



The month of October is bookended with two wonderful invitational opportunities for Palmyra First Church. Both are once-a-year chances to invite people who have either no experience with the church or have a negative view of the typical church. Are you willing to invite your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors? It will take very little effort.

The first opportunity is for animal lovers. On Saturday, October 3rd, we will again be offering a Blessing of the Animals service for our neighbors. The date we use is always the first Saturday in October, making it the closest weekend to St. Francis Feast Day.

For those who don't know, Feast Days are generally celebrated on the anniversary of an individual's transition from earthly life to the Kingdom of Heaven. For Francis of Assisi, the date is traditionally October 4th although his date of death was October 3rd, 1226. St. Francis is featured in the third stained glass window of the sanctuary (counting from the narthex), making an interesting connection for members of First Church.

If you know a pet owner, or you see someone walking a dog in the neighborhood, let them know about the Blessing of the Animals. It's a non-threatening way to introduce people to one of the services the church offers the community.

Our second opportunity is Trick or Treat night on Thursday, October 29th. While most of us are reluctant to go door to door inviting people to the church, on Trick or Treat night the kids come to knock on our door. Trick or Treat offers a wonderful chance to offer Christian hospitality to the community's children.

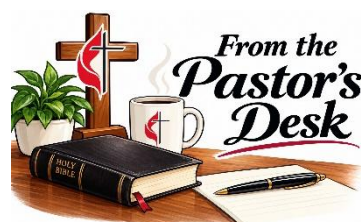
You can participate in Trick or Treat by providing some of the candy we will be passing out, or by coming to join the festivities and treating the children with the candy. Dressing in costume is optional!

Again, this provides an opportunity to invite people to become familiar with the church. You can invite any parent of a child. Let them know they can be greeted and treated twice with no tricks required. We open both the "Tower Door" on Birch Street and the "Accessible Door" (by the mailbox) and invite people to stop at both doors. You can also let them know our restrooms will be open during the event for the kids who need a potty break.

Help us in our mission of ***Serving Christ, Changing Lives*** by being invitational.

Grace & Peace,

James D. Anderman, Pastor



With October comes change. The changing color of the leaves, changes in routine as the temperature drops, and, historically, the church began a change on October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther ignited the Protestant Reformation. For the month, our messages will focus on the changes God would like us to make in our lives and our society.

We continue in the liturgical season of Kingdومتide (or the Season After Pentecost), so our primary color will remain green. We will switch to white as we begin November and celebrate All Saints' Day.

Our worship themes for October and early November are as follows:

October 4th – World Communion Sunday: Christianity is a relatively simple way of life. It follows simple rules. On this World Communion Sunday, we will review the simple rules that were set out by God. Our scriptures will be Exodus 20:1-20 and Matthew 22:36-40. Our message will be "KISS."

October 11th: During the Nazi reign, German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote about the differences between "cheap grace" and "costly grace" as he struggled with the immorality of the government of his country. Ultimately, he paid a heavy price for his stand. For him, grace was costly. This Sunday, we will look to Acts 8:14-25 and Matthew 22:1-14 as we wrestle with "The Cost of a Free Gift" when the gift is grace.

October 18th: As we think about our relationship with God, we must deal with two related concepts – faith and trust. In the Bible, God is tested over and over again, but why? Sometimes it is to help build faith and trust, and other times to challenge the Lord. This week we will look at two distinctly different times when God is challenged. Our message will be "Building Faith, Building Trust" and will be based on both Exodus 33:12-23 and Matthew 22:15-22.

October 25th: We often ask, "What if?" when we're worrying about the future. Or when we're lamenting the past. Or wonder - what if we could change our past? What if instead we move forward with God, right now, from right here? Our scripture is Isaiah 43:16-21, and our message is "What If?"

November 1st – All Saints' Day: Who are the saints? And no, I am not referring to a Louisiana-based football team. Who are the Saints of God? Is sainthood some unattainable level of perfection, or is it a status God wants all of us to achieve? Using Deuteronomy 34:1-12 and Acts 10:34-43, we will explore the meaning of "The Saints of God."



Rise Against Hunger Blessing Cups

On October 4, our *Missions Team* will begin distributing “Blessing Cups” and asking that you add a few coins to it each time you count your own blessings in the month of October. Every dollar collected will benefit *Rise Against Hunger* on **November 7th**, when we will pack more than 15,000 meals to be distributed worldwide to those with food insecurity. Watch for the sign-up to be part of that exciting morning!

