Midweek Breaks

A tasty treat is served each **Wednesday from 2:30-3:30 p.m.** in The Nook. This month features:

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 2 | Home Baked Goods from Beth Sollenberger with NM Police Department |
| October 9 | Chili Cookoff |
| October 16 | Ice Cream |
| October 23 | Popcorn |
| October 30 | Spooky Treats |

Exercise Opportunities

Our exercise classes have undergone some exciting changes!

- Chair Aerobics – **Monday through Friday at 9:30 a.m. in the Recreation Room**
- Chair Tai Chi – **Monday at 10:00 a.m.**
- Strength Training – **Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Recreation Room**
- Walk & Roll - **Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m.; Rose Garden Lounge**
- Chair Yoga – **Friday at 10:00 a.m. in the Recreation Room**

Carol will host training sessions in the Fitness Center **Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:00.** If the equipment seems intimidating, you find equipment difficult to adjust alone, or you just want company, join Carol for a simple workout in the Fitness Center.



A Friendly Lift Will Get You There

Friendly Lift drivers take non-drivers to non-medical destinations. They are paid independently to take people shopping, visit family and friends, for joy rides and more. For details, see Jennifer Gearhart.

- Carolyn Bollinger, 982-2722
- Tim Ritchey Martin, 982-0031
- June Stealy, 982-0055
- Marie Willoughby, 982-6970



If you have something you would like featured in the Timberline or a group you would like highlighted, please email Adrienne @

akamphues@timbercrest.org

WATCHWORD:

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”. Acts 20:35

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
Matthew 6:26

Meditation:

Happiness is a Bird

As I write this, rain has started to fall and they are predicting heavy showers throughout the day. I remember there were days when I watched rain fall with a sense of happiness, maybe relief that so much on my to-do list will have to wait till tomorrow, and I am one of the really great procrastinators. I now have a reason.

Out on the deck there's a little bird that has been watching me over the last couple of days, when I have stepped outside to tend to something on the grill. It's just a little bird with a red cap and I'm sure my neighbor, Diane, could tell me exactly what that bird is.

Now it's hopping around on the rail and causing me to smile because that bird seems to love the rain. Maybe he's a messenger telling me to get over it, put 'used-to-be' behind, recognize the multitude of reasons I have to be happy, before they gang up and bite me on the you-know-what. Happiness.

Maybe happiness is a bird. Flitting around, dancing on your deck, singing you songs and making you smile. Maybe happiness is a bird, pretty to look at, pretty to imagine, right there within your grasp, adding a shine to your day. Maybe happiness is a bird in the present, not in the past. Happiness in the past is just a memory, it's not happiness. Happiness is the present, a Praise the Lord moment, it's the reason you smile, and others are brightened and lifted up. Happiness is a bird on your deck.

I'm not a Pollyanna, neither are you. I'm not a droopy-drawers, either, and neither are you. Here is a cliché we all can live by, given by our common Father: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35. Think about that, really think it through.

It is a truth that turns things up-side down. Instead looking for that remembered happiness for yourself, Jesus tells us to seek and spread happiness around to others. The secret to finding happiness is giving it away.

Thank you, Lord, for we know that the Joy you give us, as we give happiness to others, is genuine, and deep and isolation-defeating. Happiness is a bird in our hand.

I believe that the Lord made birds to tell us that we are of value.

One Bird to Another:

From Martin Luther (1510) – That little bird has chosen his shelter. Above it, are the stars and the deep heaven of worlds. Yet he is rocking himself to sleep without caring for tomorrow's lodging, calmly clinging to his little twig, and leaving God to think for him.

Perched on a tree branch, two birds were observing passers-by rushing from one place to another. Looking at their faces, one bird asked the other, "Why is man so full of worries and cares?" The other bird answered, "Maybe they don't have a heavenly Father like we do."

Closing Prayer:

Lord, catch me off guard today.
Surprise me with some moment of beauty or pain.
So that, at least for the moment, I may be startled into seeing that you are here, in all your splendor, always and everywhere. Barely hidden. Beneath.

Beyond. Within this life I breathe, grant us compassion for others, courage to overcome our timidity, and strength to treasure the Peace Your children, King of the Universe, You are my Lord and Savior. Amen.

NOTE: Watchwords are written by Stan Escott and are sent out in e-mail every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. To subscribe to these free devotionals, go to bosworth30.com/watchwords, and enter your e-mail address, or call Stan Escott (578-2519).