Love God. Love People.

June 2026



June Events

Mom to Mom
June 6

Royal Family Kids Camp
June 8-12

Red Cross Blood Drive
June 16 @ 11:30am

Dad Camp
June 19-20

VBS
June 22-26

Monday Men's Basketball
Mondays @ 6:30pm

Young Adults
Mondays @ 6:30pm

Stewarding the Blessings of God
Wednesdays @ 10:00am

Grace Gals
Wednesdays @ 6:00pm

Saturday Men's Basketball
Saturdays @ 7:30am

Summer Softball League
Saturdays @ 9:00am

Youth
See Summer Activity Schedule (p. 5)

Save the Date

Friends Youth Camp
July 17-22

Men's Meating
August 23

Baptisms
August 30

inside

- LifeWise
- A Special Thanks
- A Special Announcement
- Pastor Aaron
- and more

LifeWise

LifeWise at Union Local welcomed 160 students in grades 2–7 to learn more about Jesus and what it means to follow Him.

Week after week, students grew in their understanding of who Jesus is and how God's Word speaks into their lives. Seeing kids lined up at the elementary doors, smiling from ear to ear and waiting to get on the big red bus, has been such a joy.

Volunteers worked hard to create hands-on lessons the kids would remember. They marched around Jericho seven times and learned about David and Goliath with an eight-foot Goliath made out of cardboard boxes. Lessons like these help students see the truth of Scripture and understand that God's Word is alive, powerful, and relevant today.

We are so grateful for the churches, volunteers, families, and community members who helped make this year possible.

As we look ahead, LifeWise Union Local is seeking property closer to the school so there may be room to expand and reach even more students. Please pray with us as we seek God's direction and provision. If you would like more information about volunteering or sponsorship, talk to Dana McGary or Carol Morgan.



LifeWise at St. Clairsville now serves students in Kindergarten through 8th grade, with 182 students registered this year. The program continued to grow with the addition of the remaining middle school grades, giving even more students the opportunity to hear God's Word during the school week.

There were many moments this year that reminded us why this ministry matters. One student shared that she did not know what a Bible was, creating a meaningful opportunity to introduce her to God's Word. We also celebrated with a 4th grader who was recently baptized and later shared about that experience with her class.

One of the most encouraging highlights has been seeing several middle school students begin meeting on their own outside of LifeWise for Bible study and prayer. This is a beautiful reminder that God's Word is taking root beyond the classroom.

Beyond the lessons, LifeWise St. Clairsville was able to bless both elementary and middle school staff with lunch.

God continues to work in and through these students, growing their understanding of His Word and their confidence in prayer and praise. We are grateful for all those who serve, give, and pray, and we are excited to see what He will continue to do.

LIFEWISE

5K

BELMONT COUNTY

Run or walk to support the continuation of Bible-based character education during the school day for students in Belmont County Schools!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2026
AT THE BELMONT COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
PACKET PICK UP AND LATE REGISTRATION 7:00 AM
RACE STARTS 8:30 AM

Adults: $25- Early registration now until July 9th
$30- Registration after July 9th
Students: $20- 17 years of age and under
Register by July 31st to be guaranteed a shirt
Color Fun Run Ages 5-11 Following the 5K-FREE

Register or donate today by scanning the QR code or visiting
https://runsignup.com/Race/OH/StClairsville/LifeWiseBelmontCounty5K

When LifeWise was first introduced locally in March 2022, it began with a small group of people. Now, with Martins Ferry launching in January 2026, every district in Belmont County has a LifeWise program, with more than 1,200 students enrolled county-wide.

Curious about the mission of LifeWise?
visit lifewise.org

Mom to Mom



Mom to Mom meets Saturday mornings throughout the school year and serves moms of all ages and stages. It is a biblically based parenting group designed to encourage and equip moms through teaching, discussion, prayer, and community. It gives moms a place to be reminded that they are not alone as they seek to follow Jesus and care for their families.

What a great year it has been! Mom to Mom wraps up its fourth year, continually growing with new moms supporting each other.

Motherhood is a gift, but it can also be hard. Moms face pressure from culture, expectations from others, and often the weight of their own expectations. We find that one of the greatest gifts of a group like this is the reminder to moms that they are not alone. They need the Lord, and they need one another. We do this through seasoned moms leading and encouraging small groups of younger moms with kids of any age.

This year, we went through the study *Inside Out Parenting.* Moms were encouraged to consider God's design for families, the values shaping their homes, and how faithful parenting begins with who we are becoming in Christ, focusing on who we are a bit more than what we do. This study equipped our moms in building homes that can be places of refuge, security, and connection, in the midst of a chaotic culture.

We are so thankful to the women of Friends Church who have faithfully prayed for and encouraged these moms. Please continue praying for them.

-Kim Cain

Young Adults



Matt and Emily Bravo lead the Young Adults Bible Study here at Friends Church. They moved to the Ohio Valley in July 2024 and have been so grateful to be part of Friends Church since then. They recently bought a home in the area and are thankful to be putting down roots in this wonderful community.

After taking more than a year to work through all 16 chapters of the Gospel of Mark, our Young Adults group has found itself deep in the wisdom of Proverbs. Each Monday, we spend time interacting with Scripture, looking closely at the text, and applying it to everyday young adult life — from work and relationships to our homes, decisions, and discipleship.

Lately, our group has been challenged to recognize the blessing of being part of a multi-generational church. Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety." Friends Church is full of faithful believers who have walked with Christ for many years, and there is so much wisdom to be gained from them.

We have already seen the fruit of that through Ron and Joan Lepic. They kindly opened their hearts and their home to our group, welcoming us for a night of delicious homemade food, Scripture, conversation, stories, and questions. We walked through a portion of Proverbs together and enjoyed the gift of learning from another generation of believers.

