

Pastor's Pen

Waiting for God's Promises



Did you ever wonder why God waited until Abram and Sarah were so old before he gave them their promised son, Isaac? I can think of two reasons. First, so they would know without a doubt, because of Sarah's barrenness and their advanced age, Isaac was the miraculous answer to God's promise. In other words, they had chosen to follow the true God. Second, God was maturing them in relationship to Him so they would raise their son differently – different from their pagan parents, different from their immature younger selves because they had walked with God all those extra years. In all their waiting, God had his hand on the timing, preparing them to be godly parents to raise a son who would become a patriarch.

God's plans happen at just the right time, in the fullness of his time. This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints, who wait for God's promises to be fulfilled, though they seem to be delayed. In the same way, Peter encourages us to trust God for his timing and to live as those who are prepared.

"Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, 'Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.' But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming."

Many of us have hopes for God's promises for our future. Our future as individuals, our hopes for our children, our hopes for the future of God's people, the church. We need to be patient while we wait for God's promises to be fulfilled. However, while we wait, there is something we can do. Watch and pray. Pray for God's will to be done, since there is an enemy who will try to thwart that will. Pray that we are strengthened to resist temptation. And watch so that we might be ready, living holy and godly lives while we wait.

These things certainly apply as we wait patiently for our Lord Jesus' return. They may apply as you watch and pray for the salvation of your children and grandchildren: longing to see God's will done in their lives, longing to see them fully trusting in Christ, but waiting and praying patiently with God for their repentance.

I believe they also apply as we watch and pray for the future of our church and denomination, and even for our nation. The church and its children are the objects of the enemy's special hatred! (Revelation 12:17). Are you praying for God's will to be done, since the enemy is still trying to thwart God's purposes while he can, roaming around 'like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour'? (1 Peter 5:8). Are you watching what is going on so that you understand the times? Are you ready, living holy and godly lives, so that whatever happens, you are prepared?

Let us watch and pray patiently for God's plans, using the time to mature in him by walking faithfully with him, so we are ready to fully embrace whatever he has next for us.



Yours in Christ's love, Rev. Dr. Chris Fisher



Congregational Meetings to Prepare for the Future of United Methodism

Dear Congregation,

In light of the high probability there will be a split in the United Methodist denomination at the August 2022 General Conference, the Administrative Board has approved a series of informal congregational meetings to update our members and prepare them for what is next.

These meetings will take place on the 3rd Sunday of the month after 9 am worship, beginning in September. Please mark your calendars and make every effort to attend so you can understand what is

happening and be prepared to vote when the time comes for our congregation to respond.

To be clear, no decision will be made during these meetings until a formal congregational meeting is called and properly announced, with the permission of the district superintendent. We are not doing that yet, but rather using these *informal* congregational meetings to prepare our members to be ready when the time comes.



Information about various pieces of the process will be sent out ahead of time, beginning with the Sept-Oct newsletter. The proposed schedule with basic discussion topics:

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE:

September 19, 10:30 AM: [Sunday]

Introduction, historical developments in the UMC leading to the likelihood of splitting; a look at the options for congregational re-alignment after the split, including with the new Global Methodist Church. Rebranding our local church in light of potential changes.

October 17, 10:30 AM:

Options/paths forward for our church in response to the current theological chaos in the UM denomination. Pros/cons/cost of each option.

November 21, 10:30 AM:

Further details on the benefits and costs of various paths forward. Rebranding focus.

[December: NO meeting because of the holidays]

January 17, 10:30 AM:

New policies, updates on the latest UM news related to the coming possible split, straw poll on the will of the congregation.

February 20, 10:30 AM:

Contingency planning.

Please put these meetings in your calendar and make it a priority to attend if you care about what happens

to our church. If you have any questions or suggestions, contact a member of the planning team. The members are Gary Daum, Linda Olsen, Moffette Tharpe, Ann Moyer, Doug O'Connell, & Pastor Fisher



July 2021 Covid Quarantine Update

1) Worship attendance in the sanctuary is now at full 100% capacity. The front half of the



sanctuary is not roped off and no masks are required. In the back half, every other pew is still roped off for those who desire more social distancing.

2) Those who have been fully vaccinated do not need to wear masks. Otherwise, masks at your discretion; suggested for those who cannot get the vaccine.

3) Coffee and Fellowship hour after worship has resumed, with servers overseeing coffee distribution and serving pre-packaged snacks.

4) FX Worship on Sundays, 11:00 AM continues at Bubeck Park (weather permitting). No masks needed.

5) Small groups and leadership committees are meeting live. You can still join some meetings virtually via Webex. Contact your group leader for details if you need that option.

6) If you are still in the at-risk health population, or are uncomfortable with any of these guidelines, use your own judgment. We will continue to offer online worship Sundays at 9 am.

7) We encourage you to get a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as practical. The new Delta variant seems to be hitting folks who have not been vaccinated yet. Follow your doctor's advice on which vaccines are best. Both Pfizer and Moderna seem to be solid options. Although there are rare occasions when these vaccines lead to complications, many people report a significant sense of ease to resume life as usual once they get the vaccine.

