

The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

From Pastor Lisa Schrott

Fall Back Into Rhythm: Worship, Fellowship, Study, Renewal & Hope!

As much as I enjoy the more relaxed rhythm of summer here at PCO, there is a certain anticipatory excitement as we begin the new program year. Some of you have been here throughout the summer and are eager to see returning faces. Some have been away for the season, or pieces of the season, and this moment marks a gentle turning—a return to beloved community, shared worship, and renewed purpose.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 will be our Fall Kick-Off Sunday:

The Chancel Choir will return under new leadership: Shelby Laird has joined the PCO staff as our new Choir Director. If you have had an itch to share your voice in glorifying God, this is a great opportunity to do so. The first choir rehearsal is September 4.

Education Hour resumes! Members of the mission team that visited the Simbolei Academy in Iten, Kenya will share their experiences. Snacks reflective of foods from Africa will be shared. Activities for all-ages will be provided.

Youth Group Fall Kick-Off from 5- 7 p.m. We invite all middle and high school youth and their parents to join us for a cook-out and games. We will also work on a mediation for the new Prayer Path behind the church.

Journey to 2030 Vision.

As we have been planning for the fall, staff and committees have been working hard to incorporate elements of the Journey to 2030 Vision into the life of the church. You can see the full version on our website at okemospres.org/our-mission/. Below are the tagline highlights of the vision and some upcoming programs of interest. And while you are checking out the vision, it is a great time to explore our website which was recently refreshed by Carl Lira, Gabrielle Ghosh, and Lucas Meland. Thanks be to God for the gifts they have shared!

PCO is and will be:

A welcoming congregation where meaningful connections are made.

New Member Class. Interested in becoming a member of PCO or learning more about connecting to our shared life? Join me after worship on September 14 for our next new member class.

Intentional Fellowship Sundays. On October 12, November 9, and December 21 we will enjoy a dedicated fellowship time during the education hour.

Welcome Team. Join the PCO Welcome Team and help us connect visitors and integrate newer members into the life of the church.

Cont. on next page



In This Issue

- *A special Thank You—pg. 2*
- *Youth Calendar—pg. 3*
- *Fellowship Opportunities—pgs. 3 & 4*
- *Missions—pgs. 5 & 6*
- *Book Discussion and Library News—pg. 7*
- *Scenes from Summer— pg. 8*
- *Book Nook—pg. 9*

**Deadline for the October Grapevine is
Monday, September 22nd.**

Cont. from previous page

PCO is and will be:

A congregation that is intergenerationally inclusive.

Intergenerational Bible Study for Middle and High School Youth and Adults will return. The fall the focus is on the New Testament. Class will meet on Sunday mornings at 11:30 am in the Board Room

All-Ages Education Sundays on September 7 and November 23.

Intergenerational Mission Opportunities: Cass Mission Trip to Detroit on October 4 and CROP Walk on October 12 are great ways to serve our neighbors and region. More details on page 6.

A congregation actively building partnerships.

Trunk or Treat with Okemos Community Church (OCC). Join us on Sunday, October 26 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Get your creative juices flowing and decorate the trunk of your car. Candy will be provided. Interested in helping to plan? Contact Pastor Lisa.

Refugee Partner Celebrations. PCO has long supported welcoming new neighbors to the greater Lansing area. On October 4, Catholic Charities (St. Vincent's) will celebrate their 50th anniversary. The Global Institute of Lansing (GIL), which PCO helped birth, will celebrate 15 years of providing a path to high school graduation for the refugee community on October 17.

Mission Partners. This fall we will celebrate 20 years of supporting the Haiti Nursing Foundation on September 26, continued work with PeaceQuest, with the Mission Committee leading worship on October 5, and UKIRK Trivia night returns on Friday, November 14.

Our church is more than a building; it is the gathering place for those seeking connection, meaning-making in a chaotic world, and transformation. The walls have listened to prayers whispered in sorrow and songs lifted in celebration. They have witnessed the journey of generations. If you are searching for a place to belong or a way to share your gifts, please reach out to me. No offering is too small; every act of love enriches the life of our church. Together, we are part of something larger than ourselves, shaped by hope and sustained by grace.

