



# Illinois Campers On Mission

June 2025

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## President's Letter—

Thanks to everyone who made it to Streator!!!! We had a great time!!!! We did lots of little projects around camp as well a few that took a little more time and muscle. We had great meals everyday and had a fun hot dog roast and potluck. Thanks to Jacob and Katie for the meal on Tuesday. As always, we appreciate your hospitality.

Our group got the camp looking very good for the kids and adults that will be on the grounds this year. You can see the project report on pages 6 and 7 in the newsletter. We pray that what we did is a help to Jacob and a blessing to those who come and hear the word of God.

We don't want to forget that while we were working hard up north in the state, we had another part of our team working hard in the Marion area with IBDR cleaning up tornado damage. We all have plenty of work to do in God's kingdom. We prayed for their safety, energy and to be a blessing to those that they helped in the great time of tragedy and despair. IL COM can be found in many places doing many jobs.

Plan to come help next month at MorningStar Mission in Joliet. Check page 2 for project notes and page 7 for a story on how this partnership has had big blessings come from it.

*Hebrews 11:1— Keep the Faith: Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

Fred



## COM Officers

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## **2005 Tentative Schedule**

June 3-5, 2025	National Rally, Aiken, South Carolina
July 20 – 25	MorningStar Mission, Joliet
August 17 – 22	Baptist Children's Home at Carmi
September 14-19	SICC, Makanda, IL & Fall Business Meeting
September 20	Baptist Children's Home Fall Fest
October 4	IL COM 50th Anniversary Celebration, IBSA Building, Springfield—11 am gathering reception, noon lunch, 1 pm program
Dec. 6	Christmas Luncheon, Farina FBC

**ALL DATES AND LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**



12	Bryan & Terri Keller
17	Suzy Kingsbury
19	Jessica Bonnell
20	George & Penny Meese
30	Judy Mathews



## **Project notes for July at MorningStar Mission**

Please plan to join us at MorningStar Mission in Joliet, Illinois. As usual there are many jobs to be done so bring general tools. We are usually involved in cleaning, building maintenance, working at the thrift shops, helping with devotions in the family shelter, yard work and maybe some remodeling and painting.

At this time, it looks like we will be parking our campers at the Briggs Street location right off of I 80 where some of you parked last year. There is plenty of room to park and electricity and water will be available. There are also several rooms inside the building that can be used for sleeping (bring your sleeping bags and air mattresses). We will plan to set up our sewing in the same large room we used last year.

Those signed up: Leroy & Irma, Sonny & Sondra, Fred & Paula, Richard & Anita, Cathryn St. Dennis, Dick & Karen, Gary & Karen, Andy & Marilyn and Don & Jan (if available). Let us know if you can come as we will need more help.

**Faith Focus—**

## Romans 5 "It's Complicated"

Love is a complicated thing. Everyone tries to understand love, fall in love, and explain love. People have gone to extremes to display their love for others. And thousands of years ago, God did that for each of us.

*Romans 5:7-8 Very few people are willing to die to save the life of someone else, even if it is for a good person. Some might be willing to die for an especially good person. But Christ died for us while we were still sinners, and by this, God showed how much he loves us.*

God's display of love was not conditional. It wasn't based on anything we had done or could ever do for him. He knew that without his intervention we would be separated from him forever.

Having a relationship with Jesus doesn't mean life is always easy. In May 2008, Steven Curtis Chapman and his wife, Mary Beth, lost their 5 year old daughter in an automobile accident. One message they received from a pastor who had lost his daughter gave Steven strength. "Remember, your future with your daughter will be greater than your past with her".

Bad things will happen in this life, but in Heaven our dreams will come true. God has promised a restoration of all things, excluding nothing! Our final home will hear no goodbyes. You can get through anything this life deals you with the realization that in Heaven this life won't matter, and your dreams will become reality. This provides us with the ability to face anything that comes our way. We can have hope in ALL situations. He is willing to do whatever it takes to restore our relationship with Him.

