

# The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

**From Pastor Lisa Schrott**



## INSIDE this issue

- **Save the Dates**—page 2
- **Adult Education & Fellowship Opportunities**—pages 4 & 5
- **Opportunity to Serve**—page 5
- **Missions**—page 6
- **Life at PCO in Pictures**—page 7
- **About the Heidelberg Catechism**—page 8
- **Church Calendar**—page 9 (*can also be viewed online at <https://okemospres.org/calendar>*)

As members of The Presbyterian Church of Okemos,  
We believe that in life, in death, and life beyond death,  
We belong to God.

The Church exists to invite everyone to join the  
lifelong journey of faith that is life in Jesus Christ.

Through worship that glorifies God,  
Study that seeks to understand God,  
Service to a world that needs God,  
We desire to build a network of caring relationships  
Between families, friends, and strangers  
By offering welcome, healing, justice and peace to all  
in the name of Jesus Christ.

Worship. Study. Serve. Care. Invite. Welcome. Build. Heal. The actions we are called to in our Mission Statement flow from our belief that in all things and at all times, we belong to God. Our sure and certain knowledge of this belonging opens our hearts, our arms and our voices to be Christ's hands and feet on earth. This belonging gives us both our marching orders and our wings to fly.

Worship this fall will be oriented around our Mission Statement. Using texts from Old and New Testaments, we will delve more deeply into the statement, seeking a deeper understanding of where and how we are being called to serve God as we move into our 60<sup>th</sup> year and beyond.

The emphasis on our Mission Statement will also help us set the stage for a strategic visioning process this fall. Everyone will be invited to participate in this process through structured conversations, meetings, and surveys. It will be led by a leadership team: Emily Conroy-Krutz and Jeff Arbour (co-chairs), Catherine Holdway, Doug Paterson, Matt Pearson, and myself as members. We will share a bit about this process on our **Kick-off Sunday, September 10**. We hope Kick-off Sunday will be an opportunity for longtime members and new members of our community to worship and fellowship together. We especially invite families for this fun Sunday!

**See list of activities on page 2**

**Kick-off Sunday on September 10**

- **Worship.** Westin Sorrel will be leading our Chancel Choir! Explore our call to *Study that seeks to understand God*, with texts from the book of Psalms and Paul's letter to the Romans.
- **Blessing of the Backpacks.** Students of all ages, teachers, faculty, school administrators and all those who nurture our study are invited to bring your backpacks or school bags for a special blessing.
- **Chicago Youth Mission Trip Presentation.** Youth who participated in the Praying Pelicans Mission Trip in Chicago will share about their experiences. You don't want to miss this!
- **Fellowship Lunch.** Featuring Chicago-style hot dogs and pizza in celebration of the youth mission trip.

**Save The Dates**

**Saturday, September 9**

**9:00 — 10:30 a.m.**

**Suicide Awareness Training** (ages 14 and up)

**11:00 a.m.—12 noon**

**CPR/AED Training** (compression training only)

You may attend one or both trainings.

To register, please contact Pastor Lisa or the church office.

**\*\*\*\*\* Saturday, September 16 \*\*\*\*\***

**8:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m.**

**PCO Hosts the Lake Michigan Presbytery**

Volunteers are needed to work the registration table and provide hospitality.

Ushers and greeters are also needed for the worship service.

If you'd like to volunteer or have questions, please contact Pastor Lisa or the church office.

**Saturday, September 30**

**Mission Trip to Cass Community Services**

See e-Announcements for more details.

**Sunday, October 8**

**Greater Lansing Community CROP Walk**

If you are interested in serving as PCO's CROP Walk coordinator

or part of a coordinating team, please contact Pastor Lisa.

**(More information on page 6)**

## Welcome Westin Sorrel!

PCO's new Chancel Choir Director Westin Sorrel arrived in August. He is currently pursuing a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting at Michigan State University.

Prior to arriving in Michigan, Westin was located in Denver, Colorado where he taught choir and music theory at Dakota Ridge High School. He also served as the assistant director and tenor section leader for the Chancel Choir at Bethany Lutheran Church. In addition to conducting and teaching, Westin was active in the Denver professional choral community having regularly sung with Colorado Bach Ensemble, Anima Chamber Ensemble, and St. Martin's Chamber Choir.

He is a graduate of the School of Music at Colorado State University holding a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Music Education.

