

## Northbrook Presbyterian Church Newsletter



“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”

### ...leaf's fragile, green, sovereign existence...

You would have no way of knowing this, but earlier today, I spent over two hours compiling the notes I took during Calvin University's *Festival of Faith & Writing* last month. I had never been before and decided to register because I love to read, they featured a couple of my favorite authors, and I have some nagging sense that writing may be in my future. (Though, if writing this newsletter article is any indication, it may be a bit of a slog!)

I wasn't prepared for the breadth and depth of wisdom that I'd be exposed to over three days. It was wonderful and a bit chaotic, with a couple of thousand book nerds attempting to choose which presentations to attend and then wandering all over the Calvin University campus to find where they were taking place. After each presentation, we were met with a mobile bookstore (in addition to multiple publishers, book stores, and writing coaches in the exhibition hall), and long lines of folks seeking the authors' autographs in their newly-purchased books.

I was impressed with several themes that emerged from an impressively diverse array of writers and topics. The first was obvious: the power of story to open doors. An Episcopal Priest named Layla King reminded us of how many times Jesus told stories in the bible: "There once was a man with two sons..." She also shared how powerful it can be when we share our own stories. As a Palestinian, she has learned that sharing one's story can create empathy that can start to heal the wounds that so many feel.

Another topic was the invitation to pay attention. From Robin Wall Kimmerer to Ross Gay to Todd Davis, so many of the authors invited us to look closely and learn from what is around us, especially the natural world. When I was in seminary 25 years ago, Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor was one of our favorites. I was curious to see if I would feel the same inspiration or if her ideas were still as compelling. I'm glad to report that she hasn't lost her mojo.

In fact, it was in the middle of her many nuggets of wisdom that I wrote down, that I found the line that I chose for this reflection's title:

... leaf's fragile, green, sovereign existence...

For the life of me, I can't remember the context of those words. But, I'm glad I wrote them down. They remind me to pay attention to the miracle of new life springing up all around us.

It is still the season of Easter, and I can relate to the encounter some disciples had later on the day of his resurrection (as told in Luke 24). They were walking with him, and they didn't recognize him! Their eyes were opened in the breaking of the bread. I'm grateful for all the ways we are broken open and startled out of our habits and convictions so we might pay attention to the resurrection that we so often have trouble seeing... but is right before our eyes. (And, if you're at all interested in the authors or what I learned, I'm glad to share my nine pages of notes from the *Festival of Faith & Writing with you!*)

Look and see!

~ Pastor Ben

### **Kirk Gibson Parkinson's Center Tour - Monday, May 11 at 1pm**

The Lifelong Learner's Committee has organized a docent-led tour on Monday, May 11 at 1pm and will conclude at approximately 2:30 after a question-and-answer period. The Center specializes in Parkinson's, the fastest-growing neurological disease in the United States, and other movement diseases. These diseases have recently grown substantially in SE Michigan, now considered the Rust Belt of Parkinson's. This is related to population density and the presence of heavy metal-related industry. Covid has also brought an upsurge. Parkinson's is also linked to dementia. The tour will take us through the various educational and physical services offered for Parkinson's patients and those with similar needs, including PSP, LBD, CBD, and MSA diseases. Physical therapy, support groups, counseling, exercise, nutrition, and seminars in art and music are all free to those who qualify. Our tour will also showcase the many volunteer opportunities and needs the center has. There is no cost. Carpooling from church will be available. Please call Liz Hurbis for questions.

### **Village of Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade – Monday, May 25 at 11am**

Come on out and help us promote Northbrook as we connect with our neighbors at the Memorial Day Parade. The parade is about a mile long and will take about an hour. We'll hand out Northbrook promotional materials as we enjoy the Northbrook band playing on a trailer being towed along with us. We will meet at the Groves High School parking lot. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more info about our arrival time.

### **Main Event Survey Results**

Thanks to all who completed a survey for the Main Event a couple of weeks ago. We received 25 survey responses, and 75% wanted this event to be held every other year. That means we will look forward to Fall 2027 for the next Main Event to be held at Northbrook. This year will be a time to enjoy the experiences you previously purchased!