Cash for Trash

Before you toss it in the trash can, is it on the following list???? These items are valuable!

Redner’s receipts
Glossy paper (magazines, catalogues)
Can tabs
HUB items (lists in Parish Hall)
Knitted items/yarn supplies
Nonperishable food

Our church gets cash back
Ronald McDonald House
Ronald McDonald House
Mission Central/UMCOR
Multiple destinations
Caring Cupboard

Containers for all of these items are located in our church Fellowship Hall. Thank you for supporting all of these efforts!!!

Trick or Treat Night

This year, Lebanon County will be trick-or-treating on Thursday, October 28th. Once again, *Palmyra First Church* will participate in the event. We will open the Brich Street Tower Doors and the Green Street Accessible Door for the neighborhood kids who stop by for a treat.

You can help us with this simple act of hospitality by being at the church from 6 to 8 PM to pass out the treats (coming in costume is optional!) and enjoying some time with like-minded people. Since it is a pickleball night, you might also spend a bit of time observing a game or two. Better yet, borrow a racket and play a game! You can also help by supplying some of the candy we will pass out. Each year, this has been a fun time for everyone and a chance to meet the neighbors.

Men's Breakfast

We will be having another men’s breakfast **Saturday, October 24th**, in the *Fellowship Hall* at *Palmyra First church*. After the breakfast, we will be doing yard work. Breakfast will be served at **8:00 AM**. Contact Tim Yingst if you are interested in attending or helping with yard work.



Small Group Studies

The Blessed Misfits

The Wednesday night Blessed group continues to meet in the South Wing and via Zoom at 6:30 PM with only an occasional week off. The group uses short-term studies, so you can join the group for just a few weeks if you would like. If you want to join, please contact Pastor Jim so he can add you to the email list and get you any material you may need for the study. The Zoom link is sent each week, so it is easy to find if needed.

In October, will be continuing our study of the biblical book of Daniel. The lessons are being facilitated by Rev. David Williams. Dave is a retired ordained elder from the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. While currently serving Bethany UMC in Palmyra, he is no stranger to First Church, having worshiped with us when he first moved to the area.

Sunday with the Wired Word

What should a Christian think about the news of the day? *The Wired Word* discusses the news from a biblical perspective. The group meets in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM. Lessons are emailed to participants on the Thursday before Sunday to give you a chance to think ahead. The material provides background information, links to the relevant stories, and ideas on how some Christians are reacting.

Feel free to check out the group any Sunday morning at 10:30 AM. Better yet, let Lee Smedley know you are interested so he can add you to his distribution list, giving you a heads-up on the topic of the week. Because the topic changes each week, this is an ideal study for those who can't commit to a weekly study.

Blessing of the Animals/Chicken BBQ

Palmyra First is inviting everyone to attend our *Blessing of the Animals* **this Saturday, October 3rd, starting at 10:00 AM**. We will also have a chicken BBQ during the event. Tickets are on sale for \$12 each and include 1/2 chicken, a potato, a roll, and a drink. Without a ticket, chicken BBQ is available until sold out. Contact the church office at 717-838-2551 or stop in during regular office hours if you would like to purchase tickets. There will be baked goods, photo ops with your pets, and nail trimming! If you would like to help sell BBQ tickets, contact Heidi in the church office at 717-838-2551. You do not need a pet to attend. Please keep all pets on a leash or in a carrier.

Boscov's Friends Helping Friends

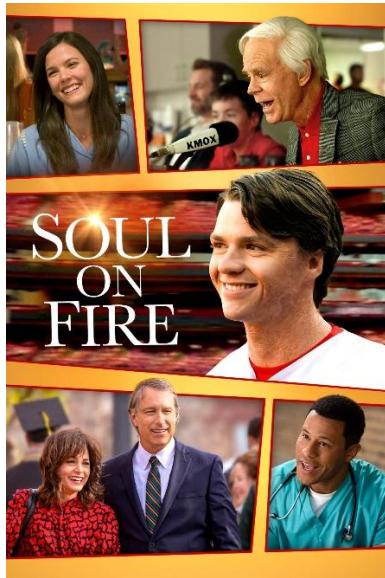
It's not too early to think about Christmas shopping! The *Mission Team* at *Palmyra First* is selling coupons for the Boscov's shopping event, *Friends Helping Friends*. Coupons will be available at the Welcome Desk in the church Narthex. The coupons are for up to 25% off any purchase, all day at Boscov's on **October 21st**. They will be available for a donation of \$5 each, and the proceeds benefit *Rise Against Hunger*. The coupon is good at any participating Boscov's store from **8:00 AM – 11:00 PM** on **October 21st**. This is good for in-store use only, not online.

