

JULY 2022

PEOPLES PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH MOUSE

210 SMITH STREET, MILAN, MI 48160 ~ (734) 439-1922



Manse Cat Monthly

MUSINGS FROM PASTOR LEIA AND GINGERSNAP

Because it's summer, a time when many individuals and family make time for travel, I thought I would share the story of the most epic road trip my family ever went on (disclaimer: I had not yet been born...and neither had any of you).

Once upon a time, my great-great-great-great-grandfather, Wilhelm Keil, was born in Prussia (now Germany). By the time he was in his early 30s, he had founded a Christian community in Bethel, Missouri, but over the next

decade, as tensions grew between North and South and secular influences kept creeping into Bethel, Keil began to make plans to move farther west. He would take his wife, eight of their nine children (one son stayed behind), and many of the families from their community in Bethel, and they would make the long trek to Oregon.

Keil had founded this first community largely by the power of his own charisma, but he was determined that this new venture would be more of a group effort, so he promised his oldest son, Willie, that he would be the one to lead the wagon train. Unfortunately, as teenagers often did in the 19th century, Willie died of malaria a week before they were all set to head west.

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My ancestor, however, was a man of his word, and he was determined to keep the promise he had made to his oldest son. He did what any loving father would do: he took his son's body, laid it to rest in a lead-lined casket, filled it with Golden Rule Whiskey (the Bethel community didn't drink alcohol themselves, but they did distill and sell it), and set the casket in a wagon draped with black cloth. Willie's wagon, drawn by two mules, was the lead wagon that guided the rest of the group.

(For the record, while there is some historical debate over whether or not the casket was lined with lead, I'm actually not making any of this up!)

I remember reading in one of my grandfather's history books that, unlike some groups on the Oregon Trail, my family's band of travelers didn't have any issues as they passed through Native American territories. The author of that book supposed that this ease of travel may have been because tribes were intimidated by the full band of brass instruments brought over from Prussia, which seemed silly to me at the time because it's not like the wagon train was heading out as a marching band, you know? Maybe they would have jam sessions at night, but they wouldn't have been playing on the road, even if they didn't have the ability to play the radio or listen to books on tape. The author further mused that maybe no one wanted to harass this particular wagon train because Wilhelm Keil was such an affable and genuine person.

This theory seemed even sillier to me. Sure, the group may have been holding impromptu waltz and polka

parties at night with trumpets and ophicleides and clarinets, and sure, Keil may have been a friendly dude, but like...he had a dead kid pickled in whiskey!!! No one in their right mind is going to mess with someone who had their dead kid pickled in whiskey!!!



In the picture of the musicians (above), the violinist is my great-great-great-uncle Emmanuel Keil, Wilhelm Keil's youngest child

Anyway, the group finally arrived in Washington state, where they finally laid poor Willie to rest and spent a very unpleasant winter. He is buried in a small cemetery on a hill. When I visited this cemetery, we parked across the street, beside an establishment that is named (and, again, I am not making this up! you can google any of it!) "Tombstone Willy's Bar." When spring came again, the whole group moved again: this time to the town they named Aurora, after one of Keil's daughters. Aurora, her two older sisters, and one brother all died of smallpox in 1862.



Pictured left: Aurora before her death at age 13

Aurora, Oregon, about half an hour south of Portland, is still there. It has a museum with relics from the old colony (including many of the original brass instruments), several antique stores, and a small Presbyterian church. I attended a service there while I was in Oregon for a family wedding, which meant that I sat on pews made for the colony's original church. Unsurprisingly, several members of the historical society are members of that church and were very excited that I had come to visit.

Whenever my grandfather shared this story, my grandmother would follow it up by pointing out that when HER side of the family moved west, they had the sense to wait for the railroad.



Above: photo of Wilhelm Keil (1812-1877) holding his granddaughter, Gloriunda Keil (1873-1942), who was my grandfather's grandmother.



KIND CAMP '22 was a HUGE success!