### **Growing Together - Wednesdays at 10am and 7pm**

Join us at either 10am or 7pm (Zoom or in-person in the library) for a five-week video series, *Embodying the Divine: Love as the Heart of Creation*. This series features theologian Ilia Delio and explores the profound implications of understanding God as the unstoppable force of love within creation. Viewers are invited to discover how love is not only the essence of God but also the very fabric of existence.

### **Brady's Bunch - Tuesday, May 5 at 5:30pm**

Please join us on Tuesday, May 5 at 5:30pm at the Honey Tree Grille (3633 W. Maple Rd., Bloomfield Twp.) for food and fellowship. Sign up in Fellowship Hall. Contact Barb Voight for questions.

### **Men's Connection - Tuesdays at 8am and 10am**

Men's Connection meets weekly on Tuesday mornings at 8am via Zoom and 10am in-person in the library and via Zoom. We are currently studying, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* by Eugene Peterson. Please contact Bill Jordan at (248) 917-7201 to be included on Zoom. Men's Connection will hold its last meeting of the year on Tuesday, June 16 with one gathering at 9am at *The Gallery restaurant*.

### **Senior Lunch - 2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month at 1pm**

Please join us in the Library at 1pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month for a delicious lunch and good conversation. In May, we will meet on May 14 and May 28. *Please consider volunteering to help with this important program.* See the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

### **Yoga with Lis - Wednesdays at 11:15am**

Join us for Yoga with Lis classes on Wednesdays at 11:15am. No fee required, but donations are welcome.

# VBS VOLUNTEERS

JUNE 22 - 26

9:00AM - 12:00 PM

There are roles for everyone!

Can't help that week? We need help preparing crafts and materials ahead of time! Sign up using the same code or link above.

**We Need YOU!**



To sign-up scan or visit

<https://www.myvbs.org/northbrook-vbs-2026>



Northbrook friends who contributed to this year's Easter Basket Project, thank you! We were able to deliver these bundles of gifts to sweet families with really adorable children. We also delivered Easter meals provided by Kids Empowered on the Move. Once again, your generosity was so appreciated by parents and children who hope for more stable and bright futures in our country. Please pray for them.

## NORTHBROOK



**Save the Dates: August 14, 15**

The Church Garage Sale is back this summer on Friday, August 14, and Saturday, August 15. We need your items to have a successful sale. As you embark on your Spring cleaning, start setting aside a donation pile for the Northbrook garage sale. We are not accepting clothing, books, or large items (furniture). More details to follow. See Barb Voight for any questions.

### ***Graduation Sunday is May 31***

If you or a family member will be graduating from school (high school, college, or trade school), please let Becky in the office know by *Friday, May 22* so that they may be recognized on Sunday, May 31st. Please let us know their degree, where they graduated from, and any future plans. Thank you!

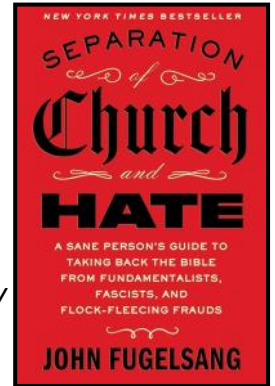
## New Members Class - Sunday, May 31 after Worship

Are you curious about membership at Northbrook? Are you interested in remembering and renewing your membership commitment? You are invited to join us for a one-hour conversation to learn more about what it means to be a member and how you can grow in faith here, starting at 11:30 in the library.

## Northbrook Book Club—June 1 at 7pm

Everybody is welcome to attend the next Northbrook Book Club discussion of *Separation of Church and Hate* by John Fugelsang. Join in person in Fellowship Hall or by Zoom. Yvonne is hosting the meeting. Please let Nancy Best know if you would like to attend by Zoom.

Book Summary: *Separation of Church and Hate* is a contemporary nonfiction work that mixes memoir, biblical commentary, and political critique. Fugelsang, a comedian and TV/radio host, begins with his own unusual Catholic upbringing—born to a former nun and Franciscan brother—and uses that personal lens to explore what Christianity originally meant versus how it is often practiced in American public life today. He argues that the core of Jesus’s message is radical compassion, humility, and justice. The book pushes back against Christian nationalism, offering readers language and scripture-based tools to challenge hate presented as faith (summary taken from [booksthatstay.com](http://booksthatstay.com)).



