



Calendar of Events

- Prayer Group (6:30 p.m.) – September 3rd
- Choir Practice (7:00 p.m.) – September 3rd
- Youth Group (10:30 a.m.) – September 7th
- Men's Group Meeting (6:30 p.m.) – September 9th
- Missions Meeting (6:30 p.m.) – September 9th
- Choir Practice (7:00 p.m.) – September 10th
- Prayer Group (6:30 p.m.) – September 10th
- Trustees (6:30 p.m.) – September 10th
- SPRC Meeting (6:00 p.m.) – September 10th
- Council Meeting (6:30 p.m.) – September 11th
- United Women in Faith Meeting (10:00 a.m.) – September 13th
- Youth Group (10:30 a.m.) – September 14th
- Prayer Group (6:30 p.m.) – September 17th
- Epilogue Group (11:30 a.m. Colony Pub) – September 17th
- Choir Practice (7:00 p.m.) – September 17th
- Pancake Breakfast (10:30 a.m.) – September 21st
- Prayer Group (6:30 p.m.) – September 24th
- Choir Practice (7:00 p.m.) – September 24th



Rev. Kathleen Schoeneck

This article is found at [UMC.ORG](https://www.UMC.ORG)

Every Church needs to practice this:

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Have you ever wanted your church to be friendlier to newcomers? In many churches, the problem isn't that people don't want to be friendly, they just don't know how. What if your church had a plan that could increase the friendliness quotient of our church immediately, painlessly, and permanently? It can be easier to find a church that preaches the Bible, has solid worship music, and offers excellent childcare than it is to find a church where we can make genuine, lasting friendships.

Friendliness is intentional, not automatic.

No church is automatically friendly. Especially not to outsiders coming in. People usually visit a church because a friend invites them. And when they choose to stay it's because they've made friends there. But it can be easier to find a church that preaches the Bible, has solid worship music, and offers excellent childcare than it is to find a church where we can make genuine, lasting friendships. Genuine friendships are becoming rarer—and thus, of greater perceived value—than any other aspect of modern church life, but we don't develop relationships without being very intentional about it. If we want to bring people in and keep them coming to church, we need to turn up the friendliness quotient.

The G.I.F.T. plan for friendlier churches

One of the simple things that has helped our church become friendlier and more welcoming is something I call the G.I.F.T. Plan (as seen in my book, *Small Church Essentials*). G.I.F.T. stands for Greet, Introduce, Follow up, and Thank. Every week, we encourage our church members, and especially our leaders, to do at least one of the following steps:

1. Greet someone you've never met before.

Get out of your comfort zone. Find someone whose name you don't know and learn it. Welcome them if they're new.

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Discover something about them. Get to know them if they've been around for a while, but you just haven't met them yet. Or offer to sit with them if they come to church alone.

2. Introduce people to each other.

After meeting someone, make sure they meet others, too. Connect people who have something in common. Introduce a first-time guest to the pastor. A young person to the youth leader. Kids and their parents to the children's ministries director. And so on.

3. Follow up on someone you met recently.

Find that person you met a week or two ago and say "hi" again. Call them by name. Engage in further conversation. Include them in your group of friends.

4. Thank someone who did something you appreciate.

Every church has people who volunteer their time and efforts with very little, if any appreciation shown to them. Sometimes it's a simple "way to go!" to the worship leader. Or an appreciation to a Sunday School teacher for encouraging your child to read their Bible. Encouragement costs nothing, but it's worth a great deal.

5. Hold people accountable.

When we first implemented this, every week, one of the first items on our weekly staff agenda was always "Who did you G.I.F.T. this week?" We'd go around the room and share stories about who we met, introduced and so on. By doing this, we held ourselves accountable and we often learned more about church members and guests as we did so. ("Oh yeah, I met her too. She told me she wants to help in the nursery. Here's her email.") We also taught the G.I.F.T. Plan in our discipleship class, including requiring the students to apply it on Sundays and report back to the group. Since starting the G.I.F.T. Plan, our church members have come more out of their shell, opened their hearts a little wider, and met some great new friends along the way.