He and his dog Brody, a Labrador Retriever, are settling in to their new home in Lansing. Westin was introduced to the congregation during the Children's Sermon on Sunday, August 20. He briefly discussed his background and the possibility of occasionally adding some percussion to the Special Music.

Westin comes to PCO following the departure of Dr. Colleen Chester, who is now Director of Choirs at Winona State University in Minnesota.



*PCO Chancel Choir Director  
Westin Sorrel*

Thanks

### A Special Thank You to the PCO Staff

Over the past few months, we have experienced a season of transition in our music ministry and pastoral staff. During this time, **Edward**, **Anna**, and **Marlene** have shouldered some extra responsibility, and done so with excellence and grace. With my deep appreciation, and on behalf of the Personnel Committee, I want to acknowledge their significant ministry to the church. When you see them around, please add your thanks as well.

*Pastor Lisa*

## Update From the Stewardship Committee

As of July 31, 2023, the General Fund Balance for the operating budget of PCO stood at a healthy \$92,118. Giving as of July totaled \$277,362, (62% of the budgeted giving of \$446,470).

The Stewardship Committee wishes to thank the congregation for its continued support of our staff, property, programs and mission giving.

As a reminder, to save resources and money, PCO is now sending giving statements electronically. If you have any questions or did not receive a statement, please contact the church office at *office at okemospres dot org* (standard email setup) or 517-349-9536.

Thanks again!

## Please Join Us!

### Fall Kick-off Sunday—September 10

- \* Blessing of the Backpacks
- \* Presentation from Youth Mission Trip to Chicago
- \* Fellowship Lunch with Chicago-style hot dogs and pizza



## Conversation & Contemplation Class

The C&C Group will meet on Wednesdays from 10:00-11:30am. Our first class is **September 6, 2023** on Zoom #905-709-104 password 48864. We plan to continue on Zoom as we have several members who are unable to join in person. If you need assistance in order to join us, please contact a group member. We can pair you with someone to attend the session with or help you with your own device.

Our first session will include sharing updates on what is going on in our lives, participating in a discussion about the fall agenda, meditation, prayer and contemplation using Lectio Divina. We hope you will drop by and see who we are and how the group inspires us in our faith journey.

A few of the group members are listed below if you have questions and would like to talk with someone. Their info is in the church directory.

Jane Bobay, Jill Schaberg, Jennifer Gordon, Katie Norton, Michele Arbor, and Barbara Dorr

## Retiree Group

The "Retiree Group" meets at noon on **the third Monday of each month. (Note: This is a new Monday of the month!)** If you are retired, semi-retired, retired but returned to work, or want to be retired, please feel free to join us. We meet in person in the fall and spring and on Zoom during the winter months. We usually have a topic to discuss and sometimes invite a guest to facilitate our discussion on a particular area of interest.

Please feel free to bring a snack or lunch, a lawn chair during nice weather, and a desire to have fellowship with other PCO folks. We will meet in Fellowship Hall if the weather is uncooperative.

See you on **September 18, 2023** at noon.

## Caregivers Support Group

This support group is for those who are experiencing changes in their lives due to health issues of a loved one. This may mean redefining roles, new responsibilities, uncertainty about the future, caring for the needs of others, or any number of situations. Please join us on Zoom for a monthly discussion. It is an open format and topics vary depending on needs of individuals in the group.

The group meets at **5:00 p.m.** on the fourth Wednesday of each month on Zoom #517-329-2320, password is hello. Please join us on **September 27, 2023** for our next meeting.

**More Group Details on Next Page**

## Adult Christian Education & Fellowship

**Password for Zoom meetings unless otherwise noted is 48864.** *Days and times subject to change. Please watch Friday e-Announcements for changes.*

### SUNDAYS

**Adult Education**—Weekly, 11:30 a.m., in person & on Zoom 434 304 558 (*check the Sunday bulletin for topics. Enjoy a time of fellowship after worship when no adult ed is scheduled*)

**Writing Life's Stories** — 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays, **2:00 p.m.**, Zoom 848 6124 7191— **next meeting is Sunday, September 3rd.**

**Birthday Cake Sunday**—3rd Sundays following worship unless otherwise noted. This month will be on **September 17th.**

**Women's Connection**— 4th Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in Room 108. This month will be on **September 24th.**

