

Shiloh Notes & News September 2026

A Word from the Pastor

Greetings,

When I was growing up, I always thought the beginning of the school year was arranged pretty well. School would start, we would go for two or three days, and then Labor Day would arrive, and we would get a three-day weekend.

Is this a great country or what?

Of course, as a kid, I didn't give much thought to what Labor Day actually meant. I just knew that we had barely gotten back into school and already somebody had decided we needed a day off.

But Labor Day weekend also seems to mark something else. Summer isn't officially over yet, but September arrives and life begins settling back into its normal rhythm. Vacations are winding down. School is starting. Schedules that became a little more relaxed during the summer begin filling up again.

The same thing happens around the church.

This month, Kid's Club will be starting back up, as will our Wednesday Morning Small Group. And something new will be joining our weekly rhythm as well.

Last month I mentioned that I was working on a new video devotional series and promised there would be more information to come. Beginning in September, *A Word From the Pastor* will be posted each Wednesday. These will be short, approximately five-minute devotionals with a little Scripture, a little conversation, and hopefully something to carry with you through the rest of the week.

The idea originally came from wanting to offer something for those who aren't always able to be with us on Sunday morning, but these devotionals are for everyone. Think of them simply as another opportunity during the week to spend a few minutes with God's Word.

As all these things begin again, I've been thinking about the difference between routine and rhythm.

There is certainly nothing wrong with routine. In fact, most of us need it. But a routine can sometimes become something we do simply because that's what we always do. Sunday comes, so we go to church. Tuesday comes, so we go to Bible study. We pray before a meal because that's what we've always done.

A healthy spiritual rhythm is a little different.

Worship, prayer, Scripture, fellowship and serving aren't simply appointments we put on the calendar. They are regular opportunities to draw closer to God and to one another.

Maybe that's the difference.

A routine tells us when. A healthy spiritual rhythm reminds us why.

September also brings with it the first day of fall. Before long, God will break out His paintbrush and begin painting the trees with reds, oranges, yellows and golds. It is one of my favorite reminders of the beauty of God's creation.

But the interesting thing is that it doesn't happen all at once.

One tree begins to change. Then another. A little color appears here and a little more there. Eventually we look around and realize that the landscape we see every day has been transformed.

Perhaps our spiritual lives work a little like that too.

One Sunday at a time. One prayer at a time. One Bible study, one act of service, one conversation, one quiet moment spent with God at a time. We may not see some dramatic change happening from one day to the next, but through those healthy spiritual rhythms, God continues to work in us.

So, as we settle back into the rhythm of things this September, take some time to enjoy that last long weekend of summer. And as the days begin to cool (hopefully) and God's paintbrush comes out, changing the landscape around us, don't just notice what God is doing to the trees.

Take a moment to notice what God has been doing in you.

God Bless,

Pastor Fred

Activities and Announcements

Please join us for:

Sunday School - 9:45 am

Worship Service – 11:00am

Bible Study – Tuesday's 7:00pm

Methodist Men's Breakfast – 2nd Sunday of each month

Our Food Pantry items for the **September** distribution are **Soup & Crackers**.

Sunday 9/6 – Hot Dog lunch after church

Saturday 9/12– 8-10am Pancake Breakfast fundraiser at Julian Lions Club

Saturday 11/7 – 9:30am–2:00pm Blood Drive at Shiloh

Please sign up or contact Lori for an appointment time.

Rest for the Soul

Studies show many Americans don't get enough sleep, and the effects can take a toll on both body and mind. Whether it's a packed schedule or restless nights, a lack of rest makes it harder to think clearly, stay focused and care for our overall well-being. Over time, that constant fatigue begins to wear us down.

Our spiritual lives follow a similar rhythm. When we rush from one task to the next without pausing to spend time with God, we can feel just as drained. We need consistent, quiet moments with Him to stay grounded, encouraged and strong in our faith.

Even Jesus made space for this kind of rest. Luke 5:16 tells us that He often withdrew to quiet places to pray. If He needed that time with the Father, how much more do we? When we step away from the noise and listen for God's voice, we find the renewal our souls have been longing for.

When the Road Gets Rough

It had been a long trip home, and the weary traveler still had miles to go. So when a sign appeared reading, "Rough Road Ahead — 4 miles," he braced himself.

Rough was an understatement. The lanes narrowed, the shoulder disappeared, and traffic slowed to a crawl. Drivers carefully weaved around potholes and construction equipment, inching forward one stretch at a time. But just as the sign promised, after four difficult miles, the road opened up and smoothed out again.

Jesus offers a similar kind of clarity about life. In John 16:33 (NIV), He says, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Notice He doesn't say we might face trouble. It is part of the journey. There will be stretches that feel slow, uncertain and hard.

Notice that Jesus didn't say we "might" have trouble. Sooner or later, problems will come. The road will get rough. But Jesus has already defeated everything the world can throw our way. We just have to keep moving, fueled by hope.

The promise is just as certain as the warning sign. The rough road does not last forever, and it does not have the final say. Christ has already gone before us, and smoother ground is ahead.

Lessons That Last

Most of us can remember a Sunday school teacher who made a lasting difference in our lives. Sometimes the simplest lessons become the ones we carry with us the longest.

One man recalled his high school Sunday school teacher, a businessman named Mr. Homan, who shared this advice with the boys in his class: "Don't ever go anywhere you would not want your mother or sister to go. Don't ever do anything you would not want your mother or sister to do."

Years later, the man reflected on those words and said, "That advice has served me well. I have always remembered it."

God often uses faithful teachers to plant seeds of wisdom, character and integrity in young hearts. Their influence may not always be seen right away, but the lessons they share can guide lives for years to come.

Never underestimate the power of a few thoughtful words spoken with love and conviction.

Prayer of Remembrance for Patriots Day

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter through every storm, and our eternal home:

We come before You remembering the lives lost on September 11, 2001. Though many years have passed, the sorrow of that day still lingers in the hearts of families, friends and a grieving nation.

Lord, comfort those who continue to carry loss. Grant peace to the brokenhearted, strength to the weary and light to those walking through seasons of grief. Let Your presence bring hope where memories still ache.

Teach us to care for one another with compassion and courage. Help us to be a people who offer kindness to the hurting, encouragement to the discouraged and justice to those who suffer. Stir our hearts to live with mercy, humility and love for our neighbors. Forgive us when our words are greater than our actions. May we strive each day to reflect the values of faith, unity and grace that honor You and strengthen our communities.

Thank You, Lord, for Your constant care and unfailing mercy. Even in tragedy, You remain our refuge and our hope.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thank God for Teachers

It is sometimes said that public school teachers do not teach values. Yet every day, countless teachers quietly model compassion, patience, integrity and kindness through the way they care for their students.

Many teachers go far beyond lesson plans and classrooms. They spend their own money on school supplies, workbooks, clothing, snacks and special needs for children who may otherwise go without. They encourage struggling students, celebrate small victories and offer steady support to children facing difficult circumstances at home.

Teachers also work with students from many different backgrounds and abilities. Some patiently help children learn English, while others devote extra time and care to students with learning, emotional or social challenges. In a world where many children face poverty, abuse, loneliness, neglect or uncertainty, a caring teacher can become a source of hope, stability and encouragement.

Many educators also serve faithfully in churches and communities, living out their faith through daily acts of love and service. Their influence often reaches far beyond what grades or test scores can measure.

As a church family, let us remember to pray for teachers, encourage them in their calling and thank God for the important difference they make in the lives of children every day.

