

The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

From Pastor Lisa Schrott



God made his Son the heir of everything and created the world through him. The Son is the light of God's glory and the imprint of God's being. He maintains everything with his powerful message. -- Hebrews 1: 2-3

Grounded in Hope

It is in the message of love and grace, the message of welcome and inclusion, the message of reconciliation and redemption that we live as a people grounded in hope.

Our worship throughout October and November will explore how we can live as a people grounded in hope, when winds of turmoil swirl around us. Using texts from the Letter to the Hebrews we will reflect on the gift of Christ and themes of grace, faith, faithfulness, witness, service, and love.

The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that our hope in Christ is an anchor – an anchor that has guided and nurtured the church through difficult eras and troubled times. It is a reminder to us that our best indication of what God will do is to remember what God has done. And that we are called to be a people grounded in hope, even when we are immersed in an election season full of division and rancor. Throughout the Grapevine you will find opportunities to become grounded in hope through educational, intergenerational, and stewardship programming in addition to Sunday worship

Digging Deeper into Hebrews: Pastor's Bible Study

In October and November, our worship series *Grounded in Hope* will use texts from the Letter to the Hebrews. As scholar Dr. Jesper Svartvik notes, "In Hebrews, the oldest Christian sermon we have, we hear what we already are familiar with from listening to other New Testament voices: a yearning for a world that is better than this world." This yearning is *grounded in hope* because we have the gift of Christ as our Lord and Savior, and the head of the church.

While Hebrews contains deep and beautiful theology, this book has also been misinterpreted and misused throughout history to promote antisemitism. We will address this issue, as well as how Hebrews has spoken through the ages to nurture generations of the faithful. This Bible study will be offered in person on Sunday mornings October 20 and 27 and November 3 and 17 during the Education Hour. An online version of the class will be offered on Sunday evenings via Zoom. Please reach out to Pastor Lisa for more information on either set of classes.

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**Deadline for the
November Grapevine
is Tuesday, October 22nd**

Stewardship 2024–2025

At PCO we live as a people of hope, because as our Mission Statement says, “We believe that in life, in death, and life beyond death, we belong to God.” As people of hope, our giving of time, talent and treasures makes an impact in our congregation, our community and the world.

Our 2024-2025 Stewardship Campaign will focus on the impact of our generosity, which is in gratitude for all God’s blessings in our individual and communal life. Throughout the month of October, we will share the impact of your generosity as we live out our call to service, faith formation, congregational care, and glorifying God through worship and music.

In a world which pulls us in so many directions, we are reminded of what truly matters: God’s deep and abiding love for us, our care for each other, the work of the Spirit which is calling us to embrace a future where we ... open our doors wide in welcome, inviting all to join us in community, worship, service, and fellowship. We *will* continue to build a congregation where all people can feel accepted, encouraged, and embraced as beloved children of God.

... embark together on a life-long journey of faith formation. We *will* create opportunities for all ages to worship, study, serve, and make music alongside one another.

... know we can’t do it alone. We *will* partner with other faith groups and local organizations to pool resources, form community, and work together in service of God’s love and justice.

Commitment Sunday is November 3. Our financial gifts and gifts of service enable the work of our church to continue and grow. I encourage you to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to participate in our shared journey. We step forward in hope, trusting in God’s abundance, knowing that through the gifts of the Spirit and our generosity we are impacting the world. I’m excited to see how the Spirit will continue to move through our congregation!