Please mark your calendar with these book titles and dates:

- ◆ July 13—*The Charm Bracelet* by Viola Shipman - Shirley hosts
- ◆ August 24—*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros - Jan hosts
- ◆ October 5—*The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans - Barb hosts
- ◆ November 16, 2026 and January 11, 2027- Books TBD

## Please Welcome Northbrook’s Newest Members



**Cole Shearer** - Cole lives in Farmington Hills with his dad, mom, sister, and dog. He started going to Church Camp in 2020 and enjoys going on the fall retreat and mission trips with the church. Cole is a current Senior at Lutheran High School Northwest and plays soccer for the Farmington Fury. He enjoys fishing with his family and spending time with friends. Cole plans on attending Schoolcraft College next year. He loves to go on vacation with his family; they have been to 6 countries and 10 states in his lifetime. Cole’s favorite food is steak, and he also loves watching movies.

**Louis Yun** - Louis, a Metro Detroit native raised in Bloomfield Hills, graduated from Lahser High School in 2012. He spent his college years at Michigan State pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering, later adding an MBA in strategic management from Indiana University. These days, he works for the tire maker Continental.

Louis lives in Bloomfield Hills with his wife, Claire, his dog, Vinny, and their favorite new addition, three-month-old Elsie. When he isn't busy with work or dad duty, you'll likely find Louis planning his next travel adventure or scouting out the best local food and wine. He's excited to jump into the community here at Northbrook and connect with everyone.



## Finance Matters—Per Capita Update

Each year, every church within the Presbyterian denomination is assessed an annual fee per member, known as *Per Capita*, to support our shared participation in the Presbyterian Church/(USA). Interestingly, the first-known mention of Per Capita within the Presbyterian Church dates back to 1734 in a letter to ministers! The Per Capita amount requested from a congregation is a combined total of requests from that congregation's Presbytery, the synod in which the presbytery is located, and the General Assembly — based on their respective budgets and membership for the coming year.

In 2026, Northbrook's Per Capita assessment is \$8,487. This amounts to **\$42.65 per member**, and is subdivided as follows: \$27.40 (Presbytery of Detroit) + \$11.71 (General Assembly) + \$3.54 (Synod of the Covenant). Generally speaking, it is the responsibility of each church member to pay their own Per Capita portion each year in addition to other tithes and offerings. Over the first quarter of this year, we collected \$1,801 of our \$8,487 owed, which is 85% of our first quarter budget for this number. That's a promising figure in my book!


As a whole, Northbrook must pay its full Per Capita assessment each year. And, though we always try to collect our church's entire annual assessment, we understand this doesn't always happen. Unfortunately, any Per Capita amount Northbrook owes and does not receive from the congregation must be subsidized by the church, which puts pressure on other areas of Northbrook's annual budget.

We ask that you help defray this unavoidable annual expense by making a voluntary gift of \$42.65 for each Northbrook member in your household over the age of 13. This amounts to roughly \$0.82 cents per week per member. If you have already done this for the year, thank you! If not, you may consider paying your portion by mail or via online giving. Thank you for supporting Northbrook's annual budget and the work of our Presbyterian denomination.

In Faithful Service,

Dan Gross on behalf of your Finance Committee: Tim Boese, Tom MacFarlane, Mark Best, Ryan Stottlemeyer, Mike Krug (Financial Secretary), Dan Gross (Chair), and Pastor Ben Larson-Wolbrink

## Hospitality TEAM



You are invited to be on the elite Northbrook Hospitality TEAM. The Hospitality TEAM is responsible principally for greeting worshipers to service, handing out bulletins, and taking the offering.

This is a valuable volunteer service to your church. We start a half hour before the service, and finish up about a quarter hour after the service. You will be the spirit and face of Northbrook—warm and welcoming—both to the congregation and, importantly, to all new visitors.

When you have decided that you are curious enough to explore further, we will be happy to give a fuller description of the duties. For more information or to sign up, please contact Bill Travis at 248-917-1481 or [wftravis46@gmail.com](mailto:wftravis46@gmail.com).

