

The Garden

See what's growing in Eden

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Note from the Pastor

In an interesting turn of events, one of my good friends during my college years was a member of Eden. I recall a particular conversation about the big faith questions we all wrestle with (I assumed), in which she remained quiet. I asked her why she didn't have any thoughts to share and her response was, "I'm just not used to talking about that kind of stuff." Fast-forward to my first year as pastor: I was visiting a member who was telling me about his time in 1-W service. He explained that he was in a unit with several young men from Pennsylvania. He marveled at the way they so freely and openly talked about their faith in Jesus with each other. I got the impression that he, like my friend, was not very practiced at talking about faith. And I believe that is simply because we have different ways of expressing our faith.

Over my time as a pastor, I've been more aware of the different "faith languages" we all have. It's clear to me that the primary two faith languages of Eden are Music and Service. Talking about faith isn't nearly as common as singing faith or doing faith. For generations, this faith community has faithfully lived out the call to "preach the gospel at all times and when necessary, use words." Amen to that! But, I wonder if we have focused so much on "doing" faith that we don't know how to speak of it. My hope would be that we can affirm our particular faith languages, while also growing the muscles that may have previously been unused.

This Fall, we will be focusing on "talking about faith" in our worship time together. We will look at some of the reasons why it can be hard, the different situations in which we might talk about our faith, and how we can learn to do it, so that God's good news can continue to be shared in various ways through us. Let's continue to grow into our mission statement: to be a community that follows Jesus in all we say and do.



New kids books available in the library!

Highlighting Author Christian Robinson

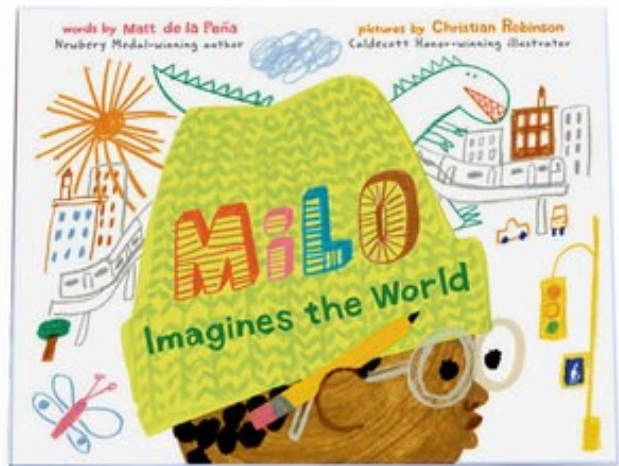
By Eden Librarian Amanda Harrison

Christian Robinson is an author/illustrator who is having a big moment in children's literature right now.

And it isn't a surprise, as his titles offer a picture of a beautiful, kind, multicultural world. Many of his books are highly imaginative, from the wordless picture book, *Another*, to *Carmela Full of Wishes*, and his newest title, *You Matter*.

Learn more about this fun new author at his website <https://www.theartoffun.com/> or check out his interview with website Read Brightly <https://www.readbrightly.com/meet-illustrator-christian-robinson/>

One of our new titles by this author is *Milo Imagines the World*.



Eden Leadership Team

Eden Leadership Team (ELT) met on August 17.

The Stewardship Commission has been working on two documents. One is an updated policy for Memorial and Estate Gifts, and the other is Responsibilities of the Stewardship Commission. After discussion on the two documents it was decided that Bruce Stucky will take the recommendations back to his commission and will return next month for final approval of the documents.

Matt Schrag, Trustee representative, reported that the trustees have prioritized the remedy of the boiler situation and the repair of the roof, windows and stucco damage caused by the hailstorm, as well as repair/modification of skylights in the fellowship hall. As funding for these projects is a significant concern, the re-carpeting and re-flooring project is now on hold, as well as the Green Burial project.

Marcella Schrag shared that the Education/Discipleship Commission is thankful to have most of the teaching slots filled for the new Sunday school year, but one or two teachers in the Junior Department are still needed. They have discussed Wednesday evening services, but decided that for now, the children will not meet weekly, but will have monthly service projects. The first one is planned for the end of September and will likely involve putting together MCC School Kits. The new Sunday school kick-off will be September 12.

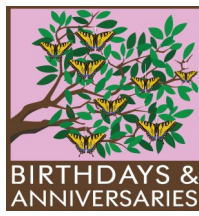
The Worship Commission, represented by JoLene Kaufman, shared that they recommend leaving the offering and bulletins outside of the sanctuary, and continue to have an open sanctuary. There was discussion of having choirs meet again this fall, including children's choir, worship band, ladies chorus, men's chorus, and chancel choir. Becky Seter, Music Minister, does not feel comfortable leading the children's choir due to COVID-19 concerns, but another interested person has offered to lead this. Becky has proposed that all singers who participate in adult choirs would be vaccinated for COVID-19. The Worship Commission brought this decision to ELT for further discernment. There was some discussion, but no decision was made.

