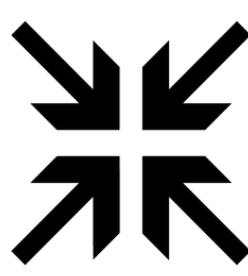


August & September

MESSENGER
2026

 Wakeman
Congregational
Church

Growing faith, family, & fellowship.

Church Staff

Pastor

Janet Ross

Email: pastor.wakemanchurch@gmail.com

Phone: 440-839-2316

Hours: Tues 11-2, Wed 11-2, or by appointment

Moderator

Susan Hazel

Phone: 419-706-3600

Email: shazel55@gmail.com

Secretary

Olivia Krumwiede

Email: wakemanchurch@gmail.com

Church Phone: 440-839-2316

Church Website: www.wakemanchurch.net

Worship: 10:00 am

Sunday School: 10:15-11:00am September-May

Adult Bible Study: Sunday mornings at 9am

Greeters

Sign up sheet is in the back of the church.

*Please arrive by 9:45 that Sunday morning.

Our Vision

The vision of Wakeman Congregational Church is to be a center for the reverent worship of God and for the biblical instruction of believers and their children. (Acts 2:42), and a source of light and salt in the community (Matthew 5:13-16).



News from The Diaconate Board

During the months of June and July, we gathered in the pavilion to hear Pastor Janet Ross share the word of God, to pray for one another during times of struggles and to celebrate with one another during times of joy. Weather permitting, we will continue to gather in the pavilion for worship service through Sunday, Sept. 6.

Beginning on Sunday, September 13, we will gather once again in the sanctuary for worship service. Congregational members, family and friends are now participating each Sunday by reading scripture verses prior to the sermon.

On Sunday, June 21, Father's Day was celebrated by gifting all the men present with a bag of popcorn. Luckily, there were a few bags left over and those who would grow up to be fathers someday were able to enjoy a bag as well.

Cards of congratulations were sent to those graduating from high school/college this year.

Adult Bible Study will reconvene on Sunday, September 13 at 9:00 am in the church when we will continue our study of the book of Genesis. All adults, young and old, new folks and visitors are welcome.

We welcome you to join us Sunday mornings for worship service at 10:00 am and experience God's good works in each of us. And we look forward to all adults joining us on Sunday mornings for Bible Study.

The Lord will give strength unto his people;
the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Psalm 29:11

Pastor Letter

Dear Friends,

How do you begin to describe this past month overflowing with God's grace?

Our Vacation Bible School was a tremendous blessing as children explored who God is: our Creator, the One who knows us completely, our Safe Place, and the very definition of Love. Together they discovered more than one hundred "God sightings"—moments when they recognized God at work in creation, in acts of kindness, in music, in prayer, and in one another. It was a joy to witness God at work in the lives of our children and volunteers alike.

Then, just a few days later, twenty-two of those children climbed aboard our parade float, joyfully singing along the Wakeman Firefighters Parade route and proclaiming, "*Oh praise Him! Alleluia!*" What a beautiful witness to our community.

And then there was our Chicken BBQ! What an incredible day of volunteers, teamwork, laughter, and amazingly good food. We sold out in just one hour! Best of all, before the grills were even cold, people were already saying, "Next year we should..." It was wonderful to see so many people working side by side, sharing their gifts with such joy and enthusiasm.

Yet as wonderful as all of those events were, what has stayed with me most happened in a quiet conversation this morning.

Someone who had spent years searching for a church home told me they had finally found one here. They smiled as they looked around our congregation and said that while they don't know everyone well, they genuinely love the people of this church. Then they added something I'll never forget: they wish more people in our community knew that God is truly alive here—that this is a place where God's love is real and visible, where God is working through ordinary people in extraordinary ways.

I found myself thinking that sometimes we can take one another for granted. Sometimes we hesitate to reach out because we don't

want to intrude. Sometimes we quietly wonder whether what we do really makes a difference.

Please hear this: **God is doing beautiful, holy work through this congregation.**

Thank you for the countless ways you pray, serve, encourage, give, welcome, and love. Together we are becoming the kind of church where people encounter the living Christ.