Pastor Lisa

Fall Back into Rhythm

Sunday, September 7

Worship @ 10:00 with Communion

Chancel Choir Returns

The Economics of Justice:

Living in Covenantal Community

Intergenerational Education Hour

Presentation by the

Simbolei Academy Mission Team

Featuring African snacks

Thank You

Dear Pastor Lisa & Friends at the Presbyterian Church of Okemos,

Thank you all so much for the outpouring of love, cards and prayers for Elaine and I during the past couple of months.

We wish to thank you especially for the beautiful service honoring my father, Mack Davis, and for the wonderful reception that followed.

To those that contributed to funds in memory of my dad, we also extend a heartfelt thank you.

You are a very kind and caring congregation.

**Love from Elaine Davis
and Laura Safran**

New Member Class

Sunday, September 14
11:30 a.m.
following worship



Want to learn more about becoming a member of the Presbyterian Church of Okemos (PCO)?

Join Pastor Lisa for a time of conversation and information. Questions welcome!

There will be an opportunity to join the church following the class. Please contact the church office or Pastor Lisa for more information.

Retirees in September

The Retiree group continues to meet the third Monday of the month at noon in Fellowship Hall. **September 15** is our next meeting. Please bring your sack lunch or snack to enjoy during the discussion. On September 15, we invite each attendee to share their favorite book, movie, series or television program that they enjoyed this summer. This group is open to anyone who is retired, semi-retired, or is a retiree wannabe.

Website Refresh

The PCO website has a new look! Thanks to Carl Lira, Lucas Meland, and Gabrielle Ghosh for their work on this project.

If you are looking for particular content, search using the magnifying glass in the header.

Recent services are being restored gradually in reverse chronological order, and the complete list can be found at <https://youtube.com/@okemospres>.

Taking place in September:



Online Directory Reminder

The current church directory is available from the instant church directory app (recommended) or website (<https://instantchurchdirectory.com>).

Create a password by entering your email address used within the directory. Update your photo or information using the menu or by sending updates to the church office.

More info is available on a poster in Fellowship Hall.

Caregiver Support Group

Caregivers meet the fourth Monday of each month at 5:00pm on Zoom #892-3955-1708. This is a time to share joys and concerns and offer resources and support to one another as we care for a loved one in new ways.

There is no meeting agenda so discussion topics vary each month. Connections to the loved one varies, be it a spouse, parent, child, or friend. This group is open to anyone and if connecting to zoom is keeping you away, please let Jane Bobay know and she will connect you to a member who can help.

YOUTH CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2025

MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL COMBINED

5 – 7 PM

SEPTEMBER 7: KICK-OFF SUNDAY

COOK-OUT, GAMES AND A PRAYER PATH MEDITATION

SEPTEMBER 14: CROP WALK T-SHIRT TIE-DYING

SEPTEMBER 21 & 28: TRUNK OR TREAT PLANNING

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OCTOBER:

OCTOBER 4: INTERGENERATIONAL CASS MISSION IN DETROIT 9AM-6PM

OCTOBER 12: CROP WALK 2PM

OCTOBER 26: TRUNK OR TREAT AT PCO 4- 6 PM

Women's Dinner Out

The next Women's Dinner Out is scheduled for **Monday, September 8** at One North at 1310 Abbot Road in East Lansing (old Reno's location). We will meet at 5:00p.m. Please RSVP To Barb Hoevel by Sunday, September 7 via text or phone—517 927-6311.

Birthday Cake Sunday

We will celebrate our September Birthdays on **Sunday, September 21**. you were born in September, please check the list posted on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall and add your name by Sunday, September 14, if it is not already there.

Conversation and Contemplation

The C&C group will have their first fall meeting on **Wednesday, September 10** at 10:00 a.m. This will be on Zoom #905-709-104. Jayne will facilitate the session. Michele will lead us in a meditation from "Pray as You Go". An overview of the plans for the fall and an extended time for sharing our experiences from the summer hiatus will follow.

On **Wednesday, September 17**, the group will meet in person at the church in Fellowship Hall from 10:00 a.m. to noon. We welcome anyone who is interested in seeing the different ways that C&C practices help us grow spiritually. Please join us for a time of fellowship with coffee and muffins. A meditative walk on the new PCO Prayer Path will be followed by Lectio Divina, led by Charlie. We will introduce *Sacred Balance: How Ancient Practices Can Restore Modern Minds* by Miriam Diephouse-McMillan, the book selected for our fall study. The books have been ordered through Schuler's Book Club and will be available soon.