8) Praise the Lord for his faithfulness at all times!



Worship & Preaching Schedule July – August 2021

Sunday Worship: 9:00 AM Live & Online
11:00 AM FX Worship live at Bubeck Park. During bad weather, online only at www.havenfx.org.
Saturday Worship: Live at 6:00 PM

Theme: "Spiritual Victory Lessons from the Wilderness and Conquest"

- July 4: 6th Sunday after Pentecost
With Holy Communion
"Be Strong and Courageous"
- July 11: 7th Sunday after Pentecost
"Preparing a People to be set apart for God"
- July 18: 8th Sunday after Pentecost
"Finding God's victory in the face of defeat"
- July 25: 9th Sunday after Pentecost
"Something better than Mt. Sinai"
- August 1: 10th Sunday after Pentecost
With Holy Communion
Meeting God face to face"
- August 8: 11th Sunday after Pentecost
Special Speaker: Rev. Luis Centeno
- August 15: 12th Sunday after Pentecost
"God's plan of conquest"
- August 22: 13th Sunday after Pentecost
"Pitfalls to Spiritual Victory, Part I"
- August 29: 14th Sunday after Pentecost
"Pitfalls to Spiritual Victory, Part II"
- Sept. 5: 15th Sunday after Pentecost
W/ Holy Communion; Labor Day Weekend
"Crossing the Jordan"



Communion Offerings

- July 4 – Pastor's Discretionary Fund
August 1 – Rev. Luis Centeno, Barnabas Transformation Ministries



Rev. Luis Centeno to be guest preacher on August 7-8

We are pleased to welcome Rev. Luis Centeno as our guest preacher the weekend of August 7-8. Our church has been a long-time supporter of Rev. Centeno, who



has served as a missionary in Philadelphia for over 35 years. He and his wife Elsie currently serve as leaders in Barnabas Transformation Ministry and oversee a house church in their own home. Rev. Centeno is a dynamic preacher who is sure to bring a blessing.



Church Prayer Ministry Updates

Prayer Focuses for July - August 2021

- 1) Pray for our congregation, for strengthening of faith, for a spirit of love, peace, and unity, for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit, for restored community life

after Covid, for our small groups and small group leaders.

- 2) Intercede for those who do not know or have stopped trusting the Lord Jesus.
- 3) Pray for our church leaders, our various ministry teams, our mission and outreach efforts.
- 4) Pray for our young adult ministry, youth ministry, children's ministry, and for parents and families with children. Pray for our seniors, home-bound, shut-ins, lonely and sick.
- 5) Pray for the church, the UM denomination, and our denominational representatives and leaders, and for Lord's will for our church's future. Pray for our congregational meetings to prepare for the future.
- 6) Pray for the missionaries and missions we support in Philadelphia and Israel: Rev. Luis Centeno of Barnabas Transformation Ministries, Bethlehem Bible College, Israel Bible Society, and Piniel Fellowship in Tiberias, Israel.

Weekly prayer team ministry continues.

Please sign up in pairs to pray for one hour a day during your week, for the Kingdom of God to come more fully in our church and our community and beyond. You can also pray together in your own homes via video chat or phone call.

Do you have a testimony to share?

We would love to include more testimonies in our weekly worship. The Discipleship Council has been working on a testimony project. See news on that separately elsewhere in this newsletter. Please consider sharing your testimony where you have seen God at work in your life as part of our worship service. Contact the office at office@havenfirstumc.org if you want to share.



New Ethos and Vision Statement under consideration by the Administrative Board

Because of rapid changes in our culture and in preparation for our future, the Administrative Board is considering a comprehensive ethics and vision statement which would govern our life together, our ethical and moral commitments and boundaries, and future internal policy and hiring practices. Some of these policy considerations are necessary because of how fast secular culture is adapting post-Christian values. The statement has been freely adapted from the Ethos statements of Asbury Theological Seminary and

the Wesley Covenant Association and revised by a select subcommittee of the Ad Board.

The draft version is included in this newsletter. Please read it and feel free to contact the office with any comments or suggestions. Administrative Board will be considering it at its September 27 meeting.



Outreach idea approved: Mother-Son Sport Shooting Event to be planned for Spring, 2022



4

The Administrative Board has approved a church-sponsored "Mother-Son Shoot" social event. We envision this as an all-church picnic, to be held at a local gun club. It will include lunch, basic safety training, competitions in rifle, trap shooting, and archery, with the men serving, and the women and children participating in the competitions. We will have food, fun, & fellowship - something for the whole family. Picture an old-fashioned outdoor picnic with some added firepower.

This event will probably need to be in Spring, 2022 because gun clubs are busy preparing for hunting season in the fall. This first time, we will keep it in-house as we learn the logistics of a sport-shoot. If successful, it could become an outreach event in the future like the Father-Daughter dance.