No one is expected to do all four steps each week. Most find that they do one or two well, but not the others. And if someone gets busy on a Sunday and misses doing it, there's no guilt attached. But when we asked them to do one a week and report the results, this simple plan with accountability attached to it made a big difference.

It really works!

I'm under no delusions that this simple little plan will automatically lead to long and lasting friendships but imagine a church in which everyone (or every leader and most of the regulars) Greeted, Introduced, Followed Up, or Thanked someone every week. It would truly be a GIFT to their guests and to the entire church.

Our church still has a lot to learn about being friendlier. But these steps have been a great starting point. One Sunday after implementing this plan, a couple in our church introduced me to someone who had sat near them during the service. We chatted and got to know each other. After the guest left with a wave and a heartfelt "thanks, I'll see you next Sunday!" the couple turned to me and said, "we got our 'G' this week!" To which I responded, "and your 'I' for introducing him to me!" They smiled. And I believe Jesus did, too.

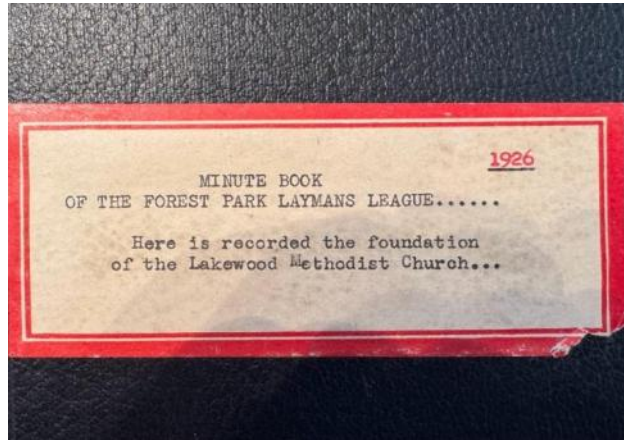
God's Peace,

Rev. Kathleen Schoeneck

Forest Park Laymans League

The Beginnings of Lakewood Church

Submitted by Curt Spicher



Part 4

The April 1, 1927 meeting of the Forest Park Layman's League was sparsely attended, with the Chaplain, President and Vice President all being absent. Mr. A.C. Stitzinger offered the opening prayer and the Secretary, Mr. Shepley, acted as Chairman for the meeting. The first item on the agenda was discussion about incorporation of the league and the title to the Forest Park lot. It was decided that the first step would be the incorporation of the league. Three members, Mr. F. Root, Mr. C. Connerup and Mr. R. Robinson were appointed to "investigate the cost of, and details concerning the process of incorporation of the league, and to report at the next regular meeting". At this meeting members agreed to "take home the unused tag day boxes and get what contributions they could and return the boxes by October 1, 1927 whether filled or not". The leagues cash balance in March was \$39.50. In April after receipts and expenses from Tag Day and a payment on the lot the groups cash balance now stood at \$415.09.

The May 6, 1927 meeting began with a supper in the basement of the School House. Perhaps strawberry pretzel salad was on the menu!

Business conducted at this meeting included:

1. Mr. Hosbach was retained to represent the League throughout the incorporation of the League, and the securing of a proper deed and title for the lot. "It was the understanding of the members present that Mr. Hosbach was to charge the League for actual expenses, and that his profit for the work would be donated to the League. The net amount was estimated to be somewhere near \$35".
2. The proposed name for the new building "Forest Park Tabernacle". Could we have been known as Forest Park Tabernacle United Methodist Church? The sign out front would have to have been much larger!
3. The previously appointed committee to investigate the matter of incorporation, was appointed to continue until incorporation was completed.
4. "It was declared the will of those present to extend to Mr. Paul Sawnei a year membership in part payment, and appreciation of his work in painting the signs on Tag Day".

The June 3, 1927 meeting again started with a supper in the basement of the School House. The business meeting opened with Prayer and Scripture reading by Mr. Baumgartner.

