

## The Pastor's Pen "It's About Discipleship"

Billy Graham has just died. This greatest of 20<sup>th</sup> Century evangelists preached to hundreds of millions of people and brought countless souls to Christ through his simple message of the gospel. I am one of them. I remember going forward at the end of a movie crusade his organization organized to give my life to Jesus Christ. I was in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. Ms. Snyder, my elementary school teacher, was a counselor at the altar rail at the end of the movie. Later, she gave me a small devotional book which encouraged me to start reading the Bible every day. I did just that.

Looking back, I realize that was an important piece of Christian discipleship. Disciples study Jesus' word. This command is at the heart of the Great Commission, which Jesus gave to all his disciples just before ascending to heaven:

*"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Mathew 28:18-20 NIV

Disciples are not just supposed to study Jesus' word. Disciples put them into practice. Learning to do everything Jesus commanded is far more than head knowledge. It is like learning carpentry. You may study all the books you like about carpentry; you may buy lots of tools and have a lovely shop. Yet you will never be a carpenter if you do not pick up the tools and put your learning into practice. As his disciples, we are to put all our Lord's teachings into practice. James, the brother of the Lord, puts it like this: "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." (James 1:22). I like how one church summarized discipleship: Love God, love each other, serve others. Disciples don't just do those things. They do them together as a body. They grow together, and as they grow in spiritual maturity together by putting Christ's teaching into practice, they attract new disciples who want the same life evident in them.

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about discipleship in our church. Our mission as a church is *to make disciples of Jesus Christ*. We adopted that formally as our mission statement about ten years ago. In thinking and praying about how we can be more effective in making disciples, I'm asking myself: What is our intentional plan and process for making



disciples? Do we have one? Is every member aware of it? Is every member involved in it? How are we systematically training all our members, from the youngest to the oldest, to consistently, daily, and diligently love God, love each other, and serve others? What are we doing to accomplish our mission?

The mission is everything the church is supposed to be about. Remember *Mission Impossible*? The whole point of every show was to accomplish the mission. If the mission failed, the show would have been a bust. No one would tune in again. So also with the church. Any church that consistently fails at making disciples is going to go bust! What does it take to be an effective disciple-making church?

This is the theme of a book I've been reading titled, *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples*, by Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger. The purpose of the Church is to make disciples. The authors have done extensive research about the disciple-making process of many churches. Those that are doing discipleship effectively have an intentional process, focus all their energy on it, and let go of things that don't accomplish the mission. They simplify to focus on what is most important. Then they have the energy, time and resources to accomplish the goal.

I read of a similar theme in a recent Wall Street Journal article titled: "How to Succeed in Business? Do less" (WSJ January 12, 2018.). The point of the article is captured in its opening sentence: "Most top performers in business have one thing in common: They accept fewer tasks and then obsess about getting them right!" The *Simple Church* authors discovered the same point in churches. Effective disciple-making churches accept the mission of making disciples as their most important task. They turn down other tasks and obsess about getting that main one right.

So, where are you at in all this? Are you growing as a disciple? Do you know you should be, wish you could be, but don't know how to get there? In the coming months, the leadership of the church will be focusing on this need. We created the recent survey to assess how effective we are in our ministry and mission and begin preparing for what's next. The Lord wants us to be an effective disciple-making church. That is our mission! We didn't make it up. He gave it to us. He wants every one of us to grow as his disciple, and he has the resources to help make that happen. You'll hear more in the coming months. Please pray that we may all put into practice what the Lord teaches us and follow where he leads!

Yours in Christ, Pastor Chris Fisher





### OUR COMMUNION OFFERINGS

March 4: *Bible Evangelism Project*

April 1: *Teen Challenge*

### Worship & Preaching Schedule March – April 2018

Sunday Worship: 8 and 10:45AM

Saturday Worship at 6 pm

Events and Themes

Themes: "The Case for Christ"  
"Simple Church – It's All About  
Discipleship!"

1 Corinthians 15:3-7



This preaching series is inspired by the book *The Case for Christ*, by Lee Strobel. It's designed to help those who want to defend their faith with reason and sound research, and to help skeptics, agnostics and atheists put their faith in Jesus.

