

# West Swamp News

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## A long tradition of service

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Ten Thousand Villages began when Edna Ruth Byler decided that women in Puerto Rico deserved the chance to send their daughters to school. They were embroidering linens to sell for that purpose. Byler brought their wares home to the US and started selling them out of the trunk of her car.

Out of that effort grew the Ten Thousand Villages stores we know today. And along that journey, volunteers have been vital to its operations.

Three or four times a year, West Swampers go to the warehouse in Brownstown to help process the hand-crafted items that come in from around 30 different countries. Turn to page 6 to see what the July 20 crew worked on when they were there.



## Pastor's Corner: Choosing a "life verse"

A project I have been working on this year is reading through the Bible. I've done this before but this trip is a little different. The copy of the Scriptures that I am reading through is called The Books of the Bible. It doesn't have any chapter or verse numbers in it, just the biblical text printed in a single column, so you tend to read bigger chunks of Scripture and notice repetition and themes a little easier.

The project of reading through the Bible has caused me to reflect some on my relationship with the Bible, and different parts of it. To me, the most important thing about the Bible is that it shows me who Jesus is. I don't value Jesus because he's mentioned in the Bible. Rather, I value the Bible because it reveals Jesus to me.

In my first year of college, I spent a semester in an intensive group Bible study led by the director of the campus ministry I was involved in. One of the things we were urged to do was to pick out one verse of Scripture that would be a theme verse for us—a "life verse" it was called. The verse that really captivated me at the time and for years afterward was Ephesians 2:13: "But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ."

Now, that's a really powerful sentence! It tells me about what my life used to be like—distant from and estranged my Creator. And it tells me about what my

life is like now—that a reunion with God has happened and I am now in close relationship to my Creator. And it tells me how the change was effected—that Jesus has brought me near to God through his blood. At 18, this seemed like everything I needed to know about life.

35 years later, I still think that all those things are true, and I am grateful that they are. But those three decades of life with Jesus have effected a change in me. The college freshman version of me was fairly self-centered, as 18-year olds have a tendency to be. Out of the whole of Scripture, the sentence that spoke most powerfully to me, that captivated my imagination the most, said something about...me.

Fortunately, and I am willing to give Jesus all the credit for this, things have changed since then. If I had to pick out a "life verse" now, it would be Galatians 5:13: "Serve one another humbly in love." One of the changes that 35

years have made in me (I feel like I should make some sort of remark here about it not being the years but instead the mileage) is to turn the focus of my gaze from myself to those around me.

These days, to me the best thing about knowing Jesus is not only that his fierce love has liberated me, but that he has set me free in order to love and serve my neighbor. A lot of days I still live as if the most important person in the world is me. But over time, there are more and more days when my focus is instead on those around me, and how I can make their lives better. And that feels like progress.

What is the growing edge of your life with God? Years ago in another congregation, I heard a church leader say that he had grown spiritually as much as he expected to, and the thought of that still makes me sad. Whatever your age or stage of life, there is still growing to do.

~ *Pastor Michael*

**SERVE ONE  
ANOTHER  
IN LOVE**  
GALATIANS 5:13

## A reminder from the Cemetery Committee

Thanks to the cemetery committee, Elaine Propst, the Stewardship Committee and the Ministry Team for working together to update the cemetery rules and regulations. There were several questions after the meeting and we want to clarify the answers.

1. If you already have a reserved plot there is NOTHING you need to do. There is NO further cost for the plot.
2. If you are an Active Member of the church you are entitled to a free plot in the cemetery. This is in effect until 12/31/2023. Beginning 1/1/2024 Active Members will be charged \$500 and Non-Members \$1500 to reserve a plot

Please note that each plot can include: One casket OR one casket and one cremation urn OR 2 cremation urns.

Any other questions please contact John Gwilliam, Jeff Rice or Matt Mood.

## Community: Senior Luncheons

This fall the popular Senior Luncheons will resume, so grab a friend and come join us! We're looking forward to seeing you for some good food and good fellowship.

Each month there will be sign-up sheets posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Room, with more details to follow.

~ *Nancy Jacobs*



## Worship: Men-O-Lan Sunday

Mark your calendar for Aug. 13, invite your friends and family, and join us at Men-O-Lan for a morning of worship and an afternoon of fun!

Important details:

- Solidarity & Harmony Church will join us once again. It has been a joy to see how their congregation has grown since we began our joint camp services in 2014. Let's have a good turnout from West Swamp 100!
- Worship will begin around 10:30 am.
- For lunch Solidarity & Harmony will bring main dishes; West Swamp is asked to bring sides and (mostly) desserts. Because of limited kitchen space, please bring anything that needs to stay cold in a cooler.
- Plan to stay for afternoon activities as we get to know each other better. Games, including corn hole, ladderball, soccer, and maybe even whiffle ball or softball, will be available.
- The lake will be open for paddle boat and canoe use. We will need an adult down at the lake to be in charge of the boat key. Or just visit the lake to enjoy some relaxing time in the gazebo or on the observation deck.
- It will be a fun and joyful day! Hope you can make it.

