

Pastor's Pen

What is Truth?

Truth is a contested concept these days. Although the meaning of truth seems like common sense – *something is either true or not true* – western culture no longer agrees on what constitutes universal truth.



For a thousand years, from the Christian triumph over Roman pagan religion to the Age of Reason, God was taken for granted as the foundation of truth. His Word was the plumb line, the measure of all measures, the guide to right living and the way to Heaven. People in that era did not always live up to that truth or agree on the particulars of its meaning. But they did bow before it as the best explanation of reality.

With the Renaissance and Enlightenment, some philosophers began turning from God to human reason as the foundation of truth. Flushed with excitement about the early scientific discoveries of Isaac Newton, Galileo Galilei, and others, these philosophers had new-found faith that human reason, goodness and progress were unlimited. Man became the measure and the measurer of all things. Science seemed to be the ideal tool of reason, searching out the truths of the natural realm. Some thought this success meant Nature was a closed system in which God was not involved. Limiting truth to the material realm, they became blind to the spiritual dimensions of reality.

Without an Absolute Truth above Nature that defines reality, there can be no moral absolutes. If that is our condition, 19th Century philosopher Frederick Nietzsche concluded life was all about a 'will to power.' He meant by this that without God, we must invent our own reality. The superior person would 'will' the meaning they wanted reality to have, and 'will' their own character to master it.

In practice, the "will to power" looks like this: those who have power can impose their will on others. Too often, reason was captive to local cultural prejudices and human perversity. Scientific discoveries and technological advances did not make people better people. Nations at the heart of the Enlightenment produced leaders who thought it was 'reasonable' to commit mass-murder.

After the blood baths of two world wars and multiple genocides, many people lost faith in human reason and goodness. With that foundation shattered, the new pragmatic philosophy of Relativism emerged. Relativism is the view that "Your truth is true for you and my truth is true for me, but they do not have to agree because there are no absolutes." In this new

view, subjective feelings and personal experience are taken as defining the truth.

The ancient Christian vision of God's eternal truth is not dead in our culture. It just no longer rules everyone as the predominant understanding of truth. It competes with pragmatic relativism, which assumes God is absent, we are on our own, and truth is what we make it to be. Relative truth shifts according to the whims of the latest cultural imperatives and prejudice. Whoever has the power can force those whims on others.

Is reconciliation between these competing views of truth possible? We can acknowledge that every person has their own story and experience, but that does not prove every perspective is equally valid. Only one view of truth matches the actual nature of reality.

We as Christians can assert with confidence that Truth is absolute, and he has a name. Jesus said, "Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (Jn 18:37 NIV) When Thomas asked Jesus the way to heaven, he answered, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (Jn 14:6) We can have confidence that Jesus Christ himself is the Truth because he has been raised from the dead. His resurrection is a fact, confirmed by historical evidence. That truth is unaffected by our prejudices, feelings, or philosophical assumptions. As the firstborn from the dead, Jesus alone has authority to name the absolute terms of Truth. He is vindicated as the True Word of God and final measurer of Reality.

Our culture contains many people who do not know Christ. Their lives are deeply influenced by relativism and they do not know how to find God. They cannot see the light of the glory of God in the face of Christ. The old King James Version of Jeremiah 17:9 captures their all-too-human situation: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" And "the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble." (Prov 4:19 NIV). Yet because relativism does not match actual reality, many people come to realize their own way has led them to a dead end. In that place, they may sense their need for the Savior.

In the relativist vision, everybody's story is equally valid. That gives you the right to tell your story. Some may try to 'cancel' it, as they have always done with the gospel witness. But others will listen when the time is right. Your story of how Jesus rescued, changed, and made the truth of God come alive to you may draw them to Christ. All this means we should not despair at the current cultural situation but rejoice that we know Jesus and God has chosen us to share the good news with the next generation. Some will respond. Whoever is on the side of truth still listens to Jesus!

Yours in the love of Christ, Pastor Chris Fisher



March Quarantine Update

- 1) Worship capacity continues to be at 50% capacity. We can hold about 100 people in the sanctuary, plus 10 more in the comfort room. There has been plenty of room lately, so come on back to live worship!
- 2) We continue to use masks, hand-washing and social distancing. Masks should be worn during worship.
- 3) Worship leaders will unmask while singing, reading scripture, preaching, etc., for the sake of the hearing impaired.
- 4) Small groups and leadership teams/committees may meet live with safety precautions, or online as necessary. You can join some live meetings virtually thru Webex. Contact your group leader for details.
- 5) If you are 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 9am and Wednesdays during Lent.
- 6) We encourage you to get a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as it is practical. See elsewhere in this newsletter for more details.
- 7) Pray for mercy!



Thru-the-Bible 2-Year Reading Plan



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

It's not too late to start the **Through-the-Bible in 2-years** plan. All you need is a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Plan details are available at <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/17108-whole-bible-in-under-2-years>. If you would like to be part of the church readers group, send your request to pastor@havenfirstumc.org. There is nothing like studying the Word of God and talking to him daily to help you grow in your relationship and experience his blessings.



March-April Communion Offering

March 7:
April 4: TBA



Holy Week Special Worship Services

March 28: PALM SUNDAY REUNION SUNDAY

9 AM – Live and Online Traditional worship

11AM – Live Outdoor Worship at the church with fellowship and refreshments afterwards.

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO CHURCH IN A WHILE, JOIN US OUTSIDE AT 11 AM FOR OUR 1-YEAR COVID REUNION!! Bring a lawn chair.