*Dr. Fisher preaching unless otherwise noted*

March 4 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent

w/ Holy Communion

"The Case for Christ: What's Up with Hell?"

March 11 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

"The Case for Christ: The Medical Evidence"

March 18 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

"The Case for Christ: The Empty Tomb"

March 25 – Palm Sunday- Beginning of Holy Week

"The Case for Christ: The Resurrection  
Appearances"

*Holy Week Activities:*

Wed. March 28 – 6 PM Prayer Meeting  
Thurs March 29 – 7 PM Holy Communion  
Fri. March 30 – 12-3 PM Prayer Vigil  
Sat. March 31 – 6 PM Special Music Service

April 1 – *Easter Day*

"The Case for Christ Finale:  
The Circumstantial Evidence."

6:45 AM – *Easter Sunrise Service*

8:00 AM – *Easter Traditional Worship*

10:45AM- *Easter Contemporary Worship  
w/ Holy Communion*

April 8 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter

"The Call to Discipleship"

w/ Rev. Rimi Xhemajli

April 15 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

"What does real Discipleship look like?"

April 22 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Youth-led Worship Sunday

April 29 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

"Discipleship: Extreme Makeover Edition"



### 2017-18 MINISTRY SURVEY RESULTS

*Why: To help improve our ministry & mission*

**Survey results are in.**

We received 38 responses to the 2017-18 Ministry Survey. A summary of results is available for all ministry teams and committees. Lay Leadership and Administrative Board will devote attention to the report in the coming months. Thank you to everyone who took time to respond to the survey.

#### Some Interesting Survey Results:

Top three ministry priorities surfaced by the survey: #1 – Worship Services; #2 – Young Adult Ministry; #3 – Small Groups. Most requested hymn: "The Old Rugged Cross." Top two preaching topics: Today's world and the book of Revelation. Biggest surprise: considering the idea of obtaining a building on Main Street for youth outreach ministry, 19 were for it, 5 against, 4 no response, and 10 asked for more time for prayer. A helpful request: would each committee chair or ministry team leader please write up a short paragraph for each newsletter describing the latest goings on in your mission or ministry. Thanks!

### CHURCH PRAYER MINISTRY UPDATES

*Wednesday Prayer Meeting:* Church-wide prayer meeting is suspended for the special joint Community



**Lenten Worship Series** through March 21. Prayer meeting will resume on Wednesday, March 28 during Holy Week at 6:00 pm. Please join us as we seek God together!

**Prayer Focus for March and April.** 1) Please pray for the work of the Church's leadership as it processes the Ministry Survey. 2) Pray for God's will for the building on Main Street. 3) Pray for the work of the Church in Discipleship and Evangelism. 4) Pray for the lost and broken of Schuylkill County for salvation.

**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. We will continue to promote the prayer team ministry on Sunday mornings, with the prayer clipboard circulated periodically.

**Do you have a testimony to share with the congregation?** Has the Lord done something special in your life recently? You might have a testimony to share and be a blessing to the congregation. It is exciting to hear what God is doing in our midst! Please let Dr. Fisher know if you want to share.

#### **Prayer Team Schedule: March-April 2018**

March 4-10 - Gerri & Paul Inama	9:00 a.m.
March 11-17- Wanda Langley	5:00 p.m.
March 18-24- Marcy Hudock	5:30 a.m.
March 25-31- Gary & JoAnn Daum	6:30 a.m.
April 1-7- Jenna Galan	7:00 p.m.
April 8-14- Ray & Dawn Housel	TBD
April 15-21- Joanne Forbes & Linda Olsen	4:00 p.m.
April 22-28-Tom & Eydie Reed	TBD
April 29-May 5- Ann Moyer	6:00 a.m.



#### **Father Daughter Dance a Big Success**

The Father-Daughter Dance was held Sunday evening, February 18 at the Walk-In Art Center. The dance was a big success and a lovely time was had by all! The daughters were all beautiful and the fathers, grandfathers, step fathers, and spiritual fathers of various stripes were reasonably well put together. The



food, venue and music were excellent. Many thanks to Barb Brady and Ruth Noecker, to DJ Dave Evans, and to the Team of helpers, cooks, assistants, decorators, photographer, and clean-up crew. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! Thanks also to Bert and Josette Evans and the Walk-In Art Center for the use of the facility.



