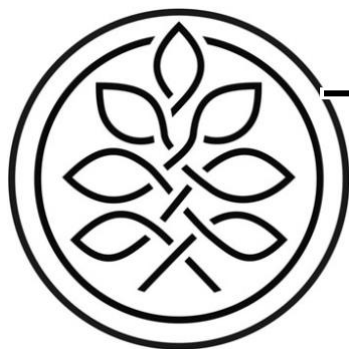




Please join us for worship.
Midway Kids: 10:30
Worship: 10:30

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Calendar

Sundays —

Women's Bible Study 5:00 p.m.
Midway Students 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Mondays — 6:30 p.m.

Boy Scout Troop 68

Tuesdays—

Prayer Ministry—1:30 p.m.
Men's Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Wednesdays —

Midway Hotel Lunch—Noon
Choir Rehearsal — 6:29 p.m.

Thursdays — 9-4:00

Sewcial open sewing
Yoga at 9:00
1st and 3rd—Twice Blessed
Open Noon to 5 p.m.

Tuesday, July 14

Second Tuesday Lunch — Noon
Prayer Ministry — 1:30

July 5-10,

Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp

Saturday, July 18

The Food Bank Give Back Day
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Monday, July 27

Gorgeous Girls — 11:00
Meriwether Café in Rocheport

Midway Locust Grove Church



Locust Leaves

Volume 39
Number 7
July 2026

An Invitation to Pray

On Sunday, September 13, we will take an important next step together as a church family when we begin offering two Sunday morning worship services: a 9:00 am modern service and an 11:00 am traditional service, with an intentional hour of fellowship in between. This is a meaningful change, and we need to prepare for it well.

So, for the five Sundays leading up to September 13, we will begin gathering at 9:00 am for a special Prayer Service. These services will run from Sunday, August 9 through Sunday, September 6. This will not be a second worship service yet. There will not be a sermon. There will not be corporate singing or hymns. Instead, it will be a guided prayer service that moves between moments of praying together and moments of personal prayer and reflection.

Each Sunday will have a specific focus. We will pray for the people we hope to reach. We will pray for our church. We will pray for our volunteers, leaders, staff and ministries. We will pray for authentic relationships, shared vision, and a deep dependence on the Holy Spirit. Most of all, we will ask God to prepare our hearts for the season ahead.

This will also help us begin getting into the rhythm of being here earlier on Sunday mornings. But more than that, it will help us remember that this next season is not just about logistics, schedules, space, or service times. It is about worship. It is about mission. It is about making room for more people to encounter Jesus.

There is an old story about Charles Spurgeon. When visitors came to see the church and ask about the secret of its fruitful ministry, Spurgeon reportedly took them to a room where people were praying. He called it the church's "boiler room." In those days, the boiler room was where the power came from. It was not the most visible room in the building, but it was essential. That is a beautiful picture. As we prepare to move into two services, may Midway Locust Grove become that kind of praying church; a people committed to praying while worship is taking place.

One hope for these five weeks is that some who attend the 11:00 am service will consider coming early to pray during the 9:00 am service. Pray for the Holy Spirit to move. Pray for people to encounter Christ. Pray for guests to feel welcomed, for hearts to be softened, and for the



Beyond
the Pulpit

**Pastor
Ben Lee**

Continued on Page 10. . .