We look forward to having you as a face on the TEAM!

**Neighborhood Night @ Northbrook - Wednesday, June 17: 5-8pm**

Come and meet your neighbors at our first - and only - Neighborhood Night of this summer. Enjoy food from Tim's Gourmet Sliders, grooving beats from DJ Unkle Eli, touring a Beverly Hills fire truck, and other games for all ages. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for volunteer information soon.



**Camp Registration Due June 1**

Summer Youth Camp Registration applications are due by June 1st. To register, please complete this [form](#). The cost for camp this year is \$600. Payment can be made by check (payable to Northbrook) or online [here](#). Summer Youth Camp will be August 2nd-8th for all completed 1st-12th graders at YMCA Camp Timbers in West Branch. For more information, contact Ken Stetson, Youth Director, at [stetson.kenny@gmail.com](mailto:stetson.kenny@gmail.com).

**Youth Mission Trip—June 28 to July 1**

Mark your calendars for our summer youth mission trip to Camp Timbers. We'll be heading there on Sunday, June 28th to Wednesday, July 1st. The trip is available to all middle and high school students. Cost and registration will be available in the coming weeks.



The Northbrook Children and Youth Committee would like to extend a BIG and heartfelt thank you to everyone who took part in the Breakfast & BINGO fundraiser held on April 19.

Your efforts and donations raised important funds for the Northbrook youth programs.

*Thank you for always coming through for us!*

## April 2026 Session Spotlight

The Northbrook Session does the important work of leadership, government and discernment regarding how God is leading the congregation. Here are two highlights from the April 19 Session meeting:

**Church Security Plan in Process** - Last fall, Session created a task force, led by Peggine DiFalco and Penny Willey, to update Northbrook's church safety plan. After having a walk-through of our building by members of the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, and attending a special training by the Sheriff's Department following the attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, the team has drafted a plan to help us keep guests in our facilities safe. While there are a few details awaiting Session's final approval, we will begin implementing key steps soon.

**Mediation to Address Choir Discord** - The Rev. Adam Grosch (Lakeshore Presbyterian Church, St. Clair Shores) and the Rev. Kimberly Secrist-Ashby (First Presbyterian Church, Saline) have been engaged as mediators to address discord around the choir. They have begun their work and shared a document about their process, including this statement of the purpose of mediation:

“Understanding that there have been some difficulties within the music department that have been impacting the entire church, the purpose of mediation is to gather the parties involved so that issues surrounding behaviors, communication, decision making, procedures, and job responsibilities can be surfaced and discussed in a healthy and productive way.

The mediation process will allow all individuals the chance to be heard, and the hope is that in hearing each other, the parties can come together to develop a mutual agreement that is acceptable to all parties.

The purpose of mediation is not to revisit the Session's or the Pastor's staffing decisions, but rather to seek mutually agreeable ways for the choir to reconvene and provide the choir a pathway forward for the sake of the choir and music program at Northbrook Presbyterian Church.”



We celebrated the baptism of Elsie Frances Yun, daughter of Claire and Louis Yun, during our worship service on Sunday, April 26.



Northbrook welcomed John W. Hardy (2nd from right) on Sunday, April 19. John, an actor, educator, and civil rights activist, was involved in lunch counter sit-ins, protest marches, and boycotts. He also served as a field representative on the Freedom Ride Coordinating Committee. Mr. Hardy shared the story of his own experience to help us ponder today's social struggles.



