

Pastor's Pen: **August Ruminations**

Dear Congregation,

Please put up with me while I ramble a bit. I am thinking about the changes we as a congregation have been through since March. You will see in a separate article in this newsletter by Walt Meck, chair of our Discipleship Council, a reminder of our discipleship plan, including our original goal to simplify, and other goals like growing in relationship with Christ and each other, and learning to reach out effectively.

The Coronavirus pandemic and quarantine have forced us to simplify dramatically. We have had to delay or cancel many things in these last months, slow other things down, and regroup around virtual and online communications, followed by a slow return to live gatherings. Live worship attendance was in the 20s during June, in keeping with our quarantine goals, but often over 200 others joined online. In July and August live worship attendance has been in the 40s, with a continued faithful online audience. We hope people will begin to feel more comfortable coming back to church, but we understand it is still a fluid situation.

What are we doing to maintain health and safety precautions? We are using masks, sanitizer and social distancing while in the sanctuary, except those who are actively leading worship take off their masks.

I saw a medical news video in June about the practical impact of masks on limiting the spread of germs. The evidence suggested masks help limit the spread of germs from breathing, coughing, and sneezing when people are closer than 6 feet. At 6 feet and beyond, it makes less difference whether one wears a mask or not.

We have held some indoor church meetings where some people take off their masks once seated 6 feet away from each other, although others who have vulnerable health conditions keep their masks on. This seems like a reasonable compromise and way forward.

The number of worshippers in church on Sunday appears to be "self-limiting" in keeping with PA state guidelines at around 25% capacity in an indoor space. That allows about 50-60 people in our sanctuary, with 10 more in the comfort room. We plan on starting a family-friendly

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Bubeck park, beginning September 13 at 11am, weather permitting. More on that later.

Many of you have experienced changes at home, as life's rhythms have altered with the quarantine. Our three daughters all rode out the end of the school year at home, studying online as schools and most universities closed. We enjoyed having our whole brood including Luke at home for the last 5 months. That is about to change with Mercy already back in college in South Carolina, and Luke preparing to leave to teach English for a year abroad in Taiwan. Big adventures ahead!

Not everyone experienced quarantine positively. There have been a lot of lonely and isolated people who have experienced the quarantine as a dark and depressing time, who became more lonely and isolated than ever. Some experienced unprecedented levels of stress at home.

This was brought home to us by sad news from a neighbor about another neighbor who moved down south to get away from PA winters. He was diagnosed with cancer, contracted the coronavirus, and went home and killed himself in despair. How very sad.



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Keep that in mind when you are thinking about a lonely neighbor you see occasionally. They may need more than a wave or a "hi, how are you?" You could be the voice of Christ's love to them pulling them out of that pit of darkness.

I hope if you are one of those lonely people, you will yourself reach out and let someone know. We in leadership at the church have been trying to keep the whole congregation connected through prayer ministry, small groups, and the ministry of calls and visitation, but sometimes someone is missed by accident. Please help us by calling the office if you or someone you love needs some TLC. Also, please consider either getting active in a small group, if you are not already doing so. God made us for fellowship and mutual encouragement. We need each other!

The last months have also seen plenty of political turmoil contributing to anxiety, not just from the aftermath of George Floyd's tragic death, but in terms of competing and radically different visions for the country's future.

Early on, I suggested not watching too much news if you wanted to keep the stress levels down. That is still good advice. But if you are going to listen to the

news, it is a good idea to listen to both sides of a story, not just the side from your favorite perspective. With elections soon here, people will get to express some of their hopes and fears about the future at the ballot box, and awareness of political events is necessary to know how to vote, including the balance that comes from considering both sides of an argument.

As Christians, we should certainly vote our conscience since our form of government allows it. We can express by vote how we want to be governed; we also have freedom of speech, and have the right to speak up if anyone will listen, and to defend why we think things should be governed a certain way. As Christians, we are commanded to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). Both things are important: both truth and love; one without the other is not in keeping with godly character.

We should also remember that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, and neither are we who belong to him. Those who put too much hope in politics and earthly leaders are often disappointed, as they all have feet of clay.

