



AT THE ORCHARD

| JULY 2025 |

A PLACE TO GROW

In 1 Corinthians 12:27, Paul tells the church, “You are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” This is an important reminder that every local church has an individual and collective component. We all have a personal responsibility to trust and follow Christ. We also have a corporate responsibility to help others to do the same. In other words, we’re all in this together.

This is one of the beauties and blessings of the church. God brings us into His family so that we might know Him, praise Him, and serve Him together. At The Orchard, we have the great joy of fulfilling this calling in six different locations. Our multi-site model has allowed us to spread out geographically for the advance of the gospel. And the Lord has blessed this multiplying work, while also allowing us to strengthen and support each other as one church.

Over these past months, I am especially grateful for the way we have rallied together around The Orchard North Shore as we seek the Lord’s direction for their long-term home. We have prayed for this need in worship services, in our LIFE Groups, and at Pray First. June’s Pray First was a particularly special occasion, as we gathered from all six campuses to call upon the Lord together.

I want to invite you to continue praying for our north shore congregation. Pray for Pastor Josh and the whole team’s endurance, strength, and joy. Pray for God’s people to grow in faith, hope, and love in this season. Pray for the advance of the gospel on the north shore for the glory of God’s name. And pray the same for each location of The Orchard.

We are one body with one mission serving one Lord.

Warmly in Christ,

Brad Wetherell, Senior Pastor

Walking By Faith

PASTOR JOSH PARSONS

A man named Octavius Winslow once said, “If we were only to advance as we saw the spot on which we were to place our foot, or only to go out as we knew the place whither we were going, it then were no longer a life of faith that we lived, but of sight.”

As a human being, I’m much more comfortable living by sight. I like knowing what is coming and how things will play out. I prefer certainty and clarity over ambiguity and unpredictability. You probably do, too.

But that is not how life often works. And it’s not how we were made to live! One of the defining characteristics of the Christian life is that “we live by faith, not by sight” (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). That’s not the exception; it’s the rule. As uncomfortable as it may be, it’s the kind of life to which God has called each of us. Which means that if we only ever advance or take a step toward something when we can see the place to set our foot, we’re actively resisting (or resenting!) the kind of life God has called us to live.

For the past two years, The Orchard North Shore has been walking by faith. Not because we want to but because we’ve had to. God closed the door on our season of ministry at Christian Heritage Academy almost exactly two years ago, has ushered us into a fresh season of ministry at the Glenview Park Center, and has not yet opened a door for us to settle into a long-term home. We don’t know the place where we’re going or all the things that God is doing, but He has been with us, sustained us, and blessed us as we’ve sought to follow Him.

We’re unsure what the future holds, but do you know what that’s done in us? It has certainly strengthened our faith. It has made us more mature. But it has also kindled our prayers. What else is there to do when we can’t see the way ahead except come for help to the One Who has already ordained the way ahead? We’ve been praying for our present and future ministry as individuals and together as a congregation. On June 1, all six congregations of The Orchard came together to pray for our search for a long-term home as well as for the gospel’s advance across the North Shore. We know that God hears prayer and that God uses prayer to make things happen. But God also leverages prayer to change the hearts of His people: to root out of us self-reliance and pride and to build within us dependence and humility. As much as we want a place of our own, what God is teaching us is that prayer is less about what we get and more about the kinds of people God is making us into.

Therefore, we look to Him for all the things we need as we walk this road by faith. “And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.” PSALM 9:10



TESTIMONIES OF FAITH

JUAN MANUEL CHACON-RUIZ

(13-year-old son of two members)

I feel happy when someone makes me laugh! God fills my heart with joy through His Word and our church. I love meeting new people who believe in God like I do. Playing basketball with my Youth Group is so fun, especially when the ball somehow gets stuck on the basketball net! Moments like that remind me how awesome it is just to be together. Going to the Youth Camp at Lake Geneva and volunteering to work makes me feel good because we are getting camp ready so we can worship in the summer and make it even more special. At Pray First, I feel connected to my church family. When we pray together, I feel God's love and protection—it fills my heart with joy. And honestly, when Pastor Jeremy shows up with donuts at Youth Group, my stomach is just as happy as my spirit! All these moments make my life so joyful!

JODI NORMAN

When I think about how God has increased my joy this year, the image of a meal comes to mind. Every day, God gives me joy when I chew on His Word. And Jesus via His Holy Spirit nourishes me with it all day. But it's not just about eating by myself. Meals are even better shared with friends and family. On Sundays, I've got a seat around the extended table of The Orchard North Shore. Family, friends, visitors all get to sing, hear the Word and fellowship on the Sabbath—it's like a joyful family holiday meal. Then I go to Sunday School, and that's like gathering around the dining room table to work together on a project. But we're working on getting to know God better together and enjoying each other's company, too. Last, but not least, is my LIFE Group, where even though I can't always join them, there's always a laptop at the table for me so I can take a seat from home. And to top that off, there's "snacks" through our WhatsApp group. We keep connected with the Word, prayer, happenings and life events. I think it's a lot like the early believers in **Acts 2:42** who "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship." Joy in Christ is sweet, but it's even sweeter when it's shared.

TESTIMONIES OF FAITH

MATTHEW ALBAZI

When I think about one method in which God has used His Church, His Word, and His people to increase my joy this year, my thoughts go to **John 14:27**: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” Passages like these brought to us by God through scriptures and sermons, which speak of His faithfulness, promises, and goodness, are a great source of comfort that we all need to hear and be reminded of time and time again. I believe that this is just one of many ways God has used The Orchard’s ministries to bring joy in my life and others’. When we look at the world and see all the problems, tension and anxiety we feel in and around us caused by sin, it can be a pretty depressing outlook on life. We feel sorrow and wonder if things will ever get better. But thank God for His grace and His son Jesus Christ Who reminds us that even though we face difficulties in the world, we ought to take heart because HE has overcome the world. It’s a comfort and joy knowing that God knows our troubles and He promises to make things right in the end. He reminds us not to worry, that He will be with us and help us take on any struggles—no matter how big—we face in life when we ask for it in His Son’s name: Jesus Christ.

“

And honestly, when Pastor Jeremy shows up with donuts at Youth Group, my stomach is just as happy as my spirit!

—Juan

It’s like a joyful family holiday meal.

—Jodi

It’s a comfort and joy knowing that God knows our troubles.

—Matthew

”





ROOTS | LIFE | FRUIT



UPCOMING



PREACHING SCHEDULE

JULY 5/6

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS | BRAD WETHERELL
BARRINGTON | TOM OLSON
ITASCA | RYAN POTELICKI
MARENGO | JUSTIN SEARLES
NORTH SHORE | RYAN COBURN
VERNON HILLS | ERIC FEDER

JULY 12/13

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS | BRAD WETHERELL
BARRINGTON | TOM OLSON
ITASCA | RYAN POTELICKI
MARENGO | JUSTIN SEARLES
NORTH SHORE | JOSH PARSONS
VERNON HILLS | SCOTT MANETSCH

JULY 19/20

ALL CAMPUSES | BRAD WETHERELL

JULY 26/27

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS | COLIN SMITH
BARRINGTON | TOM OLSON
ITASCA | RYAN POTELICKI
MARENGO | DILLON MACK
NORTH SHORE | JOSH PARSONS
VERNON HILLS | BILL MOORE

A PLACE TO GROW





REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Register your children for Awana at
one of the following campuses!

Arlington Heights • Barrington • Itasca • Marengo



THE ORCHARD

theorchard.church