

## FRONT PAGE CONTINUED

As Tom Nelson notes in his book, “Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work,” work and worship are not separate activities but are seamlessly integrated. Not only that but this relationship between work and worship is understood in the context of genuine liberation, as opposed to menial slavery. The Bible’s opening scene also underscores the importance of rest and leisure. God himself rested after working, and he expects us to do the same through natural rhythms such as sleep and a divinely ordained day of rest, Sunday. If God is the one who commands us to rest after our labors, we should take heed. There is no honor

in working relentlessly, with no rest, merely for the sake of wealth accumulation or some other motivation. But there is honor in working hard and then resting seriously. After all, God himself rested after his six days of creation. If rest is good enough for God, it should be good enough for us, too. Labor Day in an eternal perspective: While Labor Day is a time of celebration and rest, it also serves as a reminder of our eternal hope in Christ. As Christians, we believe that our labor in this world is not in vain, for it is building treasures in Heaven. After all, Jesus labored on our behalf 2,000 years ago, as He gave his life on the cross. Through his redemptive labor, he gave

us his name, “Innocent One,” and in return took upon himself our name, “Guilty One.” Because of his faithful labor, we have been set free. May we never lose this eternal perspective. If we keep it in mind, it will transform our understanding of work and Labor Day itself. It fills us with gratitude. And, it instills in us a sense of purpose and dedication to our daily tasks, knowing that our labor is contributing to God’s Kingdom and will be rewarded in the life to come.



**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1  
WORSHIP SERVICE  
CANCELLED DUE TO  
COVID.**

Give every day the chance to become the most beautiful day of your life.

Mark Twain

## **PRESBYTIDINGS** *September 2024* **Rev. Dr. Roy C. Backus**

Worship: 10:30 a.m.

This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.

Website: [www.firstpresbygibson.org](http://www.firstpresbygibson.org)

Meladee Ferguson: Administrative Assistant

Mary Clow: Ministry Coordinator

### **THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LABOR DAY** by Rob Pacienza of The Christian Post

Ask any secular American what Labor Day means to them, and he or she will likely say that it’s one last opportunity to relax and party at the end of the summer. Ask any Christian American, and he or she will likely say the same. Even though Labor Day is a secular holiday, the idea is a good one, and Christians have more reason to celebrate it than anyone else. Labor Day was first deemed a national holiday in 1894 by President Grover Cleveland. At the time, the country was in the midst of an economic depression. Hundreds of thousands of workers nationwide went on strike. To appease the labor unions and honor the American workforce, President Cleveland signed legislation declaring Labor Day be celebrated across the country with a long weekend and a break from all labor. But we should not celebrate Labor Day as a symbol of the radical labor movement, nor should we

minimize it as a mere opportunity to party. Instead, we should realize that this holiday gives us the opportunity to celebrate God’s creation of the world as a place where businesses and workplaces exist; we should be thankful for the responsibility he places on our shoulders to work rather than mooch; and we should honor the Son’s own labors on the cross to save us from our sin. The real reason we have a “Labor” Day: As believers in Christ, we find profound significance in labor. In the Bible’s creation account, the opening scene depicts God at work. It begins with God working: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). And it ends with God working: “By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it, he rested from all the work of creating that he had done” (Gen 2:2-3). What’s more, smack dab in the middle of the creation account, we learn that God created



## **LABOR DAY**

human beings to work. He tells Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply,” which means that humans are to build families and societies. And, He tells them to “till the soil” and “have dominion,” meaning that we are supposed to work hard and manage God’s good world so that we can provide for the families and societies we have created. What is clear from the very beginning of God’s Word is that work is not a curse but rather a good purpose through which humanity lives out a life of obedient worship to God. While work, service, and worship do not share the same connotation in modern English, the same word — avodah — is frequently used for each of these concepts in the Hebrew Scripture. “Work” and “worship” are two translations of the same word (Genesis 2:15). Continued on back page.