# PARISH NURSE'S NOTES

MARCH/APRIL 2018

Nancy Kraft, FCN, RN, BS



HEALING  
BODY, MIND,  
AND SPIRIT

## COMING EVENTS

### JOURNEY OF HOPE

11 AM on the following

Tuesdays:

March 13, 2018

April 17, 2018

### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS BETWEEN SERVICES

March-none

April 22, 2018



## Supporting Families Through Opioid Addiction

Most of you have heard about the opioid crisis that we currently have in our country. I am sure you know someone personally or have heard about a family that is going through the trials of this drug addiction. Members of our own church and community are suffering through this problem with their addicted brothers, sisters, children, parents and friends.

Opioids, prescription and illicit, are the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Opioids were involved in 42,249 US deaths in 2016, and opioid overdose deaths were five times higher in 2016 than 1999.

According to the CDC, in 2016, the five states with the highest rates of death due to drug overdose were West Virginia (52.0 per 100,000), Ohio (39.1 per 100,000), New Hampshire (39.0 per 100,000), Pennsylvania (37.9 per 100,000) and Kentucky (33.5 per 100,000).

This crisis is real. Families are affected everyday by this growing concern. An addiction destroys families as much as it destroys individuals. Living with an addict is both heartbreaking and exhausting. Family members are torn between how to help the addict and how to avoid being sucked into the addict's world.

### Things You Can do for Yourself

- Take care of yourself. Living with an addict is exhausting. You also need time to recover.
- Avoid self-blame. You can't control another person's decisions, and you can't force them to change.
- Do not work harder than the person you're trying to help. The best approach is to not do things for the addict, but instead to be an example of balance and self-care.
- Being a caretaker is not good for you or the addict. Understand that there is only so much you can do to change another person.
- Ask for help. Talk to a professional. Go to a support group such as Al-Anon. (More support groups are listed below.)
- Do not argue or try to discuss things with the addict when they are under the influence. It won't get you anywhere.
- If at all possible, try not to be negative when dealing with the addict. That may only increase their feelings of guilt and push them further into using. (Reference: [www.AddictionsAndRecovery.org](http://www.AddictionsAndRecovery.org))

Health and Welfare and Stephen Ministry are working together to bring an educational program to First Church about the Opioid Epidemic and how we, as a congregation, can support those dealing with individuals with this problem. We are looking to open this up to the congregation and the community sometime in spring. Please look for more information in the near future about this program and consider participating in it.



MAR. – APRIL 2018

**We will continue to meet at 1 pm on the second Tues. of every month. All ladies are invited to join us.**

### **Upcoming events**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> Program- Missionary Conferences of the UMC in the United States (canceled from Jan. due to snow)**

We have three Missionary Conferences in the United States, Alaska Mission and Conference, Appalachia and the Red Bird Conference, and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. We will watch a video for an overview of these conferences and their work.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> – Leadership Development Event- 9:00- 12 at West Lawn UMC.** Come and learn what UMW is all about. This is not only for leaders.


**March 29<sup>th</sup> -Sing a-long at Providence Place in Pine Grove**

We will be leading the residents in the sing-a-long and providing them with not only fellowship and fun, but also treats for the Easter season. We will meet at Jean's house at 1 pm to prepare treat bags to take with us and then present our program at 2 pm at Providence Place. All are welcome to join us.

**April 10<sup>th</sup> -meet to discuss future plans and upcoming Community Lunch**

**Ap. 14<sup>th</sup> – provide Community Lunch**

**Ap. 28<sup>th</sup>- EPA Conference UMW Spiritual Life Retreat – here at First UMC 9 am – 12:30 in Fellowship Hall**

 **Thank you for your help – EPA United Methodist Women were able to meet their pledge of \$150,000 to Missions work for 2017 in the US and abroad.**

#### **The Purpose of United Methodist Women**

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.