Dinner and a Movie Coming Soon!

We are having a dinner and a movie once again on **October 25th, 2026**, in the sanctuary and fellowship hall at *Palmyra First*.

Dinner: 4:30 PM

Movie: 5:30 PM



Soul On Fire

Soul On Fire is based on a remarkable true story. In 1987, after a devastating fire, nine-year-old John O'Leary suffered burns over nearly his entire body and had less than a 1% chance of surviving. With lots of help, he not only survived but spent years learning how to truly live. His father told him, "You can't always choose the life you walk, but you can choose how to walk it". This is an inspirational movie about faith, perseverance, community, and God's redeeming love. It shows that we all have choices: not to let our past mistakes define us and to make an impact on someone else's life.

Blood Drive Update

Thanks to everyone who donated at our last blood drive on September 19th! We registered 98 people and collected 78 units of blood. This drive will help save up to 234 lives! Our next blood drive will be on November 14th. Keep an eye out for more information.

New Pew Bibles

A donation of \$25 for each bible will fund the project. We are asking you to consider donating one or more Bibles in honor or memory of a loved one. If you would like to dedicate one or more of the new Bibles in honor or memory of a loved one, please fill out the form and place it in either the offering plate or Heidi's mailbox, or drop it off in the church office.

Pew Bible Dedications

Name: _____

I would like to place ____ copies of the Bible in honor or memory as follows:

____ Copies: in honor of _____ in memory of _____

____ Copies: in honor of _____ in memory of _____

____ Copies: in honor of _____ in memory of _____

____ Total dedications at \$25.00 each for a total of _____

United Women in Faith: News from our groups

United Women in Faith will meet in the church kitchen on Thursday, October 1st, 9:45 AM after *Awakenings*. We will make chocolate chip cookies to sell by donation at the *Blessing of the Animals*. Donated money will go to Lebanon County Humane Society. If you have the time to make cookie dough before coming, that will give us a head start. If you don't have time for premixing, come anyway! If you aren't available for the cookie making in the kitchen, but want to help, you can bake the cookies on your own and wrap them in sandwich bags, 6 to a package. Please have them at church by 10:00 AM on the day of the event (October 3rd). If you enjoy making dog cookies or have a recipe for baked cat treats, these are welcome too, along with any handmade (sewn, knitted, or crocheted) pet accessories. We need people to sit at the table during the event. There is a sign-up sheet for one-hour spots. 10:00 AM-11:00 AM, 11:00 AM-noon, noon-1:00 PM.

Christmas Cards for those in Prison - Look for Christmas Card packets to send to those incarcerated. The packets of cards will be in the Narthex in October, due back by the end of the month. They will be delivered to prisons in our region.

T.E.A (Through Eyes of Another) Book Club - October 15th at 7:00 PM in the south wing lounge. Discussion of *The Woman with the Purple Heart*, led by Jane Kestner.

Knit, Crochet, & Pray charity knitters and crocheters - Currently, we are making October *Breast Cancer Awareness* reminders (scrubbies, dishcloths, jar openers, and bookmarks) For the *Blessing of the Animals*, we are trying out some free online patterns for pet bandanas, etc. These will be sold for donations, which will go to the *Humane Society of Lebanon County*. These are due at the church office before October 3rd.

Also, we have begun collecting handmade mittens, hats, scarves, baby blankets, and booties for clients of *Lebanon Family Health Services*. Donations may be dropped off at the church office.

Our Next gathering for Knit, Crochet, & Pray is Wednesday, October 14th at 1:30 PM in the south wing library.



HUB News

Thanks to everyone who helped with our HUB packing event in September. Our next HUB packing event is on October 27th at 6:30 PM in the fellowship hall.

For the month of October, we are in need of insect repellent (pump spray- 6-14 oz. or 10-20 wipes).