

# FIRST Church Of Christ

June 2025 NEWSLETTER

From Bob Russell's Blog

The Old Testament taught the Jewish people to welcome aliens. *"The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself"* (Leviticus 19:34). The stranger/alien was to be accepted and not denied residency among the new nation of Israel. The Hebrew people were not to oppress the non-citizen but to treat them equally under law.

Scripture leaves no doubt—God calls His people to reflect His mercy, especially to the vulnerable. But that welcome was never unqualified. Throughout the Old Testament, God repeatedly warns His people not to adopt the customs, religions, or moral practices of foreign nations.

In fact, much of Israel's downfall in the Old Testament came not from the presence of foreigners, but from their immoral influence. Israel was to remain holy—set apart, distinct in worship, ethics, and covenant loyalty. Israel was to help the foreigner, but not be harmed by them. The alien was to clearly abide by all laws of that nation, as if they were natives themselves (see Leviticus 18:26; Numbers 9:14).

Dr. Marc Clauson, PhD of Cedarville University—who sadly passed away last month—captured this tension well in his essay *A Biblical Ethic for the Treatment of Strangers and Aliens*: *"Once in, the alien (who remains an alien under the Mosaic Law) is bound to all laws of the commonwealth, including payment of taxes, obedience of civil and criminal laws, due obedience to the government, etc."*

In the New Testament, Christ-followers are taught to *"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality"* (Romans 12:13). That means we should open our homes and welcome strangers who need food and lodging. Christians should be the first to help minister to those in need because Christ assisted that, even though we are "foreigners and strangers in the world."

The Church is a spiritual nation belonging to God (1 Peter 2:9–10), made up of all peoples, languages, and backgrounds. It is without borders but not without boundaries—doctrinal, moral, and spiritual. The Church is commanded to proclaim the gospel to everyone and to show hospitality in Christ's name.

But the Church and the nation are not the same thing.

Under God's sovereignty, nations are established to preserve order, maintain justice, and protect the welfare of their people (Acts 17:26; Romans 13:1–4). So while the Church is commanded to open its arms and show love to strangers, a nation

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Office Hours:

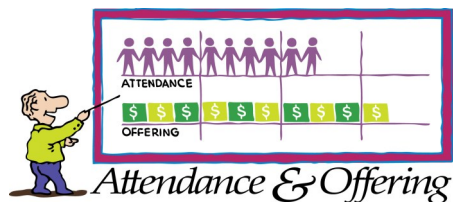
Monday—Thursday  
8:00 AM–5:00 PM

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### May 4

Attendance 42/79  
Offering \$3,763.86

### May 11

Attendance 53/91  
Offering \$7,853.32

### May 18

Attendance 47/78  
Offering \$6,656.04

### May 25

Attendance 60/74  
Offering \$2,450.72

### Needed for Budget:

\$5,099.21



## June Servers

### Deaconesses:

Diane Altman & Deb Rhodes

### Elder Schedule:

1—Doug Haase  
8—Seth Ramey  
15—Mark Rhodes  
22—Larry Snavelly  
29—Dave Beerbower

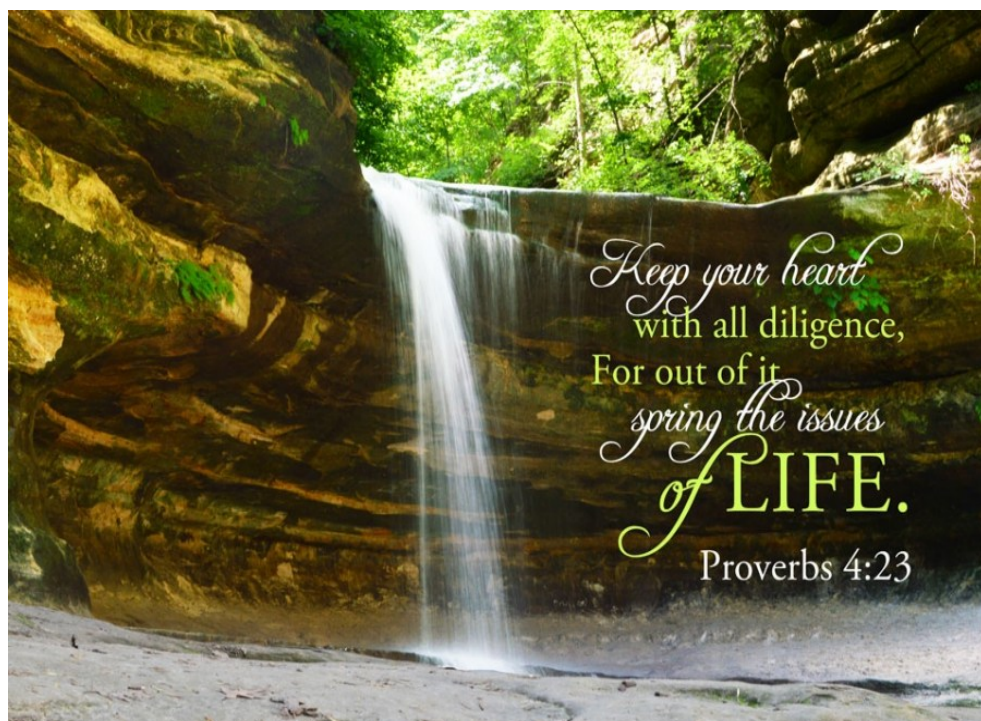
Heartfelt   
**THANKS**  
**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