Lent  
& Easter  
2026



## Calendar

May 3	10am	In-Person & Livestream Worship & Communion ~ <i>Confirmation Sunday</i> ~
May 5	8am 10am 5:30pm	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom Brady's Bunch
May 6	10am 11:15am 7pm	Growing Together Yoga Growing Together
May 10	10am 11:15am	In-Person & Livestream Worship ~ <i>Happy Mother's Day</i> ~ Deacons' Meeting
May 11	1pm 4:30pm	Kirk Gibson Parkinson's Ctr Tour Worship Comm. Meeting
May 12	8am 9:30am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Finance Comm. Mtg. Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
May 13	10am 11:15am 7pm	Growing Together Yoga Growing Together
May 14	1pm	Senior Lunch
May 17	10am 11:15am	In-Person & Livestream Worship Session Meeting
May 19	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
May 20	10am 11:15am 7pm	Growing Together Yoga Growing Together
May 24	10am	In-Person & Livestream Worship
May 25		Memorial Day Parade OFFICE CLOSED
May 26	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
May 28	1pm	Senior Lunch
May 31	10am 11:15am	In-Person & Livestream Worship ~ Graduation Sunday ~ New Member Class
June 1	7pm	Summer Camp Registrations Due Northbrook Book Club Meeting

Please visit our website: [www.northbrookpc.org](http://www.northbrookpc.org) for the most current calendar of events.

### May Birthdays

05/03 JoJo Sandercock	05/22 Claire Yun
05/08 Hal Koss	05/23 Jackson Back
05/09 Steve Taylor	05/24 Suzanne Burger
05/10 Lauren Guindi	05/26 Kim Ault
05/11 Bill Stetson	05/27 Susan Boese
05/19 Hope Larson-Wolbrink	05/29 Karen Vander Weide-Terroba
05/19 Cooper Sowle	05/30 Zephyr Ault
05/21 Kai'Yah King	05/30 Susan Riggan
05/22 Kim Bowden-Adair	
05/22 Marilyn Thomas	

### May Anniversaries

Michael & Roberta Campion—55 years on May 1  
 Beverly & Jeff Singer—46 years on May 10  
 Karen Vander Weide-Terroba & Tony Terroba—2 years on May 11  
 Tom & Val MacFarlane Jr.—36 years on May 19  
 Erin & David Swenson—12 years on May 25



**Northbrook Preschool**

**2026-27 ENROLL NOW**

- 3 yr-old program 2-3 days/week
- Pre-K program 3-5 days/week
- Extended day option until 2 pm



The church office will be closed Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

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# *“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”*

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## Northbrook

### Presbyterian Church

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Beverly Hills, Michigan 48025  
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[www.northbrookpc.org](http://www.northbrookpc.org)

*Northbrook Notes* is a monthly publication of  
Northbrook Presbyterian Church  
22055 W. 14 Mile Rd. Beverly Hills, MI 48025



Kids' Connection, our Sunday ministry for young children at Northbrook, is for children in preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Children may begin worshipping with their families in the sanctuary and will be dismissed for Kids' Connection after Pastor Ben's children's message. Each Sunday, the children will learn about connecting with God and others by hearing the stories of the Bible in fun and meaningful ways. ***We hope to see your kids on Sundays!***

#### **Staff Contact Information**

The Rev. Ben Larson-Wolbrink, Pastor	ext. 17
<a href="mailto:ben@northbrookpc.org">ben@northbrookpc.org</a>	
Jannah Cole, Worship Team Leader	
Dan Gross, Musician	
Pete Zajicek, Musician	
Sherrill Heinrichs, Congregational Care Coord.	ext. 15
<a href="mailto:sherrill@northbrookpc.org">sherrill@northbrookpc.org</a>	
Ken Stetson, Youth Director	
<a href="mailto:stetson.kenny@gmail.com">stetson.kenny@gmail.com</a>	
Becky Bachand, Administrative Assistant	ext. 10
<a href="mailto:becky@northbrookpc.org">becky@northbrookpc.org</a>	
Mike Krug, Finance Administrator	ext. 13
<a href="mailto:mike@northbrookpc.org">mike@northbrookpc.org</a>	
Kerry Callaghan, Preschool Director	ext. 16
<a href="mailto:preschool@northbrookpc.org">preschool@northbrookpc.org</a>	

#### **Worship with Us:**

**10am in the sanctuary**

#### **The Sunday service is also found:**

- Livestream on YouTube—[Northbrookpc](#)
- Livestream on Facebook—[Northbrookpc](#)

#### **Office Hours**

Mon-Thurs: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 9am—Noon  
22055 W. 14 Mile Road, Beverly Hills, MI 48025  
248-642-0200 [www.northbrookpc.org](http://www.northbrookpc.org)