SEPTEMBER 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 <i>Labor Day Church Of- fice Closed</i>	3	4	5	6 <i>Meladee will be out of church office at Gailey Eye Clinic</i>	7 <i>Recycle</i>
8 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i>	9	10	11	12 11 am Minis- ters will meet at American Lutheran Church	13	14
15 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i>	16	17	18	19	20	21 <i>RECYCLE</i>
22 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i>	23 <i>GA Hospital will host a blood drive in the fellow- ship hall</i>	24	25	26	27	28
29 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i>	30					



*FUN FACTS ABOUT SEPTEMBER . .*

First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City

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**Meladee’s working hours:**  
Meladee will be in the church office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**Email Addresses:** As part of the hardware and software upgrade for our church’s technology, email addresses as noted below:

Meladee  
[fpcgc60936@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpcgc60936@sbcglobal.net)

[Office@firstpresbygibson.org](mailto:Office@firstpresbygibson.org)

**Office hours for Dr. Backus** will be 9 to 3 on Tuesday and Thursday. Meladee will also be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 to 3 unless Dr. Backus is not available and then she will work 10 to 2 as usual.

The Autumnal Equinox, typically falling on September 22nd or 23rd, marks the onset of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere. It’s a unique astronomical event when day and night become nearly equal in length. It ushers in a vibrant transformation in nature and symbolizes a time of harvest and introspection. This annual event, therefore, signifies a significant shift in seasons and serves as a gateway to the colder months ahead.

World Suicide Prevention Day is observed globally on September 10th every year, an initiative backed by the World Health Organization. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the grave issue of suicide, aiming to promote mental health support and encourage preventive action. It reminds us that every life is precious and that resources are always available to help those who may be struggling.

In the U.S., September is National Honey Month, celebrating honey and the diligent honey bees. This initiative highlights honey’s culinary and health benefits and underscores bees’ critical role in pollination, emphasizing their substantial contributions to agriculture and our ecosystem.

National Grandparents Day, celebrated on the first Sunday after Labor Day in the U.S., is dedicated to acknowledging and expressing gratitude for grandparents. Instituted by President Jimmy Carter in 1978, the day encourages families to show appreciation for the wisdom, accomplishments, and legacy of their elderly members.

**International Coffee Day** is observed worldwide on September 29th. This day is a celebration of coffee, one of the most loved beverages globally, and it recognizes the millions of people across the globe, from farmers to baristas, who work hard to create and serve the beverage. The day aims to promote fair trade coffee practices and raise awareness of the plight of coffee growers. Today, many businesses offer free or discounted cups of coffee, celebrating the drink that powers our daily lives.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES		<i>Second Sunday Offering</i> <i>Sept 8: Gibson Area Music Foundation</i> <i>Oct 13: Random Acts of Kindness</i> <i>Ushers</i> <i>Sept: Janet Swanson and Jeanette Hensley</i> <i>Oct: Trudy Lantz and Val Hunt</i> <i>Communion Servers</i> Sept 1: Danny and Vonna Heustis Oct 6: Mary Clow and Rick Kerchenfaut September is known for many things, from marking the end of summer to the beginning of the academic year in many countries. It’s often associated with the
September	October	
15: Sharon Heavilin 17: Gene Roth 17: Danny Heustis 21: John Kirkpatrick 26: Val Hunt 26: Ted Swanson 28: Ann Backus	08: Cheryl Schultz 09: Aizza Kerchenfaut 15: Barb Williams 17: Larry Ladd 22: Jeanette Wissmiller 24: Michael Mott 26: Harry Groom 28: Happy Birthday FPC GC 1871	





Mary Clow has a full heart after spending time recently with her two other stepsons at a family baby shower held in Danville.



Jarod Tinsley, Mary and Nick Tinsley



Soon to be mother Martha, Jarod, Nick and Kaitlynn Tinsley.



Meladee and her 18 year old granddaughter, Samantha Renee VanSwol, had lunch at the Blue Star on Thursday, August 15th. Sammi is leaving for the University of Kentucky on Monday, August 19th. She made the rounds with grandparents, friends, children she baby-sat for all the time, etc. before leaving for college. She will be missed by ALL of us.



This lovely lady has been our secretary for 10 years. We are truly blessed having her take care of our church family. Thank you Meladee Ferguson for all you do.