(Rain plan: 11 AM in Fellowship Hall)

April 1: Holy Thursday with the Lord's Supper

April 4: EASTER CELEBRATION

9 AM – Easter Worship in the Sanctuary

11AM – FX Easter Worship at Bubeck Park

(Rain plan: 11 AM in Fellowship Hall)



Worship & Preaching Schedule

March – April 2021

Sunday Worship: Live & Online at 9:00 AM

Saturday Worship: Live at 6:00 PM

Wednesdays of Lent: Live & Online at 7:00 PM

FX Worship: Online at www.havenfx.org.

FX Resumes live at Bubeck Park on Easter,

April 4, 11 AM

Theme: The Contagious Love of Christ

March 7: 3rd Sunday in Lent w/ Holy Communion
Message: "Receiving the Love of God"

March 14: 4th Sunday in Lent
Message: "Loving yourself in Christ"

March 21: 4th Sunday in Lent
Special Guest Speaker: Mrs. Klaudia Zhelezny
"Messiah in the Passover"

March 28: Palm Sunday
Message: "Loving your Family in Christ"

April 1: 7 pm Maundy Thursday Holy Communion

April 4: Easter Sunday w/ Holy Communion
Message: "For the Joy Set Before Him: The Love of Christ for Us"

April 11: 1st Sunday of Easter
Message: "Loving your Neighbor"

April 18: 2nd Sunday of Easter
Message: "Loving the Stranger"

April 25: 3rd Sunday of Easter
Message: "Loving your Enemies"



Church Prayer Ministry Updates

Prayer Focus for March-April 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.
- 2) Intercede for those who do not know Jesus
- 3) Pray for the missionaries we support at Wycliffe and the Children of Zion Village.
- 4) Pray for our leaders in the church and in the world.

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. These encourage folks that God is at work and their faith will be rewarded. 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.



FX Worship is online-only until Easter

FX family-friendly worship materials are available *online only* through March 28 at havenfx.org. FX Worship will resume live on April 4, Easter Sunday, in Bubeck Park at 11 AM. Come out and join everyone at the park to celebrate Easter!



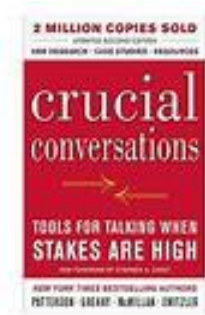
Weekly Prayer Warriors

February 28- March 6 – Liz Wallace
March 7-13 – Tom & Eydie Reed
March 14-20 – Wanda Langley & Sevenia Reiger
March 21-27 – Ray & Dawn Housel
March 28-April 3 – Randy Brensinger
April 4-10 – Sue Rudiman & Nancy Lado
April 11-17- Lynne & Doug O'Connell
April 18-24 – Liz Wallace
April 25-May 1 – Dot Murphy

Small Group Whole Congregation book recommendations for Winter/Spring 2021

Crucial Conversations

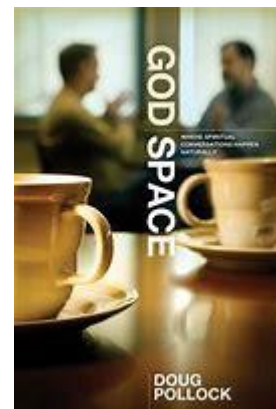
By: Dan Grider



and

God Space

By: Doug Pollock



**Wednesday Night
Lenten Services**
7:00 PM

February 24 Rev. Portia Kuzanga <i>Fasting</i>	March 3 Brian Reading <i>Scripture</i>
March 10 Doug O'Connell <i>Giving</i>	March 17 John Fatora <i>Service</i>
March 24 Dwight Dros <i>Worship</i>	April 1 - Holy Thursday Rev. Chris Fisher <i>Holy Communion</i>

The Sanctuary is open for in-person worship.

All services will be live streamed and available on Facebook, YouTube, and our website.

Holy Thursday 7:00 PM 4/1/2021

A Traditional Service with Lessons and Carols

Holy Communion will be served
Church is open for In-Person Worship

Live-Stream available through Facebook, YouTube, or our website.



Palm Sunday Services

9:00 AM: Traditional Service in the Sanctuary
*This service will be live-streamed on our usual platforms: Facebook, Youtube, and our website

11:00 AM: Contemporary Service in our Outdoor Worship Center
* Bring a lawn chair - and maybe a coat - and let us worship together with a Joyful Noise!

**Easter Sunday, 4/4/2021
9:00 AM
Traditional Service**

The church is open for worship.

This service will be available on live-stream through Facebook, YouTube, and our Website.



**FX in the Park
begins on Sunday
4/4 @ 11:00 AM**

Bring your lawn chair

Bubeck Park at Stoyer's Dam
Schuylkill Haven

We will sing 🎵

We will hear a message of God's love 🙏

We will fellowship with both old and new friends 🍷

Song Validation

Let Julie or Cindy know your song choice.

We will **Validate** your song choice through our licensing company.

You are now ready to sing, play, or dance!

We can now stream accompaniment tracks

New Rules for Streaming Services

With the streaming of our services comes guidelines for the music presented during our services.

The Worship and Media Committees have acquired licensing that allows for greater flexibility.

If you are interested in presenting a musical offering to the congregation, please see Julie and Cindy to further prepare for this offering during our streaming services.



We miss you

We have room to practice social distancing

We have hand sanitizer

We wear masks

Please consider coming back to church to worship together

We miss you

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

Revelation 22:17, ESV



Methodist Women's Ministry NEWS

March/Ap.

What did I miss? In January, we hosted a meet and greet with Portia, our new Youth Director. It was great getting to know her and hear about her life growing up in Africa. What a culture change from her youth. If you have not been able to talk to her yet, I would encourage you to meet. She helped us put our U.S. privilege in perspective with her story of growing up in a village. Thank you, Portia.