And here's the wonderful news: God isn't finished with us yet. So invite a friend. Welcome a neighbor. Keep looking for those "God sightings." God has so much more work for us to do!

Deep blessings, love, and gratitude,

Pastor Janet

August 30: A Sunday of Blessing and Gratitude

As summer draws to a close and a new season begins, Sunday, August 30 will be a joyful day of celebration for us at Wakeman Congregational Church! During worship we will offer a **Blessing of the Backpacks**, praying for our students, teachers, administrators, school staff, bus drivers, and all who begin another school year. Together we will ask God's wisdom, protection, courage, and peace to accompany them wherever they learn and serve. We will also take time to **recognize and give thanks for the many volunteers** whose faithful gifts make the ministry of our church possible.

Whether you teach, sing, cook, clean, visit, repair, organize, welcome, pray, serve behind the scenes, or quietly lend a helping hand, your ministry is a blessing to this congregation and our community. As we celebrate both those heading into our schools and those who faithfully serve through our church, we are reminded that God calls each of us—young and old alike—to be a blessing in the places where we live, work, learn, and serve. We hope you'll join us for this special morning of gratitude, encouragement, and blessing.

Next Church Council Meeting



Monday, September 21st at 7pm in the
Outreach Center.

All are welcome to attend.

EXPERIENCING GOD

In March, Pete and I chose to say “yes” to the opportunity of joining the Experiencing God” Bible Study. An adult group met on Thursday mornings and Pastor Janet also met with a teen group on Wednesday evenings. For 12 weeks, 12 adults met weekly and completed daily scripture and workbook lessons. (Shella, Joel, Helen, Keely, Cindy, Jeff, Bruce, Dana, Pete, Susan and Janet) Together we learned, shared, and our faith journey was enriched.

This brief Messenger article cannot begin to detail our lessons. Just know that this experience was all that I could have hoped for and more. We began with the understanding that God wants a relationship with each of us. That relationship is the foundation for what can be. – Remember that with God, we can accomplish more than we can imagine. “We” – as individuals, as families, as workers and as churches can accomplish so much if we choose to join God in His work. “Experiencing God” was an inspiring opportunity. - One that can change lives.

“I pray that God – the source of hope – will fill you with joy and peace because of your trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Romans 15:13

Susan Hazel

Youth Bible Study



Four incredible teens (Parker Workman, Adah Thomas, Addie Wyant and Isaac Dalton) recently completed *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*. Together we discovered that following Christ is about more than learning **about** God—it's about recognizing where God is at work and joining in.

This journey has been life-changing for each of us and has inspired a new monthly **Youth Spiritual Check-In** -- anyone ages 12–18 is invited to participate. We'll gather to pray, listen, and learn to discern God's voice and God's will in our daily lives. I'm so grateful for these young people and excited to see where God leads us next.

Next Messenger Deadline

If you would like to submit an article for the October Issue email wakemanchurch@gmail.com. All articles are due by September 28th.

Abigail Pregnancy Services

We collected \$499.49 for Abigail Pregnancy Services during our recent Baby Bottle for Change campaign. Your donations will help to support their mission to educate, encourage, and empower men and women in our community. The center's compassionate care during an unplanned pregnancy is confidential and free of charge. Their services include: counseling, parenting classes, and maternity and baby supplies. To learn more about this center and their mission, you can go to AbigailPregnancyServices.org.



Church Correspondence

Dear Friends at Wakeman Congregational: Thank you for your continued support of Blessing House and for the care that you show to children and families in our community.

We continue to work closely with families – offering guidance, connection to resources, and compassionate support during times of uncertainty. Your generosity allows us to remain present and responsive, helping ensure that children and their families receive the assistance they need.

For more than two decades, Blessing House has been a trusted source of stability and hope. Because of supporters like you, we are able to move forward with resilience and purpose, focused on the work that matters most. On behalf of all of us at Blessing House, thank you for standing with us.

Sr. Mary, Executive Director, Blessing House

We've had a rough six months, but things are getting better. Thank you for the prayers, phone calls, food, visits and your good thoughts. Wakeman people are the best!