Pastor Derek shared that coverage in Dianne's absence has been going well. It has been good to have guest preachers bringing their messages. There will be two baptisms planned for September 5. Derek and Becky are also doing premarital counseling with one couple and will be starting with another couple in November. Derek and Becky will be teaching a parenting elective in the fall. Derek has also met with Staff Congregation Relations Team, who is planning for a pastoral review for both Pastors Dianne and Derek in January 2022.

Jeff Koller reported that the deacons are exploring where we are as a church spiritually. What are our strengths and weaknesses? How can we deepen our faith?

The ELT had a lengthy discussion on what should be our policy regarding the wearing of masks in the church building and building usage during COVID-19. They had opportunity to read the most recent press release from McPherson County and also to view a video featuring the Chief Medical Officers from the hospitals in our region. The hospital CMOs gave the facts about their COVID admissions, staffing shortages, increase in children and non-vaccinated adult admissions related to the rise of the Delta variant. They strongly advocate for vaccination, masking, and social distancing to decrease the spread of COVID. There are those in our congregation who are strongly opposed to mandatory vaccinations and mandatory masking. Some feel that a mask is a political statement and makes people not feel welcome in our church. Some feel that they should be able to decide for themselves and their family whether or not to wear a mask, and they are not comfortable with the church forcing them to mask. Others feel that saying masking is "optional" is like saying that not masking is fine, and argue that proper mask-wearing does reduce the spread of infection. We were reminded that the enemy is the virus, and not each other. After listening to both sides of the issue, we agreed that for now, we would abide by the recommendation of the McPherson County Health Department, which "recommends all individuals 2 years and above mask in indoor settings when 6-foot distance cannot be maintained. Get vaccinated if you're eligible, stay home if you are sick, and wash your hands." (from the MCHD Press Release, 8-12-21) We will continue to monitor the recommendations of the local health department and make necessary adjustments. This will be communicated to the congregation by e-mail and will be in the bulletin. Pastor Derek will look into the signage at the church entrances to make certain they are consistent with this policy.





September Birthdays

- 1- Dick Gehring
- 4- Reagen Dalke (Jerrod)
- 5- Brian Kaufman
- 8- Shirley Delk
- 9- Kason Graber (Zach & Kali)
- 10- Marcia Goering
Coy Kaufman (Brandon & Morgan)
- 11- Becky Koller
Cheryl Stucky
Pat Stucky
- 13- Kathy Ensz
Michael Gehring
Justin Soriano
- 14- Pixie Doane (Heath & Samantha)
Kristopher Rath
Jill Zerger
- 16- Vaughn Goering
Robert D. Schrag
- 17- Jan Craig Goering
- 18- Jaeden Dalke (Jerrod)
Irvin Harms
Saylor Stucky (David Stucky)
- 19- Joe Lichti
- 20- Jenny Schrag
- 21- Jerome Goering
Aubree Schrag (Matt & Rashelle)
Katie (Handley) Stucky
- 22- Lorita Zook
Bobbi Schrag
Rebecka Stucky
- 23- Cade Graber
Evelyn King (Derek & Becky)
- 27- Kristeen Thompson
Shawn Rath
Robin Schrag
- 29- Carolyn Goering
- 30- David G. Goering

September Anniversaries

- 2- Robert & JoLene Kaufman
- 4- Heath & Samantha Doane
Howard & Neva Kaufman
- 6- Jay & Linda Goering
- 8- Sam & Marcia Goering
- 18- Lanny & Linda Stucky
- 21- Allen & Lauren Bonde
- 27- Kenneth & Glenna Schrag
- 28- Reese & Meghan Gehring



Thank you to all who donated to MCC by sponsoring us in the 5K Run/Walk on July 3. There were about 130 participants this year. The oldest was 86 years young and the youngest was 5. We appreciate your generous donations.

Gregory, Elaine and Denise Krehbiel



Learn from leaves

As you're enjoying the fall colors and sipping apple cider, ponder this saying: "Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."

When leaves stop producing chlorophyll, they turn vibrant shades of yellow, orange and red. This yearly spectacle makes way for the leaves to let go and fall. It also serves as a good reminder of things we may need to drop: clutter around the home, a desire for control, commitments that no longer bring joy, personal expectations that cause added stress, a need to always be right and so on.

Just as the Israelites had to let go of their past as slaves in Egypt and Saul-turned-Paul had to abandon his persecuting ways, we, too, can let go of what weighs us down and gets in the way of God's best for our lives. Embrace fall as a season of change and see just how beautiful it is to let things go!

—Janna Firestone