The 17th will be an opportunity to get acquainted with group members and the spiritual practices that are apart of our Wednesday morning gatherings. We will have a sign-up for Zoom partners, for those who wish to attend the meetings in someone's home and share their zoom screen. This is a perfect alternative if "Zooming" is not for you!

Women's Connection

We will re-connect after our summer hiatus on **Sunday, September 28** at 12:30 p.m. All women are invited for lunch and a time of fellowship. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us

Watch for details in the weekly e-Announcements. Questions? Contact Shirley Ruminger at 517- 655-4123.

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—On hiatus for the summer.

Writing Life's Stories – 1st Sundays, **2:00 p.m.**, Zoom 848 6124 7191— September meeting is on the 7th.

Birthday Cake Sunday—3rd Sundays following worship unless otherwise noted. This month will be on September 21.

Women's Connection— 4th Sundays September— November and January—May. This month will be on September 28.

MONDAYS

Women's Dinner Out— **1 st Monday unless otherwise noted.** September meeting will be on Monday, September 8 due to Labor Day Holiday

Retirees – Regularly scheduled on the 3rd Monday of the month at 12:00 noon

TUESDAYS

Men's Group – Weekly, 8:00 a.m. Zoom 813 7514 8286. **Hybrid** (In-person and on Zoom) this month is **Tuesday, September 2.**

PCO Crafts Ministry— Monthly, 1st Tuesdays, Fellowship Hall. Next meeting is Tuesday, September 2.

Artists Circle—Monthly, 2nd Tuesdays. Confirm with Eunice Creswell (contact info in the directory).

WEDNESDAYS

Conversation & Contemplation—Resumes on Wednesday, September 10. See info on left about plans for fall.

Caregiver Support Group - 4th Wednesdays, **September 24th.** 5:00 p.m. on Zoom. This group has a new Zoom number: **892 3955 1708** and **password: 48864**

THURSDAYS

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

More info Fellowship Opportunities details on page 3.



Simbolei Academy Mission Team Presentation

Sunday, September 7

following worship

Food and Activities for All Ages!



Upcoming Fall Fundraisers



The Haiti Nursing Foundation says *Cheers to 20 Years: Honoring the Past, Fueling the Future*. The event takes place on **Friday, September 26 from 5:30—8:30 p.m.** at The Kensington Hotel, 3500 South State Street in Ann Arbor. The evening will include dinner and drinks, live music and inspiring tributes. Tickets are \$150 per person or \$1100 for a table of 8. Tickets can be purchased online at haitinursing.org

Catholic Charities of Ingham, Eaton & Clinton Counties celebrates 50 years of Refugee Resettlement on **Saturday, October 4 from 2:00—5:00 p.m.** at the St. Vincent Campus Children's Home Gym, 2800 Willow Street in Lansing. This event is free to attendees and will include food tasting, dancing, testimonials and more. For more information, contact Kwach Kwan Abwol at 517-853-2215 or [kabwol at catholiccharitiesiec dot org](mailto:kabwol@catholiccharitiesiec.org) (standard email setup).



EVE (End Violent Encounters) invites all to An Evening Out on **Thursday, October 23 beginning at 6:00 p.m.** The event will include food, entertainment and a silent auction throughout the evening. Details and tickets are available by calling Kaitlin Reinke at 517-599-9071.

Save the Date!

PCO will be hosting the annual **Alternative Christmas Market** in fellowship hall on **Saturday, November 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Some of your favorite vendors will be participating again, as well as 4 new charitable groups will be selling unique items. Details will be coming in the next Grapevine. —

Jayne Zuhlke



Missions & More

Mission Trip Cass Community Services in Detroit October 4, 2025



Join us, as we support the mission of Cass: **providing basic needs** including food, affordable housing, health care, employment, and encouraging community involvement and improvement. This year we will be painting the exterior of their warehouse.

Adults as well as middle and high school youth are welcome to participate. If accompanied by an adult family member, upper elementary children are also welcome.

Sign-up sheets are in the publications rack in Fellowship Hall. We will meet at PCO at 9:00 a.m. to carpool to Detroit. We'll return to church around 6:00 p.m., earlier for those who leave before dinner.