~ *Lynne Rush*



## Stewardship: Acts of stewardship around the pavilion

Many folks here at West Swamp have taken on tasks large and small to preserve and enhance the physical facilities we are blessed to worship in.

I hope you have taken notice of the appearance of the pavilion. Earlier in the summer Matt Mood and a couple of his farmer friends covered the existing shingle roof with a beautiful bronze metal roof. Not only did Matt and friends donate their labor, but Matt also picked up the cost of the roofing material. Thank you, Matt.

More recently, Don Butcher took on the task of applying a fresh coat of stain on the cedar planks and the picnic tables. What a difference that makes. I asked Don if there was stain left over from the last time the pavilion was stained. He said yes, I always leave a small amount of in the can so that I know exactly what I will need the next time. Spoken like a true steward. Thanks Don.

Want more on the pavilion? Several years ago, the AA group who meets in the pavilion asked if we would like them to power wash the concrete floor. We said, "Yes,

of course, and thank you very much!" After their Saturday morning meeting on July 22, I met the new chairwoman of their chapter and asked if they would be able to again do the power washing. She responded without hesitation, yes.

That will make three acts of stewardship around a seemingly small physical feature that God continues to use in furtherance of his kingdom.

~ **Randy Rush**  
**Moderator Deacon,**  
**Stewardship Commission**

## Celebrate with Windy Springs!

We congratulate the Mood family on the Grand Opening of their year-round Windy Springs Farm Stand. What a joy to see this 5th generation farm thriving!

May God continue to bless them as they run the farm as

faithful stewards of all God has given them.



## Let's show some gratitude!

Let's show our gratitude for the helping hands that completed a West Swamp project:

### **Pavilion Roofing:**

Dwight, Cody, and Ryan Weisel  
2246 Keiper Rd  
Quakertown, PA 18951

Tom Mood  
1845 Myers Rd  
Quakertown, PA 18951

Matt and Eli Mood  
1851 Myers Rd  
Quakertown, PA 18951

### **Pavilion Power-washing:**

Ron Ware (brother-in-law of Matt Mood)  
2031 Rosedale Rd  
Quakertown, PA 18951

Case Mood  
1851 Myers Rd  
Quakertown, PA 18951

### **Pavilion Painting:**

Don Butcher  
PO Box 56  
Milford Square, PA 18935





## Mission: Service trip to Ten Thousand Villages

A group of six people participated in the July service trip to the Brownstown warehouse. They spent the day putting price tags on three items from the artisan cooperative Mitra Bali, based in Indonesia.

Located on the island of Bali, the organization was formed in 1993 to support poor artisans facing ruin because well-established businesses controlled prices and monopolized the burgeoning Bali tourism market. The cooperative only works with producers who support gender equity, provide healthy working conditions, use environmentally sustainable materials, and do not exploit child labor or women.

Mitra Bali helps artisans during periods of low orders with no-interest loans and the loaning of cows. Mitra Bali also supports a reforestation program, an environmental initiative, as well as an effort to prevent artisans from selling their land. Ten Thousand Villages has purchased from Mitra Bali since 1989.

Gender equality is one of the principles of fair trade. And because a patriarchal ideology still exists in the Bali island, Mitra Bali artisan group has committed to providing opportunities to marginalized women of this region, many of whom have been victims of domestic abuse.

These three items—the Summer Groove Thumb Piano, Yellow



Hummingbird Mosaic Ornament and Tangled Up Cat Ornament—are just some of the products that Mitra Bali teaches women to create so that they can grow to become self-reliant.

Each trip out to the Warehouse involves different tasks and different products. Volunteers work at their own pace. If you've never gone on one of the trips, the Mission Commission encourages you to give it a try. The next service trip will be in October. Watch for the sign up sheet at the beginning of the month.









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Reflecting God in our  
living, loving and serving



### August

8/2 Bonnie Kiesel  
Gary Parzych  
8/4 Ben Rush  
8/7 Jeff Rice  
8/9 Marsha High  
Carl Raub  
8/15 Anita Husvar  
8/16 Christine Allem  
8/20 Karen Parzych  
8/22 Katie Mood  
8/23 Darlene Deecher  
8/29 Lynne Rush  
8/31 Elizabeth Deecher

### September

9/1 Ashlynn Rice  
9/2 Loretta Keiser  
9/9 Margaret Marth  
9/10 Joslyn Kirkpatrick  
9/15 Marlene Stauffer  
9/16 Dana Searfass  
9/18 Ann Stauffer  
9/19 Doug Propst  
Alyana Riley  
9/20 Jason Kirkpatrick  
9/23 Donnie Aldinger  
9/26 Emily Rush  
9/27 Joan Hallman  
9/28 John Gwilliam