## Dates to Remember

March 31  
Easter Egg Hunt  
All Ages  
12-3 PM

April 1  
Easter Sunday  
Sunday School at 9:20

May 9 @ 6 PM  
Safe Sanctuary  
Training

May 13  
Mother's Day  
Sunday School at 9:20

May 20  
Last Day of Sunday  
School

June 17  
Father's Day

June 18-22  
God's Big Backyard  
10:00 am -1:30 pm



## **SAVE THE DATE & INVITE A FRIEND!**

Annual Easter Egg Hunt  
Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>  
12:00 -3:00 PM

Egg Hunts for ALL ages (kids and adults), Games, Food, Family Fellowship, Prizes

Those who RSVP prior to March 25<sup>th</sup> will receive 3 extra raffle tickets!  
Please call the office or sign up in Fellowship Hall!



## Easter Egg Hunt Donations

The Education Committee is in need of donations for prizes for our Egg Hunts. Please see the list of requested items in the Narthex. Monetary donations also greatly appreciated! Please label them "Egg Hunt." Donations can be dropped off in the box in the Narthex.

Thank you for your support!



## Safe Sanctuary Training

May 9<sup>th</sup> \* 6-9 PM

All volunteers who work with children and have not attended a previous training **MUST** attend! To register or for more information, please contact April Bergen or Joann Daum. This event will only be held if interested participants RSVP prior to the event date!



VBS 2018 – God's Big Backyard

FUMC of Schuylkill Haven

420 Saylor Street \* Schuylkill Haven \* PA \* 17972

(570) 385-3941 \* havenfirstumc.org

Children of ALL ages welcome

(children under 5 must have an adult at all times)

Please place this form in one of the VBS baskets in church or mail it to the church office at the above address.

Name	Completed Grade	Birth date	Age
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Allergies/Medical information \_\_\_\_\_

Special notes/instructions/requests : \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Church: \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my child's/children's photo to be displayed on (please check each that applies) ☐ Slide show presentation; ☐ Bulletin board display ☐ Church website for a VBS promotion

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Greetings FUMC family in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

On behalf of our Youth Group and Young Adult Fellowship, we wanted to thank all of you for your support and prayers. Also, we wanted to let you know that both ministries are doing well (by God's grace), although, as always, we seek to grow closer to the Lord. Our vision for this season has been to educate our students on the topics of temptation, depression, and the importance of personally experiencing God and his saving grace. We feel that a great verse for us in this season is Titus 2:11-12. It states: "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age."

We are excited to let you know that on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Youth Group will be leading and preaching for both Sunday services! Also, below please find FUMC's Youth and Young Adult Fellowship schedule for main upcoming meetings.

Please continue to pray for our students and our ministries as our ministerial success depends on God's power and presence. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

God bless,

FUMC's Youth Group and Young Adult Fellowship

#### MARCH

04 – Youth Group Meeting (6-8:00pm)

Teaching: Depression – How To get Through it and Help (loss/divorce/bullying)

07 – Youth Council Mid-Semester Meeting (TBD 6-7:00 pm)

11 – Youth Group Meeting (6-8:00pm)

Teaching Exercise: "Break the Click"

15 – Young Adult Fellowship Meeting (6-7:30pm)

18 – Youth Group Easter Fundraiser: Making Candy Friday 6-8:00 pm & Saturday 10:00am-12:00pm (Kristy)

24 – Youth Group Meeting (6-8:00 pm) Nerf Game Night (Join the Youth Group) (Anakin and Connor)

29 – Maundy Thursday

#### APRIL

01 – No-Meeting: Happy Easter

08 – Afternoon Youth Group Meeting with Lunch (11:45-1:30pm): Game 11:45-12:15; Pizza and Conversational Teaching 12:30-1:30pm

15 – Youth Group Meeting (6-8:00pm) Prep for Sunday Services and Short Teaching for Service

18 – Young Adult Fellowship Meeting (6-7:30pm)



## VISITATION LIST

The following people are on our Visitation List due to illness, recovery or homebound for on reason or another. Please let them know you are thinking about them with a card, phone call or even a short visit.

### **Schuylkill Haven**

Evelyn Moyer  
McKinley Street

Jean Huntzinger  
2 Blossom Lane

Carol Shappell  
206 Jefferson St.