### Nursery:

1—1st—; SS—Jessica & Shaun Arend; 2nd—Jessica Arend & Julia Haase  
8—1st—; SS—Kim Snavelly; 2nd—Kim Snavelly  
15—1st—; SS—Kim Snavelly; 2nd—Sharon Blinzler  
22—1st—; SS—; 2nd—Janet McCarthy & Deb Rhodes  
29—1st—; SS—; 2nd—Ashley Nelson

### Greeters

1st—Janet McCarthy; 2nd—Cindy Perry & Sue Sme-thurst





**1 Lee Stemen**  
**6 Cheryl Karnes**  
**10 Deb Nixon**  
**13 Dick Blinzler**  
**14 Peyton Von Deylen**  
**15 Tatum Beck, Rachelle Levya**  
**19 Leah Miller**  
**23 Raace Haynes, Ruth Ordway**  
**24 Jessica Arend, Harm Hetrick III**  
**29 Nathan Grimm**

#### Sympathy

The church family extends her sympathy to the following families:

- ♦ Linda Lewis & Family on the passing of her husband, Ron.



**6 John & Linda Hill (55)**  
**7 Ronnie & Mary Pinckley (62)**  
**9 Jim & Pat McPeak (55)**  
**19 Garry & Sandi Oberlin (54)**  
**22 Cody & Ashley Grimm (6)**  
**26 Adam & Kortney Subasic (4)**  
**27 Greg & Traci Hartman (33)**  
**29 Ryan & Amanda Beck (14)**

#### Congratulations!

- ♦ Asher Vaughn Hull arrived Easter morning (4/20/25) to Preston & Samantha weighing in at 7# 6 oz., 21". Proud grandma is Nicole Gordon Taylor, and great-grandma is Sandra Gordon.
- ♦ Vivian Ann Hankey arrived 4/2 1/25 to Cassidy & Brody, weighing 8# 10 oz., 21.5". She joins big sister, Adalyn. Delighted grandparents are Tim & Melissa Gordon, and great-grandma is Sandra Gordon.



## Love All

**Our Service Personnel:** Austin Brandeberry (HI), Zachary Perkins (IN), Jordan Thornburg (NE), Katie Sparks (PA). **Cancer:** Gwen Acker-Dickinson, Nathan Bailey, Marcia Baumgartner, Sue Bever, Tim Bight, Brent, Mary Ellen Bowman, Mark & Carrie Campo, Andrew Dell, Adam Farger, Carrie H, Terri Hug, Molly Johnston, Kent, Chuck Lees, Tim McKown, Rexann McCrary, Lora Manon, Chloe Merrilet, Crystal Miller, Ruth Ordway, Mary Pinckley, Elaine Purdue, Mike Roose, Sue Secoy, Terry Shinaberry, Stu Short, Annette Snavelly, Holly Sprow, Kortney Subasic, Amy Tobin, Kathy Walton, Drew Wayman;  
**Other Concerns:** Jennifer Mavis, Trevor Bailey, Neighborhood, Arlene Boyer, Danielle Strouse, Brenda Ridgway, Cindy Wolf, Zach Swisher, Cheryl Towers, Gene Nash, Kim Beek, Joshua Taylor, children's ministry, Danny Hull, Cindy Webber, Kevin Ayre, Kathy Moog, Marty, John Fry, Jackson Wolph, Shawn Roose, Fran Mavis, Nathan Ray, Nehemiah Haase, Randy Fisher, Jason Gregg, Ryan Yahraus, Khloe Hartman, Martha Hardy, Ellen Walker, Ronnie Pinckley, Tommy Morr, Garry Oberlin, John Leppelmeier, Tootie Bowman, Henry Kidd, Maverick Fields, Chuck Salsbury, Pat Northcut, Nikki Taylor, Tim Gordon;  
**Shut Ins: Hillside:** Charlene Gambler; **Home:** Linda Lewis, Leona Puff.