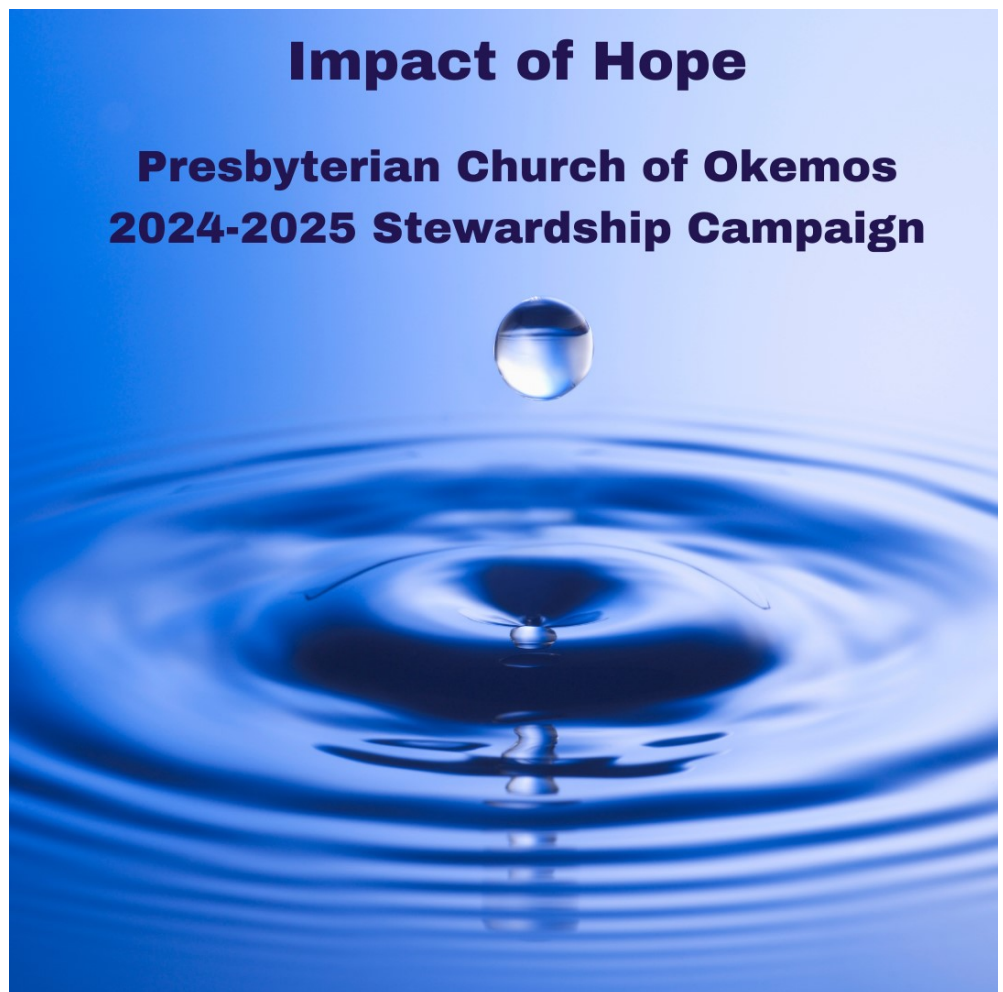
Pastor Lisa and the Stewardship Committee

Where We Stand in 2024

As of August 30th, our church has received \$312,700 in pledges and contributions toward our 2024 budget. Our budget calls for \$457,000 in needed revenue from Pledges and Contributions by members and friends of PCO. August 31 will conclude exactly two-thirds of the calendar year and \$312,700 is just about two-thirds of the revenue needed.

While it appears we are exactly on track, we have a bit of concern as many of the contributions made thus far have already met their pledged amounts. We will be sending out third quarter statements with the stewardship material in October so members and friends can review their contributions thus far. We will continue to track our revenue and report each month on how we are doing.

We can't thank our membership enough for financially supporting the work of our church!!!



APNC Update

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (Candy Boldrey, Brett Cone, Laurin Gierman, Jeri Gillett, Zach Krawczyk, Zach Nawyn-Hellinga, and Pastor Lisa) has been meeting weekly throughout the summer to complete the first steps toward seeking an installed Associate Pastor. This work included deep discernment in the current and future needs of the congregation and staff, as well as the completion of our Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP).