2025 CROP Walk

Sunday, October 12, 2025 is the date for this year's CROP Walk. Once again, you can walk, roll, or rock "The CROP Walk." You can join us on the 12, or if you have a conflict with that Sunday, you can do your walk any time in September or October.

This year PCO will be dedicating our participation in the CROP Walk to the memory of Mac Davis, who led the Lansing CROP Walk for many years.

Watch for more information to come, and sign-ups will start in early September. PS: You can support the PCO team by joining the team, and supporting the team with your prayers. Question? See Kent Workman or others on the Mission Committee.

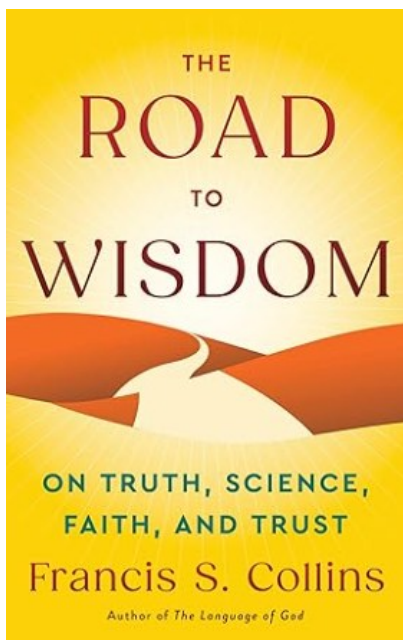
Policy Report By Ellen Hoekstra

The most important thing to know about the state legislature right now is that policy makers have not approved the budget. This is particularly a problem for schools, whose budget years begin on July 1. It was very difficult for districts to plan staffing and other expenditures for this school year, exacerbated by what is happening at the federal level. One result is that Okemos will not be providing lunch free of charge for all students, and Williamston is considering a similar change.

PCO members may be asked to sign numerous petitions for 2026 ballot proposals. Petition circulators must obtain signatures 180 days prior to Election Day-- 446,198 for those to change the state constitution and 356,958 for those to amend state law. Please remember that state law doesn't require circulators to provide accurate descriptions proposals and that most circulators are paid by signature.

Here are some of the proposals at various stages of approval by the State Board of Canvassers:

- A proposal to create a new tax on wealthier individuals to increase public school funding. This constitutional proposal aims to raise \$1.5 billion through a tax of 5% on individuals earning more than \$500,000 and joint filers earning more than \$1 million.
- A constitutional proposal requiring the adoption of ranked choice voting, the use of paper ballots, and scheduling primaries at least 140 days before the general election.
- A statutory proposal to change the recent amendments to the minimum wage laws. The proposal would raise rates more slowly--\$14.97 by 2028 rather than \$15 by 2027. Significantly, it eliminates the lower minimum wage for tipped workers.
- AX MI Tax, a constitutional proposal to eliminate all property taxes and make it significantly more difficult to raise all other taxes. The proposal would require a 2/3 vote of the legislature and a 60% vote by local residents to raise taxes. This proposal failed to make it to the ballot in 2024.
- Committee to Protect Voters' Rights, a constitutional proposal to require proof of citizenship to vote. It would eliminate voters' current ability to use an affidavit rather than photo identification for in-person voting.
- American for Citizen Voting, another constitutional proposal to regulate voting by eliminating the ability to vote in person with an affidavit rather than photo identification. This proposal goes further by mandating that the Secretary of State verify voters' citizenship. It would require two separate voting lists, one for Michigan candidates and ballot proposals and one for federal candidates.



Men's Group Book Discussion

The Men's Group will be discussing the book The Road to Wisdom - On Truth, Science, Faith, and Trust by Francis Collins starting in October. Francis Collins is a former director of the National Institute of Health and head of the Human Genome Project as well as being a Christian. Even if you are not a regular participant in the Men's Group, we'd love to have you join our discussion of this special book. Note that our discussions are every other week for four weeks.

Dates and Chapters (all times are Tuesdays from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.):

October 7 - In person at PCO or on Zoom.

Chapters "Searching for Wisdom in Troubled Times", "Intro and Truth"

October 21 - Zoom only. Chapter "Science"

November 4 - In person at PCO or on Zoom. Chapter "Faith"

November 18 - Zoom only. Chapters "Trust" and "Hope and a Plan of Action"

Schuler's Books has set aside copies of the book. If you tell them you are in a book group, you will get a discount.

