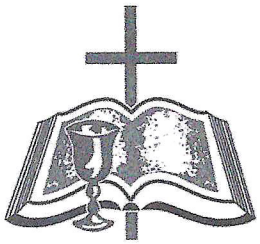
OCKER BRETHREN CHURCH

Serving Christ, Serving Our Community

NOVEMBER 2026



BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING

Wednesday,
November 11, 2026
6:30 pm

Upstairs Conference Room. Meetings are open to all.



A word from the Pastor...

Happy November Ocker...I hope we can all take this month of Thanksgiving to practice gratefulness in our lives....we all have so much to be thankful for....I know I have so many people and situations in my life in which I am beyond grateful...

I am so grateful for Ocker...since Grant, the church has exhibit so much love and kindness towards me and my family...you have been so patient with us...you have allowed my family to wrestle with our grief...thank you. Primarily, I am so grateful for my immediate family. Mary and Lucy are my entire world. We have helped each other deal with our deep grief caused by Grant's passing. Lucy has kept me grounded in reality...she reminds me that Mary and I need to live in the present...she reminds us that life is worth living and that the best is yet to come.

Mary has decided to share her grief through writing...she uses writing to communicate deep "grief truths" that I need to internalize. Recently, she has started a Substack page in which she writes about her grief journey after Grant.

With her permission, the rest of this article will be one of her articles that taught me so much...I know there are many of you that struggle with the loss of a loved one. It is my prayer that this article will help you in your grief journey during this time of Thanksgiving in which many might struggle to find any reasons to be thankful.

She titled the article — **501 Days**

It's been 501 days since Grant fell from the top of a waterfall and drown. If it takes about 365 days to recover from receiving a heart transplant, what is the timeline for a shattered heart, one that has to regrow itself?

➡

I know, I know - just take one hour at a time, take one day at time. Live in the present. Practice mindfulness, practice your breathing, do your grounding exercises. I'm trying. And yet most of the time I hate it, or resent it. Does it matter which?

Those early days...fragmented memories float like scrolling still frames in my mind. Glancing at the front door and seeing the silhouette of an arm, it's knocking and it's wearing black clothing. Ignore it, it's just a delivery. Two police cars drive away. Why two of them? In case one couldn't bear to say the words? Brad writhing in the garden, emitting a primal howl that suspended time. Walking white-knuckled down the center aisle of a full church, the silent sorrow palpable. A house full of teenagers, family, friends – conversations, silence, laughter, tears, flowers dripping from every counter. A box marked human remains arriving. Collapsing at the door. The horror of opening it, of holding my son's body, reduced to a bag of dust and pieces of bone. My beautiful, precious boy. I beg God in that moment - I can't survive this, please, please don't ask me to.

Months afterwards, returning to work and school. I have slipped into the upside down. Life is happening up there. I am somewhere else. I try hard to look like I am living with up there, but I'm not. I'm living in a land of endless dark. All my energy is spent trying to not be fully absorbed by the blackness. I say hopeful, positive things, that I am trying to choose joy, that there is still beauty and good in the world. I believe it...I think? Or am I just being performative? Saying things I think a person of faith should say?

A year later. Some moments I am still stunned by the reality of his death. Mostly I am just so sad. Sadness has seeped into every nook and cranny. My bone marrow feels heavy with it. I am exhausted carrying this weight. The sadness is punctuated by anger that gives way to desperation. I shake with rage. If only I could find the seam, am I looking hard enough? If I find it, I can rip and claw myself out of this reality, back to the before.

My days are a collection of mind games I play on repeat. First - I hate this, I can't do it anymore. Is there even life after death? Then - I know his spirit still lives, I can feel it. One day I will see him again. Back to - I just want to die, please why can't I die? And then - I need to live for Lucy and Brad. I want to soak in every moment with them. Life in this world is precious, it really, truly is. I want to LIVE all my days. So goes the endless loop of mental ping pong...

501 days in.

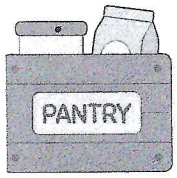
Slowly, quietly, I am aware that my heart is stretching, making incremental space to hold the both/and. The horror and the beauty. Grief and hope. Doubt and faith. It takes my breath away. Can a heart burst from feeling the whole range of human experience?

Is this what healing feels like?

I sure hope that is what healing looks like...Mary. I am so thankful that we can heal together.