KIND Camp '22 was in full swing Monday through Thursday with close to 20 kids each day! Many different projects and "kind" donations were made - one to keep and one to give away - while earning badges for each project that the kids completed. The kids learned how to deal with frustration while building bird houses and how to hand sew when making prayer squares. They painted rocks with kind messages, then took a walk and spread them throughout the Milan community. They also made fleece blankets for their Kind and Comfort Ministry and tied pillows to give to children in foster care.

Camp ended with a Grand Finale on Thursday night with a short program and potluck dinner. The campers each spoke of what they had learned this week and ended in song. Thank you to Kerri Marrow for organizing and running this amazing ministry, and to all of the volunteers who helped with preparations and throughout the week.





KIND CAMP 2022

Free Movie Night

"Inside-Out" PG (2015)

Friday Night 7PM
August 5, 2022
Peoples Presbyterian Church
210 Smith Street
Milan, MI





PPC, Marble Methodist, and Milan Free Methodist are joining together for our annual outdoor service on August 7 at 10:30am. This will be held in downtown Milan at Wilson Park.

There will be yard games!

Invite your friends and neighbors. This is kid-friendly with the playground next to the pavilion. Remember the splash pad is also near the pavilion so you may want to have swimsuits for the kids (maybe you, too?)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1. If you want to sit under the pavilion for shade, you will want to arrive early. Free Methodist estimates about 50 people and another 40 from the Marble Methodist. This will be a very special community event!**
- 2. If you don't plan to bring your side dish/dessert in a cooler or temperature controlled carrier, Marble Methodist will have their church open so you can put your food in their fridge before the service. You will need to go back to the church to get your dish following the service or label your dish indicating you need someone to bring it down for the potluck. Label your coolers and containers so they don't get lost.**
- 3. Bring a lawn chair.**
- 4. Bottled water will be available and, if you prefer, please feel free to bring your own personal bottle with your preferred beverage.**
- 5. You are welcome to bring your own picnic plates and cutlery although plates, forks, etc. will be provided.**

Want to be more involved?



JOIN A COMMITTEE
YARD / LAWN WORK
AUDIO VISUAL
COFFEE / SNACK CREW
JOIN THE HAT MAKING GROUP
ADVERTISING
SOCIAL MEDIA SHARING
SPONSOR SUNDAY FLOWERS
BAKE COMMUNION BREAD
HELP WITH THE KIND CLUB
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
VISITING SICK OR ELDERLY
FLOWER BED MAINTENANCE
LAY READING / USHERING
ORGANIZE A CHURCH SOCIAL EVENT
PHOTOGRAPH CHURCH EVENTS
HELP START A NEW MISSION PROJECT
PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRIES
ORGANIZE A COLLECTION FOR AID IN MILAN OR LOCAL SCHOOLS







What is
YOUR
passion?

*We lift up our voices in prayer,
especially for:*

Georgia Anderson • Mike Bell
Rod Cranson • Nan Cranson
Bonnie Cranson • Ann McKeel
Gordon Parker • Barbara Sinclair
Geoff S. • Rod Vollink • Bill LaFeve
The Pratt Family



AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
(July 31)   Happy 98th birthday, Barb Sinclair!	1	2 Worship and Music mtg 6:30PM in the church lounge Bible Study 8PM	3	4 Social Hour 5PM	5 First Friday  Movie Night 7PM in the church lounge	6
7 Church in the Park 10:30AM	8	9 Bible Study 8PM	10	11 Social Hour 5PM 	12	13
14 Worship 10 AM Green Tape Sunday Second Sunday Adult Ed 11AM	15	16 Bible Study 8PM	17 Session Mtg 7PM in the church lounge	18 Hats for Cancer 1-3PM Social Hour 5PM	19	20
21 Worship 10 AM	22	23 Bible Study 8PM	24	25 "Mere Christianity" Bible Study in the church lounge at 9AM Social Hour 5PM	26	27
28 Worship 10 AM	29	30 Bible Study 8PM	31			How many church mice are hidden in this newsletter? 