### MONDAYS

**Retirees** — Noon at PCO on **3rd Mondays** (this is a new day). Next meeting is **Monday, September 18th.**

**Women's Dinner Out**— **Monday, September 11 at 5:30 p.m.** at Noosh Afghan Cuisine, 603 N. Waverly Rd in Lansing.

### TUESDAYS

**Men's Group** — Weekly, 8:00 a.m. Zoom 813 7514 8286. **Hybrid (In-person and on Zoom) 1st Tuesdays - this month Tuesday, September 5th.**

**PCO Crafts Ministry**— **3rd Tuesdays** at 6:00 p.m., Board Room-**next meeting is September 19th**

**Artists Circle**-*Watch the weekly Announcements for artists' gatherings.*

### WEDNESDAYS

**Conversation & Contemplation**—Weekly, 10:00 a.m. Zoom 905-709-104

**Caregiver Support Group** - **4th Wednesdays** 5:00 p.m. Next Meeting is **September 27** on Zoom 517 329 2320; password is hello

### THURSDAYS

**Bible Study** — Weekly, 9:30 a.m.  
Zoom <https://msu.zoom.us/j/5147440526>

**More Group Details on Next Page**

## Opportunity to Serve—Usher Coordinator

PCO is in need of a new **Usher Coordinator**. It has been an honor and a privilege for the past many years to be the Usher Coordinator here. It is now time to pass the job on to somebody new. Many of the ushers are lifers also, so if any of you wants this job, please let me know.

Usher Coordinator is just a matter now of checking with the ushers to see if they are coming back for another year, and lining up ushers for special occasions like Christmas Eve and funerals .

If you are interested in this position, please let me know and I will fill you in with more details.

**Trudy Sturk.**



### Super Special Spiritual Souls (S4) Link Group & Youth Groups

The Link Group, facilitated by Jane Bobay, will serve a 3:30 p.m. meal at the Advent House on **Saturday, September 16**. The food will be provided by members and the PCO Youth will decorate cookies and help serve the Taco Meal. Plan to arrive at the Advent House at 2:00 p.m. and serve the meal at 3:30 p.m. on that day. Carpooling from PCO can be arranged. Please contact Jane or a youth leader if you have questions.



### Women's Dinner Out

The next Women's Dinner Out is scheduled for **Monday, September 11 at 5:30 p.m.** **Noosh Afghan Cuisine**, 603 N. Waverly Rd, Lansing 48917.

If you will be attending, please notify Candy Boldrey by Sunday, September 10. Her email address is *cbold67 at gmail dot com* (standard email set up) and phone number is 859-421-0014.

## Results of the Firearm Safety Taskforce Questionnaire

In August, PCO's Firearm Safety Taskforce conducted a survey regarding possible future topics for education and advocacy to guide our work. Thank you to the 49 individuals who completed the survey!

Based on the data, the Taskforce will be looking for opportunities to provide more information about these topics, which were deemed the highest priority by those taking the survey:

- Restricting the purchase of assault weapons and limiting magazine capacity
- Protecting domestic violence survivors
- Prohibiting guns in areas that are sensitive for families
- Prohibiting guns in sensitive areas for our democracy
- Establishing a waiting period for gun purchases

The Taskforce very much appreciates the comments that were included with the survey. We will continue to recognize the variety of viewpoints on many of these issues, and to work to ensure that views from responsible gun owners are included in the conversation. The taskforce will also seek to partner with community organizations which are addressing gun violence, mental health issues, and reduction of self-harm. Finally, there was interest in learning more about gun buy-back programs.

### Birthday Cake Sunday

In September, we will celebrate Birthday Cake Sunday on **Sunday, September 17**.

If you celebrate your birthday in September, please check the Birthday List posted on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall and add your name by Sunday, Sept. 10th if it is not there. Happy Birthday, Dear Virgos & Libras!

### Women's Connection

**Women's Connection** will happily resume after the summer break on **Sunday, September 24, 12:30 p.m. in Room 108**.

Please plan now to join us as we re-connect over lunch and sharing of what has happened throughout the Covid period and the summer.

Questions: Shirley Rumminger 655-4123 or *srumminger at yahoo dot com* (standard email set up)

## CROP Walk 2023

The 47th Annual CROP Walk will happen on **Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>** at 2:00 p.m. at Grace United Methodist Church in Lansing. We will have a group from PCO walking together on that Sunday. If for any reason that day/time does not work for you, you can walk anytime and anywhere you want for “Your CROP Walk.” You can also “rock” in a rocking chair for your Crop Walk.