I will see you on Sunday, Ocker...it is shapping up to be a great day,

Brad



Rogers Clothing & Food Pantry

The holiday season is upon us. It is an important time for donations and holiday meal planning. Here are some needs:
chicken broth, stuffing mix, cranberry sauce and some gravy mix (packets or jarred). Please continue with jelly/jam, pancake mix & syrup, canned meats (chicken, tuna, spam, Vienna sausage, chili); 2# bags of sugar, flour; canned soups with meat, mac-n-cheese, instant mashed potatoes (bags or cups). Think of your Thanksgiving/holiday plate. Any help is so appreciated!

The Rogers Clothing & Food Pantry is open on Tuesday and Saturday mornings from 9-Noon. Volunteers are always welcome and needed on one of those mornings and would be much appreciated also.

Ocker Brethren Church supports the Rogers Clothing & Food Pantry. A tub is placed close to the foyer of the church entry for donations. Thank you for your support with this effort. Be sure to follow the Rogers Clothing & Food Pantry on Facebook.

Questions: please see Lisa Sebek or text or call Lisa at (254) 913-7596.

SUNDAY SCHOOL / C.E.C. NEWS

This is an exciting time in the growing life of our Sunday School and church family. We are blessed!

In other news, first Sunday breakfast is November 1 with the breakfast at 8:30 sponsored by the Books of the Bible Class. December will be pot luck so everyone bring a little something to share. Holiday activities are being planned. We hope you are able to be a part.

November 29 - 1st Day of Advent and the Hope Candle - Hanging of the Green Service during the regular worship service;
December 6 Advent Candle of Peace - 1st Sunday Breakfast - Potluck - everyone bring to share;
December 13 - Advent Candle of Joy - Children & Youth Christmas Program with a finger food potluck meal and gift exchange to follow. We may even have a special visitor so bring those kiddos.
December 20 - Advent Candle of Love - Adult Christmas Choir Cantata - it will be a blessing
December 24 - Christmas Eve Service at 5:30 - Advent Christ Candle - come and be blessed and set your hearts on the birth of our Savior
December 25 - Merry Christmas and Love to ALL!

A quick CEC meeting will be held on **November 22** immediately following worship services. Anyone interested in our Sunday School program is welcome to attend.

Sunday School has a class for everyone! If you aren't coming to Sunday School, consider this your official invitation to get plugged in! Talk to one of the CEC officers: **Tracie Malovets, Lisa Sebek, Dianne Psencik or Lynne Cassens for more information.**

Friendsgiving

Girlfriends & God



Monday - November 23 9 am to 12:30 pm

Please plan on joining us to help OCC Collection drop off at Ocker from 9:00 - 11:00 am.
After our shift, we will enjoy a festive "Friendsgiving" and fellowship.
Bring your easiest variation of traditional Thanksgiving foods to share with our group.

CHRISTIAN SISTERS NEWS

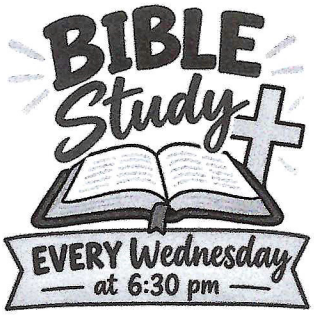
The Christian Sisters met on October 20 with 8 members present. Lunch was enjoyed and a business meeting was held afterwards. We would like to encourage anyone needing Rada merchandise to order items through the link posted on the Ocker Christian Sisters Facebook page as we greatly reduce the number of items we stock. Also we want to remind members and families that flowers for the sanctuary are always appreciated. If you want to provide an arrangement at any time please notify Deanna Naiver. Poinsettias will be provided by Christian Sisters in December so flowers are not needed then. The next meeting will be November 17, 2026 @ 11:30 am in the Youth Building. All ladies are invited!



Come and crochet with Maggie every Wednesday at 4:30 pm. Bring your current project or come and we will teach you to crochet if you would like to learn. We are currently making some small items for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study
Book of Isaiah

Adult Bible Study meets every Wednesday night at 6:30 pm.
Come and join the study as we see what God is saying to us through this prophet.
See Maggie Imhoff if you have any questions.