We are putting together a planning team to organize the Shoot. If you are willing to help, please let us know in the office as soon as possible. We will have an organizing meeting in late summer/early fall.

Thanks for your prayers and consideration!

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OUR ETHOS [DRAFT 6-27-21]**Community Vision**

We, the trustees, administration, pastor(s), staff, and members of First United Methodist Church (henceforth, 'the Church') embrace this ethos as a Wesleyan community which stands within the tradition of Christian orthodoxy and whose life and work are committed to reflecting the truth, beauty, and goodness of God's holiness. As a United Methodist Congregation and a member church of the Wesleyan Covenant Association, we acknowledge that we operate under the ethical standards and discipline of the United Methodist Church [or a future orthodox and traditional Methodist denomination]. In addition, for the common good of the church community, we commit to the following community vision.

We aspire to order our communal and personal life according to the truth and love revealed in Scripture and imparted by the Holy Spirit. We pledge ourselves to go on to the fullness of salvation, seeking through relationships of mutual accountability the maturity of faith, hope, and love that reflects the mind and likeness of Jesus Christ. By the Spirit's power we will bear witness to God's Kingdom, embodying a way of scriptural holiness that unites sound knowledge and vital piety in proclaiming the Gospel and participating in God's mission.

We covenant together to embrace ways of living in keeping with the spirit and intent of the General Rules set forth by John Wesley:

- By doing no harm and by avoiding evil of every kind.
- By doing good of every possible sort as far as possible to all people.
- By practicing the means of grace together.

We are committed to speaking the truth in love, sharing one another's burdens, bearing with one another's weaknesses, and serving one another by the mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation extended by God. We will practice and nurture speech that is just, charitable, encouraging, and respectful of the standards and policies of First United Methodist Church. Exercising discernment, which is guided by the law of love, we will affirm the breadth of views that bear witness to the richness of the Gospel and the diversity of Christian communities it calls and creates.

With God's help we will exercise the freedom of joyful obedience in being faithful stewards of our minds, bodies, time, gifts, abilities, possessions, and finances as expressions of God's good creation. We will renounce those attitudes and actions that resist the work of the Spirit, divide Christian community, and impede human flourishing. In faithfulness to the Gospel, we will resist the pervasive influence of materialism and commit ourselves to ministry with the poor. We will reject utilitarian methods that commodify the faith and mission of the church according to the values of a consumerist culture. By God's grace, we will nurture redemptive relationships that honor and uphold the dignity of creation, human life, the sanctity of embodied human sexuality, the equality of women and men, the covenant of Christian marriage between one man and one woman, and the importance of the family. All for the glory of God.

Application of Community Vision

This covenantal ethos orients our community life toward the fullness of holy love as the end of God's Law which has been fulfilled in the life and work of Jesus Christ. In light of the truth and goodness of God revealed by Christ, and as interpreted by our Wesleyan heritage, we acknowledge the Christian life cannot be reduced to either right doctrine or morality. Redemption in Christ includes the power of the Spirit to transform us into the image of Christ (2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 2:6). The fullness of salvation consists of the restoration of the image of God and our life in communion with God and others. Basic to our task as a church is our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. This mission includes the

cultivation of knowledge, wisdom, and virtue for the practice of faithful obedience that bears fruit in love for God, our neighbors, and the whole creation.

For this reason, concerns related to particular expressions of thought and behavior will be assessed in light of the law of love which is the source, means, and goal of true freedom in Christ. To this end, we commit ourselves to seeking the Spirit's wisdom and discernment through the study of Scripture and participation in the means of grace, common worship, and holy conversation.

In addition, and for the common good of the church community, we commit to the following guiding **Moral principles:**

Gender Equality

- Scripture teaches that men and women are of equal value in the eyes of God. Accordingly, the church should treat women and men equally. (Genesis 1:27; Galatians 3:28). We believe that both women and men are called to and gifted for ordained and licensed ministry, and both genders are able to hold any role of leadership within the Church.

Equality

- We believe that all persons are of sacred worth. Therefore, we gladly welcome all who seek to grow in their relationship with God to attend worship services and participate in the church's ministries. No person shall be disqualified from becoming a member of a local congregation, holding a leadership position in the church, or becoming an ordained or licensed clergy based on race, color, nationality, national origin, marital status (single or married), or economic condition. The Church specifically renounces all racial and ethnic discrimination and commits itself to work toward full racial and ethnic equality in the church and in society. (Galatians 3:26-29).

Marriage and Sexuality

- We believe marriage and sexual intimacy are good gifts from God. In keeping with Christian teaching through the ages and throughout the Church universal, we affirm marriage as sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union for life, as delineated in Scripture, and provides the sole context for sexual intimacy, helping to ensure the blessings of that relationship as God intended. (Genesis 2:24; Leviticus 18; Matthew 19:4-6). We believe that God intends faithfulness in marriage and celibacy in singleness. (1 Cor. 6:12-7:40). We affirm celibacy as a valuable and honorable practice related to holy living. (Matthew 19:8-12). We honor and esteem the fidelity of deep holy friendships as being in the image of God.