## THANK YOUS AND MORE

Dear Presbyterian Church of Gibson City:

On behalf of World Central Kitchen, I want to thank you for choosing to donate \$2,500 on May 10, 2024 in support of our work around the globe. We are so grateful for your help as we use the power of food to nourish the world. No goods or services were received in exchange for this philanthropic contribution. Deploying our model of quick action, leveraging local resources, and adapting in real time, WCK has provided more than 400 million meals since 2010 in response for humanitarian, climate, and community crises across the world. We are a team of food first responders, mobilizing with the urgency of now to get meals to the people who need them most. We know that a nourishing meal in a time of crisis is so much more than a plate of food—it's hope, it's dignity, and it's a sign that someone cares. Thank you for your belief and trust in our mission. Sincerely, Erin Gore, Chief Executive Director, World Central Kitchen

*Thank you, church, with sincere gratitude and appreciation. Thank you for helping me celebrate my retirement. Your monetary gift is much appreciated. Love, Janice Swanson*

Dear Church Family, Thank you so much for all have done for me and the children throughout the years. It was a true blessing that we got to use the church for all those years. Thank you to anyone whoever stopped by to read and all those who picked up our lunches for us. I truly appreciate everything you have done for us. A special thank you for Meladee for allowing us to stop by for treats and hugs. The children always loved stopping by her office. Lastly, thanks for all the prayers. Sarah has a job in Fisher and Kayla and I both have jobs at GCMS. Thank

you for all you do. Molly Ertel

*Dear Church Family: Thank you so very much for the beautiful roses and gift card to the Blue Star Café for my 10th anniversary of working at the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City. It truly has been a joy getting to know all of you and loving you for the fine Christian people you are. I hope to stay as long as my health holds out and as long as you will have me. It has been a pleasure and I look forward to the next ten years. Your Administrative Assistant, Meladee Ferguson*

Dear First Presbyterian Church, The Gibson Area Food Pantry (GAFP) gratefully acknowledges your recent gift of \$5,000 to support the distribution of food for those in need in the Gibson City area. And throughout Ford County. Currently, all donations go for the purchase of food and supplies. The GAFP is by far the largest food pantry in Ford County. In 2023 it served families in 14 different counties with 85% of the food going to residents in Ford County. Due to the local supply line disruptions and economic turmoil with inflation our local needs have increased. We continue to serve many new users as our pantry becomes a lifeline to their families. Your generous donation will help us to continue to support that increased need. We thank you for your contribution to your local food pantry. Gibson Area Food Pantry Board

*Dear Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much for my scholarship money. As always, this is a HUGE help for me. Also, I love seeing the community gardens at Railside when I work at the coffee shop. The flower shop up in MT (Sweetwater) was a great experience!! Love, Emma Swanson*

**Meladee:** Thank you so much for sending the Presbytids. Enclosed is a check to help cover the postage. Your publication is great and I always enjoy reading it. You do such a good job. Keep up the good work. Mary Jo Kingsley (Thank you, Mary Jo. It is our pleasure to share it with you.)

**COMMUNITY GRIEF RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP**  
The Gibson City Bible Church is pleased to announce the return of a community grief recovery support group specifically established to minister to any and all who are in the midst of grieving the loss of a loved one. The group is scheduled to begin Thursday, September 5, at 6:30 p.m. GriefShare is a nondenominational group that features biblical teaching on grief and recovery topics. Each GriefShare session includes a video seminar and group discussion. Participants will have a workbook that assists with note-taking, journaling and grief study. Feel free to call me at 217-784-5702 if you have further questions. Thank you for helping to spread the word to those in our community who are in the midst of the pain of grief. Blessings, Bonnie Arends, GriefShare Group Facilitator





CHURCH NEWS



Ronald M. Clow Sr., 87, of Gibson City passed away on Friday, August 23, 2024 at OSF Heart of Mary Hospital in Urbana. A visitation was held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on Friday, August 30, 2024 at Rosenbaum Funeral Home in Gibson City. A private family burial at Drummer Township Cemetery was held on Saturday, August 31, 2024.

Surviving is his loving wife of sixty-nine years Carolyn Clow of Gibson City along with two children; Ronald (Mary) Clow of Gibson City and Sherrilyn Corry of Saybrook, three grandsons, one great granddaughter and his beloved pug, Meadow.

