



What's Up Wickliffe!

JULY 2025

~A Word from the Minister~

“Can We Go Against the Flow?”

I recently read an interesting article by the Rev. Joyce Borger, editor of the *Reformed Worship* magazine (Pentecost 2025 issue). It was somewhat alarming. Here is what she said:

If you pay any attention to denominational reports, you will find the same statistics – churches and denominations are getting smaller. According to a national survey, FACT 2020, the average weekly attendance in the United States has dropped over 50% since 2000 and half of all congregations in the U.S. have 65 or fewer people in worship on any given Sunday. In the United Kingdom, attendance went from 11.8% of the population in 1980 to 5.0% in 2015 according to research by the Brierley Consultance. A 2001 survey in Canada found that only 20% of the population were attending worship weekly. No longer can churches depend on birthrate and generational commitment to a particular denomination.

Here are my observations. I would concur with what Rev. Borger said. I think it's true. I believe the COVID 19 pandemic accelerated the trend that was already starting to happen years before 2019. Many older folks stopped attending their mostly mainline churches because of the pandemic (while younger folks ignored the warnings about the pandemic), and a number of the older folks never started attending again when the pandemic was over! You would think when COVID was mostly over there would be a flood back to the mainline churches, but no, there was not. Because there is no brand loyalty, the younger folks, (and some older folks) left to attend “nondenominational worship centers” that ignored the pandemic and welcomed those whose churches were closed. By the way, they are not really nondenominational. If you look closely at what they do and say they are close to what many other churches are saying and doing anyway. But it's stylist these days to call yourself “nondenominational!” This continuing trend in the past 25 years did not happen to all mainline churches. The church I pastored in Wayne grew from an average attendance of 140 in 1999 when I started, to 208 by 2007 when I left. It was a slow, steady increase. What happened? No magic. We offered helpful options for families during Sunday School and worship time. We would have the children's sermon early in the service, then the children

would be dismissed to Sunday School. This schedule does present some problems, but the convenience of having worship and Sunday School at the same time, worked for these parents. The grandparents then attend where the children and grandchildren attend. The transition took some time, energy, and work by people to make it all happen. The churches I see growing right now are churches with established programs. They already have momentum in that direction. One need only step in and get your family involved.

Rev. Borger is correct. Overall, attendance in churches is down, with less than 65 on a Sunday in half the churches. Where did the people go? No. They aren't all attending a large “praise” church. But the tendency is for more and more people to attend fewer and fewer churches where there are established programs. Yet, overall, fewer people attend worship. I believe the trend needs reversed if Christianity is to attract a larger demographic.

What is the solution for the church, overall, and for Wickliffe, specifically? It's easy to feel hopeless. But with God all things are possible. One thing we can quickly do is eliminate one word from our language. “No.” “No” never did anything, nor make anything happen. Leave open possibilities with a “Yes!” “No” has gotten more churches in trouble than any other word or attitude of which I can think. “No” to this, “no” to that, and soon enough nothing happens. We need to remain faithful in what we do and say and plan. Many worry about the shame of failure. If we are worried something won't work, it doesn't matter. Our success is not up to us, it is up to God. We are just called to try and do the best we can. That's all. Later, we'll talk more on what we can do!

Grace and Peace, Pastor Rob

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JULY SCHEDULE

July 6	4th Sunday after Pentecost
July 13	5th Sunday after Pentecost
July 20	6th Sunday after Pentecost ♦ Needle's Eye Service
July 27	7th Sunday After Pentecost ♦ Benevolence Sunday



Happy Birthday!

July 1	Bill O'Hara
July 10	Janet Walston
July 13	Nancy O'Hara
July 16	Melanie Duritza
July 29	Gail Wayne

Happy Anniversary

July 22	Clete & Patricia Morningstar
July 27	Bill & Sandie Wayland

Church Office Hours:

Monday - 9:00am - 12:00pm

Tuesday - Closed

Wednesday - Closed

Thursday - 9:00am - 12:00pm

Friday - Closed

(Hours may vary. Please contact the office for an appointment if you need in the church)

Church Website: www.wickliffepc.com

Secretary's Email: wickliffepc@gmail.com

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TLCC Daycare and Preschool
Director, Norma Johnson

Blessed is the nation
whose **God** is the Lord,
the people he chose for his inheritance.

Psalms 33:12





2025 Per Capita increased to \$33.00. Per Capita information flyers are available at the church.



The **Fourth of July**—also known as **Independence Day** or **July 4th**—has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the [American Revolution](#). On July 2nd, 1776, the [Continental Congress](#) voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the [13 colonies](#) adopted the Declaration of Independence, a historic document drafted by [Thomas Jefferson](#). From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence, with festivities ranging from [fireworks](#), parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues. The Fourth of July 2025 is on Friday, July 4.

History of Independence Day

History of the Fourth of July

Did you know New York City has the biggest fireworks display in the United States and that three U.S. presidents died on July 4?

When the initial battles in the [Revolutionary War](#) broke out in April 1775, few colonists desired complete independence from Great Britain, and those who did were considered radical.