Since we are living in such divisive times, let us do our part to be representatives of Christ, not agents of discord, hatred and evil. I am reminded of two commands from scripture to guide us: "Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people" (Acts 23:5, Exodus 22:28), and "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2: 1-2). Vote, but leave the sovereignty of earthly kingdoms to our God, who is Lord over all. Pray, and keep a tight rein on your tongue. Pray for our leaders; but put your trust in God.

Your affectionately in Christ,
Pastor Chris



Sept – Nov. Communion Offering

Sept. 6: Good News Club

Oct. 4: World Communion Sunday Offering – to support the division of chaplains and ministries, Crusade Scholarships and the scholarship fund for minority groups.

Nov. 1: Pastor's Fund



Worship & Preaching Schedule September – October 2020

Sunday Worship: Live & Online at 9:00 AM
Saturday Worship: Live at 6:00 PM
Sunday FX Worship Service: Live at 11:00 AM
at Bubeck Park beginning Sept. 13

Theme: "Living in Peace in Anxious Times: Romans 12-15"

**Sept. 6: 15th Sunday of Pentecost w/ Holy
Communion**

Message: The Return of Christ

Sept. 13: 16th Sunday of Pentecost

Message: How to be Transformed

Sept. 20: 17th Sunday of Pentecost

Message: Humble service in the Body of Christ

Sept 27: 18th Sunday of Pentecost

Message: Love in Action

**Oct. 4: 19th Sunday of Pentecost & World
Communion Sunday**

Message: Submission to Governing Authorities

Oct. 11: 20th Sunday of Pentecost

Message: Love your neighbor as yourself

Oct. 18: 21st Sunday of Pentecost & Laity Sunday

Special Guest Speaker: Mr. Doug O'Connell

Message: "The Importance of the Resurrection"

Oct. 25: 22nd Sunday of Pentecost

Message: Right living when the time is short

Nov. 1: All Saints Day with Holy Communion



CHURCH PRAYER MINISTRY UPDATES

**Special "The Return" National Day of Prayer in
Washington DC on Saturday, September 26**

A number of Christian leaders have called believers to gather in Washington, DC, from 8 am to 8 pm on Saturday, September 26, for a National Day of Prayer and Repentance. A group from the church will be driving down to participate, while another group will gather in the church sanctuary to participate virtually. Please contact the office or Pastor Fisher if you are interested in taking part. See <https://thereturn.org/> for more information.

Our New Prayer Card Ministry:

About 60 people are praying every day for 10 people in the congregation whose names are printed on their prayer card. Occasionally, they may reach out to check on how the people on their card are doing. If

you are a member of the congregation and have not heard from anyone asking how you are doing, please let us know. Some prayer cards may have been lost or become inactive. We want to correct that and make sure someone is praying for you. Call the office for more information.

Prayer Focus for September and October 2020

- 1) Pray for our family-friendly 2nd Sunday worship service beginning September 13 at Bubeck Park.
- 2) Pray for our small groups, for fresh connections, for deepening spiritual walk and friendships, for the Lord Jesus to grow us as disciples through these sharing and learning opportunities.
- 3) Pray for our Youth groups, children's ministry, and new youth staff worker and leadership needs.
- 4) Pray for the continued development of our worship services, for our technology and tech team, for our worship leaders and speakers, for our missional effort to reach the community through a post-card outreach campaign.
- 5) Pray for more of the God's presence and grace in the Body of Christ. Pray for Christ to be formed in us. Pray for the spiritual growth, health, and unity of the body of Christ.
- 6) Pray for the church's stewardship and finances, that we will be faithful and generous with what God has given us; that all his people will exercise their gifts; that we will discern and accomplish the Lord's priorities for us in ministry and mission.
- 7) Pray for our recent graduates as they prepare for the unknowns of work, college, and other future hopes and dreams.
- 8) Pray for the pastor, staff & church leaders, that we may receive grace for all the Lord calls us to be & do leading the congregation.
- 9) Pray for our nation, for our leaders, for the upcoming elections.
- 10) Pray for spiritual awakening among the lost, the prodigal children, and those who do not know the Lord in our families, our county and our nation. Pray for revival, repentance, miraculous deliverance, and supernatural healing.

