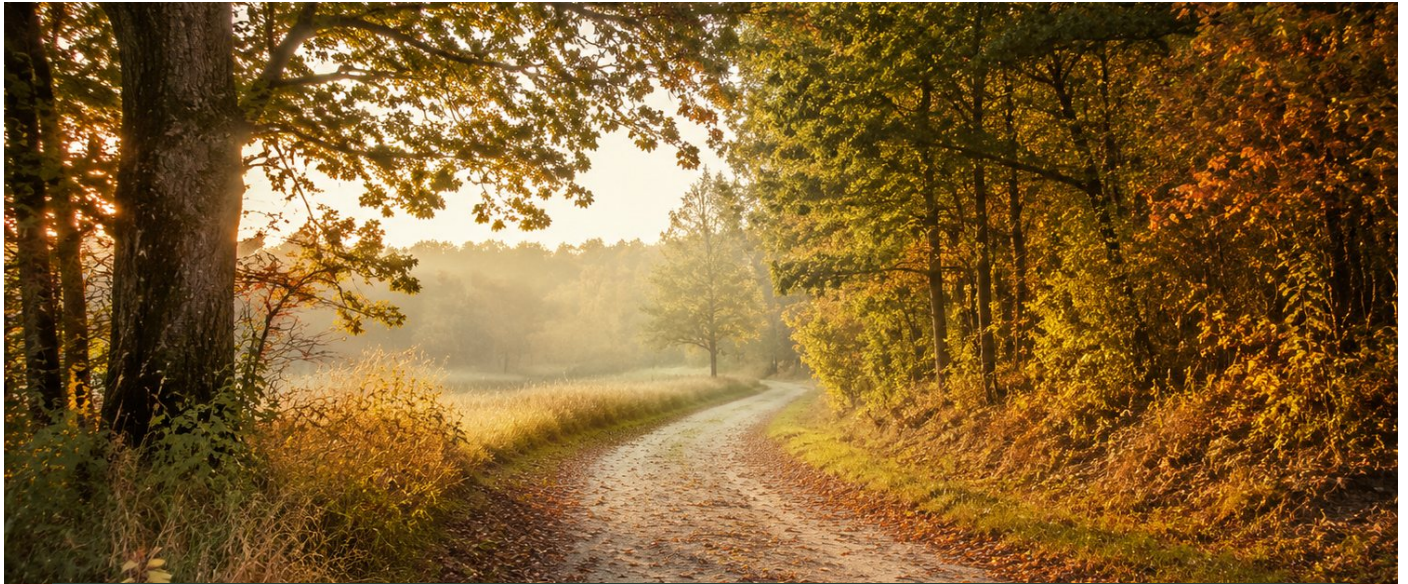




FIRST FRIENDS MONTHLY

Mercy for the Road Between Sundays

September 2026

September's governing question: What does the mercy we receive from God form in a faithful follower of Jesus?

A Small Table Between Sundays

When I first came to First Friends, I began writing a monthly newsletter because I wanted us to have more than a list of dates and announcements. I hoped it might help us recognize what Christ is doing among us and remain connected between Sundays.

Over time, ministry became fuller. I was writing more than ever - sermons, Bible studies, classes, and other projects - but one of our shared places of connection grew quiet.

This newsletter is beginning again in a simpler form. Think of it as a small table between Sundays: a place for Scripture, reflection, congregational life, prayer, and the community beyond our doors.

We are not going backward. We are recovering a useful rhythm because connection is worth tending.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Paul

Four Sundays of Mercy

Each Sunday gives us more than a theme to hear. It gives us a query to carry into the week - something to hold before Christ in prayer, conversation, and daily faithfulness.

September 6 - Reconciliation

Mercy Tells the Truth

Ezekiel 33:7-11; Psalm 119:33-40; Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20

Query for the week:

Where is Christ asking me to tell the truth in a way that seeks restoration rather than victory?

September 13 - Forgiveness

Mercy Stops Keeping Score

Genesis 50:15-21; Psalm 103:8-13; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

Query for the week:

Whose debt am I still carrying on an inner ledger, and what would it mean to place that debt into God's hands?

September 20 - Grace

Mercy Gives More Than We Think Is Fair

Matthew 20:1-16; Jonah 3:10-4:11; Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30

Query for the week:

Where have I mistaken God's generosity toward someone else for unfairness toward me?

September 27 - Cruciform Love

Mercy Takes the Shape of the Cross

Philippians 2:1-11; Matthew 16:24

Query for the week:

Where is Christ inviting the mercy I have received to take the shape of self-giving love?



Pause with the image: Where do you notice movement? What might mercy set in motion through you?

Life Among Friends

Touch-A-Truck Was a Hit!

We began September with a wonderful Touch-A-Truck gathering. Children and families enjoyed exploring the vehicles, meeting people from our community, and spending time together.

Thank you to everyone who helped welcome our neighbors and make the event possible. Gatherings like this remind us that hospitality does not have to be complicated. Sometimes it begins with an open parking lot, a friendly face, and room for children to be curious.

Gathering at First Friends

Every Sunday

9:00 a.m. - Psalms and Prayer
9:30 a.m. - Sunday Bible Study Classes
10:30 a.m. - Worship in person and online

Wednesday Heaven Study

Dinner begins at 5:15 p.m.
Study begins at 5:30 p.m.

Continuing each Wednesday through November 18.

First Friends Rummage Sale - September 18-19

Come browse, visit, and help support the life and ministry of First Friends. Please share the dates with family, friends, and neighbors.

September at a Glance

SEPT 6	Reconciliation - Mercy Tells the Truth
SEPT 9	Dinner 5:15 p.m.; Heaven Study 5:30 p.m.
SEPT 12	River Fest and Marion citywide cleanup
SEPT 13	Forgiveness - Mercy Stops Keeping Score
SEPT 16	Dinner 5:15 p.m.; Heaven Study 5:30 p.m.
SEPT 18-19	First Friends Rummage Sale
SEPT 20	Grace - Mercy Gives More Than We Think Is Fair
SEPT 23	Dinner 5:15 p.m.; Heaven Study 5:30 p.m.
SEPT 24-27	Ducktail Run Car Show
SEPT 25-27	James Dean Festival
SEPT 27	Cruciform Love - Mercy Takes the Shape of the Cross
SEPT 30	Dinner 5:15 p.m.; Heaven Study 5:30 p.m.

Around Our Community

Being part of First Friends also means noticing the life of the community beyond our doors.

September 12

River Fest in downtown Marion, beginning at 11:00 a.m.; Marion's final citywide cleanup of the year.

September 24-27

Ducktail Run Car Show at Gas City Park.

September 25-27

James Dean Festival in Fairmount.

[Grant County event details](#) | [City of Marion](#)

Looking Ahead

Fall for Marriage

Saturday, Oct 31, 2026, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

A day of practical marriage coaching to strengthen communication, deepen connection, and rediscover friendship.

[Learn more and share the invitation](#)

A Prayer for September

Lord Jesus, let the mercy we receive from you become truth spoken with love, forgiveness that releases its ledger, grace that rejoices in generosity, and love that takes the shape of the cross.

Form your life among us and carry your mercy through us. Amen.

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