Human Worth, Dignity, and the Created Image of God as Male or Female

- We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual or group are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church.
- We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female. Together these two distinct sexes reflect the creative nature and image of God. (Gen 1:27).
- Based on a Biblical view of creation, fall, and redemption, our goal is to come alongside as a loving community anyone who is experiencing gender identity discordant with their birth sex. We do not affirm theologically the adoption of a psychological identity discordant with one's birth sex as a result of the tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender. Similarly, we do not affirm attempts to change one's given biological birth sex via medical

intervention in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity. (Gen 1:27, Deut 22:5; 1 Cor. 11:3-16).

- We recognize that as part of our fallen state, in rare cases there are genetic errors and defects in the development of a child which may affect their sexual biology (such as hermaphroditism). In these rare cases, parents and doctors must exercise prayerful discernment on how to best treat these conditions. We commit to an understanding and compassionate response to all concerned in such cases.

General Moral and Ethical Commitments

- We affirm God's design for holy living, and believe that Scripture clearly prohibits certain acts, including but not limited to drinking alcohol to excess, using pornography, stealing, speaking or writing profanely or slanderously, acting dishonestly, cheating, engaging in occult practice, and engaging in sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage (including but not limited to premarital sex, adultery, and same-sex sexual behavior). Such actions have devastating personal, social, and global effects, especially upon society's most vulnerable members. (Romans 13:8-10).
- We affirm the need for responsible care and stewardship of the human body through regular exercise when possible; practicing healthy eating habits; and properly balancing study, work, rest, and leisure.
- We stand with all Christians, both past and present, against the misuse of all substances that abuse the body, foster addiction, and bring harm to others.
- We covenant with each other to maintain an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment with respect to all church facilities, events, and activities.
- We condemn any form of harassment or abuse.

This Ethos assumes the practice of Christian hospitality within a church community that is dependent upon the gift of God's grace and characterized by relationships of mutual trust and respect. To this end, we acknowledge our constant need for keeping covenant with one another and diligence in speaking the truth in love. We encourage the practice of repentance, confession, pardon, correction, and redemptive discipline when breaches of this covenant may occur. In witness to society, we commit ourselves to these guiding principles, and we disavow advocating, supporting, or condoning behavior contrary to this Ethos. We will make institutional decisions in light of this policy.

Freely adapted from 'Our Ethos,' ©2021 Asbury Theological Seminary, and the Wesley Covenant Association "Statement of Beliefs" (2021).

<https://asburyseminary.edu/about/theological-orientation/our-ethos/>

<https://wesleyancovenant.org/about-page/#1533314242168-c269fe11-86cb>

Summer Greetings

from the Administrative Board!

The AD Board met on June 20th. We are prayerfully working together to the Lord's work in our church.

The following is an update on presentations and actions taken at the meeting.

Pastor Fisher led an open discussion of the future of First UMC. Members of the board and visitors from the congregation presented suggestions and concerns. A preparation team made up of Ad Board members and members of the congregation was proposed. The motion was carried.

As there has been interest in a Mother/Son shoot a motion was presented and carried to hold this event.

The Frontier Girls group has requested the use of the church to hold their meetings. It was moved to allow the use and offer regular faith input for the group to live out their stated creed. The motion was carried.

Reports were heard from the treasurer, Stewardship and Finance committee, Discipleship Council, SPRC, Trustees and Outreach.

Please continue to pray for God's guidance in all the efforts of First UMC.

Praying you all have a safe, relaxing, healthy and blessed summer.

