



# The Looking Tree

*Love lives here, Love flows from here...*

September 2026

*Hello Members and Friends of Head of Christiana,*



Pastor Myles Thompson

As summer draws to a close and we round the corner into fall, I'd like to thank all of you who have participated in our conversations with Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl. Having been present for each of the groups, I think it's fair to say that most of us considered it a helpful and enlightening process. I hope you all have had a chance to read Pastor Len's report that I had Nancy email out. We will have a chance to discuss Len's insights and our experience of his work with us at our salad luncheon after worship on September 27th. But, before then, I wanted to talk about some key takeaways from the experience that have sat with me, that I would invite us all

to meditate on as we move into the fall: faithfulness, vocation, and trust.

Time and again in our groups, members would mention that there have been moments when they've considered leaving the church for one reason or other. And yet, and yet, and yet!—they keep coming back! For whatever reason(s), this congregation has become home for you, its members. The faithfulness you demonstrate in your service to the church, even in your just being a part of this body, even if it always hasn't been easy, is a beautiful thing to behold. I believe that whatever your reason for calling Head of Christiana your home, there is a reason you're here, and there is a reason we open our doors week after week and year after year. Which leads me to my second keyword: vocation. Each of us here, from decades-long members to me, your year-and-a-half in pastor, have been called here. There may be what you might call "proximate" causes for this, whether it's the convenience of living across the street, or the Presbytery suggesting I consider this congregation for my first ordained position. But, as Presbyterians, we believe that God is ultimately the one who calls us—calls us to faith, calls us to faithfulness, calls us to the communities that we call home. And

*Cont'd...*

part of our common vocation, our common calling, in this congregation, is to practice a genuine, heart-felt ministry of welcome. Of acceptance. Of radical hospitality. Fellowship here blurs the lines between a free association of individuals and, dare I say it, family? That is an increasingly uncommon thing these days, and it is a truly wonderful thing.

It's easy to lose sight of that if it's what you've known for years, but not every congregation feels like family. Not every church feels like home. (Not even every "good" church). Based on our conversations with Len, I believe that that is our calling as a church: to practice the radical hospitality that we're already so good at, to lean into it, and continue to be a worshipping community where anyone can belong and feel like they belong. And so we get to my final takeaway: trust. I trust that the God who has been with this congregation for over three hundred years is with us still, and will continue to guide us, to walk with us, and abide in us, into the future. I trust that by listening to the Holy Spirit's call on our lives, to be who we were made to be and how we were made to be, God will bless this church, and, through it, bless our community, empowering us and inspiring us to truly love our neighbors in an age when most people just want to build a longer fence or a taller wall, even as their increased isolation and loneliness are slowly, but surely killing them. And I trust in the faithfulness that God has graced each of you with, the faithfulness that inspires and strengthens me to do my job as your pastor, to partner with me, with one another, and, ultimately, with God, in discerning how he is calling us to be a welcoming, loving, faithful congregation in the eternal and universal body of Christ into the next three hundred years. Amen.

In Christ's Peace,

*Pastor Myles*





A quarter century after the September 11, 2001 attacks, 100 million Americans are too young to remember the day that changed our city and nation forever. It is our shared promise — made 25 years ago — to never forget so those born after 9/11 learn its significance and enduring legacy.

As we commemorate this anniversary, a new generation will learn about the unimaginable loss we experienced and the inspiring stories of bravery, compassion, unity, and service we witnessed, and have rippled through the decades.

It is certain each and every one of us remembers where we were and what we were doing on that tragic day. Life as we knew it, changed forever.

Remember...and pray for those lost, those who survived, and for our nation.





## **RALLY DAY/KICK-OFF SUNDAY**

**Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>**

It's hard to believe that summer has flown by so soon. The good news is that that means we are starting a new program year. On Sunday, September 13, we will kick that off with lots of energy—and fun! Everyone is encouraged to bring a friend-or more-to church that day. Let's make it about showing some people that may not feel it that God cares for them—and we do too!!!

After worship we'll celebrate with a make-your-own sundae bar. (Someone suggested that that makes it Sundae Sunday!). Jeanne, God bless her, is getting the ice cream. The rest of us are encouraged to bring toppings. A great way to start our new program year!

