

Northbrook Notes

SEPTEMBER 2026



NORTHBROOK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Still Abiding...

Way back in January, the Northbrook Session presented its theme for the year: Abide and Thrive. This was inspired by some powerful words Jesus shared with his disciples.

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

~ John 15:4-5

Since that time, it has been a challenging season for Northbrook and a challenging season in the life of our family. These struggles can feel pretty overwhelming. Maybe we should change our theme to: *Abiding and...*

Barely Hanging On?!?

And yet, when I look back on this year, I can't help but see ways - in the midst of the struggles - Northbrook is thriving. I'm grateful for the new members who have joined our community, as well as the inspiring statements of faith from this year's confirmation class. The halls of Northbrook were filled with the sounds of over 60 young people learning about Jesus during vacation bible school. And, once again, Northbrook's summer camp proved to be an inspirational week as young people - and all the committed volunteer counselors - spent a week learning about how their lives are wrapped up in God's story. There have been deep conversations at Men's Connection and the Northbrook Book Club, enlightening outings with the Lifelong Learners, and several offerings to support the important work of our mission partners (including a service day in Pontiac). I feel like I could go on and on and only scratch the surface.

And, you did all this with your pastor missing - out on family leave - for almost five weeks! Or rather, God did all this through you. Sometimes, when things get difficult, we can forget that God is with us and working through us. We're still on the vine. We're still abiding and thriving.

The context for the above scripture in John 15 was the farewell teachings Jesus shared with his disciples before he was betrayed and crucified. As we return to indoor worship this month, we will be exploring other teachings of Jesus - the lectionary readings from the Gospel of Matthew - that invite us to abide and thrive... especially when things are difficult. We will also be revisiting this theme as we start a new 10-week session in our Wednesday *Growing Together* Gatherings with an in-depth look at vinemaking and how it relates to faith (see inside). If you haven't participated before, this will be a great opportunity to give it a try. These are just two of the many ways you can abide and thrive at Northbrook this fall!

Still abiding and thriving,
Pastor Ben

Live the Love of Jesus Christ



On Sunday, September 13, we will return to our regular 10am worship time and move back into the sanctuary.



Lifelong Learners: Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum Thursday, September 17 - 11am in Saginaw

The Lifelong Learners committee has arranged a docent-led tour of the museum. Marshall Fredericks was one of the most prolific sculptors of the 20th century. He is known in America and abroad for his monumental figurative sculpture, public memorials and fountains, portraits, and animal figures. The tour includes the sculpture studio, the main gallery, the current touring exhibit, and the sculpture garden. After the tour, we'll have lunch at a nearby restaurant (location TBT). The tour and admission to the museum are free, but attendees will be responsible for paying for their own lunch. We will meet at church at 9am and take the church van to Saginaw, or you can meet us there at 10:45. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Stephanie Wicker for more information.

LOGOS

LOGOS, our weekly gathering for kids of all ages with games, songs, devotions, crafts, and dinner begins in September. Registration and fee information will be coming soon, so mark your calendars and reach out to Ken Stetson at stetson.kenny@gmail.com with any questions you might have.

Senior Lunch - 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the Month

Senior Lunch resumes on September 10th and September 24th at 1pm in the library. Please join us, and invite a friend. If you would like to volunteer to help prepare and serve lunch, please see the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

Yoga with Lis - Wednesdays

Join us for Yoga with Lis on Wednesdays. Please contact Bill Jordan for specific times. No fee required, but donations are welcome.