During the meeting there was a report on the process for incorporation and the application for

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charter. The application was discussed in open meeting and was approved with “some slight changes as to form. It was explained to the group that it was necessary to elect a Board of Trustees to hold deeds to real estate and otherwise represent the League in matters of business.” Seven members of the League were elected to serve as Trustees:

Mr. G. Lloyd, Mr. Baumgartner, Mr. Haller, Dr. Root, Mr. Hamlett, Mr. E.E. Stitzinger and Mr. F. Root.

Lastly, at this meeting “it was properly moved and carried that the Treasurer pay off on the lot debt, such an amount that would reduce the debt to Six Hundred (\$600) Dollars. It was made a part of the motion that the payment go through the hands of our attorney, Mr. Hosbach.

In July there was no official meeting of the League but they did hold a Strawberry and Ice Cream Social which raised \$11. Lakewood UMC was famous for their Strawberry and Ice Cream Socials well into the 1990’s.

“I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.”

Matthew 25:35



TRACY/ASBURY BACKPACK PROGRAM 2025-2026

Food insecurity impacts 1 in 5 children and can make it more difficult for students to learn and be successful in school. Second Harvest Food Bank provides needed food for children through the Backpack Food Program each week from October through May. Students receive 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners and snacks for the weekend.

Since 2014, Lakewood has provided volunteers to pickup the food from SHFB, pack the bags at Lakewood and deliver bags to Tracy and Asbury schools. We have had many faithful and reliable volunteers these past 11 years and are grateful for how well our ministry teams work to get the job done each week.

The 2025-26 program will begin the first week of October. **We are in need of a SHFB pickup driver for the 4th Wednesday morning of the month and a Tracy/Asbury delivery driver to fill in as a back up on Thursday mornings when needed.**

If you would like to volunteer to help as a driver or packer, please contact Maria Spicher at mespicher56@gmail.com or 814-397-8545.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Elizabeth Gilchrist	09/01
Alexandra Gilchrist	09/01
Errol Lim	09/01
Maggie Marsden	09/01
Megan Metzler	09/01
Aaron Pold	09/01
Jeremiah Bull	09/02
Phillip Lawton	09/02
Linda Offner	09/02
Robin Repine	09/02
Neal Gerarde	09/05
Megan Hulick	09/05
Chip Fried	09/06
Janice Day	09/07
Tracy Shaffer	09/07
Stuart Enterline	09/08
Ralph Keller	09/08
Daniel Mountain	09/08
Janice Daeschner	09/09
Angela Giannamore	09/09
Tricia Lee McConnell	09/09
Sharon Bisbee	09/11
Dennis Morell	09/13
Emma Hess	09/15
Brenden Hoffer	09/15
Brittany Hooen	09/16
Julianna Ore	09/16
Adrienne Hess	09/17
Mary Smith	09/19
Jennifer Lyons	09/20
Laura Ellsworth	09/21
Lori Miller	09/21
Kara Monahan	09/22
Matthew Renshaw	09/22
Malissa Litz	09/23
Heather Houston	09/24
Adam Kupfer	09/24
Betsy Geer	09/25
Louise Giddings	09/25
Christopher McConnell	09/25
Janice Naglowsky	09/25
Daniel Goodman	09/26
David Adams	09/27
Matthew Killian	09/27
Nancy Pence	09/27
Sharon Pike	09/27
Michael Renshaw	09/28
Dennis Belknap Sr.	09/29
Roy Blair	09/29
Sarah Giannamore	09/30

United Women in Faith

UWIF will be meeting in September on Saturday, September 13 at 10 a.m. in the Library. We will be discussing the menu for Sunday Supper in October, and possible upcoming plans for fall and Advent.

We would like to request our wonderful bakers and desert makers in the church if they could kindly help us out with some simple to serve deserts for Sunday Supper on Sunday, October 5. Watch your bulletin for more information!



It is almost time for the 50th annual Erie County CROP Hunger Walk. This event raises money for people who struggle with hunger and poverty here in Erie County and around the world. 25% of funds collected will be used to address hunger issues in the Erie area. Last year, the Erie County Walk

raised a record \$88, 212!