***All are invited to participate!***

# HELPING HANDS NEEDED

*Submitted by Jeanne Hastings*

NAWC (Newark Area Welfare Committee) is looking for more volunteers to host the Food Cupboard at the Newark United Methodist church on Main Street.

The food cupboard is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours each day. You would work with another person. The cupboard was recently enlarged so it's very easy to help clients find the foods they want.

Clients may visit the cupboard every two weeks. Sign up is through Signup Genius and you can sign up as often (or as little) as you like. Please consider giving a bit of your time to help out the NAWC food cupboard.



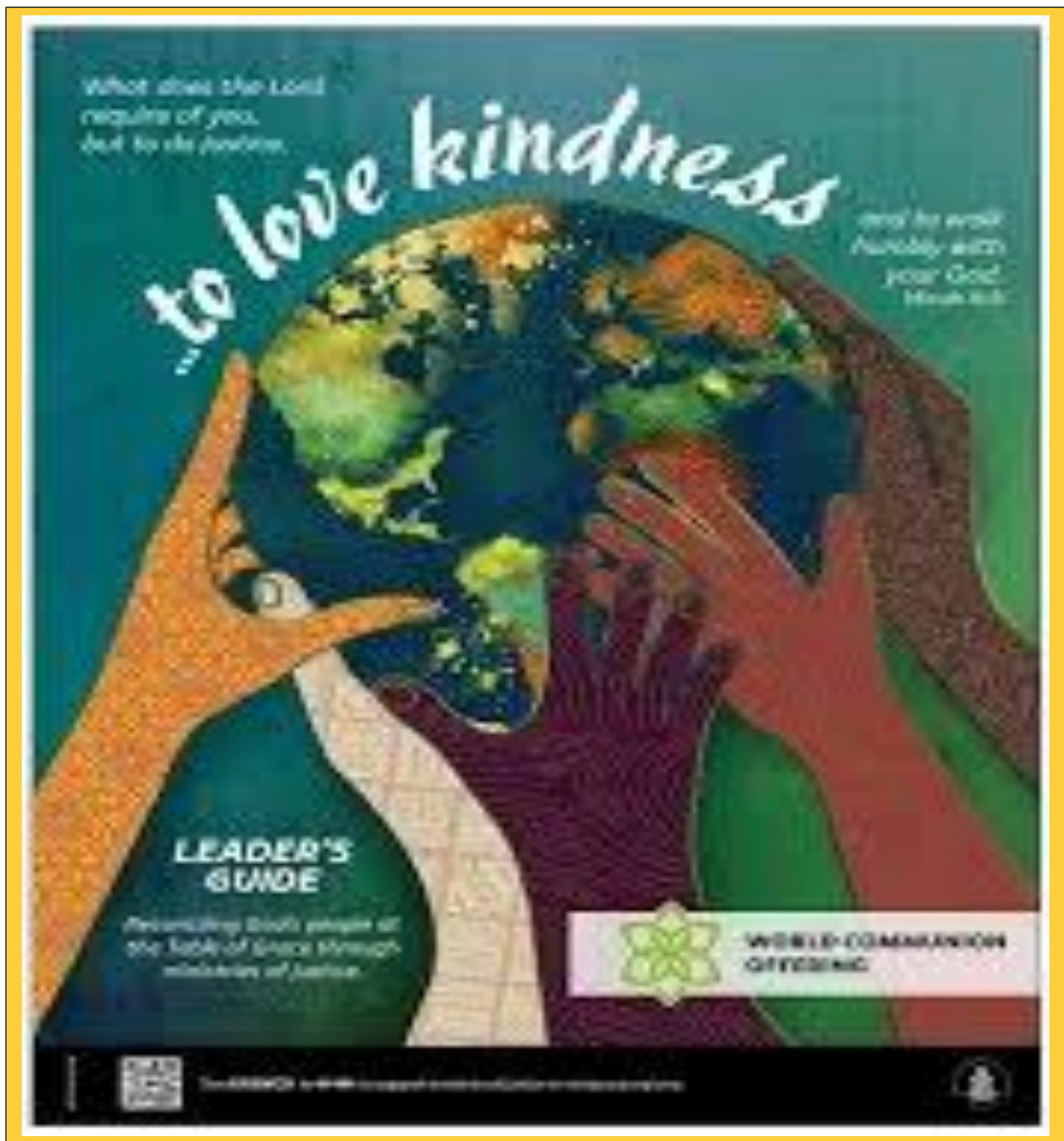
# HoC HAPPENINGS

Care and Fellowship is hosting its annual **Pot Luck Salad Luncheon on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> following worship.**