Elizabeth Wallace

Ad Board Chair

PRAYER MINISTRY

SCHEDULE

July 4-10—Wanda Langley & Kim Meyers

July 11-17—Tom & Eydie Reed

July 18-24—Paul & Gerri Inama

July 25-31—Doug & Lynne O'Connell

August 1– 7—Wanda Langley & Sevenia Reiger

August 8-14—Ray & Dawn Housel

August 15-21—Dolores Morgan & Evelyn Jones

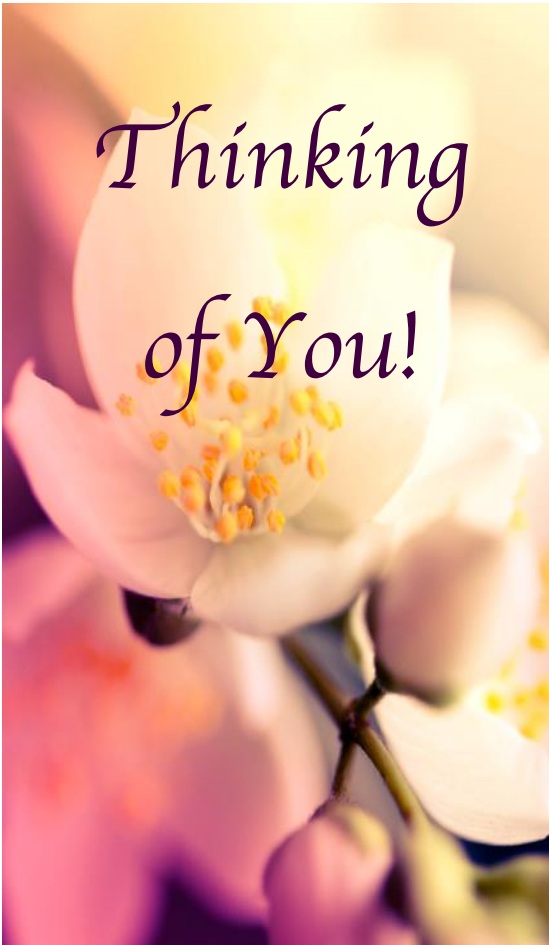
August 22-28—Dwight & Cindy Dros

Aug. 29- Sept 4—Dot Murphy

September 5-11—Wanda Langley & Sevenia Reiger

Thank you to our Prayer Warriors! If you would like to sign up for a week of prayer, please contact Wanda Langley, our prayer coordinator.

On another note, if many of you may remember in March of 2019, we launched another prayer ministry where members of our congregation are assigned 10 other members of the congregation to pray for on a daily basis. This has been quite the undertaking, thank you to all who have participated. At the current time, we have a few needs for others to step in and pray. If you would like to pray for fellow brothers and sisters in the congregation and have not been asked to do so, please call the church office and we will send you a list of folks to pray for. Once again, a big thank you to all of you who have prayed and are still praying!



Thinking of You!

As life has begun to return to normal and the things of the world that have been rather uncertain lately are seeming to even out, God has still remained faithful to His children. As we are beginning to venture out more and more, please remember those in our midst that are Shut-In, Homebound or recovering with a card, quick note or phone call to let them know that they are not forgotten:

Schuylkill Haven
Lucille Romberger
406 May Drive

Catherine Daubenspeck
FL 33733 Schuylkill Center

Carol Shappel
206 Jefferson Street

Marilyn Koch
Schuylkill Manor
Room 119

Pottsville
Helen & Stuart Sattizahn
York Terrace
Room 138

Orwigsburg
Carol Wagner
1000 Seton Drive
Room 507

Tremont
John & Anna Mease
113 Washington Street

Lewisburg
Rev. Carl Geary
Buffalo Valley Luthern Village
Room 257
189 E. Tressler Blvd.
Lewisburg, PA. 17837

SATURDAY NIGHT WORSHIP PREACHING SCHEDULE

July 3—Rev. Portia Kuzanga
 July 10—Dwight Dros
 July 17—Rev. Portia Kuzanga
 July 24—Moffette & Mary
 Tharpe
 July 31—Brian Reading
 August 7— Rev. Luis Centeno
 August 14—Doug Esposito
 Aug. 21 Rev. Portia Kuzanga
 August 28—Doug O'Connell



A set of keys have been found and turned into the church office. They would like to find their owner. If you have lost a set of keys in the past few months, please contact the church office or Linda Olsen and your keys will be returned to you.



Open Wedding Invitation for the Church

Hello church family! Anne and I hope you are all well. So, as some of you may know, Anne and I will be getting married this year. The ceremony will be held here at FUMC on August 28 at 3:30pm. We would like to extend an open invitation to the church family here to attend the ceremony only. Unfortunately, we cannot afford to invite everyone to the reception that follows. If you are interested in attending, we would love to see you here at the ceremony. God bless you all!



SPRC NEWS

We are happy to announce that we are expanding the position of the senior high Youth Director, Rev. Portia Kuzanga to include a young adult ministry advisor position. Portia has graciously accepted this position which will increase her hours to 30hrs./week. She will include a core group of young adults in their 20's & 30's advising and mentoring them to develop this ministry. This will include outreach and small groups to encourage spiritual growth and discipleship following our church's Master Discipleship plan. We have also included regular preaching to her duties at either Saturday night or Sunday worship service.

If you have any questions about this new and exciting venture for our church, please talk with SPRC or Pastor Chris.

Linda Olsen

SPRC Chair



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Beyond
MEASURE



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Pod Casts Now Available

Our church is now has a podcast that will make Pastor Fisher's sermons available. Our podcast is called, "Igniting Your Faith," and can be found on many of your favorite podcast sites such as: Spotify, Apple, Anchor, Breaker, Google Podcasts, Pocket, Radio Public, TuneIn, Pandora, and more.

Podcasts are a great way to make Pastor's sermons available to the world. If you want to listen to a sermon you missed, or if you want to review and study his sermons more deeply, they will now be available. You do not need to get a CD. You can just go to any of the podcast platforms, type in "Igniting Your Faith," and you will find our pastor's sermons.

You can listen to Pastor's sermons and download them for future listening such as when you are driving in the car. Podcasts are great for listening while working around the house or yard.