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 pray in your own homes. Consider sharing a phone call or video-chat to pray together if you live in different homes.

Do you have a testimony to share with the congregation?

Has the Lord done something special in your life recently? You can record your testimony at home and we can incorporate that into the online worship service. Your testimony might bless someone who views the worship online. Please contact the office at office@havenfirstumc.org or Pastor Fisher at pastor@havenfirstumc.org if you are willing to contribute.



Sr. High Youth Ministry Update

The Sr. High Youth Group met this summer for several outings, including hiking, a fossil hunt and a trip to Heisler's Dairy. They are currently helping the SPRC interview applicants for the Sr. High youth director position. Please keep them in prayers as they start a new school year and new youth group year.



Youth Group at St. Clair fossil hunting on old coal fields (we were not trespassing!)



Worship at Bubeck Park Church to start second Sunday Service

Our church is starting a second worship service at 11:00 am on Sunday mornings: the FX Family Worship Experience, live at Bubeck Park/Stoyer's Dam in Schuylkill Haven, beginning September 13, weather permitting.

- *Come join us for a worship experience planned with children & families in mind.*

- *Bring a lawn chair and umbrella for shade.*
- *See later article in this newsletter for more details.*



"The Return" National Day of Prayer



"For if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." ~ 2 Chronicles 7:14

See <https://thereturn.org/> for details.

A group from our church will be driving to Washington D.C. for this Day of Prayer. The church will also be open as a satellite site for the event if you want to participate that way.

Contact the Church office or Pastor Fisher if you are interested in attending.



Small Group Ministry

Small Groups: The Discipleship Council and our small group leaders are planning towards small groups this fall. We had over 21 active small groups this past

season, and about half are still meeting. We are encouraging small groups to resume live meetings as soon as possible. Some will be completing the study on healing. Others will be looking at a new study on effective discipleship today. We also need folks who are willing to be trained as new small group leaders. Is that you? Please pray for these things as we lean into the new cultural setting and seek to live for the glory to God. See Walt Mecks' article later in this newsletter for more details.



New Youth ministry Staff

The SPRC is pleased to announce that we have hired Mrs. April Bergen to be our new part-time Director of Children's Discipleship and Middle School Ministry. Effective September 1, April will begin serving officially on staff in a role she has been performing fully as a volunteer for some time. April will be part time, putting in about 20 hours a week leading the two aspects of ministry. April is married to Don Bergen, and they have two lovely children – Matthew and Katie.

Separately, the SPRC is still interviewing to fill the Director of Sr. High Youth Ministry post. Please lift them in prayer as they seek the Lord on this.

SPRC

We want to thank Katie Klamfoth for the awesome job that she did as our summer intern!! She worked in many capacities: from helping to organize youth events, to organizing the 3rd floor storage room, to cleaning. May God bless you Katie as you start your Junior year in college!!!

This summer we have been busy conducting interviews for the church's two new youth leader positions. Currently we are in the process, with the help of youth council leaders, of completing interviews for the senior high (grades 9 – 12) position. SPRC is aware of our current financial position and are prayerfully considering how to proceed. We will let the congregation know as soon as we have hired that person.

We are pleased to announce that we have offered the position of middle school (grades 5 – 8) leader to April Bergen and she has accepted our offer!! April and Don joined our congregation in 2004 and have been very involved in the life of our church ever since. April has been leading our middle school group as a volunteer since January and has done a wonderful job!! We are happy that she will be continuing in that position as a staff member of FUMC starting on September 1st.

Respectfully, Linda Olsen, SPRC chair

Welcome April!!!



As many of you know, for the past fifteen years, I have been heavily involved in developing strong relationships with parents, teachers, and students as the Director of Children's Ministry & Discipleship here at FUMC. I am also a certified elementary teacher with my Master's Degree in Curriculum & Instruction. Most recently I have been the the iGnite (Middle School) interim leader.

As a disciple of Jesus, youth advocate and elementary teacher, I am excited for this opportunity to lead our Middle School Youth, partner with parents and reach families through the new FX (family) initiative at Bubeck Park. Teaching and encouraging young people has always been an important part of my life.