Men's Connection - Resumes September 15

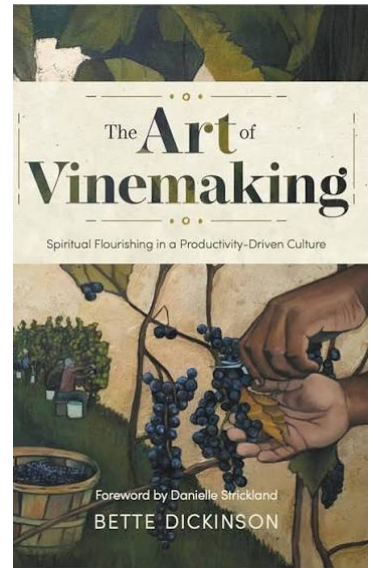
We continue with our book, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, by Eugene Peterson, Chapter 9 "Work", and Chapter 10 "Happiness" when we reconvene for the fall session on Tuesday, September 15. There is a Zoom connection at both 8am and 10am, and in-person at the library at 10am. Contact Bill Jordan at (248) 917-7201 to be included on Zoom. We welcome new men to our fellowship circle. We hope you'll join us.



Kids' Connection, our Sunday ministry for young children at Northbrook, is for children in preschool through 5th 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!

Growing Together on Wednesdays **Explore *The Art of Vinemaking* by Bette Dickinson**

You are invited to join Northbrook's *Growing Together* gatherings on Wednesdays at 10am and 7pm, starting September 16. We will revisit our theme for the year - *Abide and Thrive* - by reading through *The Art of Vinemaking*, by Bette Dickinson. In a culture that measures fruitfulness by productivity, *The Art of Vinemaking* offers a countercultural and deeply compelling invitation: to return to the slower, sacred rhythm of abiding. Through the rich metaphor of John 15, author and artist Bette Dickinson guides readers through a Traverse City vineyard where she's been learning from both the vine and a local organic vinedresser, Dave Bos. On this 10-week journey through the book, we will engage scripture, personal story, and original hand-drawn illustrations—embracing a deeply embodied reflection on what it means to be rooted in Christ in every season.



Course Schedule:

September 16 - Come ready to discuss:

- Foreword
- Introduction

September 23 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 1: The Vinedresser
- Chapter 2: Terroir

September 30 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 3: The Vine and Branches
- Chapter 4: The Rhythm

October 7 - *No class

October 14 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 5: Descent into the Roots
- Chapter 6: Post-Harvest
- Chapter 7: Dormancy
- Chapter 8: Pruning

October 21 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 9: Ascent into the Branches
- Chapter 10: Bud Break

October 28 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 11: Growing
- Chapter 12: Flowering

November 4 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 13: Ripening Fruit
- Chapter 14: Veraison

November 11 - Come ready to discuss:

- Chapter 15: Harvest
- Chapter 16: Wine

November 18 - Come ready to discuss:

- Epilogue
- Note from the Vinedresser: Dave Bos

The Latest From The Safety Team

We now have a Safety Team volunteer in place from 9am - 11am during the Summer 9:30 am worship hour, and 9:30am - 11:30am during 10am worship hour. Thank you to Lori Spiewak, Kathy Bauhof, Todd Dolan, and Barb Voight (along with Penny and Peggie) who monitor the doors and other areas before, during, and after worship.

We are always looking for a few more volunteers to be part of the team. We work on a rotating schedule based on your availability. Contact either one of us for more information or to join the team.

Peggie DiFalco and Penny Willey
Safety Team

Northbrook Garage Sale

The Northbrook Garage Sale was a Success!

Thank you for your time, effort, hard work, donations, and prayers. Your willingness to use your gifts and abilities to make this garage sale successful has been a true blessing to this church.

Again, we thank you all!

Your Northbrook Garage Sale Committee



Thank You ~ Thank You ~ Thank You!



Sunday Greeters

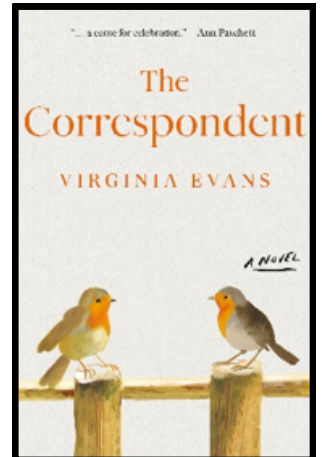
Thanks to all who have greeted in the past! We are hoping you'll sign up again! We are also asking those who have not had this experience to learn the process and sign up now. Why? Because, this this minimal commitment of your time has a wonderful impact on the attitude of the church congregation. The act of welcoming people to our service, both members and newcomers, shows our warmth and love. It demonstrates that we are glad to see you.