You may recall that MDPs (previously called MIFs or Ministry Information Forms) are used to introduce our church and needs to possible candidates. Our completed MDP has been viewed by Session and is awaiting approval from the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry (COM). Once the MDP approval has been given by COM, and we have uploaded it to the PC (USA) matching system, we will make the MDP public for you to view, and ultimately to share with those who may be interested in the position. We encourage you to share the position widely in your circles!

As you know, the process of candidate review and interviewing is confidential. We will keep you informed on our progress, but will be unable to share specifics until we have a candidate to present to you. We appreciate the trust you have given us and ask your continued prayers for this team and potential candidates.

Bible Study:

Senior High Youth & Adults

The *Collaborate* series continues **October 20 and 27**. This is a discussion based class designed for those who wonder about and seek a broader understanding of the Bible.

If you are among those who have hesitated to attend a Bible study because you don't feel like you know enough to even get started, this class is for you! If you've studied bits and pieces of the Bible and wonder how it all fits together, this class is for you! If you are invested in intergenerational learning, this class is for you!

Join Roy Meland, Rebecca Mattern and others in the Board Room!

Get Ready for the Greater Lansing CROP Hunger Walk!



PCO has been part of the Greater Lansing CROP Walk since 1979 when we had 2 walkers. In recent years, the church has had many participants.

Sunday, October 13th

Grace United Methodist Church

1900 Boston Boulevard in Lansing

**Registration: 1:00p.m.

**Walk Kick Off: 1:45 p.m.

**Walk Begins: 2:00 p.m.

This is the 48th year of the CROP Walk. We hope you will join us this year as we fight hunger in our community and across the world. You can walk, rock, or roll with us on the 13th, or any day/time you want if you cannot make it that day. And don't forget support the PCO young people participating by sponsoring them as they walk.

You can sign up in Fellowship Hall and online at: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/team/presbyterian-church-of-okemos>

For more information or questions please contact Kent Workman.

Fun and Fellowship this Fall

Trunk or Treat

PCO is joining Okemos Community Church for a Halloween Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 27 from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

In addition to bringing your kids or grand-kids to the event, there are opportunities to volunteer. Folks are needed to help with the hot dog and popcorn stations.

And there are opportunities to decorate your truck or car trunk and distribute candy or other goodies.

The Mission Committee and Green Team will be distributing Earth stress balls. Stay tuned for a link to register your "trunk."

UKirk Trivia Returns

Friday, November 1, 2024
7:00 p.m.

The MSU UKirk Trivia Night Fun(d)raiser returns to PCO. We hope you will join us for a night of fun trivia, fellowship, and to show our support of MSU student. You can sign up as an individual or as a team of six. The evening will include great food and a silent auction.

So, get your team(s) together now and let's bring the trophy back to PCO! Even if you can't join us for trivia, you can sponsor a table. (\$20.00 per person or \$120.00 for a table.

To sign up let Kent Workman know.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:42 (NRSV)

Annual Chili Cook-off & Game Night

Sunday, November 3, 2024
5:00-7:30 p.m.

We will enjoy a variety of chili dishes at 5:00 p.m. with games beginning around 5:45 and lasting until about 7:30. What a great way to spend a beautiful Fall night!

There will be a sign-up on the church website under "Sign up Lists" or the sign-up sheet on the kiosk to bring chili, a side dish or dessert to share with the group. Feel free to bring along your favorite game, too! This is an event for all ages so come along and enjoy the night with us.

Youth Education & Fellowship Opportunities

YOUTH CALENDAR October 2024



- Oct 6 Youth Group with Elders and Deacons
- Oct 13 CROP Walk
- Oct 20 Corn Maze—Intergenerational 4pm followed by Youth Group to design our trunk for:
- Oct 27 Trunk or Treat at Okemos Community Church 3:30—6:00 pm

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

**HOMEWORK
& HANGOUT
WEDNESDAYS
3-5PM**

*Church family:
gather with and/or
pray for our youth*

See Barbara Fretwell-Cook
or Rebecca Mattern for more info

SUPPORT OUR YOUTH BEYOND THE WALLS OF PCO!