## Upcoming EVENTS

**Vacation Bible  
School  
6/8-12**

**Father's Day  
Rootbeer Floats  
6/15/2025**

**Lunch Bunch  
6/24/2025**

## SENIORS MINISTRY

We will do Lunch Bunch on Tuesday, 6/24 at 11:45 AM at Mancino's in Archbold. Please meet there.



## Hop Aboard for Wonder Junction VBS

*We are gearing up for a great week of Bible School June 8-12, 5:45-8:15 PM. Volunteers are still needed for many different roles.*

*Check the sign-up sheet in the foyer. Donations are needed for snack and craft items. Those sign-up sheets are also in the foyer. But most importantly, it's time to get your kiddos (3-12 years old) registered. Below is the QR code for volunteers and children to sign up/register. A nursery will be available for workers. Any questions? See Ashley Knepper.*



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 
<div> <b>Wonder Junction Vacation Bible School 5:45-8:15 PM</b> </div>						
<b>15</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 11:45 Lunch Bunch	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	<b>30</b>					

is commanded to establish justice, discernment, and wisdom, including establishing its borders and enforcing its laws.

God's compassion for the outsider is unmistakable. Over and over, He reminds Israel to love the sojourner—often appealing to their own history as former slaves in Egypt. But that welcome was never without expectations that the nation would protect itself from harm.

Imagine if your neighbor came to you and asked you to help someone in need—you'd likely say yes. But if they explained further that they wanted them to stay in your home overnight, you'd begin to ask practical questions: "How long?" "How many?"

Now imagine your neighbor says they're not sure—but "it might be indefinitely, and it might not just be one person, but a whole family... maybe not just one family but several families... perhaps up to 50 people... and oh, by the way, I've never met them and have no idea who they are or where they are from."

It would not be un-Christian of you to place some boundaries or restrictions on your assistance. That's not selfishness. That's stewardship. Every household has limits. So does every nation.

**Galatians 6:10** teaches: *"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."*

We are to help as many people as possible, but our first responsibility is to our own family and fellow believers.

This passage reminds us that love must be ordered. We cannot love everyone in every way, equally, all the time. Scripture affirms the priority of caring for those closest to us—first family, then the household of faith, then the wider world. Government leaders, likewise, are not unchristian for prioritizing their citizens—they are fulfilling God's assigned role.

A nation of Christians should generously welcome displaced persons and attempt to shelter those seeking asylum. While there are times I personally risk being gullibly generous over curmudgeonly cautious, it is an important part of biblical stewardship to establish boundaries on generosity. A church board is wise for carefully researching the moral, ethical, and financial credibility of potential ministry partners before donating to them. Churches understandably perform background checks on staff and volunteers, especially if working with children and youth.

Similarly, a nation is wise for maintaining order and justice, including enforcing laws established to control the consumption of resources and protect the safety of its citizens from non-citizens. America has a strong history of helping those in need, from opening its doors to the foreigner to sending its soldiers to fight and die for the liberation of oppressed people in foreign lands.

To be clear: this current issue of immigration overload is not with immigrants—but with disorder. God's Word consistently affirms the dignity and value of every person—including the foreigner. But biblical hospitality is not a license for unchecked disorder. The foreigner is to respect and adapt to the host nation, not exploit or destabilize it.

A solution to the current crisis is not one that can be established easily. While I pray there is some way to accommodate immigrants who are here illegally but otherwise have an established record of being productive and law-abiding to remain here, I feel an open-borders policy is unsafe and destructive in the long term.

The Church is called to help the refugee. But the nation must evaluate matters of safety, legality, and infrastructure capacity. God established families and nations so that society might function with order, justice, and peace—and so that His people could be protected, and His gospel freely proclaimed, believed, and obeyed.

*"From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us" (Acts 17:26-27).*

**Destined to Win, Larry**