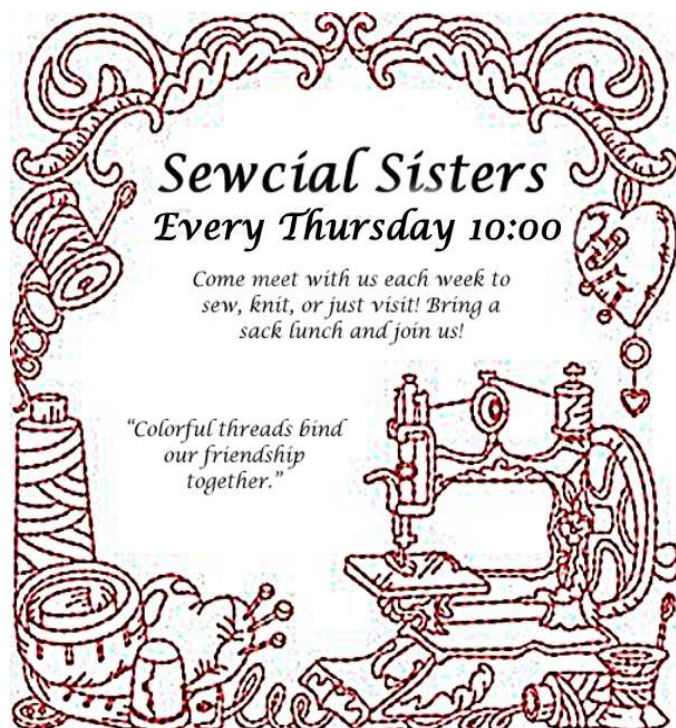
Ministries & Missions

GORGEOUS GIRLS Lunch finds its way to Rocheport. See you Monday, July 27.

Charlotte Palmer has announced the resumption of luncheons for the Gorgeous Girls. The next scheduled luncheon will be Monday, July 27th, at 11:00 a.m. at Meriwether Café on the Katy Trail across from the Depot in Rocheport. Meet at the church at 10:30 if you want to carpool.

In addition to an excellent meal, you can expect an interesting collection of activities in Rocheport ranging from historic sites to unique shopping experiences.

If you have any questions, please contact Charlotte Palmer at ca-palmer48@gmail.com.



Greetings and Farewell from The Koehlers In Lexington.

Dear Locust Grove Family,

We have finally made the permanent move to Lexington. Many of you may have thought we had already moved, but as of May 30, we officially became residents of Lexington. It is hard to let go of all things Midway, our wonderful church family and all our dear friends. However, things change and Clete and I are already for this next chapter of our lives.

As I write this, we are on a cruise with all the kids and grands to celebrate our 50th anniversary. It is a special time for us to be with our family and enjoy wonderful time together. We are thankful that we will live about five minutes from Katie & family, and 45 minutes from Jason and his family in Lee's Summit.

Thank you, dear church family for all of the great years spent at MLG and the wonderful memories we take with us. If you are ever in the Lexington area, give us a call and we'd love to show you around. God's blessings to all of you.

Kathy and Clete Koehler
1610 Bloom Street
Lexington, MO 65067
(K) 573-864-4597
© 573-999-6660

Happy Birthday

July 2026

If someone's name does not appear here and they do have a birthday this month, please let us know by email and we will update our records.

1 Jackson Strubel
2 Jewel Roberts
5 Darren White
8 Ben Lee
9 Jill Cook
9 Rachel Durrant
9 Angie Gerzen
9 Luciana Mendez

10 Ian Fuemmeler
11 Iola Grant
14 Marlin Gessling
14 Morgan Green
16 Ken Zahringer
17 *Betty Goran*
19 Dylan Roop
19 Rhyllie Burkart

22 Wilson Martin
24 Katie Persinger
24 Bill Roop
24 Debi Sanders
26 Ada Cooper
26 David Snook
28 Cameron Frink
29 Elliot McPherson
(email only)



KINGDOM QUEST

AN EPIC JOURNEY TO
DISCOVER GOD'S KINGDOM

Vacation Bible School

June 7th-10th 2026 (5:30 - 8:00 p.m.)

Midway Locust Grove Church

Kids ages 3 - incoming 6th grade

See Pages 5 through 8 for the
report on this remarkable journey.



Getting to know you

With the recent and continuing growth of our congregation, it seemed a good idea to revive a feature from earlier years of Locust Leaves. We will feature someone in each month's issue, alternating new and longtime members. Thanks to LeeAnn Martin for coordinating the series.