You can sign up online at: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/team/presbyterian-church-of-okemos>. We will also have sign-ups in fellowship hall on several Sundays in September. Watch for more details in church announcements and on the PCO Webpage. See Kent Workman for questions.



## Public Policy Report By Ellen Hoekstra

At the international level, one country with political upheaval has been Kenya, where 13 counties have experienced police violence against demonstrators protesting rising prices of food and gas. News reports have reported fatalities as a result of these protests, linked to the opposition party.

As unfortunate as this is, the good news is that the area around Simbolei Girls Preparatory Academy, including the nearest city (Eldoret), has remained peaceful. PCO has long supported this school with financial and material gifts, and during mission trips.

At the state level, the most significant recent issue was the finalization of the state budget. Warning: many of the increases for human service needs and education may be one-time increases because Michigan has spent the last of its federal pandemic funding.

Some items of note in the state budget for 2023-2024:

- \$10 million for a respite care program so that foster parents can have occasional, temporary relief.
- \$4.9 million over two years for Double-Up Food Bucks programs, such as Meridian Farmers' Market's, to increase access to fresh produce for people on food assistance.
- Free breakfast and lunch in K-12 schools, 5,600 more free pre-K slots, and additional funding for special education, at-risk students, and English language learners.
- \$45 million to improve facilities for school based health services and other budgetary increases to increase access to mental health services, such as developing a new pediatric psychiatric urgent care center.
- Funding to support loan assistance to attract and retain behavioral health professionals (\$10 million) and to continue to implement a behavioral health crisis and support call center for individuals and families (\$3 million).
- Free air purifiers for K-12 schools—this spring the CDC updated guidelines for air exchanges in schools to limit the spread of illnesses and protect against allergens and wildfire smoke.

Other items of interest:

- Michigan is doing better than many other states in retaining Medicaid coverage for participants now required to meet annual eligibility redeterminations. For one thing, there is additional outreach to people who did not respond to renewal requests.
- The Governor has appointed Phil Roos as director of the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, succeeding Dan Eichinger who resigned in April.
- A 5 bill package (HB 4120-4125) has been signed into law to expand protections against abuse for students in schools, colleges and universities. Some components include increasing the professions for which reporting is mandatory and creating training materials for mandatory reporters.
- Michigan's lieutenant governor (Garlin Gilcrist) has been elected as chair-elect of the bi-partisan National Lieutenant Governor's Association.



## Life at PCO in Pictures

*As the Summer of 2023 winds down, PCO members and friends continue going 'Out on the Town' and enjoying fellowship around the church building and grounds.*



*Clockwise from the top left—  
Two activities selected by the  
Parish Life Committee to promote as  
'Out on the Town' events were Faith  
and Family Night at Jackson Field in  
Lansing and the Meridian Township  
Pride Festival at Marketplace on the  
Green in Okemos.*

*During a Sunday evening of  
games and s'mores in the church  
yard, youth, parents and members of  
the CYCE Committee made plans for  
the upcoming school year and be-  
yond.*



## BOOK NOOK

*By Ron Dorr*

### The Heidelberg Catechism In The Book of Confessions

After Pastor Lisa's sermon, "Belonging to God," on August 20, the Affirmation of Faith included these words from the Heidelberg Catechism:

Q: What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

A: That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful savior, Jesus Christ. . . . Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Here "comfort" means not only strength but also exhortation and challenge. "With the encouragement of comfort," Karl Barth has written, "we are set on our feet. . . . The content of Christian doctrine is that it gives this comfort." Who is the comforter? God in Christ. Who is comforted? Sinful creatures who no longer belong to themselves but to Jesus Christ. And what is true in life? This invigorating comfort given from God. The tone in the first answer in the Heidelberg Catechism is warm and reassuring, yet the task of living is not to lie under an electric blanket but to live in the light of a crucified and resurrected Lord.



*Zachartas Ursinus*

The Heidelberg Catechism is one of 11 confessions of faith in Part I, The Book of Confessions, in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church. Written by theologians Zachartas Ursinus, 28, and Caspar Olevianus, 26, in 1563, it captures the Reformed side of Protestantism stemming from Calvin and Luther. Here, according to Shirley Guthrie, Jr., "the Reformed Church confesses the good news of Jesus Christ in a joyful, thankful, free, personal way."