It has been a joy to see our church family encourage and invest in our young adults as we grow in faith and community. You can usually find many of us in the front rows during the 11:15 service on Sunday mornings.

If you're a young adult looking for discipleship and community, we would love for you to join us this summer! We'll continue gathering on Mondays, with additional events planned throughout the season. Let us know you're interested, and we'll get you all the details.

– Emily Bravo

Young Adults meet at Matt and Emily's home on Mondays at 6:30pm, and you can find more details about upcoming events on Instagram @erfriends_ya.

Youth Ministry

Friends Youth Ministry is saying a heartfelt thank you to Anthony and Anna Verardi! Anthony grew up at Friends Church, and over the years he has served faithfully in so many ways — even from the time he was a kid himself. What a joy it has been to watch God grow him and now send him and Anna into this next season of ministry.

Anthony and Anna will be leading the children's ministry at their home church near Akron, and while we will miss them, we are so grateful for the ways they have loved and served our students here.

Thank you, Anthony and Anna — a million times over! We are cheering you on and praying God's blessing over this next chapter.



SUMMER SCHEDULE

JUNE 3
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

MOVIE NIGHT - IFLC
Bring your students for a fun movie night with snacks, friends, and laughs, a laid-back evening to kick off summer together as a community.

JUNE 17
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

VBS SETUP & PIZZA PARTY
Join us for a VBS setup night with pizza, teamwork, and fun, a great way to serve together and get everything ready for an incredible week ahead. Service hours avaliable!

friendsyouth

JULY 1
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

4TH OF JULY PARTY
Celebrate the Fourth of July with food, games, and fun, a fun-filled evening to hang out, enjoy summer, and make great memories together.

JULY 8
WEDNESDAY / ALL DAY

CEDAR POINT
Get ready for a day at Cedar Point with rides, friends, and thrills, an exciting adventure to enjoy together and make unforgettable summer memories.

JULY 13-17
ALL WEEK

FRIENDS CAMP
Join us for Friends Summer Camp with fun, growth, and adventure, an unforgettable week to build friendships and experience God in a powerful way together.

JULY 29
WEDNESDAY / TBD

PITTSBURG PIRATES
Join us for a Pittsburgh Pirates game with baseball, friends, and fun, a great summer outing to cheer, relax, and enjoy the game together.

AUG 5
WEDNESDAY / ALL DAY

ZOOMBEZI BAY
Get ready for a day at Zoombezi Bay with slides, the zoo, friends, and fun, a refreshing summer adventure to cool off and make unforgettable memories together.

AUG 12
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

BONFIRE & CAPTURE THE FLAG (TBD)
Join us for abonfirenight with capture the flag, friends, and fun, a laid-back evening to compete, laugh, and enjoy time together under the stars.

AUG 19
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

POOL PARTY
Join us for a pool party with friends, games, and fun, a refreshing summer hangout to relax, laugh, and enjoy time together in the sun.

AUG 26
WEDNESDAY / 6:00PM

BACK TO SCHOOL PARTY
Kick off the school year with a back to school party, friends, games, and fun, a great night to reconnect and start the year together strong.

friendsyouth

SEPT 2
WEDNESDAY / 6:00 PM

VISION KICK-OFF NIGHT
Join us for a Night with purpose, direction, and community, a meaningful start as we begin our year-long journey through the Gospel of John together.

SEPT 16
WEDNESDAY/6:00PM

JOHN 1:1
Step into a new year together with purpose, growth, and community, an exciting start as we begin this journey and see all God has in store.





friendskids

Friends Kids Ministry celebrates Joe and Inez Haythorn! They are retiring after 17 years of faithfully serving our kids. We will miss Joe and Inez - they had such a knack for making kids feel comfortable and seen (they are a bit camera shy themselves ;). Thank you, Joe and Inez, for your years of discipling our kids so well! We pray God blesses them as they move into a new season of life.





Welcome to the World!





Judah James Davis

May 30, 2026 | 6:47 PM | 7.5 lbs

Praying rich blessings over Jeremy & Maddie as
they weclome their son into the world!

from Pastor Aaron



As we head into the summer months, I find myself genuinely grateful for all that God is doing in and through our church family. There is so much ahead of us: Pastor Rod's "Stewarding the Blessings of God" series, Royal Family Kids Camp, VBS, Dad Camp, youth camp, and all of the moments in between that we love: conversations around campfires, afternoons by swimming pools, family gatherings, late summer evenings, and the simple joy of being known by God and others. It is a rich blessing to be part of a church family like this one.

This summer, we are also preparing to walk together through the book of Colossians from June 7th through August 23rd. Week by week, we will search the Scriptures together and fix our eyes on the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. My encouragement to you is simple: bring your Bible, bring a notebook, bring a pen, and come ready to lean in. There is something powerful about a church opening the Word together with expectation, humility, and hunger for what God wants to say.

Personally, this season feels like an opportunity to put into practice many of the things the Lord has been teaching me. Over the last several months, we have talked often about the truths that "Jesus is enough" and that we are called to "Think like Jesus." This summer, I do not want those ideas to remain sermon points or phrases we simply repeat. I want them to shape the way I live, lead, love my family, serve others, rest, speak, and follow Christ in everyday life.

Would you join me in that?

Let's be a church that not only hears the Word, but lives it. Let's be people who slow down enough this summer to recognize the goodness of God, enjoy the people He has placed around us, and pursue Jesus together with sincerity and joy. Who knows, God may just use that to bring others into our story also. I truly believe God has good things ahead for this church family, and I cannot wait to see what He does.

Praying rich blessing over you and your family this summer!
In His service, *Pastor Aaron*

Don't forget you can listen to sermons on the go with Apple and Spotify





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est. 1879

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until the whole valley knows.