Ronald proudly served in the United States Air Force and with his wife Carolyn owned and operated Clow Feed Service in Gibson City for 38 years. After retirement, he then began working for Cheney Grove Township and later Drummer Township.

Our church family extends our sympathy to his wife Carolyn and our Church Elders Ron Jr and Mary Clow.

WITH SYMPATHY

*Generous and Extravagant God,*

You continue to do new things by blessing college students and young adults with abundant gifts they can share within and beyond your church. Help us support, teach and learn from each other as we all strive together to be instruments of your justice, mercy, reconciliation and peace.

*Amen*



By all these lovely tokens, September days are here, with summer’s best of weather and Autumn’s best of cheer.

Helen Hunt Jackson



Anneliese Kerchenfaut with a coworker at Tea and Grounds on her last day of work before heading back to Michigan State University. Good Luck, Anneliese! Your Church Family wishes you well. Our church family would also like to wish good luck to Emma Swanson, Noah Swanson and Nicole Schultz.

BENEFIT FOR HARLAN “POP” BOTTLES



FUNDRAISER



Harlan “POP” & Carol Bottles

AMERICAN LEGION BENEFIT FUNDRAISER

All You \$12 Can Eat



All You \$12 Can Eat

Harlan “POP” & Carol Bottles

Breakfast Buffet

Sunday, Aug 4th 7-10:00AM

Help w/ Medical & Care Expenses

Ron and Mary Clow attended the American Legion Fundraiser in Leroy for Ron’s second cousin Harlan “Pop” Bottles and his wife Carol Bottles. Above is a picture of Ron and Harlan who is 99 years old and World War II army veteran who served as a combat medic. Our church also donated to the fundraiser. Harlan has been a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Leroy for 78 years.