In February, we did not get to meet, but we did donate 15 gallons of soup for the Walk-In Art Center's Souper Bowl Fund Raiser. It was a great way for us to be involved with the community. They had some left over which went to Wanda's apartment complex for the residents there. God is good. Thank you to Wanda and April. We also sent Valentines to our shut ins and rarely seen others from the church. Lastly, we helped with Marcy's Valentine Project for nursing homes and VA hospitals.



We are continuing to collect diapers for Jewel. They need sizes 3-6, diaper wipes, and Pull-ups in sizes 2T, 3T, and 4T. If you are unable to shop, but would like to help, donate to MWM diaper drive and we will shop for you. Thank you for your support.



We continue to look for a fund raiser for this year. If you have any ideas that you would like us to explore, please let us know. We are open to ideas.

We continue to serve in local missions, so if you know of a need, please let us know and we will see if we can help.

We will continue to meet the 2nd Tues. of the month at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall, COVID restrictions in place and members willing. All are welcome. We have wonderful husband members. (wink, wink, nudge, nudge)

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

Jean Twardzik, Chair

Book Reviews



Welcome back. We now have a not so new reason to read. We do not feel like being out shoveling snow. Walking in it and playing with the dog are good reasons to be outside but skip that shoveling- make friends with your neighbor kids.. Here are some new books for you to snuggle up with.

Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus by Ann Spangler and Lois Tverberg. This book takes you back to the culture of Jesus's time. Your understanding of the gospels will change as you are introduced the customs, beliefs, and traditions of the Jewish culture. It gives you a fresh perspective by listening to the parables as they may have sounded to first century Jews. I believe that God will give you a deeper understanding of the Scriptures and of Jesus, our Messiah. An example was in the first chapter, when the book speaks about the anointing of kings and compares that to what Mary did with Jesus. But then it goes on and talks about the aroma lingering, that people would know when royalty was near, by the aroma. We knew that the perfume was valuable, but the authors compare it to being more valuable than diamonds! This is an excellent book, complete with study guide.

Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus by Tverberg. This is a second book in her series. This text looks at the words of Jesus in the Jewish context. As we study the Bible, we must leave our twenty-first century culture and our Western attitudes and go back to another time and place. We enter the Eastern culture that was passionately religious and that longed for God's great redemption. By doing this we gain additional insights. The author gives contemporary scholarship, ancient sources, and recent archaeological discovery to aid you in the journey back to the world of Jesus. This is a very enlightening text and easy read. You just get pulled into the story. The back of the book has an excellent glossary, Scripture index, and Notes section. Also, an extensive Bibliography. Enjoy

Quietly Courageous, Leading the Church in a Changing World by Gil Rendle. We just finished the book study on this book. Basically, Gil wants us to realize that we are in the wilderness right now. It is a time of change which is difficult for us. By the time we implement changes to accommodate our situation, they are outdated. It is very frustrating. But the hope is that we now have the opportunity to try things that we have never done before. We need to have a deep sense of our missional call. Instead of asking "How" do we; we need to ask "Why" are we doing it? We need to find where the Holy Spirit is working already and ask how can we help? It was suggested that we find ways to open our building to the community. Make it so the church isn't invisible to the neighborhood. We need to give ourselves away. Let's see where the future and God leads us. Blessings Jean

Finance Update

March- Ap. 2021



Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ

I begin with thanking you all for your faithfulness in giving. This year the church starts out financially on a good note. God is good and always faithful to those who love Him. We continue to seek His direction for our mission in our neighborhoods and in the world.

We are called to be good stewards of His world. What does that entail? I tried to look up steward/stewardship in the Concordance of my Bible and it was not listed. I was surprised. I thought for sure it would be there. I persevered and looked it up in the Index to Topics section of my Bible- it was there. I'm sharing what I found. We need to look at God's relationship to what we have- God owns everything (see Ps. 24:1). God is the source of everything- our wealth, our talents, our ability to work, every moment of our lives, and everything that we have. Once we accept that, then we need to look at our relationship to what we have. Regarding our gifts and talents, do we use them faithfully, for God's glory, and to serve others? Are we trustworthy with them? See Luke 16: 10-12. Regarding our wealth, do we have the attitudes of believing that God will provide, of not taking credit for what we have and of being content with what we have? Lastly, have we learned the principles of giving to the Lord? They are that giving should be proportionate, willing, spontaneous, cheerful, and generous. What is the benefit of giving? You will receive blessings on earth and in heaven. What more could you want? Amen, and amen.

In His Service,
Jean Twardzik
Finance Chair

Faith Community Nurse's Notes

Brought to you by Ann Moyer RN, FCN

February was Heart Month

Heart attack, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases are America's number one killer. The American Heart Association stresses the importance of recognizing the warning signs of each.

Stroke Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Any of the above symptoms may be temporary and last only a few minutes. Don't ignore them! If symptoms appear, call 911 to get medical attention immediately.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. This feeling can occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs. These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, and back or jaw pain. If you or someone you're with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait to call 911.

The American Heart Association has identified seven factors that impact your heart health and quality of life: 1. Don't smoke. 2. Maintain a healthy weight. 3. Engage in regular physical activity. 4. Eat a healthy diet. 5. Manage your blood pressure. 6. Take charge of cholesterol. 7. Keep blood sugar, or glucose, at healthy levels. Reduce your risk factors and live healthier!

Faith Community Nurse's Notes

By Ann Moyer RN, FCN



Children and Safety in the Home

Children are one of God's richest blessings. If you are a parent or grandparent, or will become one soon, you want your home to be a safe haven for your offspring. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is so appropriate when dealing with the safety of children.