PCO Library News

As part of a focus on poverty and economic insecurity, both in sermons and in the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, the PCO library has added a few new books on this subject. (All quotations are from the publishers.):

Poverty, by America by Matthew Desmond (2 copies) "In this landmark book, acclaimed sociologist Matthew Desmond draws on history, research, and original reporting to show how affluent Americans knowingly and unknowingly keep poor people poor. Elegantly written and fiercely argued, this compassionate book gives us new ways of thinking about a morally urgent problem. It also helps us imagine solutions."

Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (And How to Reverse It) by Robert D. Lupton "Veteran urban activist Robert Lupton reveals the shockingly toxic effects that modern charity has upon the very people meant to benefit from it. This groundbreaking work shows us how to start serving needy and impoverished members of our communities in a way that will lead to lasting, real-world change."

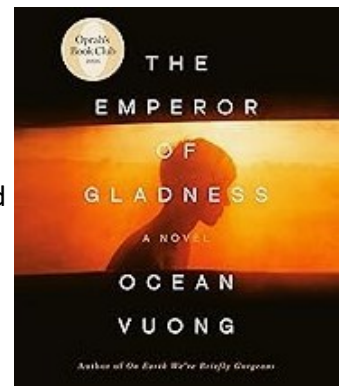
The Anti-Greed Gospel: Why the Love of Money Is the Root of Racism and How the Church Can Create a New Way Forward by Malcolm Foley "Black Christian historian Malcolm Foley shows how racism is part of a cycle of self-interest that begins in a lust for power and money and causes violence and exploitation. The church can break this cycle by building communities of deep economic solidarity, anti-violence, and truth telling."

Bone of the Bone: Essays of America by a Daughter of the Working Class by Sarah Smarsh "Sarah Smarsh brings her graceful storytelling and incisive critique to the challenges that define our times – class division, political fissures, gender inequality, environmental crisis, media bias, the rural-urban gulf."

In addition to these works of non-fiction, we added two new novels to our collection:

The Emperor of Gladness by Ocean Vuong "Nineteen-year-old Hai stands on the edge of a bridge in pelting rain, ready to jump, when he hears someone shout across the river. The voice belongs to Grazina, an elderly widow succumbing to dementia, who convinces him to take another path. Over the course of the year, the unlikely pair develops a life-altering bond with the power to transform Hai's relationship to himself, his family, and a community on the brink."

Stone Yard Devotional by Charlotte Wood "Burnt out and in need of retreat, a middle-aged woman leaves Sydney to return to the place she grew up, taking refuge in a small religious community hidden away on the stark plains of rural Australia. A novel about forgiveness, grief, and what it means to be good."



Please sign out your library books by writing the title and your name in the check-out binder. The suggested borrowing period is two months. Please return your books to the basket designated for book returns. That is the best way for us to know that you have returned a book. Do you still have a book that you checked out months ago? Please return it to the basket so that others may borrow it – no fines or penalties of any kind. Thank you!

Kathi Cook

Scenes from Summer 2025



PCO parishioners didn't stop praying and playing in August, and continued to serve as well.

Dave Rumminger and Brian McWilliams (left), along with Keith Camann and Edward Ennen took part in the Hope in One golf fundraiser for Advent House, a PCO mission partner.

Laurie and Jack Harkema (middle right) were among those who served a meal to guests of Advent House in August.

PCO member Frank Hatfield and Sexton Edward Ennen (right) spent many an hour trimming trees around the PCO parking lot.

A evening watching the Lansing Lugnuts, followed by a fireworks show, continued to be a favorite and well-attended PCO Out on the Town event.



BOOK NOOK

By Ron Dorr

On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the Revolution in Women's Sports by Christine Brennan

Caitlin Clark came to Christine Brennan's attention late in the game. By the end of the Paris Olympics in August, 2024, however, the well-respected sports columnist was working on a book about the star player for the University of Iowa and Indiana Fever basketball teams. Clark, who "seemed to be 22 going on 40, or 50," had become "a groundbreaking, historic, immensely popular but also at times controversial cultural figure." The Women's National Basketball Association was highly "unprepared . . . for Clark's arrival."