Don, my husband, and I have two middle school youth ourselves. Matthew, who is 13 and entering 8th grade and Katie, who is 11 and just entering the middle school environment this year. So parents, I'm right there with you and believe it is imperative to build strong family and faith foundations to support the issues facing our youth today!

In my free time I enjoy spending time together outdoors as a family and with our 4 year old yellow lab, Nilla. I love traveling (the beach is my favorite!), enjoying times with friends, whether it's a quick lunch out or just chatting on the phone, and my "Quiet time" soaking in God's word, talking to Him and listening for His voice.

In closing, I am extremely enthusiastic about this opportunity and feel blessed to continue with the on-going success of encouraging and equipping our youth on the path of discipleship in Jesus Christ.

April Bergen

Discipleship Update

It is still Summer, but Autumn is closing in. And many small groups started meeting again, learning how best to meet, reconnecting, and finishing the study of the Healing book. Beginning the week after Labor Day, most groups will begin to study a new book, *Starfish Movement – Unleashing the Unstoppable Mission of Jesus* by Dan Grider. This study is a continuation of the effort we began at First church almost two years ago to simplify and focus our church's ministry, direction and growth.

You may remember that we started by having groups study the book, *Simple Church* by Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger. Its theme was that many churches became too complicated and lost clear direction, so congregations may need to simplify in order to focus and better serve God's people.

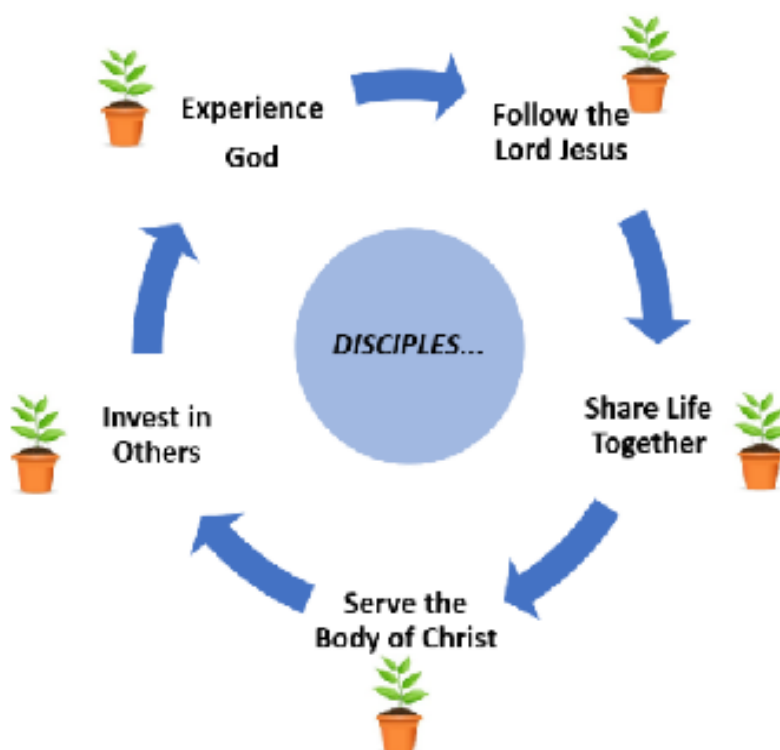
They advocate tying the church's vision statement to a process of discipleship, explaining that churches full of different programs and activities are not often growing churches, even if the individual programs are successful. This is because they don't have a clearly defined process for discipling people. They don't move people from one stage of spiritual growth to another, and their programs suffer from mediocrity because their energies are dissipated across so many programs.

That book opened our eyes to the need to discuss and agree on the mission of the church and our way forward. So, the next step in our progression was to have congregational meetings to do just that.

We met a number of times over a period of months and agreed that if our entire church focused on reaching outside our church to "create disciples" we could make a significant impact on the lives of those around us. And we agreed that...

Our Mission is to make Disciples of Jesus Christ

...with five key steps in our discipleship process:



This alignment effort brought many of us in the church together, helped us to know each other better and, importantly, began to align and focus the church membership on our mission.

Before we jumped into trying to disciple others, we recognized the need for *movement* (spiritual growth before reaching outside the church to disciple others) and *alignment* (having all church members learning about discipleship and growing together). So we decided to start with the study of “healing” as a steppingstone using “small groups” as a vehicle.