Ocker Brethren Church

Annual Children's Christmas Nativity

In preparation for Ocker's Christmas Program, CEC will be hosting a series of practices for children Pre K-5th grade. (6th grade and higher participate with the Youth group)



Sunday Nov.22~Assign parts~NO practice

(Parents be on the lookout for paperwork, start reading parts at home over the Thanksgiving Break)

Wednesday Dec.2~ Practice 5:00-6:30 Dinner provided

Sunday Dec.6~ Practice (During the last 20 minutes of Sunday School)

Wednesday Dec.9~ Dress Rehearsal 5:00-6:30 Dinner provided

Sunday Dec.13~ Program & Meal/Gift Exchange (Please be at the church at 9:00 for one last run through)

OCKER PACKING PARTY
NOVEMBER 14 @ 10 am
ALL ARE INVITED!

NATIONAL COLLECTION WEEK
NOVEMBER 16 - 23, 2026

Ocker is a Drop-Off Hub again this year! We have committed to 2 hours per day Monday, November 16th through Monday November 23rd. Sign-up sheets are now on the large bureau on the window wall in the back of the Sanctuary. We would like 4 volunteers per day.

HOURS OF OPERATION

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16	10 AM - NOON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17	10 AM - NOON
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18	4 PM - 6 PM
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19	10 AM - NOON
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20	10 AM - NOON
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21	9 AM - 11 AM
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22.	NOON - 2 PM
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23	9 AM - 11 AM

We do have an Amazon wish list. Use the QR code below to order.
Make sure to have items by the Packing Party on the 14th!
Thank you Ocker! We couldn't do this without you you!!

LET'S connect

Ocker Brethren Church

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Christian Sisters Hospitality Coordinator:
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E-mail: busybaker10@gmail.com

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



1 - Jessica Chervenka
2 - Tracey Elkins
3 - Kara Hoelscher
6 - Aaron Martin
10 - James Stepan
12 - Adam Trojan
13 - Camryn Harper
14 - Parker Buck
16 - LaNelle Lesikar
19 - Holden Tucker
21 - John Paul Chervenka
22 - Richard Lesikar
26 - Donald Williams
27 - Cayslee Pierce
28 - Tessa Koslovsky
29 - Max Jordan

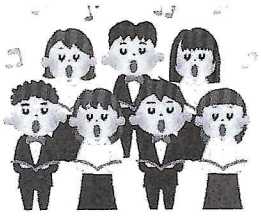
November Anniversaries



5 - *Andrew & Desirae English*
Allen & Melody Hill
14 - *Larry & Darlene Pechal*
21 - *Chris & Taryn Tucker*
26 - *David & Lisa Sebek*
Joseph & Debbie Bedrich

November Youth Retreat

Saturday November 14
Check-in: 9:30 - 10 am
Sunday, November 15
Dismissal: 2 pm
Bus will leave at 8:30 am on Saturday and return at 3:30 pm Sunday.
See Jennifer if you have any questions.



Sanctuary Choir News

The Sanctuary Choir rehearsals for the Christmas musical are in full swing! COME JOIN US!

We will also sing during the worship service on the 4th Sunday of each month.

If you enjoy singing and making a joyful noise unto the Lord, please join us at 6:15 PM every Wednesday. Questions may be addressed to Kim Dillard, Sanctuary Choir Director.

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **8:30 am First Sunday Fellowship** **10:15 am Worship**	2	3	4 4:30 Crochet 6 – 8 pm BYF 6:15 pm Choir 6:30 – 8 pm Adult Bible Study	5 SENIOR ADULT FELLOWSHIP	6	7
8 **9 am Sunday School** **10:15 am Worship**	9	10	11 4:30 Crochet 6 – 8 pm BYF 6:15 pm Choir 6:30 – 8 pm Adult Bible Study 6pm BOE MEETING	12	13	14
15 **9 am Sunday School** **10:15 am Worship**	16 OCC Hours 10 am - Noon	17 OCC Hours 10 am – Noon Christian Sisters Meeting 11:30 am	18 OCC Hours 10 am – Noon 4:30 Crochet 6 – 8 pm BYF 6:15 pm Choir 6:30 – 8 pm Adult Bible Study	19 OCC Hours 10 am – Noon	20 OCC Hours 10 am - Noon	21 OCC Hours 9 am – 11 am
22 **9 am Sunday School** **10:15 am Worship** **OCC Hours** **Noon – 2 pm**	23 OCC Hours 9 am – 11 am Girlfriends & God Friendsgiving 9 am – 12:30 pm	24	25	26 happy thanksgiving	27	28
29 **9 am Sunday School** **10:15 am Worship**	30					