By the middle of the following year, however, many more colonists had come to favor independence, thanks to growing hostility against Britain and the spread of revolutionary sentiments such as those expressed in the bestselling pamphlet "[Common Sense](#)," published by [Thomas Paine](#) in early 1776.

On June 7, when the [Continental Congress](#) met at the [Pennsylvania](#) State House (later Independence Hall) in Philadelphia, the [Virginia](#) delegate Richard Henry Lee introduced a motion calling for the colonies' independence. Amid heated debate, Congress postponed the vote on Lee's resolution, but appointed a five-man committee—including [Thomas Jefferson](#) of Virginia, [John Adams](#) of [Massachusetts](#), Roger Sherman of [Connecticut](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#) of Pennsylvania and Robert R. Livingston of [New York](#)—to draft a [formal statement justifying the break with Great Britain](#).

Did you know?

John Adams believed that July 2nd was the correct date on which to celebrate the birth of American independence, and would reportedly turn down invitations to appear at July 4th events in protest. Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826—the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.



Newsletter Content Wanted!

Our monthly newsletter, can at times be quite sparse especially during summer months, and I need your help to fill the pages.

Some ideas of things that can be submitted are:

- ◆ Church and Family Celebrations
- ◆ Prayer and Praise Requests
- ◆ Poems and Stories
- ◆ Favorite Recipes

Let's beef up our future newsletters to reflect our church and family life. I welcome your contributions! Thank you!

Audrey Covault, WPC Secretary



WICKLIFFE CHURCH ANNUAL PICNIC

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Sunday, August 10, 2025

Austintown Senior Center
112 Westchester Drive

10:00 AM SERVICE 11:00 AM LUNCHEON

MUST STAY FOR "GENTEEL" GAMES AND PRIZES!!!!



Needle's Eye Soup Ministry

**JUNE DONATIONS SO GREAT!
LET'S BREAK THE RECORD
FOR JULY!**

Thank you in advance for donations of peanut butter,
beans, and soup!



**GOODTIMERS will meet
Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at
11:30 AM at Denny's.**

~Grace Brown

**The DISCOVERY GROUP meetings are
suspended for the summer; will resume
Tuesday, September 30, 2025.**

~Grace Brown



FOURTH ANNUAL NEEDLE'S EYE SERVICE JULY 20, 2025

Please join us for our Fourth Annual Summer Sunday Service on July 20!

A yummy luncheon follows after the 10:00 AM service with Needle's Eye providing the speaker. Come along with us and meet these delightful people who work so hard day after day to follow Christ's command to love one another and help others!

Bill and I will be in the church parking lot at 9:15 AM if anyone wants a ride or to follow us to the Needle's Eye on Kenmore and Oak Hill. If arriving on your own, please plan to be at The Needle's Eye at 9:30 AM. Address is 74 Kenmore Ave., Youngstown, Ohio.

If you wish, please bring a jar of peanut butter, beans, or soup to add to The Needle's Eye pantry which will be a nice surprise for them. Also, a Free Will donation will be collected by Nancy O'Hara to give after eating.

See you there on Sunday, July 20, 2025 at 9:30 AM!
Donna Cooper

THE ART OF *HAPPINESS*

~You can't pursue happiness and catch it. ~ **Happiness** comes upon you unawares while you are helping others. The philosophy of happiness is pointedly expressed in the old Hindu proverb, which reads: "*Help thy brother's boat across, and lo! thine own has reached the shore.*" ~ **Happiness** does not depend upon a full pocketbook, but upon a mind full of rich thoughts and a heart full of rich emotions. ~ **Happiness** does not depend upon what happens outside of you but on what happens inside of you; it is measured by the spirit in which you meet the problems of life.

~ **Happiness** is a state of mind. Lincoln once said: "We are as happy as we make up our minds to be." ~ **Happiness** doesn't come from doing what we like to do but from liking what we have to do.

~ **Happiness** does not come from doing easy work but from the after-glow of satisfaction that comes after the achievement of a difficult task that demanded our best. ~ **Happiness** grows out of harmonious relationships with others, based on attitudes of good will, tolerance, understanding and love. ~ **Happiness** is found in little things: a baby's smile, a letter from a friend, the song of a bird, a light in the window. ~ The master secret of happiness is to meet the challenge of each new day with the serene faith that: "*All things work together for good to them that love God.*"

Submitted by Cathy Murray (The Pittsburgh Press—February 1961)

July 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 5:45 PM TOPS	4 	5
6 10:00 AM Worship Service 8:00 PM AA Mtg.	7	8	9 11:30 AM Goodtimers at Denny's	10 5:45 PM TOPS	11	12
13 10:00 AM Worship Service 8:00 PM AA Mtg.	14	15	16	17 5:45 PM TOPS	18	19
20 10:00 AM Worship Service at Needle's Eye 8:00 PM AA Mtg.	21	22	23	24 Newsletter Deadline 5:45 PM TOPS	25	26
27 10:00 AM Worship Service  8:00 PM AA Mtg.	28	29	30	31 5:45 PM TOPS		