Check out the
"Community Page" on
the PCO Website for
information about
games, concerts, shows
and more!

PCO YOUTH GROUP INVITES
ACTIVELY SERVING
ELDERS AND DEACONS

**FOOD
FELLOWSHIP
FAITH**

October 6, 2024

5-7pm

PCO Fellowship Hall

RSVP:

REBECCA@OKEMOSPRES.ORG

CHANGING THE WORLD
CONFIRMATION FOR THE MISSIONAL CHURCH



Confirmation Class
October 13
11:30-12:30

Semicolon Butterfly



Many of you have commented on the butterfly pin I wear on my robe. It was a gift from Lisa when we participated in Mental Health Advocacy Day last spring. In grammar, the semicolon is a used where a sentence could end, but the author chooses to continue; the butterfly is a symbol of hope and transformation. Put together, it is a symbol of mental health and suicide prevention awareness symbolizing life continued in hope.

I wear it for all who are affected by mental illness and suicide. No one is alone; God's transformative love goes with us.

- Rebecca Mattern

35 Years of Fellowship!

On Tuesday, October 1,
the PCO Men's Group will recognize
35 years of meeting weekly -
More than 1,800 meetings.

*** All men are welcome **
See meeting info in right column.*

Women's Dinner Out in October

Our next Women's Dinner Out is scheduled for **Monday, October 7**, at 5:30 p.m. at Bobcat Bonnie's (formerly Clara's) 637 Michigan Avenue in Lansing.

If you will be attending, please notify Candy Bol-drey by Sunday, October 6. Her email address is *cbold67 at gmail dot com* (standard email setup) and phone number is (859) 421-0014.

Info about Artist's Circle

Artist's Circle meets the second Tuesday of each month, 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Art Room (October 8th this month). It is open to anyone interested in exploring faith-driven creativity in the visual arts, no matter your skill level. Join us to share in fellowship, play with mixed media and learn new techniques.

We use what we learn to create art for the sanctuary. One example is our 2023 Advent banner that engaged many members in an intergenerational activity. Some future sessions will include work on Alternative Christmas Market items, perspective in art-work, Advent decor, sketching with charcoal, and alcohol inks.

We also welcome those who would like to share their art or techniques with us. For more information talk to Eunice Creswell or Jennifer Gordon.

Retirees in October

The Retirees will meet on Monday October 21, 2024 at noon in Room 108. Please feel free to bring a lunch or snack. We will discuss the future of the group, possible topics that might be helpful to new and longer time retirees, and decide on the best day and time to meet this year. If you are interested but can't attend, please contact Jane Bobay to share your input.

Caregiver Support Group

Please join us on Zoom October 23, 2024 from 5:00-6:00 p.m. The group discusses topics related to supporting a loved one. All are welcomed. Zoom 517-329-2320 password hello.

Adult Christian Education & Fellowship Opportunities

SUNDAYS

Writing Life's Stories—Monthly, 1st Sundays, 2:00 p.m. Zoom # 848 6124 7191. Next meeting is **Sunday, October 6**.

Education Hour—Weekly, 11:30 a.m. in person and on Zoom 840 6585 2997

Birthday Cake Sunday—Monthly, 3rd Sundays, following worship. **October 20**.

Women's Connection, Monthly, 4th Sundays, 12:30 p.m. in Room 108. Next meeting is **Sunday, October 27**.

MONDAYS

Women's Dinner Out, Monthly, 1st Mondays. 5:30 p.m. **See info on left**.

Retirees Group Monthly, 3rd Mondays 12 noon. Next meeting is **Monday, October 21**. See info on left.

TUESDAYS

Men's Group on Zoom at 8:00 a.m. every week on **Tuesday**. Zoom #813 7514 8286. Hybrid meeting is **1st Tuesday, October 1**. See box on left.

Crafts Ministry, Monthly, 1st Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, Next meeting is **Tuesday, October 1**.