Can you welcome people to the service? Light the candles? Take up the collection? If you can, please sign up on the board in the hallway or contact Bill Travis at 248-917-1481.

Northbrook Book Club—Monday, October 5 at 7pm

Everybody is welcome to attend the upcoming Northbrook Book Club discussion of *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans on Monday, October 5 at 7pm. Barb is hosting. Join in person in Fellowship Hall or by Zoom. Please let Nancy Best know if you would like to attend by Zoom.

Book Summary: *It follows Sybil Van Antwerp, a retired lawyer in her early seventies, who has spent her life writing letters to friends, family, authors, strangers, and even one person she never actually sends her letters to. The story spans from 2012 to 2022. During this time, Sybil loses her sight, repairs broken bonds, carries deep guilt, and faces a letter from her past that forces her to reopen her most painful wound. What begins as a quiet character study slowly builds into something emotionally overwhelming. This book earned its place at the top of the New York Times bestseller list. Filled with knowledge that only comes from a life fully lived, The Correspondent is a gem of a novel about the power of finding solace in literature and connection with people we might never meet in person. It is about the hubris of youth and the wisdom of old age, and the mistakes and acts of kindness that occur during a lifetime.*



Please mark your calendar with these upcoming titles and discussion dates:

- November 16 – *The Book Club for Troublesome Women* by Marie Bostwick – Kim hosts
- January 11, 2027 - *Eternal* by Lisa Scottoline – Winnie hosts



The Northbrook Book Club attended an author event with Curtis Chin at Mon Jin Lau restaurant, after reading his book, *Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant*.

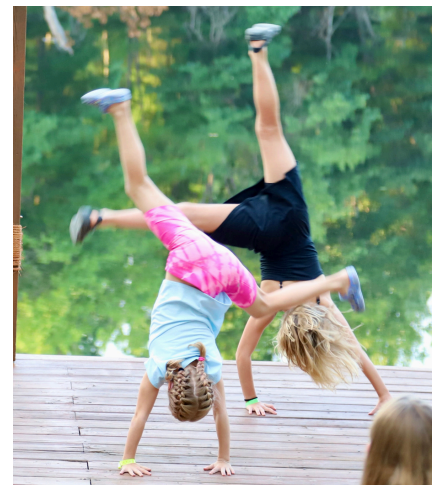
Thank you

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Cleaning Supplies Donation Drive. Your donations will be shared with those supported by *Kids Empowered on the Move*.



Summer Camp Adventures





Can't wait 'til next year!

Finance Matters

Your Finance Committee continues to offer our sincere appreciation for your generous contributions to Northbrook so far this year, which maintain support for the mission and ministries of our church. Your contributions allow us to sustain our church home, support our staff and programs, and serve both our congregation and the greater community. Please continue to keep up with your pledged amounts for this year. And as always, we welcome all questions, comments, and/or suggestions about the church finances with open arms.

To update you on our progress with our church's annual Per Capita assessment (levied by the greater Presbyterian Church/USA), through the first 7 months of the year, we have collected \$2,187 of our \$8,487 owed in 2026, which is 44% of our budget for this number through July. If you would like to make your Per Capita contribution separately from your pledged contribution, you can do so via the link on our church website or by submitting a personal check to the church office. (Please indicate "Per Capita" on your check or online.) The amount due for each Northbrook member in 2026 is \$41.

Finally, our stewardship season & campaign are almost upon us, and we are so excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for the 2027 calendar year! Stewardship is not simply a function of doing business in the local congregation, but it is an act of worship that flows from God's Word. It is the joyous activity of managing life's resources for His purposes. As our campaign approaches, we ask that you prayerfully consider your financial commitment to Northbrook for the 2027 calendar year.