Ken & Lucille Romberger  
406 May Drive

Shirley Yenilaitus  
61 Memorial Drive

Daryl Hoffmaster  
Rose Wood Manor

### **Pottsville**

Rev. Carl Geary  
1425 Sweet Arrow Lake Road

Debra Urfer  
Sch. Manor Nursing Home Rm. 324

Marilyn Koch  
Sch. Manor Nursing Home Rm. 226

Donald McDemus

E Norwegian St. Hosp.

### **Orwigsburg**

Claire Bowman  
Seton Manor Room 707

Dr. Herb Rubright  
33 Grist Mill Rd.

Marion Geary  
Seton Manor Nursing Home Rm. 607

### **Topton**

Jack O'Rourke  
33 Price Drive

Our minister of visitation Mr. Brian Reading visits each one every month. Vickie Brink also visits our member on a regular basis. If you would like to join this team of people who visit our members from time to time, please see Brian and he will help you get started. If you know of someone that we have missed, please contact Brian as well. Thank you.



## LENTEN SERVICES

March 7, 2018 – St. John's UCC, Orwigsburg  
 Pastor – Ralph Saunders, Preaching  
 March 14, 2018 – Welcome, UMC, Landingville  
 Pastor-Janet Remer-Osborn, Preaching  
 March 21, 2018 – Covenant UMC, Schuylkill Haven  
 Pastor – Chris Fisher, Preaching

All services will have a light supper at 6:00 p.m. and the service will begin at 7:00 p.m.



March 25, 2018 – Palm Sunday – 8:00 & 10:45 A.M. Services at First UMC, Schuylkill Haven

## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Maundy Thursday Service:

Thursday, March 29, 2018  
 7:00 P.M. Service @ FUMC with Holy Communion

### Good Friday

Prayer Vigil – Noon-3:00 P.M.

### Holy Saturday:

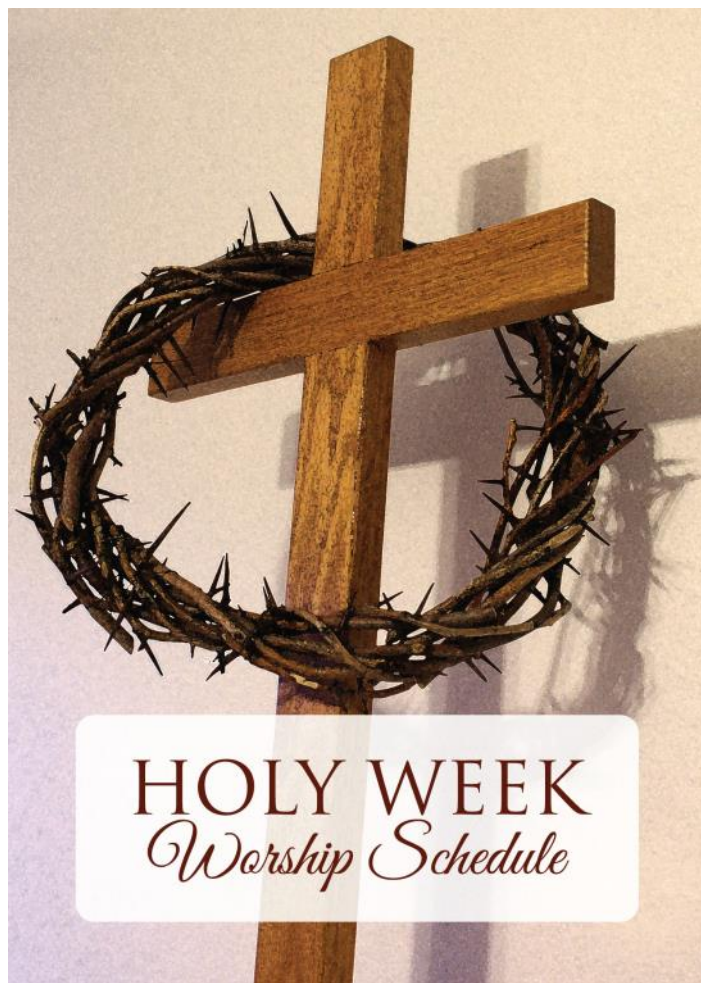
Easter Egg Hunt for All Ages: Time: 12:00 – 3:00

Worship @ 6:00 P.M.