Lucy and Alex McDade

Lucy McDade is just completing her first quarter as Locust Grove's Administrative Assistant, and is stepping into her role with enthusiasm and care.

She brings valuable experience from her previous role as a lead administrative assistant with the Department of Special Services, where she developed a strong foundation in organization, communication, and attention to detail.

She and her husband Alex were married July 19, 2025, creating a three-day holiday each year . . . Alex's birthday is July 17, Lucy's is July 18.

Alex earned his masters degree in accounting from the University of Missouri, and is a loan coordinator at Veterans United in Columbia.

Lucy has one niece, 3-year-old Lyla, who is her only sibling's child, and the couple has two pets, a Chocolate Lab named Theo and a cat named Arya.

Their non-working interests include going camping, hanging out with friends and family, attending concerts and musicals, and they love to be able to travel.

Lucy's father is a deputy sheriff and volunteer firefighter for Gasconade County in



east-central Missouri with its county seat Hermann. Her mother is a Dispatcher for the county.

Born in San Diego, California, in 2002, Lucy moved to Owensville, Missouri when she was six years old. Alex is a native Columbian, where the couple now resides.

Lucy's grandfather was a pilot for TWA, and also served as a person who refueled the planes in the air when he served in the Air Force.

Lucy is stepping into her new role with enthusiasm and confidence, and we are grateful to have her supporting the daily life and ministries of our church.

When you see our new couple, be sure to introduce yourself and give them a warm Midway Locust Grove welcome!



Vacation
Bible
School
rates
another
successful
season



“Kingdom Quest” Vacation Bible School was held on the evenings of June 7th-10 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The children ate dinner, rotated through stations (music, craft, games, Bible story), and learned about God’s Kingdom. There was a bottom line each night that was the focus of their Bible story (Night 1: Jesus is the way, Night 2: Jesus is with me, Night 3: Jesus is alive, Night 4; The Holy Spirit helps me).

It was a wonderful week with lots of excited children each evening. The children raised over 1,000 items for Twice Blessed, with the girls winning this year’s friendly competition and Zeke Lee being a good sport and taking the pie in the face.

We wrapped up our week with an ice cream social in the fellowship hall. It was a wonderful way to end our fun week.

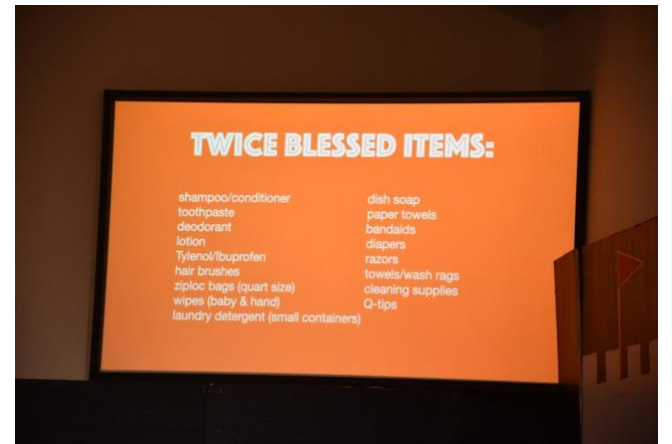
This week would have not been possible without the MANY volunteers! Thank you so much to every single person that played a part in helping with VBS! We had volunteers drawing and painting the backdrops, decorating, prepping/serving food, working check-in, supervising the four different age groups of children, leading the four different stations, running the A/V booth, setting up zip lines, helping with dismissal/parent pick-up, and tear down/cleanup following VBS.

It truly takes a village, and I am beyond thankful for ours as Midway Locust Grove. I appreciate everyone of our volunteers who showed up and poured into our children! I am already excited and planning for next year.

Thank you for everything!