As I stated, go to any of the podcast sites and type "Igniting Your Faith" in the search area and you should find it. There will be a picture of our altar window.

Season One will start with March 7th of this year, but we will quickly upload more sermons to get up to date. Hopefully, we can upload sermons from previous years.

"Igniting Your Faith" will be available worldwide for everyone to hear and study the sermons and grow in God's love.



Igniting Your Faith

By Pastor Chris Fisher

Igniting Your Faith is a regular podcast delivering messages from Dr. Chris Fisher. God's Word, the love of God, and His truth bring power, faith, healing, for a new and growing life. Igniting Your Faith is published by Dr. Chris Fisher and First UMC Church, Schuylkill Haven, PA.

[Spotify](#) [Message](#) [Website](#)

WHERE TO LISTEN

Discipleship Council



The My Faith Stories initiative has taken shape. The first Story was shared on May 2nd during the Sunday morning service and also during the previous Saturday night service. A new Story will be introduced every two weeks. Each has been reviewed/edited by Discipleship Council members and approved by the contributor. The publicly-shared Stories are supported/promoted by three bulletin boards in the church, a post to the church's Facebook page, a worship service live stream announcement, and posting to the church website Faith Stories tab www.havenfirstumc.org/my-faith-stories.

Some Church website tabs have been relocated so that information related to the Discipleship Council is in one place. The new Master tab is called "Following Him." Under it are Small Groups (*directory*), My Faith Stories (*full text of the story*), FUMC Discipleship Plan (*June 23, 2019*) and soon, 2021 Small Group Plan.

A 2021 Small Group Plan was developed, consistent with the FUMC Discipleship Plan. This Plan addresses the Small Groups by Category. Five of the seven Life in Action Groups were visited by a representative of the Discipleship Council to discuss the work of the Council and the contents of the Small Group Plan. Contained in the Plan are periodic meetings of all Small Group Leaders and all Small Group Members. Currently, there is a meeting of all Small Group Leaders scheduled for the morning of July 17th.

The Council revisited the FUMC Discipleship Plan (*June 23, 2019*) with the intention of making it more central to our church and Small Group life. We discussed stylizing the visual overview of our *discipleship process*. Concepts were solicited from two graphic artists and will be reviewed during the next Discipleship Council Working Meeting on July 13th.



Respectfully submitted,
Moffette Tharpe
Chair, Discipleship Council

My Faith Stories

By the time you receive this newsletter, five **My Faith Stories** will have been presented during our Sunday morning and Saturday night worship services by members of our congregation. Supporting these presentations are three bulletin boards in the church, worship service live stream announcements, church Facebook page postings, and the church website www.havenfirstumc.org/my-faith-stories.

It is our belief that **we all have a Story to tell** and sharing our *God experiences* with one another bonds us together as a Faith Community. A day-to-day experience with God, that persons can relate to, can be very powerful and impactful to the reader. It can literally **change lives!**

We encourage all of you to share your Story. No story is too small. A couple of sentences may be all that are needed to capture the **God experience**. Who knows how your Story will impact those hearing it.

If you have a Story to share, **please contact** Eydie Reed, Nancy Kraft or Moffette Tharpe, members of the Discipleship Council. They will gladly assist you in preparing your Story. And if you have more than one story to tell, they are welcomed, too.



Submitted by
Discipleship Council

Finance Update

July-August 2021



Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Thank you all for your tithes and offerings. Please continue giving through these summer months. May we be faithful as He is faithful.

Report from EPA Conference

In the May 2021 Financial Update from the Conference, the Connectional Ministries Fund (CMF) showed \$1,326,001 in giving. Local Church giving was \$108 thousand more than budget and \$145 thousand more than May 2020. Expenses for 2021 were \$323 thousand less than budget and \$91 thousand less than May 2020. In regard to the rest of the church funds- local churches paid \$5.44 million or 32% of the total billed of \$17.12 million to all churches. This is an increase of 1% from the prior year. The apportioned funds (CMF, WSF, and GCF) giving through May 2021 were \$1.83 million or 29% of the total budget. That number is up 1.75% from the prior year.

State of the Church

As of our May Summary Report, our church is running slightly ahead of budget. Our giving varies from week to week, but we have been able to pay salaries and expenses. Generous gifts have supported some of our building projects and repairs so there isn't a strain on our budget. We continue to be blessed in our mission.

The Annual Conference has granted churches a reprieve in paying their share of the Connectional Ministry Fund for a month. We have decided to take the month of August off from that payment. That gives the church an extra \$2,168 for our use.

We will again run a Stewardship Campaign the same way that we did last year. Donation/ tithe cards will be sent out at the beginning of September, followed up by a phone call if the card is not returned by the end of September.

