

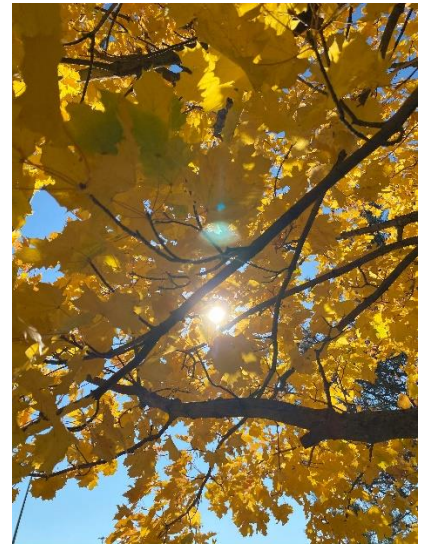


September 11, 2024
A Note from Lindsay Robinson

Dear Friends,

I was driving home the other day and noticed some of the trees that line the street had begun to change color. They were a lighter green with more hints of yellow starting to show. The leaves signifying to us that fall is upon us. This change in season coordinates with the start of the school year, and for me, it always feels like an invitation.

Fall invites us to learn. Our students are returning to their studies. Some, like our newest preschool families, for the first time. The excitement of starting school and the new adventures that await. Gaining knowledge we didn't have before. Making new friends. Meeting new teachers. Kids in their first year at middle or high school or as young adults, in their freshman year of college.



This invitation isn't just for those who are in school, however; we all are invited to this season of learning.

Maybe fall is inviting you to embrace a new hobby and learn to crochet or sew, read a new book by your favorite author, or learn how to make that dish or dessert you've always wanted to make.

Maybe fall is inviting you to learn more about yourself through an Enneagram class or to take another step into your faith journey with a midday Bible discussion or the Centering Prayer Reboot class.

Whatever it may be, the invitation to learn remains open until we are ready.



Fall invites us to play. Get out in the cooler weather and enjoy your front porch at dusk, watching the lightning bugs dance. Cheer on your favorite team from the sidelines or from your couch.

Jump in a pile of leaves (c'mon, you know you want to, just once) or hit a trail and watch the multi-colored leaves float from the tree tops down the path ahead.

Go with friends to a farm and pick apples or pumpkins, and while you are there, grab a cup of apple cider or a donut and have someone take a picture so you are actually in it, too.

For our kids, **starting today, Wednesday, September 11**, they can come to **Faith Kids** (age 4–second grade) or **Faith Finders** (grades 3–6) from 6:30–7:30pm and play with their friends while learning what it means to be a beloved part of the community. (<https://hilliardumc.org/children-weekday-evenings/>)

The invitation to play is all around us my friends, waiting for us to say yes.

Fall invites us to rest. There is something about the shorter days that create a desire to slow down. Even with the busyness that comes with a school year or the upcoming holiday seasons, the shorter days seem to encourage rest.

Friends, life has been beyond challenging for so many of us. In this stress-filled time, I have found myself needing to recognize the limits of my own capacity lately. Shifts in my personal life and my life as a mom have brought significant changes to my daily schedule and pushed me to my limit. The pain in my arm, which I was pushing off getting looked at, is actually a torn rotator cuff that requires me to care for it and slow my body down to heal. I also recently lost my stepfather. I've worked hard to pay attention to my body and listen to it when it's telling me I'm at capacity and have to rest.

If you have been in your own stress-filled season, let this fall's invitation to rest be what you need to take those moments for yourself. Let yourself rest so you are no longer at capacity even if it's just for a short time. You are allowed to rest and love yourself amidst the challenges of life.

Fall invites us to be curious. I wonder what I will learn this year? I wonder what my team's record will be at the end of the regular season? I wonder what my mind and body need in order to rest?



I wonder through all of life's challenges, what might bring you joy?

What might provide you respite from all the stressors of everyday life?



Pastor Jon and I spent time together last week, offering coffee and welcoming smiles to our parents and weekday preschoolers on their first days.

And as we talked with parents who were excitedly sharing how their little one couldn't wait to go to school that day and how they were going to spend the next few hours before they picked them up, I found myself laughing and smiling and feeling joy.

As the kids played on the playground and I could hear their little voices and the kind gentle encouragement of their teachers, I found myself feeling joy.

In the midst of everything my regular daily life has been giving me and all the times I felt myself at capacity, the presence of these kids, and serving their parents coffee, and giving back to them brought a smile to my face. I wasn't there out of obligation; I was serving through joy. I'm not sure I expected that, but I am certainly thankful for it.

So, I join in fall's invitation to you to be curious. What might bring you joy? Maybe you can find it serving within the walls of HUMC.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to help serve a Wednesday night community supper?

What might you learn as a part of our tech team?

How could joining the kids and me on Wednesday nights or in the nursery on Sunday mornings bring a smile to your face?

What new friends could you make as a part of the welcome team?

Being curious doesn't have to mean a full year's commitment. It's great to just check it out one time and see if it's for you!

It might free you from those daily stressors and provide respite from the challenges for a moment. Maybe it'll be exactly what you didn't know you needed.

Fall's many invitations are there, waiting for each of us. Which will you RSVP to?

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