



# *Leacock Communicator*

*Leacock Presbyterian Church*

717-687-6619

[www.leacockpres.org](http://www.leacockpres.org)

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*July 2021*

## **Notes from the Manse**

*“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”—Genesis 8:22*

A while back, I do not know how long, I began one of these reflections with the Scripture passage above. But that was a different time, a different season, if you will. These words were spoken by the Lord after the flood. They are a promise that life will never again be shattered so completely because of the broken hearts of human beings. The images are not unique to *Genesis*. They can be found throughout the Bible and Jesus repeatedly used metaphors of seed and harvest to capture the coming of the kingdom of God. What Scripture teaches is that there is a rhythm to the life of a creature. It's a realistic picture: it is not all summer and daytime. There is night as well, and cold and winter. As *Ecclesiastes* so powerfully put it, there is a time, a season, to everything under heaven.

It probably comes as no surprise that all this resonates with me now, as Emily and I will soon enter a new, different season of our lives. That has brought me to a place of contemplation, reflection, memory and imagination. Seedtime and harvest; seasons. The month we arrived at Leacock an old tree by the side of the manse was in part taken down. Its trunk was forked and rot had gotten into one of the two forks; not too much later, the second fork was removed. At the same time, a tree was planted not too far away. I have watched it grow and now, 14 years later, it stretches high and wide. It's a maple and last year seemingly every day I had to fight the spotted lantern flies that were attracted to it. That the other tree had come to its winter was sad, but inevitable. I just didn't want the new one to die before its season. A couple of years ago, another tree was taken down in the front of the manse, an ash, to avoid its getting the spreading ash borer disease. To me, that was sad, for the tree was healthy. So, not long after I went out and got a small birch sapling and planted it. I have nurtured that little guy and now it towers over me, close to ten feet tall.

Luther, it is said, when asked what he would do if he were told the world would end the next day replied that he would plant a tree. We affirm life, we affirm God's good creation, whenever we plant a seed. When that seed bears fruit that we harvest, we affirm that life brings life, that our endeavors are not in vain. And when winter comes, we affirm our mortality, that with the promise of new creation there are also endings. Let me leave you with the questions I have been pondering of late. What for you might be the seed or seeds whose time it has come to plant? What might it be time for you to harvest? And what might there be whose season is winter, whose time it is to end? There is joy and sorrow in these questions. In the end, they all speak to the grace in the promised rhythm of life.

Rev. Robert W. Birch

# July Lectionary

<p><b>Sunday, July 4</b> <b>Sixth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 2 Samuel 5:1–5, 9–10 Psalm 48 2 Corinthians 12:2–10 Mark 6:1–13</p>	<p><b>Sunday, July 11</b> <b>Seventh Sunday after Pentecost</b> Samuel 6:1–5, 12b–19 Psalm 24 Ephesians 1:3–14 Mark 6:14–29</p>
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<p><b>Sunday, July 18</b> <b>Eighth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 2 Samuel 7:1–14a Psalm 89:20–37 Ephesians 2:11–22 Mark 6:30–34, 53–56</p>	<p><b>Sunday, July 25</b> <b>Ninth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 2 Samuel 11:1–15 Psalm 14 Ephesians 3:14–21 John 6:1–21</p>
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## Worship Committee

Most of you are probably aware of our summer worship protocols with optional mask wearing and continued social distancing. We continue with two summer services and, of course, our on-line option.

Communion is scheduled for July 19.

Looking forward to fall, plans are in place for both the Chancel Choir and the Bell Choir to resume rehearsals.

## Ushers

With our return to in-person worship, we again need ushers to greet congregants, hand out bulletins, and help with seating.

**July** - Chuck and Kathy Ankney

**August** - Bob and Margy Hershey

**September** - Joe and Elaine Gouba

If you are unable to usher during the assigned month, please contact Head Usher, Ed Margerum.



*July Prayer Families*

**July 4**  
Ellen Barnes

**July 11**  
Kirk & Deborah Beane

**July 18**  
David & Carol Berkhimer

**July 25**  
William E. Berkhimer



*Flowers for the Church*

You may purchase flowers for the sanctuary on **July 11** in honor or in memory of someone or a special occasion.

Please call the church office  
717-687-6619



**Trustee Notes**

The next two Special Offerings and Building Fund, will be going towards the Manse.

The Trustees are always busy with cleaning, repairs, painting, and general maintenance with all the Church Properties.

Your two sextons keep the inside of the Churches looking good and the outside is always trimmed and mowed. I will always tell you that without your help and support YOUR Church properties would not look as good as they do.

As always, if you see a problem, tell a Trustee. Thank you.

Dave Berkhimer  
Trustee President

**Session Snippets**

The Session met via Zoom in June and took the following actions:

New summer worship protocols were adopted:

- Wearing masks is optional
- Continue social distancing in both sanctuaries
- Open the east door into the Narthex in Paradise
- Continue offering procedure as it currently exists until the Fall
- Put Friendship Books back into the sanctuary
- Change the front sign to read "Worship with us in person or On-line"

A fund raising Corn Roast was scheduled for August 21 from noon until evening.

The Session will not meet in August.



Dear church family,  
Please know how appreciative I am for all the cards and prayers I received during my time with Covid. I also want to give special thanks to Reverend Birch.  
I am especially grateful to everyone because during my stay at the Gardens at Stevens it was very lonely without visitors. Bless you all for thinking of me!

Shirley Smith

## Where Do We Go From Here?



As we look toward the future, many questions are swirling around us: What's next? What process do we follow to get a new minister? How do we prepare for Rev. Birch's retirement?