**Everyone is invited to bring a salad to share.** Any variety of salad is welcome—vegetable, fruit, pasta, potato, protein—the only limitation is your imagination (if you bring a green garden salad, please bring salad dressing too). **There will be a sign-up sheet on the table nearest the back parking lot where you can indicate which kind of salad you plan to bring.**

*Looking forward to seeing you all there!!*





The PC(USA) Peace & Global Witness Offering—officially renamed and transitioned into the **World Communion Offering** starting in 2026—runs from September 6 through October 4, 2026, concluding on World Communion Sunday. It supports peacemaking, global witness, racial and gender justice, and ecumenical/interfaith relations.

Thank you for your generous support of this offering.

# Word Search Puzzle

X B A T H I N G S U I T H R E N N U R E V A W O  
 F G R L A K N Q C E L A X K H A E S D I P M U H F U T I  
 Q Z I A K U H W P I O T A W B A W Q X A I Q C F S A L A Z O F A S N G  
 S K B X G V E M P I H E P I Q K X H Q D P A D N A V U G S  
 N O R K R A S P R E Y F T W K L N G K A N D B G Y J M G A R F O M  
 U A E W H S M N E E R C W I E S N U S R C G Y G O H Q I N X  
 R T I B V V M W K A D D Q X C W E L O H O P T M U R R L W Z U  
 P O G M R Q A A R D B W S C P I N Q S L C M N L S P Y A S T  
 S I C V E N K P B E I L A Q D K F M E I R R A U W D I R O  
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 A R F G N S T T C Q Y N K J F R W I Z J W I I S T U O  
 P M B U V T X C Q N K C J I S R O O D T U O D W N  
 J O W I T O C E A N R D I R J S R O O D T U O D W N  
 Q Z T O C E A N R D I R J S R O O D T U O D W N  
 I G N I S B J P R E C R E A T I O N U R I Q P E G

bathing suit  
 beach  
 berries  
 bikini  
 boating  
 camping  
 canoeing  
 diving  
 flowers  
 fresh fruit  
 frisbee  
 gardening  
 grass  
 hiking  
 holiday  
 hot

humidity  
 ice cream  
 journey  
 muggy  
 ocean  
 outdoors  
 outings  
 outside  
 park  
 picnic  
 play  
 popsicle  
 recreation  
 relax  
 rest  
 road trip

sandals  
 sand castle  
 sailing  
 sea  
 shorts  
 sunscreen  
 swimming  
 tan  
 trunks  
 travel  
 vacation  
 watermelon  
 wave runner  
 waterpark

# HOC CALENDAR — September Happenings

|                |               |                              |                                  |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wednesday      | Sep 02        | 1:00pm                       | Hygge                            |
| Tuesday        | Sep 08        | 11:30am                      | Nifty Wiftys @ Wesley's          |
| Wednesday      | Sep 09        | 1:00pm                       | Hygge                            |
| Friday         | Sep 11        | 12:00pm,                     | Hope Dining Room                 |
| Monday         | Sep 14        | 7:00pm                       | Session                          |
| <b>Tuesday</b> | <b>Sep 15</b> | <b>LOOKING TREE DEADLINE</b> |                                  |
| Wednesday      | Sep 16        | 1:00pm                       | Hygge                            |
| Wednesday      | Sep 23        | 1:00pm                       | Hygge                            |
| Sunday         | Sep 27        | 12:15pm                      | Care & Fellowship Salad Luncheon |
| Wednesday      | Sep 30        | 1:00pm                       | Hygge                            |



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



|        |                   |        |                   |
|--------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Sep 3  | Cindy Taber       | Sep 27 | Merle Slack       |
| Sep 9  | Barbara Johnston  | Sep 28 | Rebecca Condliffe |
| Sep 11 | Claire Herrington | Sep 28 | Katie Gillespie   |
| Sep 12 | Janice Harper     | Sep 29 | Steve Graham      |