Artists Circle, Monthly 2nd Tuesdays, 1:00—3:00 p.m. at PCO. Next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 8**. See more info on left.

WEDNESDAYS

Conversation & Contemplation, Weekly, 10:00 a.m. on Zoom #905 709 104 See more info on page. 7

Caregiver Support Group-Monthly, 4th Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. on Zoom. **Wednesday, October 23**. Zoom # 517-329-2320; **Passcode hello** See more info on left.

THURSDAYS

Adult Bible Study— Weekly, 9:30 a.m. Zoom: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/5147440526>

Youth Parents Night Out, Monthly, 3rd Thursdays, 8:00 p.m. at Joe's on Jolly Next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, October 17**.

Read more about Education and Fellowship opportunities in the left column & throughout this month's Grapevine.

Birthday Cake Sunday

We will celebrate our October Birthdays on **Sunday, October 20**. If you celebrate your birthday in October, please check the October Birthday List posted on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall and add your name by Sunday, October 13 if it is not there.



Conversation & Contemplation

This group meets Wednesdays from 10:00-11:30 a.m. on Zoom 905-709-104, password 48864. Meditation and prayer open our spirit-filled morning. The group study then alternates between Lectio Divina, usually based on the lectionary, and a book.

We will start Chapter One of the book *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* by Marjorie J. Thompson on **October 9**.

Some members of the group share in the leadership of these contemplative practices

Women's Connection

We will "re-connect" after the summer hiatus at our first meeting of the '24-'25 program year. Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, October 27, 12:30 p.m.** and watch the announcements for details. All women are welcome for lunch, conversation, and a casual introductory talk by one of our members or guests.

If you have questions, contact Shirley Ruminger at (517) 655-4123 or *srumming at yahoo dot com* (standard email setup).

PCO Library News

October brings a variety of new fiction to the shelves of the PCO Library. See the round table in the library for this exciting collection of historical, contemporary, biblical, and mainstream fiction (all quotes are from the publishers):

This Other Eden by Paul Harding, winner of the Pulitzer Prize

"In 1912, formerly enslaved Benjamin Honey and his Irish wife, Patience, discover an island where they can make a life together – beginning an interracial community. Their world is small but relatively safe – until good intentions (a missionary schoolteacher) and bad politics (eugenics-minded authorities) intervene. Beginning with a hurricane flood reminiscent of the story of Noah's ark, the novel ends with yet another ark in a luminous, transcendent story of human dignity in the face of bigotry."

The Song of Sourwood Mountain by Ann H. Gabhart, bestselling author of many novels

Though the century began with such promise, it is 1910 when Mira Dean's hopes of being a wife and mother are dashed to pieces. Her fiancé dead from tuberculosis, Mira resigns herself to being a spinster schoolteacher—until Gordon Covington shows up. No longer the boy she knew from school, Gordon is now a preacher who is full of surprises. With much trepidation, Mira steps out in faith into a life she never imagined, in a place filled with its own special challenges, to serve a people who just might end up becoming the family she always yearned for."

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride, bestselling author and winner of the National Book Award

"In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new housing development, the last thing they expected to uncover was a human skeleton. Who the skeleton was and how it got buried there were just two of the long-held secrets that had been kept for decades by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side, sharing ambitions and sorrows. As the novel unfolds, it becomes clear how much the people of Chicken Hill have to struggle to survive at the margins of white Christian America and how damaging bigotry, hypocrisy, and deceit can be to a community. McBride shows us that it is love and community – heaven and earth – that ultimately sustain us."