In His Service,
Jean Twardzik
Finance Chair

Methodist Women's Ministry NEWS July/Aug

We are continuing in our "Just Because" collection for Nursing homes. We are collecting shampoo, body wash, puzzle books, coloring books, crayons, Bingo markers, etc. for nursing homes in Schuylkill County. They have expressed this need to us as we delivered the flowers and butterflies. There is a tub in the Narthex for you to put your donation. Or if you would like to give a donation of money, please mark it MWM/nursing home and we'll be sure to use it for that. We'll be collecting until our July meeting.

In June we visited Providence Place in Pine Grove to lead a sing a-long and share home-made cookies with them. The residents were so appreciative. They spoke about not have much to do there day after day. It was a nice change for them. Not only were they blessed, but we were also.

We meet the 2nd Tues. of the month at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

Our upcoming meetings are:

July 13th – planning meeting- dividing collected goods for nursing homes to deliver.

Aug. 10 – hoping to "do lunch" and fellowship with each other

Thank you again for your support, past and in the future.

Jean Twardzik, Chair



Faith Community Nurse's Notes

Brought to you by: Ann Moyer RN, FCN
Foot Care

If your feet could talk, I wonder what they would say. It may be something like "Hey up there, don't forget me! I am achy, hot and sweaty down here. You know I am literally bearing all your weight!" All kidding aside, we rely on our feet to get us places and they are a very hardworking part of our body. Our feet truly deserve some daily tender loving care.

General foot care should include:

- Wash your feet daily with warm (not hot) water and mild soap, being sure to get in between your toes. Pat your feet dry with a towel making sure that all areas are completely dry.
- Apply lotion to the skin on your feet and over dry brittle toenails. It is best to use a lotion free of alcohol and that is unscented. DO NOT apply lotion between the toes.
- Inspect your feet for cuts, sores, blisters, infected toe nails or any swelling.
- Trim toenails straight across and file the edges of the nails with an emery board or nail file.
- Wear shoes that fit properly and have enough cushioning. Flip flops and flats should be avoided due to lack of enough arch support.
- Make sure that socks and stockings are not too tight and that a clean pair is worn daily.
- Contact a health care provider if you have a medical condition (diabetes, peripheral vascular disease) that increases your risk of infection and you note any cuts, sores or bruising. Also report any redness, swelling, pain, skin discoloration or drainage of any type.
- Schedule a complete foot exam annually if you have any foot problems

Proverbs 4:26 Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure.

<https://www.webmd.com>
<https://youreducation.elsevier.com>

We are in need of folks willing to help others in our congregation . We have an aging congregation who at times need help with transportation to doctors appointments or to the store. There are people who could use help with household, outside chores and cleaning. There are also many taking care of loved ones that could just use a little respite time. Please consider being the hands and feet of Jesus in this manner. If this is something you feel lead to do, please contact myself or the church office.



Dates to Remember

July 21
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Wacky Water
Wednesday
Green Goose

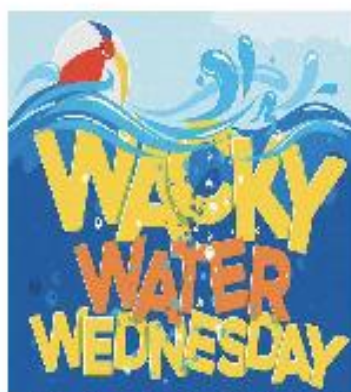
August 4, 11, 18
6:45 PM – 8:15 PM
SummerBLAST!
"I Wonder"
Bubeck Park

August 11
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Wacky STEM
Wednesday
Green Goose

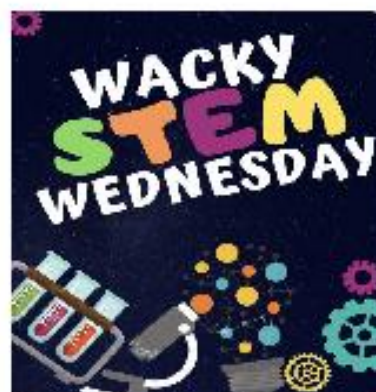


Friends, Food, Faith & Fun!

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM * Green Goose Playground



Wednesday, July 21st



Wednesday, August 11

Sundays * 11 AM * Bubeck Park



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

To assist with Children & Youth Ministries!

Contact April B. for more information!



Hey Parents, Youth & Kids,

Have you ever gone on an adventure? Your life is an adventure with God. Each day that you wake up is a wonderful gift from our good, good Father. You will learn many things on your spiritual journey. With the Holy Spirit guiding you around and through each obstacle that comes, trust God that He will show you the way to go. I invite you to join us for some fun adventures as we discover God's great love for us and learn how we can show that love with others! The following pages contain activities that you can do over the next few months. Once you complete an activity, color it in. Complete **25** (any combination of study, prayer or action works!) to earn a prize! Let's see just how many adventures your family can take this summer!