Marge & Paul Brookover

Dear Pastor Janet & Members of the Wakeman Congregational Church,

I was so touched to receive the very comforting card of condolence concerning my dear wife Nelda's death on March 8th. It has been 17 years since I left Wakeman Church and so many of you still remember me. I know most of you never met Nelda, which makes your remembrance even more supportive. The Lord gave us 8 memorable years together enjoying musical concerts, bus trips, daily conversations about faith, music, art, family – the list is endless.

I value the sentiments of each person who signed the card. God's faithfulness is so often expressed in the loving words and deeds of His people.

Nelda's dementia, memory/vision loss, dizziness, back pains, etc. etc. are now over. She is, and will ever be, in the loving arms of Jesus.

Thanks so much for your love and care. Reverend Ed Shelly
**She was 94. I am half way along toward 96. But, thank God, there is still a little fire left in the furnace.

Sunday School Kickoff

Mark your calendar for **September 20th at 10:15am.**

Join us for our Sunday School Kickoff! Kids in Kindergarten–5th grade and 6th grade and up will meet in their classes to begin another great year of growing in their faith. To celebrate, we'll kick off the year with a sweet cookie-themed lesson and activity as we discover that God has made each of us special and that we all have a place in His family. We can't wait to see you there!



Wakeman Firefighter Festival Parade



**"Praise the Lord,
everything he has created,
everything in all his kingdom."
(Psalm 103:22)**



VBS - Rainforest Falls

This summer volunteers transformed our church into a rainforest, complete with a waterfall. Kids were engaged in daily activities exploring the nature of God. They spent time in music learning hand motions to our themed songs, making crafts, playing games, exploring science and learning bible stories all pointing them to the one true God.



Thanks to the incredible 30 people that volunteered, our generous donors, and supportive families, VBS was a true community effort! We were blessed to have 50 kids come through our doors during the week. The God sightings, laughter, prayers and connections made were a reminder of how impactful VBS is for the children in our community.

The children attending this year's vacation bible school raised money for Water in Tanzania helping to provide access to safe water.

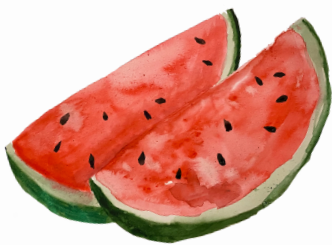


As part of our local VBS mission project, the children were asked to bring in non perishable food Caring Community. The generosity made a true impact on our community.



Clothing Closet

August



August 1st 9 to noon
August 13th 5:30-7:30
August 15th 9 to noon
August 25th 9 to noon
August 27th 5:30-7:30



September

September 5th 9 to noon
September 10th 5:30-7:30
September 19th 9 to noon
September 22nd 9 to noon
September 24th 5:30-7:30

October

October 3th 9 to noon
October 8th 5:30-7:30
October 17th 9 to noon
October 22nd 5:30-7:30
October 27th 9 to noon



TREASURER'S MONTHLY SNAPSHOT 6/30/2026

June	General Operating Income	\$7,098.24
June	General Operating Expense	<u>\$ 13,699.74</u>
		-\$6,601.50
Year to Date GO Income	\$94,986.16	
Year to Date GO Expense	<u>\$66,016.58</u>	
	\$28,969.58	
Budget Year to Date		\$72,435.00
Budget Items Spent Year-to-Date		<u>\$67,686.98</u>
	Under Budget	\$4,748.02

Ken Green, Treasurer

Pearls of Wisdom

Pearls of Wisdom will not be meeting in August. A special time is planned for our September gathering: The Art of Letting Go. As leaves start to fall, what else can fall away? A scrumptious meal will be served by our POW Gals, Pattie Eschen, Dana Leimbach and Pam Massey. Join us and bring a friend: Wednesday, September 9 11:00-12:30 in the Outreach Center.

A History of Pilgrim Hall

In 1952, remodeling the church basement was discussed. They wanted to update the east end of the basement and build a nursery classroom, high school classroom, office, furnace room, update the restrooms, and install a new fuel-oil furnace.