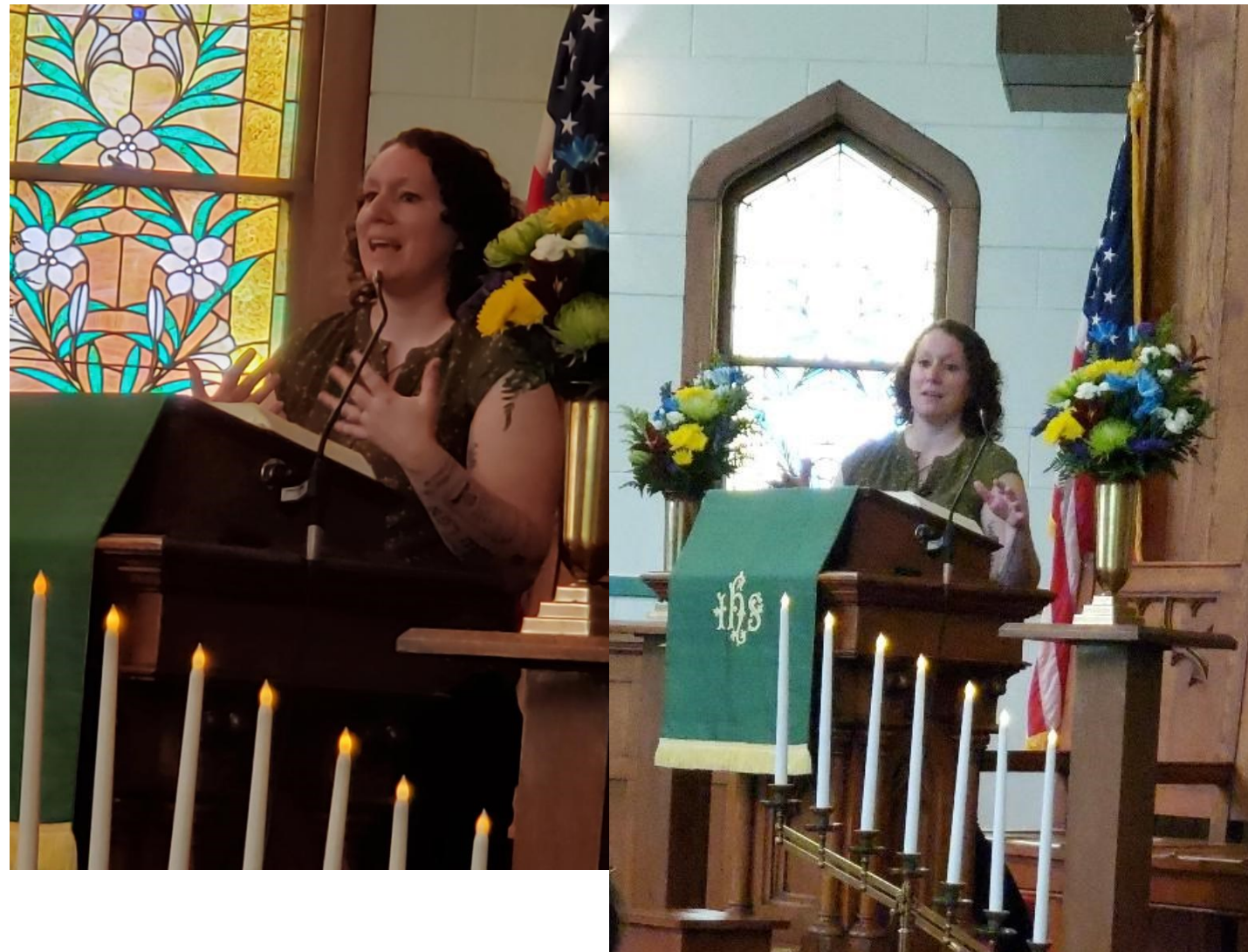




## VISITING PASTOR ON AUGUST 18, 2024

Lindsay Gordon has served in full time youth and children's ministry for the last three years, most recently at First Presbyterian Church of Joliet. She received her Bachelor's degree in English Education from Olivet Nazarene University, and will now be pursuing her Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary. Lindsay is a published poet, singer, cancer survivor, and dog mom to her Shiba Inu, Rocket. She loves hiking and traveling with her husband, Lex, and is passionate about cultivating intentional and inclusive communities to share the Gospel.

Lindsay was the visiting pastor for our church on August 18, 2024. She was very energetic and gave a beautiful sermon. The church who receives her as their minister will be truly blessed.



## CHURCH NEWS

### NO CHARGE

By Mike Hastings

Yours for the asking is salvation  
At your request, eternal life.  
Given by the God of all creation  
Bought with Blood of Jesus Christ.

There's nothing you need to do to earn it  
It's something money cannot buy.  
Freely given, though some spurn it  
Sometimes not even knowing why.

It's joy you'll know if you accept it  
This gift of Christ into your heart.  
Today's the day, so don't neglect it  
The Lord's already done His part.

His blood was shed for sins' remission  
When they nailed Him to the cross.  
No charge to you, save your submission  
He paid the price, He took the loss.

Be born anew, have life eternal  
The Father's equal to the task.  
Have your name written in His journal  
Salvation's free, no charge, just ask.

the LORD  
is my light  
and my  
SALVATION

## And the Winner Is



Pictured above: Phil Noellsch is the winner of the Bible Word Search Puzzle for AUGUST. There were twenty (20) who entered this month: Linda Graham, Carla Allen, John Ferguson, Ed Hopkey, John Johnson, Mona Summers, Val Hunt, Teresa Alexander, Barb Williams, Linda Gandy, Jean Williams, Jeanette Hensley, Sherry Tomlinson, Jodi VanSwol, Denise Birky, Kathy Brant, Phil Noellsch, Janice Swanson, Sharon Collings, and Pat Farris. Anyone receiving this newsletter is eligible to win a \$25 gift card to County Market. Please see the BEIGE colored card in the center of this publication to play. Turn it into the church office by SEPTEMBER 25TH! Not at the church: mail it or place in the black box outside the south east church door. Be certain to read the Bible verses attached to each puzzle.



CHURCH NEWS

Ted Swanson and Jean Ertel load food and water into a clients car at the July 27th Food Pantry Distribution. Thank you Mary Clow and Sharon Heavilin for also helping at the distribution and representing our church.



Sharla Williams Cousin Celebration!