"What was going on?" Brennan continues in her introduction to On Her Game. "Was this because Clark is white and straight in a league that is 74 percent Black or mixed-race, with a sizable gay population? Was it because she played at Iowa rather than one of women's basketball's blue bloods? . . . Was it because the WNBA did so little to help its players understand what was about to happen when Clark entered the league? Was it because of her eight-year, \$28 million Nike shoe deal . . . when established Black stars had never received that kind of a contract? Was it jealousy? Was it all of the above?" What promising and provocative questions to examine.

Brennan certainly captures the appeal and accomplishments of Clark, especially since 2022 at the University of Iowa. Especially striking are her first-year statistics, the all-time records in points scored and assists delivered that she set, her poise and maturity at handling interviews, and her accessibility, particularly to young girls who admired her. "No female athlete had ever had such a profound effect on attendance, social media, TV viewership, and merchandise sales on a sport and a league in so short a time."

Brennan is also very good at narrating certain moments in Clark's career. On February 26, 2023, two points behind the Indiana Hoosiers with 1.5 seconds to go, "Clark launched a wild shot from a ridiculous position, off-balance, left leg askew"—and made it, winning the game for the Hawkeyes. The Fever's 9-4 record in the second half of Clark's first professional league play is vivid and suspenseful. More important, when asked whether Connecticut Sun player DiJonai Carrington had deliberately hit her in the eye, trying to block a shot, Clark answered, "It wasn't intentional by any means. You just watch the play."

A sports reporter for 40 years, Brennan sets well historical contexts such as Title IX, the old guard's resistance to change, and the disparities between women and men's sports. Players, coaches, and WNBA officials damn themselves in their sexism, racism, jealousies, and lies. At first, as a pro, Clark faced severe difficulties, but Fever teammates were soon there for her with efforts like the De-escalation Committee.

Brennan's answer to the first six questions mentioned in the second paragraph above is her seventh question.

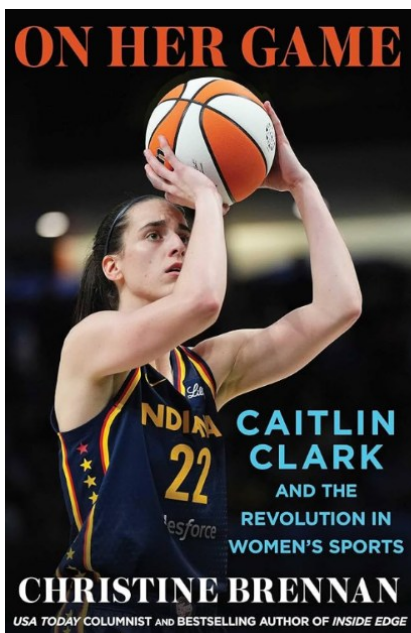
Does anything unify "all of the above"? Too many people, I believe, were threatened by the talents of Caitlin Clark. Too much success scares some people. The great irony, of course, is that so many people benefited from the exciting presence and accomplishments of this gifted, intelligent, driven, and game-changing young woman.

"Moving at breakneck speed" in composing On Her Game, however, has hampered Christine Brennan in certain ways. She pays little attention to Iowa coach Lisa Bluder, assistant coach Jan Jensen, and teammates other than Kate Martin. Certain questions remain. Why did Clark whine so much about referees' calls? What were the foundations of Caitlin's joy, court vision, and "enticing style of play?" What influence did Caitlin's mother and Clark's Catholic faith play in her sports and character? A broader analysis of Caitlin Clark as a person would help humanize her. As a young girl, she played the piano. Only one sentence on Clark as a student-athlete at Iowa (she was a marketing major with a 3.64 GPA) is a glaring omission. Giving an entire chapter to Brennan's two questions that she asked Carrington shifts the attention to Brennan, away from Clark.

I would love to be alive in 2035 and read a second edition of this book.



Author
Christine Brennan



Presbyterian Church of Okemos

2258 Bennett Road
Okemos, MI 48864
Phone: (517) 349-9536
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

SHELBY LAIRD, CHANCEL CHOIR DIRECTOR

IRENE SHUTT, HANDBELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

EDWARD ENNEN, SEXTON

ANNA THIEL, OFFICE MANAGER

GABRIELLE GHOSH, MEDIA SPECIALIST

Phone: 517-349-9536

<https://instagram.com/okemospres>

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

Website: [https://okemospres.org](http://okemospres.org)

Email: office@okemospres.org