At the church council meeting on February 9, 1953, Mr. Stiles moved, and Miss May Bacon seconded the motion that a “God’s Acre” (aka “God’s Little Acre”) plan be adopted. Mr. Robert Brucker, Chairman, appointed George Dalton, Platt Beecher and one other person to serve on the committee.

At the February 9, 1953 council meeting, Rev. Houldsworth reported 20 acres of land east of St. Mary’s Cemetery was donated for this purpose. At the July 13, 1953, council meeting, it was reported that 9 acres of corn and 17 acres of soybeans were planted. (Note: So, doing the math, it must have been 26 acres of land rather than 20 acres.)

Since most of the congregants were farmers, one farmer plowed the ground, another fitted the ground, another planted and another harvested the crops. The following year Mr. C.C. Canfield III donated acreage on West River Road for this project.

The first year’s profit from selling the grain went to the remodeling project. When the project was completed, the basement area was dedicated as “Pilgrim Hall” as the sign says as you descend the stairs today.

Dan Green, Church Historian

Pilgrim Hall Has a New Floor!

Among their many on-going projects, our church trustees have completed the new flooring project in the church basement. Hills Interiors in Norwalk has installed the commercial-grade gray vinyl tile, along with new vinyl baseboard.

Take a look at the new flooring the next time you're in the church building. The basement looks wonderful, thanks to our trustee members for their diligent and dedicated service to our church.

Pilgrim Hall Memories

Wow, what a great opportunity to look back on our church's fondest memories and many of them occurred in the basement ... in Pilgrim Hall. To the best of my recollection, I swear the walls were painted pink! And for the birthday dinners, mother-daughter and father-son events, who else would be playing the upright piano on the south wall ... but Marge Prindle! Nobody I had heard then and since then, nobody could match her ability to improvise and move and down and all around that keyboard ... what I would give to hear her playing again. When I was a kid at one of the chicken barbecue dinners, I recall someone (I cannot remember who) was choking on a chicken bone. Thank God Doctor Graham was attending and he rescued the gentleman ... very scary. I have faint memories of attending the wedding reception in that room of my cousins Bob and Margaret Graves, plus Lois and Terry Hilaman's wedding reception. I still can see myself at five years old getting dressed for the Christmas Eve children's pageant in what is now the nursery ... and my parents were exasperated because I had cut my own hair that day. And as a teenager I remember the pastor's office was off Pilgrim Hall ... I spent a lot of time meeting there with Rev. Ellwyn Owen as we worked on my pursuit of the Boy Scout God and Country Award.

Joel Ross

Pilgrim Hall Memories

Pilgrim Hall has many memories for me: VBS, Sunday School, Easter breakfast after sunrise service, showers, rehearsal dinners, youth group activities. Our youth group was headed up by the fearless Hal and Melinda Dalton. I treasure having those two wonderful people influencing my walk with Christ. I am not sure how they got the crazy job of leading the youth group, but God put the best people in my path. We had many youth activities and meetings in Pilgrim Hall. My favorite was our youth lock-in's. Why in the world those two let us talk them into that I will never understand. It was so much fun. We played games, ate lots of food, stuffed the eggs for the egg hunt and, of course, harassed Hal. He always had his folding lawn chair to sleep in. You should not fall asleep at a lock in! Poor Hal, we messed with him so much and yet he came back and did it again the next year. I look back at those moments and I am so grateful that we had a place to gather.

Stephanie (Butler) Wetzel

We liked to play hopscotch on the shuffleboard on the floor in Pilgrim Hall. We also liked spinning around on the metal poles - I can still remember the clunking sound when one of our heads hit a pole!

Keely Krumwiede

In the late 1950's, I attended church youth group activities at the Wakeman Congregational Church. We often played shuffleboard in Pilgrim Hall during the meetings. We also went on a canoe trip on the Mohican River with our youth leaders, Bob and Betsy Murdock. I remember being in a canoe with Helen Wheeler, along with our tents and other supplies. We missed the first night's landing, so we had to canoe all of the way to the second night's landing. We had a very late dinner that night!