With the help of Donegal Presbytery, your Session has begun what is referred to as the "Vacancy Process." We have met twice with Rev. Dr. Erin Cox-Holmes, our Executive Presbyter, and Rev. Dr. Michael Wilson, our Stated Clerk, who explained first steps in this process to us.

We have decided to advertise for an interim/transitional pastor with the Session as a whole serving as the interview and hiring body. With internet availability, receiving and reviewing applications is easier than it was sixteen years ago when last we experienced a pastoral vacancy.

The Presbytery will advertise for the position, but it is Leacock's Session which will do the hiring. The goal is to have someone in place when Rev. Birch leaves.

Many of you are wondering when we will be able to call our next pastor, and that is a question we are not able to answer at this time. Once we have hired an interim, we need to decide what kind of Mission Study will be needed to be ready for our next pastor.

After the Mission Study has been completed and approved, the Nominating Committee will be charged with selecting nominees for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to present to the congregation for election.

This is the committee which will be commissioned and charged with writing our Mission Information Form (MIF) to introduce Leacock to prospective ministerial applicants. Once the MIF is approved by the Session and the Presbytery Commission on Ministry (COM), the search process begins in earnest.

Again, you ask, how long? Again, we do not know. It could be eighteen months to two or more years from the time Rev. Birch leaves.

However, we will not be alone. Our interim will be our pastor, guiding the process, filling the pulpit, moderating Session meetings, visiting, and offering spiritual sustenance.

And throughout this process we continue to trust in God's love and providence. God has guided Leacock Church since her inception over 275 years ago, and God will continue to be with us today.

Dianne Yuninger  
Clerk of Session



## Stewardship

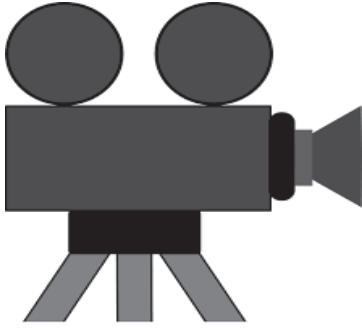
You know the words—"Well done, good and faithful servant."

Well, they apply to you, the members of our congregation. This is certainly true in your on-going offering. The Stewardship Committee reviewed the financial statements for May at our recent meeting and expenses were considerably below giving. Overall, for the year this is also true. And one of the Sundays in May was not even included, as it fell on the Memorial Day weekend! We are entering the summer months, when giving tends to decline a bit. Let's beat that trend! Your faithful generosity makes so much possible. As Leacock steadily begins to do more and more of what we did before the pandemic, there will of course be increased expenses. But you never stopped supporting your church during all those long, COVID months. So, now we are in good shape to ramp up our activities. All along, we have maintained our Benevolence commitments. And now we can look forward to things, like, possibly a corn roast! As always, we remember that stewardship is not just about financial support, as important as that is. It is also your engagement in all we do. It has been so good to see each other again at our services. We will move into the future, Leacock Strong, because of you!

## CORN ROAST, CORN ROAST, CORN ROAST!



Things are getting back to normal (or so we hope)! It may be a new normal, but what's important is that it looks kind of like the way we remember things. Here at Leacock we are going to start doing some of the fun things we used to do. Remember the FUNdraising Committee? Well, they have an event planned that will kick off some of that good, old fun. We will be having a corn roast on August 21st right in (on?) our parking lot. And our Softball Team will be supplying additional food (rumor has it that it might involve pork barbecue). Mark your calendars! Plan to come and pig out (bad pun)! Volunteer to help that day! Just have fun! Let this be the start of new/old good times.

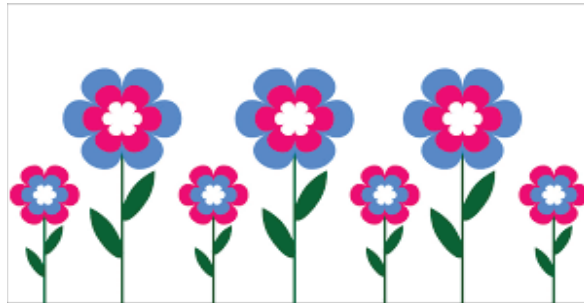


## Leacock Book and Movie Group

So, we enjoyed our discussion of Nick Hornby's book *Fever Pitch*, all admitting how little we know about English football, and now it's time to watch the movie (all together, for the first time since the pandemic hit!). We're taking a break during the month of July and will get together for a potluck dinner (hot dog casserole, anyone?) at 5:30 p.m. on Friday August 13th. After what is sure to be a delicious meal (because it always is), we'll

watch the American version of the film *Fever Pitch* (there's a British version, as well, for those of you who have streaming services and want to check it out to compare). Please bring some food to share and join us. Our next book, which we will be discussing on September 10 is *The Hundred Foot Journey* by Richard C. Morris.

Emily Birch, Book and Movie Group Coordinator



## Gratitude Corner

### **(Those Who Go Above and Beyond to Care for their Minister and His Wife)**

It seems almost every week when Bob tells us about the prayer person for the week, he mentions how much they have appreciated all the cards and notes they've received from the Caring Connections volunteers. We wanted to say how much we've appreciated them, as well. As a member of the Caring Connection, I know it hasn't always been easy to make those connections every week (especially difficult when one has a broken arm!), and I want you to know how much we've appreciated them, how much they've often been just what we needed to lift our spirits. So, thank you, thank you, to all those of you who've been doing this special work for more than a year now and for all the kind words you've sent our way.

Emily Birch

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# *JULY*

Articles for the August/September Newsletter  
Are due by July 23, 2021

THE LEACOCK COMMUNICATOR  
Sandy Schoettle, Editor