Several of Sharla Williams’ cousins were in town to attend the GAH Bret Michaels Concert. Pictured below with Sharla is Rance Williams (Florida), Teri Naour (Bloomington IL), Rob and Juliet Williams (Geneva IL), Kane Williams, Pam Stevens (Gainsville FL)



Lovely Emma Swanson working at Tea and Grounds was recently happy to serve an Iced Vanilla Chai Latte with Oatmilk on Hump Day, Wednesday, August 28th.



Charlie & Cheryl Schultz were all smiles watching their grandson Sutton celebrate his 4th birthday. Sutton sure is adorable and growing fast. Cool cake Grandma.

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FACTS AND FIGURES

Our September Special Offering supports the Gibson Area Music Foundation. We encourage all singers to participate in the Gibson Area Music Foundation’s annual performance of Handel’s Messiah. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at our Church. The performance will be the afternoon of Sunday, December 8th, at the Gibson City Bible Church.

MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS – AUGUST 2024

<b>August</b>	
Year to Date July.....	\$126,633.00
Kemmerer Village – Horses & Heros Program.....	\$ 1,000.00
American Legion – Harlan & Carol Bottles.....	\$ 1,000.00
Meladee Ferguson Gift Card.....	\$ 100.00
Lindsay Gordon.....	\$ 208.00
Rent Carriage Lane/Jodie & Terry Allen.....	\$ 250.00
Ford Co. Chronicle.....	\$ 5,000.00
Year to Date August.....	<b>\$134,191.00</b>

*Come, Holy Spirit,*

And fill us with love for neighbor and stranger. Show us your love for the people around us and send us to befriend them and serve them and welcome them in your grace and in your power. In Jesus’ name.

*Amen*





## PASTOR ROY'S TRIP TO SWEDEN



Everyone needs to have a mustache like Morfar.



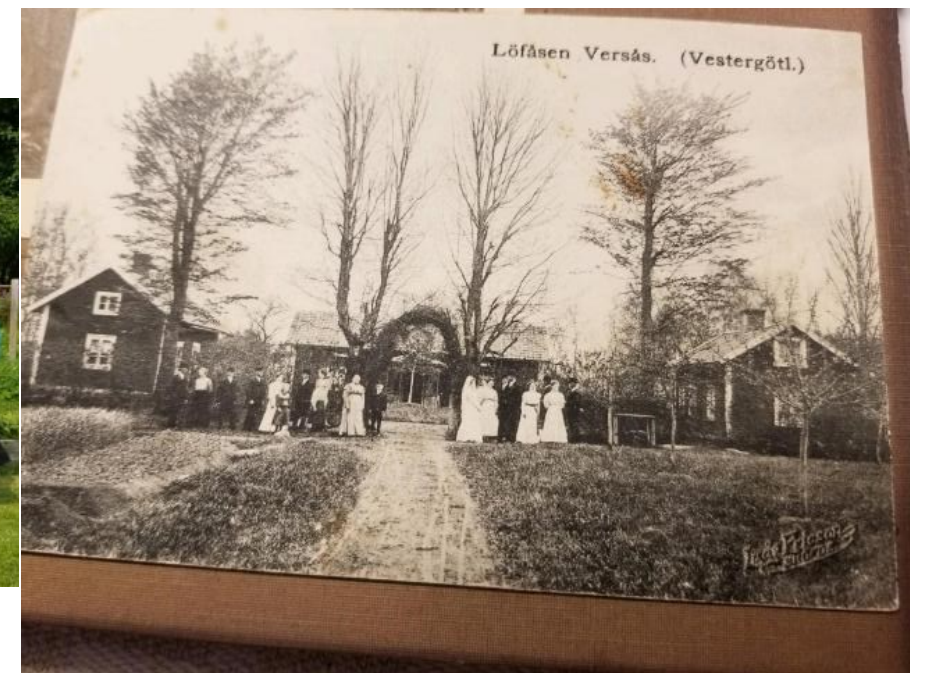
Eating a licorice ice cream cone!



Exchanging pictures with our distant cousins.



## PASTOR ROY'S TRIP TO SWEDEN



An oil painting of the Thorsen farm.

Dr. Backus was able to travel to Sweden this month and join his daughter Hava;ah, son-in-law Matthew and granddaughter Tennessee. The weather was mild and they visited lots of interesting sites. They were also able to spend time with distant extended family and see Thorsen family sites.