Brenda Friend

Pilgrim Hall Memories

My memories of Pilgrim Hall include potluck dinners, Sunday School, wedding receptions, Mother-Daughter luncheons, choir practices, baby showers, Vacation Bible School, and Brownies/Girl Scouts. In other words, Pilgrim Hall represented a “sense of community” in my childhood as I was always surrounded by good friends, spiritual inspiration, and good food!

Suzanne Dalton

I have many fond memories of my first year of teaching at Western Reserve. I spent my 1st year teaching Kindergarten in the church basement. It wasn't your “typical” classroom, however many great memories were made and a lot of learning happened!! The people in the church made a space for this teacher and her students and that is truly a special thing and definitely following what God calls us to do. Thank you for helping make my 1st year a blessing.

Tracy Harvey

One of my fondest memories of the church basement was on my wedding day. Hal and I were married in the Sanctuary in March of 1974. My bridesmaids and I got dressed for the ceremony in the nursery/choir room area. We waited in Pilgrim Hall until it was time to go down the aisle, with my Aunt DeEtte Zimmerman playing the organ. What a glorious way to start our life together!

Melinda Dalton

Back in the day, you brought your own plate, glass, & silverware to the potlucks... Some brought more than one setting just in case someone forgot.

Dorothy McGuinness



Spotlight on Dana Leimbach



Short Bio: I grew up in Texas with my parents and nine siblings, including a twin sister, Dena. I moved to California to live with family, and got a job at CalTech. Bruce was a student at Cal Poly Institute, so he was also in California during that time. We met at a church social, and have now been married for 48 years. I have two children, Morgan and Dane, and two grandchildren, Owen and Lucy. I was a florist for thirty-plus years, and really loved working with flowers. I am currently a member of the Christian Education Committee, and I help organize the monthly Pearls of Wisdom social gathering.

Hardest thing you've ever done: Childbirth.

What you do for your spiritual well-being:

I go to a quiet place and talk to God.

Favorite comfort food: Egg Custard Pudding and Crème Brulee.

Occupation you might have pursued if you weren't a florist:

Nutritionist in a hospital.

A detail about you that people would find surprising:

I'm a misplaced Texan that loves Ohio!

Real-life hero: My Aunt Loreen supported me and my siblings emotionally when times were tough. When she saw a need, she was there for me.

Song at the top of your playlist:

"Gonna Fly Now." It's the theme song from the movie, Rocky.

Go-to place to pray:

On my swing under a tree.

Best advice you've been given:

My Uncle Cecil told me, "Don't preach – your life is your sermon."

Favorite bible verse:

Psalm 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God."



A Chicken BBQ, A Church Family, and a Whole Lot of Grace

Sometimes all it takes is one simple idea.

This year's Chicken BBQ began with Dan Green saying, "Hey, let's bring back the Chicken BBQ!" That spark quickly became an incredible expression of teamwork, hospitality, and love. After nearly a decade, our Chicken BBQ returned—and we sold out in just one **hour!**

There was one unexpected wrinkle when we discovered the Pavilion had been double-booked. But BBQ Chairperson **Melinda Dalton** simply smiled and said, "No problem. We'll go to the Outreach Center." What first seemed like a setback became a blessing: air conditioning on a hot day, no flies, and an opportunity for many community members to see our beautifully updated Outreach Center for the first time.

From there, it was truly an all-hands-on-deck effort. Jeff and Matthew Murdock and J.L. Draganic cooked delicious, fall-off-the-bone chicken. Theresa Murdock and Steve Dillon prepared the potato salad and baked beans using Lois Hilaman's beloved recipe, after volunteers had peeled, cooked, and cubed 100 pounds of potatoes. Others baked desserts, packaged treats, sold tickets, collected tickets, served meals, cleaned up, and welcomed guests with warm smiles.

Most importantly, we shared more than a meal. Friends and neighbors gathered around tables, renewed old friendships, made new ones, and experienced the warmth of Christian community. The Chicken BBQ was more than a fundraiser—it was a joyful witness to what happens when God's people work together with generous hearts.

Thank you to every volunteer, donor, cook, baker, server, organizer, and supporter. Together, you helped make the return of the Chicken BBQ an overwhelming success—and a beautiful expression of God's love in our community.

Chicken BBQ pictures