The other titles include:

Absolution by Alice McDermott

Stealing by Margaret Verble

Search by Michelle Huneven

All My Secrets: A Gilded Age Novel by Lynn Austin

Hannah's Hope by Karen Kingsbury

Up from Dust: Martha's Story by Heather Kaufman

These Tangled Threads: A Novel of Biltmore by Sarah Loudin Thomas

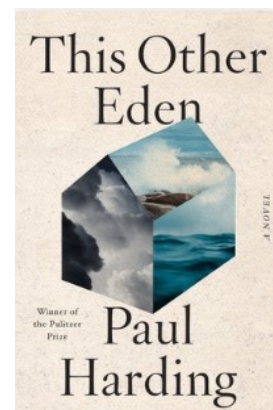
The Woman from Lydia: The Emissaries Book One by Angela Hunt

Fatal Domain: A Travis Brock Thriller by Steven James

The Ark and the Dove: The Story of Noah's Wife by Jill Eileen Smith

All of these books are available for borrowing. See the instructions posted in the library for easy check-out, return, and book donations. Enjoy your reading!

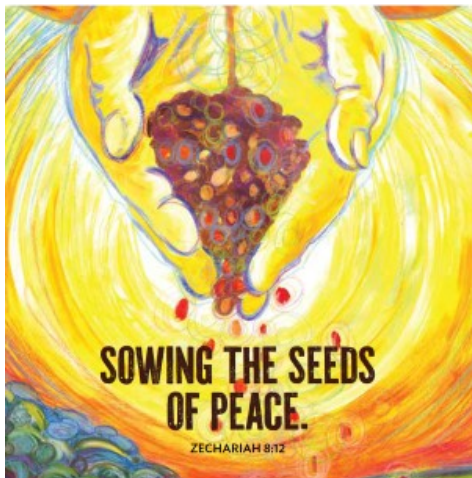
Kathi Cook



Missions & Outreach

Peace & Global Witness Offering

This offering will be collected on Sunday, October 6. PCO keeps 25% of the offering for local peace initiatives. If you are donating to this offering by check, please note P&GWO on the memo line.



Collecting for EVE

An abundant amount of personal hygiene items was taken to EVE (End Violent Encounters) at the end of August and the organization is grateful for help from PCO. We will continue collecting personal hygiene items (any size) for EVE (container in the coat room), replacing the former collections for Advent House.

September Trip to Cass

On September 14, nine PCO members—seven adults and two youth—traveled to Detroit to volunteer at Cass, a large nonprofit associated with Cass Community Methodist Church. Our tasks for the day included cleaning out a warehouse so that it can be repurposed, fixing lawnmowers, and shredding documents. Thank you so much to these volunteers and to PCO's members who provided ample food and water for their on-site lunch!

Thanksgiving Baskets

One of our Mission Committee's 2024 goals is to provide food donations to local residents in need.

As Thanksgiving approaches, PCO will again give area residents Food Gift Cards to assist them in purchasing Thanksgiving groceries. Our goal this year is to provide 20 families with Food Gift Cards valued at \$75 each.

Member contributions, in the form of cash or checks in any amount, will be collected during **October**. They can be given as part of Sunday offerings, mailed or delivered to the church, or dropped off at a display table in Fellowship Hall. (If you choose to contribute by check, please be sure to write Thanksgiving Baskets on the memo line.)

Thank you for helping PCO feed our neighbors during this special time of year.

If you have any questions, please contact Becky Gillespie at 517-332-5657.

Meals at Loaves and Fishes

PCO still has a few slots available this month and next if you would like to help the church provide a meal at Loaves and Fishes Ministries. See the sign-up sheet on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall, or contact Barbara Dorr (info in the directory) for more information about how you can help.

Loaves and Fishes opened in 1981 and offers temporary and transitional housing to individuals in the greater Lansing area. Loaves and Fishes is supported by business, civic and religious organizations in the region, including PCO.



ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS MARKET NEWS

Mark the date! The Market is earlier this year – Saturday, November 16, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., in Fellowship Hall – a wonderful time to shop for an unusual gift for that special person. Choose from a variety of fair trade, handmade items that support people around the world and also locally. Peruse the unique gifts available from these international vendors:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| *Hmong Crafts | *Hope against Trafficking | *Better Way Designs |
| *Sak Saum Bags and Clothing | *Solar Circle | *Viva Fair Trade |
| *Peruvian Slippers | *Simbolei Academy Nativities | *Esperanza en Accion Crafts |
| (Nicaragua) *Cass Community Social Services | *Mayan Women's Organizations | |

In addition, the PCO Artist Circle will sell crafts with proceeds to go to E.V.E (End Violent Encounters), and the PCO Craft Ministry will be selling items with sales supporting GIL (Global Institute of Lansing). Edgewood Village Artisans will also have crafts.

There will be food too!! Bread Bites is coming again and the Youth Group will have treats to sell.

BOOK NOOK

By Ron Dorr

Small Things Like These

by Claire Keegan

Claire Keegan's book, Small Things Like These, is one of the finest short novels that I have read in years. Its themes are concrete and expansive, its characters conventional yet surprising, its organization suspenseful, and its prose clear and concise.

Some "small things" are explicit in the text. Bill and Eileen Furlong's five daughters went through "the small things which need to be done—genuflecting in the chapel or thanking a shopkeeper for the change." Eileen and Bill lay in bed together, "going over small things like these": Bill's offering a lift to a wayward boy, Eileen's pointing to the Irish lad's alcoholic father, and the two of them disagreeing who was responsible for the boy's poverty. Bill remembered being slapped by his own mother, "for being bold or talking out of turn or leaving the lid off the butter-dish, but these things were only small."

Bill Furlong, the protagonist of this poignant novel, was born on April 1, 1946, the illegitimate son of an unknown father and a domestic servant on the Wilson place. Harassed as a lad in school, he lost his mother when he was 12. Yet the Protestant widow, Mrs. Wilson, who did not dismiss Bill's mother when she gave birth to him, raised the boy—and raised him well. Like his daughters later, he had a good head on his shoulders. He worked his way up the economic ladder in a company delivering coal and wood to families in New Ross, Ireland, a Catholic school, and a convent. By 1985, he had become the head coal and timber merchant. At Christmas he found himself quite busy, making late deliveries to people preparing in nasty weather for the festivities.

Nearing 40, Bill was pondering where he was in life. When he helped his daughters write letters to Sana Claus, he wondered if life would ever change. "Always it was the same, Furlong thought, always they carried mechanically on without pause, to the next job at hand." How would his daughters turn out? On Mondays, he would think about his work and who would do what, when, where, and tomorrow "much the same way." "Might things never change or develop into something else or new?" He was wondering what mattered, whether he was making any headway, and "what the days were for."

Small things, however, could turn into large matters. On one occasion, Bill "thought of Mrs. Wilson, of her daily kindnesses, of how she had corrected and encouraged him, of the small things she had said and done and had refused to do and say and what she must have known, the things which, when added up, amounted to a life." Complications peaked when Bill, delivering coal, encountered the Mother Superior and two distraught girls at the convent and laundry run by the religious order. Should he investigate, intervene—or leave well enough alone?

Mrs. Kehoe, the owner of the diner that fed Bill and his workers every noon, warned him, "Those nuns have a finger in every pie. . . . Watch over what you'd say about what's there." "You've worked hard, the same as myself, to get to where you are now." You can't side the religious order running the school against the order running the laundry without hurting your chances, she told Bill. "They're all the one." And when a visitor at the Wilson farm told Bill that he resembled Ned—the longtime farmhand at the Wilson place, Furlong was shocked into recognizing who his father was. "It took a stranger to come out with things." Even at Mass, Bill was pondering his own hypocrisy and Christian faith.

Are there in us, in you and in me now,
that recklessness of the loving heart,
that wild courage, that crazy gladness
in the face of darkness and death,
that shuddering faithfulness even unto the end of the world,
through which new things can come to pass?

The poetic lines above come from The Magnificent Defeat, by Frederick Buechner, but the faithfulness to large things as well as Small Things Like These come from the prize-winning Irish writer, Claire Keegan.



Author Claire Keegan

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