Things to think about:

- Store cleaning agents for the kitchen and bath on a high shelf out of reach of children, or apply cabinet safety latches.
- Use safety gates to block open stairwells.
- Plastic outlet plugs should be placed in low-lying outlets. Children love to explore with their fingers and mouths.
- Keep electrical cords to a minimum and as out of site as possible to prevent falls and to prevent the attention of curious little minds.
- Try to place cribs and toddler beds away from windows. Cords from blinds and mini blinds can entangle a youngster. There are safety adapters that can be placed over the cords or cordless blinds that may be purchased.
- If purchasing a stove be sure the control knobs are placed high on the stove, not where little fingers can reach them. There are safety covers available for low lying switches.
- Consider temperature control devices for water heaters or at least for tub and bath faucets. Burns are very painful.
- There are safety screens which can be used in front of fireplaces.
- Make sure windows have safety screens, especially on higher floors.
- Alarms are available for outside accesses such as sliding doors and gates to pools. There are also safety devices for different types of doors to make it difficult for a child to open.
- Medications should always be stored on a high shelf, never on a table or even a kitchen counter.
- Be careful using buckets of water. Toddlers are top heavy and can drown in a bucket of water. Toilet latches are a worthy thought.
- Remember to use smoke alarms and have a fire extinguisher available in your home.
- Log onto "Safety First" to see many of the safety items available for purchase. Remember that safety devices are great, but there is no substitute for close supervision.



Living a Healthy Life

A program for people with chronic conditions such as, but not limited to:

Arthritis ❖ High Blood Pressure
Heart Disease ❖ Lung Disease ❖ Diabetes

This program aims to:

- ❖ Improve healthful behaviors
- ❖ Improve health status
- ❖ Help reduce hospital stays

"Living a Healthy Life" is a 6-week workshop designed by Stanford University to help people with chronic conditions live and feel better! For people age 60+. Family members and caregivers are also invited.

Join Us!

Space is limited. Register early – Call (570) 624-3017 by Feb. 22.

DATES: (Mondays) March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 • April 5

TIME: 10 a.m – 12:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Meadowbrook Center – Common Area
23 Meadowbrook Drive | Rt. 183 | Schuylkill Haven, Pa.

COVID-19 safety precautions will be practiced.

 **DIAKON** COMMUNITY SERVICES
DIAKON CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES


SCHUYLKILL COUNTY
OFFICE OF SENIOR SERVICES



Diakon Community Services manages Pennsylvania's Health & Wellness program under a contract with the Schuylkill County Office of Senior Services with funding by the PA Department of Aging.



Discipleship Council

The Discipleship Council met in late January to begin developing a 2021 plan & guidance in support of our Small Groups. Current members of the Council include: Pastor Chris Fisher & Gary Daum, Lay Leader (ex officios); Walter Meck (previous Chair); April Bergen, Director Children's Discipleship & Middle School Ministry; Eydie Reed; Nancy Kraft; Fred Yuengling; Mattheau Bridges; Hannah Heintzelman; and Moffette Tharpe, Chair.

The Council, recognizing the impact of COVID-19 and placing a priority on the continued development of the churchwide Discipleship Plan, has agreed to participate in regular "*Working Meetings*" to regain the momentum we had before the pandemic and also to continue the work.

One of the first tasks was to update the Small Group list and the Recommended Readings for posting to the Church website. There are currently 19 active Groups broken into four categories: Life in Action, Accountability, Bible Study, and Focused. Most Small Groups have openings for new members. Contact information will be included in the updated information, when posted to the Church Website.

There are 7 Life in Action Groups, who are studying the recommended "discipling" books and are focused on Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19 "..... go therefore and make disciples" (EACH ONE, REACH ONE). The list of recommended books for the Life in Action Groups has been grouped by "Component" as shown in the *June 23, 2019 Discipleship Plan* and the list has been expanded. We anticipate all the updated material to be placed on the Church Website by late February.

A second task for the Council is to develop a 2021 Plan for the Small Groups. We just "scratched the surface" on this during our second Working Meeting in early February. Look for more information on this in the coming weeks.

Thirdly, we began exploring how to "Rekindle the SPARK," within and outside our congregation, that comes from *sharing the love of Christ and living according to His teachings*. Knowing the life-changing impact that testimonials can have, we picked them as a place to start. That initiative began during our early February Working Meeting and will continue to be developed and expanded in the months ahead.

Please pray for God's guidance as the Council continues this very important work.

In Prayer,
Moffette Tharpe
Discipleship Council

Doing Youth Ministry in pandemic!!



When I was moving from North Carolina to PA, driving that long 7hrs journey I imagined that I am moving far away enough from the everyday struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic and all the sufferings it is causing on human life. The moment I arrived at the passage I saw church family waiting to welcome us in their masks, then I realized COVID-19 is everywhere, and I did not run away from it. However, it was exciting for me and my children to be in worship service physically and meet my youth group.

Our first three weeks were very satisfying, only when COVID-19 threw us back again in this jigsaw puzzle that sometimes as much as we try to put the pieces together, some of the pieces continue to be missing. Like many of you, I have been working from home when I would normally be meeting face to face with my youth group. Church service has transitioned to online services on some Sundays. I guess we all hoped this to be short-lived and return to normalcy, only to find out that this is our new normalcy.

My everyday question then is, what then do we do with youth ministry, what does it look like to do youth in this COVID-19 time? To navigate these questions has been a little more of a challenge. For me and my group, the in-person experience is such

a strong component of youth ministry, especially for our teenagers. In a normal face-to-face youth meeting/ club night, youths thrive on community, friendships, and social interactions. However, COVID-19 continues to block all that physical experience. This challenge is explained well by Psychology Today writer Christine L. Carter who wrote, "Teenagers and college students have amplified innate, developmental motivations that make them hard to isolate at home. The hormonal changes that come with puberty conspire with adolescent social dynamics to make them highly attuned to social status and peer group." Taking away school, church, hang-outs, and parties have created a problem for adolescents, mainly the feeling of being disconnected.