Whatever you are facing-family dysfunction, professional turmoil, relationship troubles-God will make it right. It might not be quick or easy, but God will make good out of this mess. That's his job!

***Dear God, we thank you for the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, which has brought us peace with you and a hope for the future. In Jesus' name, Amen***



**Jim and Marilyn Diercks, Chaplains**  
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There were inside jobs and outside jobs to be done. Everyone worked so hard—painting, digging, building, mixing cement, planting flowers, sewing, cooking—all for the Lord.





Lots of work was done by lots of people!!! The cold could not stop our progress and the rain could not dampen our spirits! God provided all we needed! God bless Streator Baptist Camp and Jacob and Katie as you minister to those who come to you.



**COM List Projects—Streator Baptist Camp**

Build new camp sign in front of the manager's house  
Install window in camp kitchen  
Build 10'X10' sunshade frame at Ax Throwing  
Build 10'x10' Sunshade frame by Archery  
Install trim in camp Kitchen  
Install trim in snack shack  
Set up washer and dryer in Lodge Basement  
Build a new bell tower  
Build wood 9 square game in rec field  
Pour concrete and move flagpole  
Install hanging lights around large campfire spot  
Replace lights on the front of prairie center.  
Check and fixed a damaged window screen  
Run 30-amp camper hookup to new camper spot at manager's house.  
Tighten up all the bolts in the beds in bunk house 1 and 2  
Turn on water to lake pavilion and check for leaks  
Paint sidewalk tripping hazards.  
Prune low hanging branches around camp  
Remove drywall anchors in camp kitchen bathroom, fill holes and paint  
Trim bushes all around camp  
Move the human foosball to rec field  
Weed eat the lake  
Paint trim for camp kitchen  
Paint trim for snack shack  
Clean up flowerbeds around camp  
Till a new flowerbed in front of the manager's house fence.  
Plant flowers around new camp sign  
Move snack shack stuff to the new snack shack  
Move nursing stuff to new cabinet and organize  
Move cleaning supplies from the dining hall closet and organize them into the old nurses closet.  
Clean windows in dining hall  
Clean all doors around camp  
Clean Lake Pavilion after water was turned on  
Cleaned ceiling fans in dining hall  
Cleaned air vents in dining hall  
Relocated ceiling fan out of snack shack  
Cleaned the apartment, Prairie Center and Lodge bedroom  
Installed 2 air conditioners  
Picked up donated fabric, cutting table, 2 sergers, quilt books and misc. fabric stabilizers  
Grouted around the refrigerator  
Put up new shack shop sign  
Consulted on a roof repair in Streator with Curtis Starnier  
Purchased and donated pots & pans for Prairie Center, Apartment and Bunk House 3  
Served 112 meals  
Painted trim around window in kitchen and new refrigerator  
Removed lime scale off of drinking glasses  
Glued baseboard in kitchen  
Fix and install CO detectors  
Cleaned coffee area in dining room  
Fixed the roof on storage area on lodge  
Fixed roof on building beside the barn

**Work Project Report—continued**

Install bunk in lodge  
Install outlet in kitchen  
Hang curtains in dining room  
Cleaned and organized sports eqpt. Room  
Cleaned and organized kitchen pantry  
Put all pots and pans through the dishwasher after completion of dry wall and painting was done  
Moved a light switch in the basement of the lodge  
Sewed 63 bear bodies for COM National Rally seminars that will be stuffed, made 14 large draw-string bags, made 4 smaller sling back bags and prepared 50 bear patterns. Ordered 20 pounds of fiberfill for stuffing bears.

**A MIRACLE HAPPENED BEFORE OUR EYES**

I wanted to highlight a great partnership we have formed that turned into a great blessing for us.

A lady contacted MorningStar Mission in Joliet to give a large donation of fabric that she no longer needed. Because of our partnership with MorningStar, they directed her to us. Dick and I were able to go to Plainfield and pick up what we estimate to be over \$1,000 worth of fabric and sewing supplies to help in our evangelism outreach projects.