We chose to use the book *Healing* by Francis MacNutt to guide our study. This study opened our eyes about healing – about the different types, how to understand and discern healing needs, and how to better pray for people. Most importantly, it taught us how to better communicate with others about their needs.

Our study of *Healing* accomplished several goals, including furthering the process of caring for each other and learning how to disciple with all focusing on the same topic. One of our members said of the Healing study, “For the first time, I now feel comfortable and confident about listening to others in their time of need. And what to do next.”

It is now time to select our study for the Fall Group Program where we will continue our *movement* preparing us for our discipleship efforts. After considering alternatives and the needs of our community resulting from the pandemic, we decided the time is right to focus our study on the tools that would more directly prepare us for reaching out into the community – one of the key steps in the *Simple Church* and in our discipleship process outlined above – “*Investing in Others.*”

We know that many in our church are not comfortable with reaching out into our community with a discipleship effort. We all come to church to be spiritually fed, not all are not confident in their ability to reach out into the community to find and feed people. Others are willing but just don't know how. Still others like us just the way we are and see no need to reach out.

We selected two books to study this fall that will help improve our understanding of how to reach out and disciple others in the way Jesus did it, simply and straightforwardly – helping us prepare for this effort, giving us helpful tools – all consistent with the concepts outlined in our first study, *Simple Church*.

We will first study a book called *Starfish Movement: Unleashing the Unstoppable Mission of Jesus*. Jesus started a movement designed to include, engage, and inspire all people. But somewhere along the way, Christians began imitating those who went before them instead of imitating Jesus.

They became immersed in church programs and issues of Christian sub-culture. As a result, most never experienced the power of the unstoppable mission of Jesus. Instead, what if we were trained and empowered to become a part of that mission? What if we realized that Jesus had us in mind and created us specifically for this all along? This book is designed to do just that, challenging us to embrace the principles of the movement Jesus launched – the Starfish Movement.

After that study, we will move to another book by Dan Grider, *Crucial Conversations* that will give us the tools, skills and confidence to engage with those who need to meet Jesus – how to engage in crucial conversations without being weird.

We look forward to this fall's Small Group program and encourage all to participate. If you are not in a small group and wish to join one, just call the Church Office and we will find a group for you.

Faith Community Nurse's Notes

By: Ann Moyer RN, FCN



Continue Safe Practices!

Remember to get your Flu vaccine! Flu viruses are most common during the fall and winter months. Flu activity peaks between December and February but can last into May.

Pneumococcal vaccines are important for infants, young children and adults age 65 and older. Talk to your physician for recommendations.

Stay tuned as we move forward with Our Journey of Hope Cancer Ministry.

Our Journey of Hope Cancer Ministry

Cancer is a dreaded disease. It confronts not only the person diagnosed with it but also family, friends, and anyone closely associated with the person battling the disease. It effects people physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Unfortunately, cancer is not only a dreaded disease, it is widespread. In 2019 The American Cancer Society reported 1.8 million new cancer cases in the U.S.A. and 606,520 cancer deaths.

There are few if any persons who can say they have not been touched by cancer in some fashion. I myself experienced cancer through my daughter's diagnosis as well as my father's, two step parents, a grandmother and several other loved ones. I saw firsthand the devastation, heartache and challenges of the disease. I am sure many of you may say the same. It is because of this, that when an opportunity to go to a cancer care ministry leadership training seminar arose, I attended.

Many people in our own congregation have traveled, or are currently traveling, on their own cancer journey. A cancer ministry calls for persons willing to walk alongside individuals and their family members during their cancer journey. It requires offering practical and spiritual support. Practical needs that arise maybe child care, transportation, meals, and financial. Spiritual needs can be enormous and are unique to each individual.

If you are interested in learning more about this ministry of offering hope and assistance, please let me know by calling 570-385-0686. Remember there are many ways to help in Our Journey of Hope.

Cancer

According to the National Cancer Institute, Cancer is the name given to a collection of related diseases. In all types of cancer, some of the body's cells begin to divide without stopping and spread into surrounding tissue. It can start almost anywhere in the human body.