What then do we do? Close the church and shut down ministries? No, no no! I believe in keeping on moving, even if it means to crawl, if we keep moving and focused on our faith journey COVID-19 has no victory over us, for through and in Christ, we are more than conquerors. Let us keep moving, those small steps are important, "the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

Here at Haven First UMC, we continue to provide youth ministry services:

Study Group- Every Thursday, we meet on Webex @ 6 pm-7 pm, check on each other, and have a conversation on some crucial topics. This first quarter we are focusing on Apologetics- Be aware of false teachings and stand on your faith. We are hoping to be back in person in the second quarter.

Club Night- Every Sunday, we meet in person in the fellowship hall, it is a big space where all we can exercise social distance, mask on. We fellowship, play games, and learn the gospel. Our February theme is Love and Acceptance.

Events

February 28- Youth will be leading the worship service, Join us in sanctuary or online. We will have a fellowship hour after that- snacks and coffee provided.

March 6- Youth Fundraiser, see details on Junior youth page.

Summer camp plans are under way- Looking at Creation camp June 22-26. Details will be in due course.

Discipleship Focus

March- Questions of Jesus and the way to Cross.

SATURDAY NIGHT PREACHING SCHEDULE SPRING 2021

MARCH

March 6—Brian Reading

March 13—Doug Esposito

March 20—Klaudia Zhelezny—

Chosen People Ministries

March 27—Doug O'Connell

APRIL

April 3—Pastor Fisher

April 10—Bonnie Hawley

April 17—Brian Reading

April 24—Doug Esposito

Puzzle!

Use the clues to complete words with various vowel arrangements. Then place the circled letters in the correct blanks below to complete an Easter phrase.

1. Brave: E O U

2. A dark profile: O U E

3. Circular: O U

4. Running away: E E

5. Savage, fierce: I O U

6. Odd or nostalgic: U A I

7. A person from the 50th state:

 A I A

8. Compress, push together:

 U E E

9. A large tree in California:

 U I A

10. Paddling in a small, narrow boat:

 O E I

11. Upright, moral and righteous:

 U O U

12. Lining up in a row: U E U

13. Gorgeous: E A U E U

14. Precipitation: A I

Easter phrase:

<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
9	10	11	12	13	14	!	

Answers: 1. courageous, 2. silhouette, 3. round, 4. fleeing, 5. vicious, 6. quaint, 7. Hawaiian, 8. squeeze, 9. sequoia, 10. canoeing, 11. virtuous, 12. queuing, 13. beautiful, 14. rain; Christ is Savior!



Haven FX will return to Bubeck Park on Easter morning! Join us starting Sunday, April 4th at 11:00 AM as we "RECONNECT"!



5 Simple Ways To Help Your Kids Know—and Enjoy!—the Bible

Kids have hectic schedules. Between school, homework, sports, activities, volunteering and friends their lives can get very busy. Where does the Bible fit in for them? As their parents, it is our responsibility (and privilege) to teach them how to read, learn, apply, and love the Word. Here are 5 simple ways you can help your kids know the Bible and enjoy it too!

1 Use a sticky note or washable window marker to write a verse on their bathroom mirror.

Everyone could use a little encouragement first thing in the morning. You can do this daily, weekly, or even have a "theme verse" for the month. Choose verses that remind them of who they, who God is, or one of His promises (rather than what they're supposed to do). Encourage them to write or draw around the verse. This will help them internalize it.

2 Read and discuss a Bible story while your kids eat breakfast.

Mornings can be crazy and rushed, but a kid's got to eat, right?! So while they are shoveling in their bowl of cereal, read to them from the Bible. Then ask them what they think about it, how they feel about it, or ways they might apply it as they look ahead to their day at school. What a fantastic way to start your day!

3 Discuss a verse or biblical principle on the walk or drive to school or activities.

No more social media or texting in the car! (After all, the car is frequently the only time you have uninterrupted time with your kids.) Instead, guide your kids to look to you about real-life application of a biblical principle. This activity helps them learn how to live the principles God teaches us in the Bible.

4 Give your kid messages reminding them who they are.

If your kids are old enough for phones, text them once or twice a week about who the Bible says they are (get some great ideas from my free eBook, *49 Mentality Messages Your Kids Need to Know (and Won't Unless You Tell Them)* kellyherm.com/identity-messages). If they don't have a phone, drop a note in their lunch or backpack. This helps them understand who they are in God's eyes.

5 Pray out loud over them and for them using Scripture right before they go to bed.

Pray! Not just a general "Help them get a good night's sleep" prayer. Specific prayer. Ask them what was worth celebrating that day. What they struggled with. What they're thankful for. What they need prayer for the next day. What their friends need prayer for. Then pray. Out loud. While sitting on the side of their bed (or kneeling beside it). Praying scripture aloud over your children affirms them in the Word.

The more kids and adults Bible know to write, text, and pray, the more they will love it!

Kelly Herm

Adopt A Pet Challenge!

How are your pets doing?

We would love to you and your pets reading scripture together! Send photos and/or videos to

Miss April at abergen@havenfirstumc.org.