In Faithful Service,

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



The Lifelong Learners Committee organized a tour of The Scarab Club on Friday, August 21. Attendees learned about one of Michigan's oldest arts organizations and enjoyed a delicious lunch at Chartreuse Kitchen in Detroit.



New Brady's Bunch - Tuesday, October 6

There will be no New Brady's dinner in September. Instead, we will resume on Tuesday, October 6 at 5:30pm. More details to follow on the location. Please contact Barb Voight with questions.

Flu Shots - Sunday, October 11

Flu Shots will again be offered at Northbrook on Sunday, October 11th, before and after worship. Watch for more details.



Camp Sunday



Live the Love of Jesus Christ

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Sept 2	Yoga - Time TBD
Sept 6	9:30am: In-Person & Livestream Worship & Communion
Sept 7	Labor Day - Office Closed
Sept 8	9:30am: Finance Comm. Mtg.
Sept 9	Yoga - Time TBD
Sept 10	1pm: Senior Lunch
Sept 13	10 am: In-Person & Livestream Worship in the sanctuary *Note new time* 11:30am: Deacons' Mtg.
Sept 14	First Day of Preschool 4:30pm: Worship Comm. Mtg.
Sept 15	8am: Men's Connection (Zoom only) 10am: Men's Connection
Sept 16	Yoga - Time TBD 10am: <i>Gathering Together</i> 5pm: LOGOS 7pm: <i>Gathering Together</i>
Sept 17	9am: Lifelong Learners Outing
Sept 20	10am: In-Person & Livestream Worship 11:15am: Session Mtg.
Sept 22	8am: Men's Connection (Zoom only) 10am: Men's Connection

Visit the calendar on our website for the most up-to-date information.

Sept 23	Yoga - Time TBD 10am: Gathering Together 5pm: LOGOS 7pm: Gathering Together
Sept 24	1pm: Senior Lunch
Sept 27	10am: In-Person & Livestream Worship
Sept 29	8am: Men's Connection (Zoom only) 10am: Men's Connection
Sept 30	Yoga - Time TBD 10am: Gathering Together 5pm: LOGOS 7pm: Gathering Together

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

09/02 Barbara Voight	09/12 Roberta Campion
09/03 Louis Yun	09/12 Dan Willey
09/04 Stephanie Wicker	09/13 Keith Lee
09/08 Emily Szukhent	09/17 Bruce Murdock
09/09 John Bennish	09/19 Diane Joppie
09/09 Terri Hurbis	09/20 Patty Van Loo
09/10 Abby Adair	09/23 Michael Huddlestun
09/10 Lois Kurta	09/27 Brian Long
09/10 Evan Willey	09/28 Jim Parks
09/11 Jan Bennish	

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Peggie & Al DiFalco - 4 years on September 10
 Don & LeeAnne Hemberg - 47 years on September 15
 Bill & Gayle Travis - 56 years on September 19
 Dan & Jennifer Gross - 20 years on September 23

Staff contact Information

The Rev. Ben Larson-Wolbrink, Pastor ben@northbrookpc.org	Ext. 17
Jannah Cole, Music Team Leader	
Dan Gross, Musician	
Pete Zajicek, Musician	
Sherrill Heinrichs, Coord. of Congregational Care sherrill@northbrookpc.org	Ext. 15
Ken Stetson, Youth Director	
Becky Bachand, Administrative Assistant becky@northbrookpc.org	Ext. 10
Mike Krug, Finance Secretary mike@northbrookpc.org	Ext. 13
Kerry Callaghan, Preschool Director preschool@northbrookpc.org	Ext. 16

Worship with us:

9:30am on the patio on 9/6
10am in the Sanctuary - Begins 9/13

The Sunday service is also found:

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

Contact us:

22055 W. 14 Mile Road
 Beverly Hills, MI 48025
 248-642-0200 www.northbrookpc.org

Office Hours

Mon-Thurs: 9am - 4pm
 Friday: 9am - Noon (starting 9/11/26)