The normal orderly process of human cell growth and division becomes disrupted. Old or damaged cells survive when they should die and new cells form when they are not needed. The extra cells may multiply and form growths called tumors. As this occurs the cells create damage and hamper the ability of organs and systems to function properly. The cancer cells may become intertwined with healthy parts of the body and may become difficult to remove to stop the cancer. It is this devastating progression that makes cancer such a fearful diagnosis.

Carcinomas are a type of cancer that begin in the skin or tissue that line or cover body organs such as the breast, colon, liver, lung, pancreas, prostate, or stomach. Sarcomas are a broad group of cancers that begin in the bone or soft tissue such as fat and muscle. Lymphoma is a cancer that starts in the cells of a person's immune system. It includes the lymph nodes, spleen, thymus gland, and bone marrow. Leukemia is a broad term for cancer of the blood cells. Cancer in general includes 200 different diseases.

There are three primary cancer treatments. Surgery involves physically removing the cancerous cells. This cannot always be done if the cancer has spread and removal would damage vital organs. Chemotherapy is the use of chemical mixtures injected into the body to kill or damage the cancer cells. Unfortunately, the chemicals can also weaken healthy cells and cause unpleasant side effects for the person. Radiation therapy uses concentrated and precisely aimed radiation to kill or weaken the cancer cells. Healthy tissue close to the cancer may be harmed in this process. In many cases a combination of these options may be used to combat the cancer.

Other therapies may be integrated into a person's treatment plan. These therapies may include nutrition, naturopathic medicine, pain management, oncology rehabilitation, and spiritual care.

Information from

Department, P.C. (2019). Our Journey of Hope Cancer Care Ministry Leaders Guide. Cancer Treatment Centers of America

Homebound, Recovering or Shut- In

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 or just a quick not to let them know that they are not forgotten:

Schuylkill Haven

Lucille Romberger
406 May Drive
507

Carol Shappel
206 Jefferson St.

Pottsville:

Marilyn Koch
Schuylkill Manor, Rm119

Helen & Stuart Sattizahn
York Terrace, Rm 138

Catherine Daubenspeck
FL 33733, Schuylkill Center

Tremont:

John & Anna Mease
113 Washington Street

Orwigsburg:

Carol Wagner
Seton Manor, Room

Dr. Herb Rubright
33 Grist Mill Road

Lewisburg:

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



PRISON MINISTRY

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St. Petersburg, FL.33733

Smart Communications

SCI Muncy

Bridget Steffie PC8700

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If you know of anyone
who would like a visit,
please call the church
office or our Minister
of Visitation:

Brian Reading

570-385-3804

Finance Update

Sept- Oct 2020



Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, September begins our Stewardship campaign. We ask you to prayerfully consider your gift or tithe to God through our church. A letter will be coming asking you to please let us know your pledge/ tithe to the church for the year 2021. We realize that it may be difficult to predict at this time. Your pledge is not written in stone and may be increased or decreased at any time. The letter will include a postcard to be returned to the church by the last Saturday or Sunday in September, Sept. 29 or 30th. Volunteers will follow up on the cards not returned to the church, to help you.

Currently our offerings are running about 7% below budget. We are approximately \$13,000 below budget as of the end of July. Please consider giving to the General Fund of our church. If you currently give to designated giving or a specific program, consider splitting that gift with the general fund, so we can take care of our everyday expenses and salaries.

Besides needing new technology for our streaming services and website, we have several new programs beginning in September that will need our support. We will be beginning an outdoor family-friendly community worship service at Bubeck Park to provide for those who may be fearful of attending services in the building and possibly attract some of our neighbors. Our small groups will be restarting with a new focus. Also, we are looking into hiring a new Youth Director to revitalize our youth program.

With all these new initiatives on the horizon, please give generously as you are able. May God bless you as you bless others.

In His Service,
Jean Twardzik
Finance Chair



Noteworthy Mentions from Worship Committee



FX Worship @ Bubeck Park

Beginning September 13, 2020 @ 11:00 AM



The Worship, Outreach, and Christian Education Committees have combined resources to reach out from within our church walls to go out and worship IN the community.