Dates to Remember

Wacky Wednesdays
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
4:30 - 5:30 PM
Fellowship Hall

Haven FX
Sundays
April 4, 11, 18, 25
11:00 am
Bubeck Park

Wacky Wednesday
April 7, 14, 21, 28
4:30 - 5:30 PM
Green Goose Playground



news & events

Dates to Remember

Wacky Wednesday
Wednesdays * March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
4:30 - 5:30 PM
Fellowship Hall

Lasagna "Fun Raiser"
Saturday, March 6 * 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Fellowship Hall

iGnite Bible Study
Sunday, March 7 & 14 * 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Comfort Room

Gretna Glen Youth Afternoon Sunday,
March 21 * 1:00 - 6:00 PM
Meet in church parking lot

"What are you searching for?"
Sunday, March 28 * 5:00 - 7:00 PM
Bubeck Park

"Egg My Yard" Fun-raiser
Saturday, April 3 * 7:00 PM - ?
Meet at church parking lot

Haven FX
Sundays * April 4, 11, 18, 25 * 11:00 am
Bubeck Park

Wacky Wednesday
Wednesdays * April 7, 14, 21, 28
4:30 - 5:30 PM
Green Goose Playground

iGnite Bible Study
Sundays * April 11, 25 * 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Location TBD

Gretna Glen Youth Afternoon
Sunday, April 18 * 1:00 - 6:00 PM
Meet in church parking lot

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO
HELPED US
TACKLE HUNGER
BY SUPPORTING OUR
SOUPER BOWL
FOOD DRIVE
THROUGHOUT FEBRUARY!
OVER 750 ITEMS WERE
COLLECTED!**

iGnite Bible Study

Sundays * 6-8PM * Comfort Room
We will start our spring study with
"Who God Says You Are"
and then finish up with
"God, Guys & Gals"

Lasagna Fun-Raiser Pick-up



Don't forget to pick up your
lasagna orders on
Sat., March 6th @ 1:00 PM
Or
Sun., March 7th @ 10:00 AM
Thank you!

Hey Parents,

Keep up the good work!

"You may feel burdened about the state of today's teens. I find great comfort in the words of the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 29:11. No matter how maddening the world is, God is still in control. He wants to bless your teen with an abundant life and remind you that you are the one He chose to help convey this truth to her.



What is the key to inheriting this promise? The answer is found in the next two verses in Jeremiah. The key words for you and everyone in your family are all your heart. We find hope when we choose to seek God wholeheartedly.

Satan knows that if he can prevent your teen from pursuing a committed relationship with Jesus Christ, he likely has gained a soul. Satan knows the good plans God has for your teen, and he schemes to release all hell on earth to keep him from becoming everything God promises.

But Scripture tells us in 1 John 4:4 that "The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Although Satan is out to end it all for my kids and yours, we have One on our side who is greater than any lie from Satan. No matter how hard Satan works to deceive, we, too, must work hard to empower our teenagers to understand the errors of this culture.

Your goal isn't to have a perfect teen. It is to be a guide toward truth as he navigates an ever-changing world. I want my daughters to live in obedience to the standards set in Scripture. I want them to know the difference between right and wrong and choose to do what honors God. I want them to become everything God desires for them.

Jesus said in Matthew 22:37 that the greatest commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength" (NCV). Our calling, and our privilege, is to raise children who aspire to love Jesus Christ with every facet of their lives.

God, you have plans for a future and a hope for [teen's name]. You are greater than anything he will encounter at school, at home, at work, or in the world today. May each of us in our family seek you with all our heart. Amen."

Taken from Day 5 of Raising Successful Teens by Jeffrey Dean

"Egg My Yard" FUN-raiser!

Here's how it works:

- Let our "bunnies" do all of the work for you!
- Surprise the kids in your life by ordering your candy filled eggs & a note from the Easter bunny sharing the Good News of Jesus' resurrection!
- Eggs will be hidden in your yard for Easter morning!
- We have a limited amount of time to hide, so that means we'll have a limited number of lawns to egg, so book early! Deadline to book is March 20 2021.
- In the case of inclement weather, eggs & notes will be placed in a basket on your porch.

25 eggs ~ \$15.00*

50 eggs ~ \$25.00*

*You can receive a \$5 discount if you choose to pick up eggs at the church office prior to Thursday, April 1st

Proceeds benefit the FUMC of Schuylkill Haven Youth Group
420 Saylor Street, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972 ~ 610-385-3941
www.havenfirsttime.org



NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

(#) 25 candy filled eggs with Easter basket & storybook
hidden in your yard for \$15.00

(#) 50 candy filled eggs with Easter basket & storybook
hidden in your yard for \$25.00

(#) 25 candy filled eggs with Easter basket & storybook
PICKED UP by April 1st for \$10.00

(#) 50 candy filled eggs with Easter basket & storybook
PICKED UP by April 1st for \$20.00

PAYMENT IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO APRIL 1st! Please make payment out to FUMC and put "Egg My Yard" in the memo line or if paying by cash please mark your envelope clearly with "Egg My Yard."



Sunday, March 28 * 5:00- 7:00 PM * Bubeck Park
A SOCIALLY DISTANCED FAMILY FRIENDLY
EVENT TO HELP YOU DISCOVER
THE WONDERS OF EASTER!



Unfortunately due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and concerns as to how the need for social distancing and masking up may affect the atmosphere, we have made the sad decision to postpone our annual Ladies Ten Party until April 30, 2022.

A pastor attended a men's breakfast in the middle of a rural farming area of the country. The group had asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast :

"Lord, I hate buttermilk," the farmer began. The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where this was going.

The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." Now the pastor was growing concerned. Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord, you know I don't much care for raw white flour."

The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one to feel uncomfortable. Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits."

So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."

Within that prayer there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today.

Stay strong my friends, because our life is being mixed with lots of things that we don't care for..... relax and wait until the mixing is done.





Are You Experiencing Pandemic Fatigue?