Shayla Roop









A Season of Song: Why We Sing, and Why You Might Join Us

As we look ahead to our 2026–27 choir season, I’ve been reflecting on what makes our choir more than a group of singers. Week after week, I see people walk into the loft carrying their own joys, burdens, hopes, and stories — and somehow, when we begin to sing, those individual lives knit together into one offering of praise.

Recently I asked our choir members to share, in their own words, *why* they sing. Their responses were so heartfelt that I wanted to share a few with you, because they paint a picture of what choir truly is.

One member wrote, *“Being in choir fills my heart with joy each Sunday when we sing! My voice is only mediocre, but Jim has a knack of blending all our voices into beautiful praise for our God.”* Another said, *“Choir is an act of humble worship... our imperfect voices raised together as one voice to praise Him.”*

Several spoke of the spiritual encouragement they find in singing together: *“For me, singing in the choir fulfills this exhortation — providing the means to encourage and be encouraged, through sharing my heartfelt faith with others, and they with me.”*

Others described the deeply personal way God meets them in song: *“As I sing worship songs of praise and gratitude for my salvation, His Holy Spirit lifts my soul and spirit.”* *“I think of singing as praying, set to music.”*

And one member captured the heart of choir ministry beautifully: *“I sing from my heart and soul as a testimony of what the Lord has done and is doing in my life... that others may be edified and encouraged by the faithfulness of the Lord.”*

All of these voices — different people, different stories — come together in what one member summed up simply: *“Singing in unison. Worship in unison. One in the Spirit.”*

As we prepare for a new season, I want to invite you to consider whether God might be nudging you toward choir. You don’t need a soloist’s voice. You don’t need musical training. You don’t need to know how to read music. You simply need a willing heart and a desire to worship.

If you’ve ever wondered what it might be like to sing with us, or if you’ve felt that quiet tug during a Sunday anthem, I encourage you to pray about it. We would love to welcome you into this ministry of encouragement, testimony, and shared praise.

Come join us — not because we need more voices, but because God may want to use *your* voice in ways you haven’t imagined.

By Jim Johnson



Happy Birthday America

Abraham Lincoln was our 16th President and it is reported that Chicken Fricassee was a favorite food for him. During the stressful times of the Civil War he sometimes forgot to eat, but his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, could coax him to the dinner table with this rich, slow cooked chicken and gravy served over hot biscuits.

Please enjoy this historical meal.

Hope Burkart

Ingredients:

1 whole chicken cut up (or 8 chicken thighs)
 2t salt
 1/2 t pepper
 1/2 t nutmeg
 1/2 t ground mace
 1 t marjoram
 2 cups heavy cream
 4T butter
 4-6 T flour

Directions:

(Use 10 inch cast iron skillet with lid)

Rub chicken with salt, pepper, nutmeg, mace, and marjoram mixture. Melt butter in skillet. Add chicken and pour cream over chicken and turn to coat on all sides. Cook over medium heat until cream bubbles, then lower heat, cover and simmer until chicken is fork tender (165 degrees internal temperature) about 30 minutes. Remove chicken and set aside.

To make gravy, whisk flour a little at a time into remaining liquid in pan. Once thick, return chicken to pan and reheat

An Invitation to Pray

Continued from Page 1)

Word of God to bear fruit. In the same way, those who attend the 9:00 am service may consider staying after to pray for all that is taking place during the 11:00 am service.

Prayer should never be something we talk about only after our plans have been made. Prayer must be how we seek God's direction, depend on God's power, and entrust the work of the church to God's care. It is the quiet strength underneath everything we do.

So please join us at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings from August 9 through September 6. Come ready to pray. Come ready to listen. Come ready to ask God to lead us, shape us, unite us, and empower us for the work ahead.

I am grateful for this church family, and I am excited for all God has before us.