The Walk is scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, September 28 and will begin at the Beach 1 Runner's Pavilion on Presque Isle. Our team will meet at 1:00 p.m. at the site.

Lakewood United Methodist Church has a team registered online, so please join our team or sponsor our team. You can register and/or donate by going to the following link: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/lakewood-united-methodist-church>

You can also do an online search for Erie County CROP Hunger Walk. Donation collection envelopes for interested walkers and additional details are also available from Chris Paul in church. If you are not walking, please consider sponsoring one of the Lakewood walkers or the Lakewood team.

Interested in a 50th anniversary Erie County CROP Walk t-shirt? See Chris Paul or email him at bertachris@yahoo.com. Shirts are \$15 and orders must be in before September 15.

AUGUST 2025 ATTENDANCE:

Average attendance for weekly in-person worship: 71

Average views of weekly livestream (Youtube): 44

Average weekly combined "attendance" for August: 115

Average weekly combined "attendance" to-date for 2025: 119

Church Council Update - September

Online Church Directory: Council has decided to move forward with developing an Online Church Directory that will allow members to access their personal profile at any time to update it as needed. Church members will be able to access this directory on our website to learn more about our members. Hard copies will be available for members who prefer a book. We will be compiling the directory in 3 phases.

- **Phase 1:** Create a QR code and provide members with access to the code to create their profile.
- **Phase 2:** Support members who attend in person church and were unable to use the QR code to create a profile.
- **Phase 3:** Support our homebound members with creating their profile.

Help Shape the Future of Our Faith Community!

We invite you to take part in a special Survey and Focus Group during our upcoming Pancake Breakfast! As part of our commitment to supporting your spiritual growth, our Church Council is seeking your input. This is your opportunity to share your thoughts, experiences, and ideas to help us better understand how we can walk alongside you in your faith journey.

When: September 21 at 10:30 a.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

What to Expect:

- Enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast
- Fill out a short, thoughtful survey
- Join an optional small group discussion to go a little deeper

Your voice matters—and your participation will help guide how we serve and support our church family moving forward. We hope you'll join us for food, fellowship, and faithful conversation!

The next Council meeting will be Thursday, September 11 at 6:30 p.m.



Erie City Mission volunteers needed: Are you looking for an opportunity to directly serve those in need? Lakewood volunteers are needed on Sunday, September 21 to help with preparing and serving a meal and providing fellowship at the Erie City Mission, 1023 French Street. There is a sign-up sheet in the church lobby. Contact Lisa Medina at Immedmex@aol.com if you have additional questions. Volunteers meet at about 9:15 a.m. at the City Mission (entrance behind the building). Volunteers are usually done by 12:30 or 1 p.m.. We usually need about 10-12 volunteers so please prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve.

If you are interested in helping with this ministry but are unable to serve on September 21, there will be one more opportunity to serve in 2025 on November 16.



Lakewood Youth News

Helping youth to discover, experience and know the
love and presence of Jesus Christ.

Meeting Schedule

Students in grades 5th – 12th are welcome to join us.

We will now be meeting every week! Come anytime!
Attendance is not mandatory.

September 7: Kick Off Sunday 10:30 am – 11:45 am

September 14: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

September 21: Pancake Breakfast at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

September 28: Crop Walk 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

October 5: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

October 12: Adventure Erie Mini Golf 12:00 – 2:30 pm

October 19: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

October 26: District Youth Fall Event - TBD

November 2: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

November 9: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

November 16: Event - TBD

November 23: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

November 30: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

December 7: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

December 14: Youth meeting at Lakewood 10:30 am – 11:45 am

December 21: Progressive Christmas Dinner 3:45 – 7:45 pm

*Dates and events are subject to change as opportunities arise or change.

Contact Information

For questions and concerns please contact us any time.

Jackie and Jeremiah Bull

Home: 814-833-4520

Call or Text: 814-323-6805

Email: missjackie77@hotmail.com