Are you feeling exhausted from all the disruptions to life brought on by the pandemic? Are you or someone you know struggling with challenges like . . .

- Isolation and loneliness;
- Anxiety over health;
- Grief due to many different kinds of losses;
- Tension from juggling work, childcare, and schooling;
- Financial strain or job loss;
- Uncertainty about the future; or
- Other unexpected life challenges?

If so, you don't have to face it alone. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support.

A Stephen Minister will meet with you privately—by phone, by video chat, or, if safely possible, in person—to offer care and support. It's free and completely confidential. For more information, call either Lynne O'Connell at 570-449-2355 or Nancy Kraft at 570-385-4431.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" —
Matthew 11:28

Collecting for Servants to All

Please join our small group, Women Moving Forward, in collecting personal hygiene items for Servants to All, who help the homeless here in our county. They are in need of shampoo, toothpaste, shaving cream, safety razors, etc... Smaller items are preferred. We will be placing a bin in the Narthex for the collection. We intend to collect from February 28th till Easter April 4.



Nursing Home Outreach

Just wanted to give an update on what God has used our church to do to show love to the residents and staff of our 12 nursing homes/personal care homes in our county and beyond since our Christmas Outreach.

One of the 12 nursing homes 135 residents ended up getting their calendars after Christmas. We saved the cards and ornaments that were originally in their bags and replaced them with towel roll snowflakes and a card that contained winter related notes of encouragement. We were able to send along mints and chocolate kisses for the residents and staff also that were appreciated. We actually received two thank you cards from their residents.

Here is an excerpt from their cards:

"Thank you for the beautiful calendar, snowflakes and the snow flake reading"

"Thank you for the spiritual calendar you sent to the residents at Providence Place in Pottsville. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and will enjoy using it."

Here is some feedback from the Activities coordinators of three of the nursing homes:

"Just wanted to let you know I distributed the Valentines at the dining tables for the residents. They look so festive and pretty! We all very much appreciate the time you all took to do this for our residents.."

“Thank you so much for thinking of us.”

“Thank you so very much for Christmas and Valentines cards! It means a lot to them especially now”

We partnered with the Frontier Girls to send valentines to all 12 of the nursing homes and had enough cards left over to send to some of the Veterans Nursing homes in our State.

We are currently working on our spring project which is making flowers and butterflies for the residents. We already have folks who are busily collecting, cutting, painting and assembling these. We hope to distribute these in April and May to the residents. Help is needed with all parts of the project including donations of paper towel rolls, toilet paper rolls, craft glue and paint. See me if you are interested in helping. A few folks have expressed interest in working on this together so I am looking at setting up work times at the church where small groups can safely gather for an hour or two each week to work on this project. Contact me if you are interested. We will also make butterflies using coffee filters, liquid watercolors and clothes pins. This is a fun project to do with kids and grandkids.

A few folks from our church have responded to the need for large sized men's clothing (especially 1, 2, and 3X) and a second delivery is going to be made to the nursing home in the next week or two. If the weather permits, a snowman or two may be built for the residents to enjoy when we drop the clothes off.

Looking ahead, we are thinking of a letter writing project for June, outside visits to sing to residents, during late spring and summer, Christmas gifts and then snowflakes and Calendars for January.

I would also like to be able to provide treats and snacks to the staff of the few nursing homes we were not able to bless at Christmas. There are also a few nursing homes that did not receive little gifts at Christmas time that I would like to be able to gift either as a Christmas in July treat, or an all birthday celebration.

We are not limited to the ideas I mentioned and every outreach doesn't have to be with all 12 nursing homes.

In addition to participation in and donations for the above mentioned activities, help would be appreciated with periodic contact with the nursing homes just to say we are thinking about them and to see how we can come alongside them, advertisement of projects and possibly contacting other churches for assistance with future projects.

Please leave a message for me at the church office or email me at marcywhoduck@aol.com to let me know how you or your small group may be interested in reaching out in love to the folks in the nursing homes.

Blessings and prayers,



A CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES PRESENTATION:

Messiah in the passover

The Messiah in the Passover presentation is a powerful visual message not only of Israel's freedom from slavery in Egypt, but of the redemption of individuals from the bondage of sin through the atoning work of Jesus. The program is designed to give participants a deeper understanding both of Passover and of the Communion table.

LOCATION: First United Methodist Church, Schuylkill Haven

DATE: March 20 & 21, 2021 **TIME:** 6:00 p.m. & 9:00 a.m.



**CHOSEN PEOPLE
MINISTRIES**

Chosen People Ministries
Office of Church Ministries and Conferences
P.O. Box 244418, Boynton Beach, FL 33424
561-737-1431
www.chosenpeople.com/churchministries

In Canada
Dufferin-Lawrence
P.O. Box 58103, Toronto, ON M6A 3C8
1-888-442-5535
www.chosenpeople.ca