Peace,

Ben

*God promises
 a safe landing,
 not a calm passage.*

Join us for Second Tuesday Lunch

**July 14
 Noon in the
 Fellowship
 Hall.
 Bring a dish
 and a friend .**





While last month's food drive has formally ended, the need continues to provide food donations to the Twice Blessed giving Box on a regular basis. Keep your gifts coming on a regular schedule.

30 volunteers sought for Food Bank July 18

Volunteers from Locust Grove will work in the Volunteer Room of the Food Bank for Central and Northeast on Saturday, July 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Food Bank's Volunteer Room at 2104 Vandiver Drive, Columbia.

Please use the QR Code below to register at least one week ahead of the work shift. Volunteers must be at least 12 years old to qualify to work.

Please have your group members use this reservation link to sign up. We re-

quire all volunteers to be registered for their shift by July 11.

Thirty positions have been reserved for this project. Any unused slots will be released to other volunteers, and we cannot guarantee that unregistered members of your group will be able to serve with us.

When your group arrives for your shift, make sure you are wearing closed-toes shoes and check in with the staff to get started volunteering.

Register Here:



Watch for details in the Fellowship Hall, or contact Leslie Brown at 573-0355-3978 or by email at brownie1262@hotmail.com.

Leslie Brown
Ministry Chair



MIDWAY LOCUST GROVE CHURCH

2600 N. Locust Grove Church Road
Columbia, MO 65202

Pastor: Rev. Ben Lee
Administrative Assistant: Lucy McDade
Church phone: 573-445-4667
Pastor's cell phone: 478-447-4438
Email: mwlocustgrove@gmail.com
Email: blee.mwlocustgrove@gmail.com
Facebook: [@mwlocustgrove](https://www.facebook.com/mwlocustgrove)
YouTube: [mwlocustgrove](https://www.youtube.com/mwlocustgrove)
Instagram: [@mwlocustgrove](https://www.instagram.com/mwlocustgrove)



***Our Mission:
We exist to
gather in grace,
grow in Christ,
and go share the Gospel.***

Locust Leaves Editor: Gene Baumann
Rocheport@aol.com 573-445-1998

The Back Row By Gene Baumann

As a Locust Grove Church member, I have been proud of our congregation's more than two centuries of dedicated service. With a record like ours since 1817, it makes sense that we would notice when another long time congregation would suspend its service.

I have just read Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church held its last service Sunday, June 29, after 112 years of worship.

Since 2014, the church was the home of Turning Point, a United Methodist ministry that serves people who are homeless. As Turning Point moved its operations to the VAC Opportunity Campus on Business Loop 70, the church struggled to find ways to replace the income that was coming from

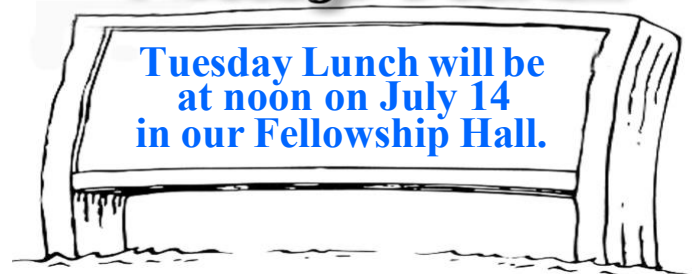
Find the hidden Bible in this issue.



Visit our Web Site: at www.locustgrove.com

Volume 39 Issue 7 July 2026

***If we had a
Message Board...***



July 2026

the ministry group's rent.

On Sunday, the church held its final "homecoming" service to celebrate its history. The event brought together people of all stages of life. Church pews filled with current members, past members and a pipeline of pastors dating back to the 1970s.

I remember the church's greatest claim to fame as feeding the homeless through their Loaves and Fishes program, which our Locust Grove members helped serve on a regular basis. Beginning in 2010, the service provided free meals every night for 40 years before moving in 2024 and is now in its new VAC location.

Now members of the church are looking for a new home. I personally would like to invite anyone affected by the closure to consider Midway Locust Grove as an excellent replacement as their new congregation.