Miss April

BIBLE READING CHALLENGE

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read to a sibling. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read with a flashlight. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read under a tree. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read to a parent. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read under the table. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read to a grandparent. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read to your pet (or stuffed animal). | <input type="checkbox"/> Read while eating a snack. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read to your best friend. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read in a hammock. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read on a park bench. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read by the water (pool, beach, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whisper read. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read in a tent. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read in your pajamas. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read in the car. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read in bed. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read on the sand. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read by a campfire. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read on a swing. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read in a closet. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read a passage and then act out a scene from it. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read and draw a picture of what you read. |



How many places can you discover and share the Good News of Jesus?

PRAAYER adventures

DO YOUR BEST TO PRAY ALL OF THESE PRAYERS BEFORE THE SUMMER IS OVER

Tell God three words that describe you best.

Tell God something that makes you feel worried and why.

Ask God what makes Him angry.

Tell God something that makes your family special.

Tell God what you'd buy if you had \$10,000.

Tell God about your favorite song, or sing it to Him.

Ask God what makes Him happy.

Tell God something you'd like to change about the world.

Tell God about someone you're missing.

Tell God about a time something started badly but ended well.

Tell God about your happiest memory.

Tell God about the worst thing that ever happened to you.

Ask God what He'd like you to help Him change.

Tell God something about Him that you really appreciate.

Tell God what you love doing more than anything else.

Tell God about a time you felt alone.

Tell God something you did that you didn't think you'd be able to.

Ask God about what He's looking forward to and why.

Tell God something that's bothering you at the moment.

Tell God something about Him that you don't understand.

KINDNESS



Counts



Try to see how many acts of kindness you can do this summer! If you complete all of these, continue adding your own acts of kindness! Come back in September and share how you made a difference by being kind!

Help someone without being asked.

Leave a thank-you note for the mail carrier.

Let someone go first.

Call a relative and ask about their day.

Catch someone being kind—and praise them for it.

EVERY TIME WE GET
THE CHANCE, LET US DO
GOOD TO EVERYONE.

- GALATIANS 6:10



Tell someone why they are special to you.

Help make dinner and/or set the table for dinner.

Add encouraging messages to your sidewalks using chalk.

Wash someone's car.

Give a parent a big hug out of the blue.

Tell each of your family members one thing you love about them.

Write a kind message to someone in your family and leave it for them to find.



THE ROLE OF PARENTS AS THE PRIMARY DISCIPLERS OF THEIR CHILDREN

By Tim Pollard

We've all heard the command of God through Moses to parents. These familiar words found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 encourage parents to be about the business of teaching the things of God to their children. This passage was one that was recited each day by the faithful Jews.

Today, this passage is often used to encourage parents to be the champion for their children spiritual growth. The part that seems to be missing is the why. Why was it important for parents to teach their children the things of the Lord and recall the great and mighty deeds that God had done? A clue can be found in the book of Psalms.

Psalms 78 is a song of Asaph. The Psalms of Asaph were written by either Asaph, a temple leader under David's reign, or any number of temple leaders given a similar designation. This Psalm reviews the history of Israel's walk with God and sheds light on the importance of parents being responsible for teaching their children about the things of God.

In the 1st 8 verses of this song, the writer illustrates the why behind the command.

In one of my favorite verses in all of scripture, Psalm 78:6 tells us that we are teaching our children, so not just our children, but a future generation—children yet to be born might know. God's command to parents to be the spiritual teachers of their children is not just to benefit the current generation, but to influence a generation that is yet to be born. By disciple our children, we also pass on the teachings of God's wonderful works to the generation beyond.

God's Word is full of the mighty deeds that God has done. We as parents can pass on that knowledge, not just to our children, but to our children's children and beyond.



If you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers, please fill in the form below and mail to the church office or call the church office to reserve a Sunday. Altar Flowers are still \$20.00. You may send a check earmarked in the memo line as Altar Flowers. The following dates are still available: August 22, September 5 & 12, October 3, 24 & 31; November 21 & 28; December 5

Name: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

If there is a date that has already been spoken for and it is a special date that you would like to sponsor flowers, please call the church office. We have the ability to have two altar vases placed.

420 Saylor Street
Schuylkill Haven, PA. 17972
Phone: 570-385-3941
Fax: 570-385-6842
E-Mail: office@havenfirstumc.org
www.havenfirstumc.org

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First United Methodist Church

"Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world"

In Person Sunday Service at 9:00 A.M. & Saturday Night at 6:00 P.M.

11 A.M. Family Worship Experience (FX) worship @ Bubeck Park

You can also join us online at: www.havenfirstumc.org

Or like us on Facebook and join us there.

Our Vision: Welcoming, Empowering, Reaching Out

Ministers: Everyone of us:

Pastors and Staff:

Dr. Christopher Fisher	Senior Pastor
Rev. Portia Kuzanga	Director of Sr. High Youth
April Bergen	Dir. Of Children's Discipleship and MS Ministry
JoAnn Daum	Office Manager
Marcy Hudock	Sexton
Adam Kraft	Treasurer
Ann Moyer	Parish Nurse
Cynthia McClelland	Organist/Music Director
Brian Reading	Minister of Visitation
Julie Saunders	Choir Director
Pamela Setlock	Church Secretary