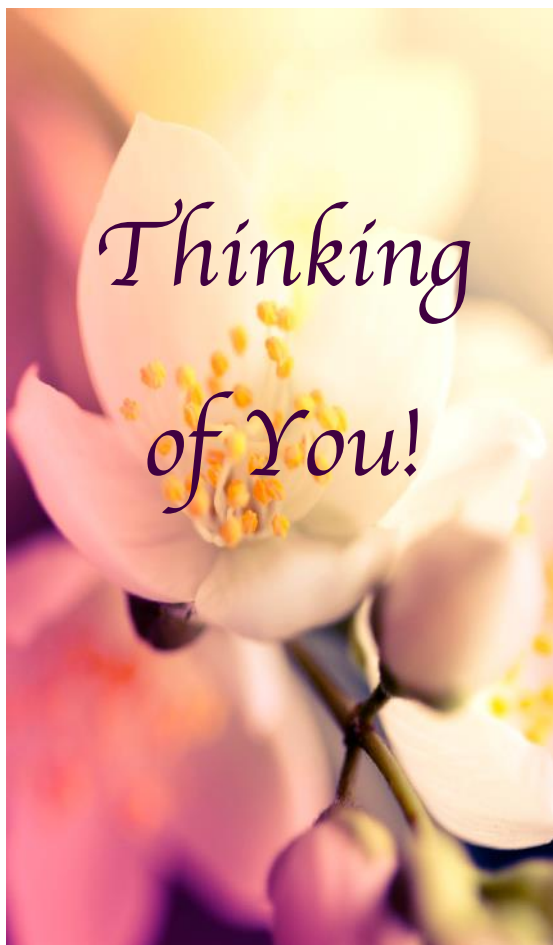


If you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers, please fill in the form below and mail to the church office or call the church office to reserve a Sunday. Altar Flowers are still \$20.00. You may send a check earmarked in the memo line as Altar Flowers.

Name: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____



Things of the world have been rather uncertain lately but God has remained faithful to His children. 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:

Schuykill Haven

Tremont

Lucille Romberger

John & Anna Mease

Carol Shappel

Pottsville

Orwigsburg

Marilyn Koch

Carol Wagner

Helen & Stuart Sattizahn

Catherine Daubenspeck

Lewisburg

Rev. Carl Geary

Phone: 570-385-3941
Fax: 570-385-6842
E-Mail: office@havenfirstumc.org
www.havenfirstumc.org

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED
DATED MAIL, PLEASE
DO NOT DELAY



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BULK RATE
POTTSVILLE, PA. 17901
PERMIT #26

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) virtual worship

During this season 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

Health & Welfare

Here is information about a series of workshops for spouses and caregivers presented by Diakon Community Services.

Living a Healthy Life

Join our *free* 6-session chronic disease self-management workshop on how to lessen pain, fatigue and live a good quality of life while dealing with an on-going health condition. Spouses and caregivers welcome. For ages 50+

Topics: Pain and Fatigue, Healthy Eating, Communication, Physical Activity, Preventing Falls, Dealing with Depression, and more!

Location: 23 Meadowbrook, 23 Meadowbrook Drive, Rt. 183, Schuylkill Haven, PA

Dates: Every Monday, March 1 through April 5, 2021

Time: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm **COVID-19 safety precautions will be practiced.*

To register, please contact Diakon Community Services at 570-624-3017 by 2/22.



Diakon Community Services manages Pennsylvania's Health & Wellness program under a contract with the Schuylkill County Office of Senior Services with funding by the PA Department of Aging.

The Caregiver Support Group program is developing. I am inviting you to view a series of YouTube videos presented by Ms. Sheila-Rea York of Caregiver Option.

Caregiver Option is...An option for understanding, encouragement, and practical support. Caregiver to Caregiver.

Sheila-Rea (Rea preferred) shares strategies for being effective and fulfilled caregivers. She has been a family caregiver for over 20 years, with the longest time being caregiver for her mom.

(Taken from the ABOUT page on her YouTube channel, and edited.)

You may visit YouTube and search for *Caregiver Option*. Rea is posting 28 Caregiver Affirmations, one each day for the 28 days of February. If you find her presentations of value please "like" her videos, subscribe if you like, and share with your friends who may also enjoy her talks.

Plans for the 2021 Caregiver Conference are being discussed. We may not be able to meet in person, but virtual has become a new way of life. With the Lord's blessing we will have this conference in 2021. Please pray for our success.

Karen

Coffee Fellowship

Coffee, tea, cocoa, and what? Are there other choices for a warm comforting drink when you need a lift or calming?

Maybe not surprising, there are a LOT of other hot (or cold) beverage options. A search on Amazon presents some interesting choices.



I recently shared on my Facebook page the story of Postum, the instant hot drink made from grains. I used to drink this regularly because my stomach could not take the acid in coffee, but I still wanted the texture and body of coffee. A few years ago, I found it online and ordered a few jars that lasted several months. Then I forgot about it until recently and was not able to find it. Seems the company was bought out by a large corporation that found no use for the product, not knowing how to market it. And it was no longer being made. Thankfully, there was/is a strong fan base that encouraged someone to bring it back. I was able to again get my Postum and am back to a happy cup.

But it made me wonder what else is out there for the various tastes we all have. Some have interesting names like MUD/WTR, which has mushrooms in the mix. A few of the other choices:

- Pioneer Roasted Beverage INGREDIENTS: Caffeine and Stimulant Free, made from the finest Roasted Corn, Broad Bean, Wheat Barley and Cinnamon
- COFFIG GOLD - Organic Roasted FIG & CHICKPEA Coffee Substitute is made with only 2 natural ingredients, figs, and chickpeas! COFFIG GOLD is a plant-based beverage with nothing added. No artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives. Naturally delicious!
- Cafix Coffee Substitute Crystals Ingredients: Roasted Barley, rye, chicory, Sugar Beets. (This product does have an acrylamide warning.)
- Kaffree Roma, Plant-Based Original Made from only three delicious roasted grains: barley, chicory, & rye

I could have spent hours researching all the varieties, flavors, and ingredients. Maybe we can have a few of these alternatives to try, like a taste test. I think I am curious to try the fig version COFFIG Gold. I like figs so maybe as a drink?

Have you tasted any of these products listed, or another product totally different? Let me know and we may include it when we do our tasting party. Would you be adventurous to try these drinks?

Coffee hour after services is still not happening. Hopefully soon. Stay safe and warm. Winter is not yet over.

Karen