Special Music Worship Service by Brian Reading.

### EASTER SUNDAY:

6:45 A.M. Easter Sunrise Service  
 8:00 A.M. Easter Morning Worship  
 9:20 A.M. Sunday School  
 10:45 A.M. Easter Morning, Worship







## SAVE THE DATE!!

Saturday, June 2

The Fellowship Committee is hosting a Ladies Tea here in Fellowship Hall. Details will be provided closer to the date.

For more information, see Barb Brady or Gerri Inama.

There is a couple who needs a washing machine, If you have a washing machine that you would like to give away, please contact the Church office. We will make arrangements to move it from your house to the folks who need it. Thank you!

### ATTENTION ALL KEY AND ALARM CODE HOLDERS:



The Trustees have upgraded the Security System. Due to these upgrades in addition to your personal code, everyone needs to know the universal password to use in the event that the alarm sounds while you are in the building. If you are a key code holder, please call the church office and we will give you the Password.

If you are in the building and the alarm sounds, please proceed to the nearest key pad and disarm the system, you will also hear the phone ring, it will be the dispatch company, pick up the phone, they will ask you for the password and will verify that you are an authorized key holder. This is important for you to remember so that we as a church do not get cited for false alarms. If you have any questions about this change, please call the church office and someone will try to help you.

Please, if you think you may be the last person in the building, check and make sure no one else is here before you set the alarm. By doing this, you will help minimize the chances of accidentally setting the alarm on someone. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Also, the list of folks with key codes is being reviewed, if you have a key code, you will keep it. If you need a key and key code for some reason or are unsure if you have a code, please contact the church office and we can check it for you.

### WISH LIST FROM THE TRUSTEES:

The Trustee have quite a list of items on their "To Do" List. If you would like to help offset the costs of these projects please see Randy Helwig:

New HVAC system,

Landscaping

Lighting for Basketball court,

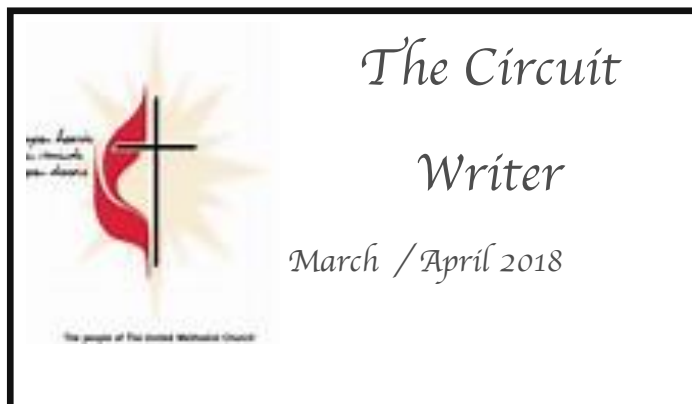
Fire Alarm System \$8,000.00

Telephone System \$6,000.00

Parking Lot lighting \$2,000.00

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH**  
420 Saylor Street  
Schuylkill Haven, PA. 17972

Phone: 570-385-3941  
Fax: 570-385-6842  
E-Mail: [office@havenfirstumc.org](mailto:office@havenfirstumc.org)  
[www.havenfirstumc.org](http://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"*

*Sunday Services at 8:00 A.M. & 10:45 A.M.*

*Sunday School at 9:20 A.M.*

*Saturday Evenings at 6:00 P.M.*

Our Vision: Welcoming, Empowering, Reaching Out  
Ministers: Everyone of us:  
Pastors and Staff:

Dr. Christopher Fisher .....	Senior Pastor
JoAnn Daum .....	Office Manager
Marcy Hudock .....	Sexton
Adam Kraft .....	Treasurer
Nancy Kraft .....	Parish Nurse
Cynthia McClelland .....	Organist/Music Director
Brian Reading .....	Minister of Visitation
Julie Saunders .....	Choir Director
Pamela Setlock .....	Church Secretary
Adhurim Xhemajli .....	Associate Pastor of Youth & Young Adult Ministries