She cried as we left and told us she had been trying to sell everything but no one was interested and if we had not come to get it, she was going to throw it all away. Her tears were also because she knew not only would it be saved and used but it would be used for missions.

She was a great blessing to us at a time we needed those supplies to meet the needs we have for several Catholic hospitals in the St. Louis area who are asking for bears, a missionary in South America who is asking for more bears, a connection with a military base in the St. Louis area who is interested in getting bears, the upcoming Fall Festival at the Baptist Children's home where we distributed many bears and the great need for bags for the homeless shelter at MorningStar Mission.

We were all so excited to see what God was doing by connecting us. That \$1000 gift will open up many opportunities to share the gospel with a lost and hurting world. Always be looking for the miracles that God has in store for you. We see them everyday in some way with IL COM—whether it is a gift like this, an opportunity to get the word of God into places that normally would not allow it in, a new person you meet that is blessed with an As You Go Bear, churches that get behind our sewing projects with money or materials or sewing with us, or any number of ways God steps in to make what we think is surprising or impossible part of what He has planned for a long time. Thank Him for His goodness and provision and always letting us know He is with us. Thank you, Lord!!!!

**Elvira Barrow Obituary**

Elvira Barrow, 88, of Washington, IL passed away at 1:50 pm on Sunday, May 25, 2025 at Apostolic Christian Restmor in Morton, IL. Elvira was born on September 9, 1936 in Golden Pond, KY, to Floy Dean Hicks and Elvis Hicks.

Elvira grew up on a farm in the Land Between the Lakes in Kentucky. She graduated from Trigg County High School in Cadiz, KY in 1955. She married James Barrow, from Model, TN on April 19, 1958 also in the Land Between the Lakes. He preceded her in death in 2020. She is also preceded in death by her parents; and one older brother, Cleveland Hicks of Dearborn, MI.

She is survived by her two daughters, Rita (Kim) Byard of Morton, IL, and Julie (Stan) Zehr of Eureka, IL; her five grandchildren, Jared (Megan) Byard and Lisa (Cody) Clark of Morton, IL, Bradley (Joylynn) Zehr of Peoria, IL, Laura Zehr of Altamonte Springs, FL, and Matthew Zehr of Davenport, IA; and her 7 great grandchildren, Kaden, Addison, Riley, Avery, Rowan, Everett, and Alaina.

Elvira worked as the head baker/assistant cook at District 50 schools in Washington, IL for 22 years. She enjoyed making cookies from scratch for the kids, and would regularly bake 600 cookies per day, which was enough for both schools in the district. Elvira also enjoyed gardening, and would freeze or can vegetables and fruit from her garden. During earlier years, she enjoyed sewing and making crafts that she would sell at the annual Spoon River Drive Craft Show. She shared a booth with her husband, James, at these events.

Elvira was a 60 year member of Dayton Avenue Baptist Church in Peoria, IL, where she enjoyed singing in the choir. She, along with her husband and daughters, was a member of the "God's Little Messengers" puppet team. They, along with other members of the team, took 4 summer trips, traveling across the country, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Elvira and James were also members of the Illinois Campers on Mission. They would go on mission trips to build and remodel church buildings, or participate in yard clean up at summer camp facilities.

Elvira was an avid fan of the Chicago Cubs. During baseball season, you would usually find her in front of, or talking back to, the TV whenever a player struck out or when the other team scored. During the last few family gatherings, she would just sit quietly and watch all of the great grandchildren playing together.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Midwest Food Bank or Illinois Campers on Mission.

**PLEASE BE IN PRAYER FOR HER FAMILY AND REJOICE THAT SHE IS HOME!**

As a father shows compassion to his children, so  
the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

Ps. 103:13

Praise God you are our Father who loves us, protects  
us, guides us, carries us and forgives us. Amen.