*Caspar Olevianus*

The Heidelberg confession was designed for several purposes: to crystallize Christian doctrine, to teach the young, to be read in public worship, and in its 52 sections to provide themes for a sermon every Sunday. It contains three parts: human misery, redemption, and gratitude. This summary of Reformed doctrine comes in questions and answers.

Q: 88 How many parts are there to true repentance or conversion of man?

A: Two, the dying of the old self and the birth of the new.

Included in the Catechism are explanations of the Apostles' Creed (questions 23-58), baptism and the Lord's Supper (66-82), Ten Commandments (92-115), and Lord's Prayer (116-129).

Following the introduction on comfort and belonging, content as well as tone is soothing and bracing and tonic. The key motifs are truth, community, morality, and gratitude. Life is troubling and adverse, human relations are "poisoned," and "by nature I am prone to hate God and my neighbor." The authors of this confession of faith take sin seriously but devote only two pages (nine questions) to human misery. Twelve pages (74 questions) concentrate on redemption and another seven pages (44 questions) on gratitude. "True faith" is trust and knowledge, redemption and righteousness. The essence of Christian belief here is the Apostles' Creed, which concentrates on God in Christ. Much of this theological exposition is dense, old-fashioned, even unfashionable. Membership in Christian fellowship is paradoxical yet exhilarating. Some phrasing is exquisite. Homely analogies clarify the two sacraments of baptism and communion, distinguishing their meaning from that of Roman Catholicism. This Catechism does not try to be inclusive.

"Thankfulness" is the revealing title and content of the last part of the Catechism. Redeemed by Christ and renewed by the Holy Spirit, we are to "show ourselves grateful to God for his goodness." "Good works" are done "out of true faith," in obedience to the Law of God. The explanations of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer are the most illuminating and helpful parts of this confession of faith (e.g., the fourth commandment). Like the rest of the Catechism, they are usually brief, clear, and restrained. Knowing that we are imperfect and that we cannot keep the commandments, however, will lead us to more diligent prayer. And prayer, "the chief part of the gratitude that God requires of us," ultimately takes us back to the first question and answer in the Heidelberg Catechism. Whose we are is more important than who or what we are.



# September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - No Adult Ed 2pm - Writing Life's	4	5 8am - Men's Group @ 5pm - Adult Education	6 10am - Conversation and 11am - Staff Meeting 5:30pm - Worship and 7pm - Parish Life @ <a href="https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/">https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/</a>	7 9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	8	9 9am - Suicide Awareness 11am - CPR Training
10 10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 4pm - Middle School 5pm - High School Youth	11 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	12 8am - Men's Group @ 6pm - Administration 7:30pm - Communication	13 10am - Conversation and 11am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Mission Committee 7:30pm - CECY	14 9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	15	16 9:30am - Presbytery
17 10am - Worship Service 11am - Birthdays 11:30am - Sunday Adult 4pm - Middle School 5pm - High School Youth	18 12pm - Retirees at PCO 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	19 8am - Men's Group @ 6pm - PCO Crafts 7pm - Deacons @ <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pcocrafts/">https://www.facebook.com/pcocrafts/</a>	20 10am - Conversation and 11am - Staff Meeting 7pm - Session @ <a href="https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/">https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/</a>	21 9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 12:30pm - Women's 4pm - Middle School 5pm - High School Youth	25 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	26 8am - Men's Group @	27 10am - Conversation and 11am - Staff Meeting 5pm - Caregiver Support	28 9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	29	30 8am - Mission Trip to

## Presbyterian Church of Okemos

2258 Bennett Road  
Okemos, MI 48864  
Phone: (517) 349-9536  
[www.okemospres.org](http://www.okemospres.org)

*The Grapevine* is a monthly newsletter of  
*The Presbyterian Church of Okemos*

**Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M.**

**Staff**

*REV. DR. LISA SCHROTT*, PASTOR/HEAD OF STAFF

*DR. MARLENE BREWBAKER*, ORGANIST

*WESTIN SORREL*, CHOIR DIRECTOR

*IRENE SHUTT*, BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

*EDWARD ENNEN*, SEXTON

*ANNA THIEL*, OFFICE MANAGER

Phone: 517-349-9536

<https://instagram.com/okemospres>

<https://www.facebook.com/OkemosPresbyterian/>

Website: <https://okemospres.org>

Email: [office@okemospres.org](mailto:office@okemospres.org)