Bring a lawn chair and let's worship together 🎵🙌

Made by Canva.com, edited by FX worship



Do you have a musical talent?
Can you sing, play keyboard, guitar, bass, or drums?

The Lord gave YOU the talent to use for His Glory.
Please consider sharing that talent in our worship services.

9:00 AM - Live Streaming, traditional service
11:00 AM - Family Friendly service at Bubeck Park

*Please contact Julie Saunders or Cindy McClelland
for information*



Important Dates to Remember

9/13 - FX service at Bubeck Park, 11:00 AM
9/26 - Day of Prayer in the Mall, Jonathan Cahn (Washington, DC)
10/18 - Laity Sunday
11/1 - All Saints Day
11/8 - Anniversary Sunday
11/22 - Thanksgiving Sunday
11/29 - First Sunday of Advent



Seriously...

Stop hiding your talents and gifts. If you have been blessed with musical ability, artistry, programming, teaching, helping others, then PLEASE step forward.
Your church and your community NEED you.

Thursdays requested,
Julie Saunders and all the committees within the church



Singing in the Parking Lot

Beginning September 12th @ 10:00 AM
Every 2nd and 4th Saturday



SLIDESMANIA.COM

Attention Choir Members And anyone who likes to sing

- Cindy and Julie would like to invite you to join us on
- Saturday mornings at 10:00 (2nd and 4th)
 - In the church parking lot by the basketball hoop
 - To sing and praise

Stay in your car or bring a chair

***Let's sing Loud.
Let's sing Clear.
Let's Proclaim that
Our Lord is Here!***

Methodist Women's Ministry Events

Sept./ Oct. 2020

Like everyone else's, it was an unusual summer for MWM. We held a first drive-through Community Lunch in July and distributed 96 Pa. Dutch Chicken Potpie dinners, not only to those who attended the drive-through, but also, to friends, family, and neighbors in need.



Unfortunately, our speaker from FREE, Freedom and Restoration for Everyone Enslaved, couldn't come to speak on Human Trafficking in Aug. Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you. They are having difficulties with coverage due to COVID. For more information about their work go to www.freefromht.org.

Some of our MWM members were able to help pack boxes for the Vineyard on Aug. 4th and distribute them on the 5th. (Thanks, Mike, for joining us) Help is always needed. "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few".



September 8th we will be hosting a **Favorite Dish-Recipe exchange** at 1 pm. Cook your favorite dish, bring it and the recipe to church to share that day with us for lunch. Social distancing will be done.

Oct. 13th – Our own **Ann Moyer** will be our speaker that day, speaking on a smorgasbord of **Women's Health topics** – safety, health tips, nutrition. Meeting at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall. Mask up!

Methodist Women will continue to meet the second Tuesday of the month at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall in September and October unless otherwise announced. Our focus continues to be local mission work. All ladies are welcome. Please let us know of any of your ideas or about issues that you would like more information.

Blessings,

Jean Twardzik, Chair

Coffee Fellowship

As promised here are some interesting facts about teas...

- Who drinks the most tea?

In 2016, Turkey was the largest tea-consuming country in the world, with a per capita tea consumption of approximately 6.96 pounds per year. In contrast, China had an annual consumption of 1.25 pounds per person. In 2015, China was the leading global tea producer, followed by India and Kenya.

From: [www.statista.com › statistics › global-per-capita-tea-...](http://www.statista.com/statistics/global-per-capita-tea-...)



And

- It takes around 2,000 tiny leaves to make just one pound of finished tea. Tea plants grow wild in parts of Asia, but it can also be farmed. The very best tea comes from high elevations and is hand-picked.
- Some tea grows in the United States. There is an island tea plantation off the coast of South Carolina and in Hawaii.
- People were using ceramic teapots 11,000 ago in Asia and the Middle East. Tea didn't reach most Europeans until the late 16th century.
- Genuine "Darjeeling" tea is grown in an area of India at the foot of the Himalayas that's less than 70 square miles large. For this reason, Darjeeling is highly prized and known as the "Champagne of teas."

From: 10 Fun Facts About Tea, By Erin Mascercola at Romantic Homes.com

I wondered...What is tea and crumpets?

Doing some creative research, I found...

From Britannica.com: Crumpets originated in the 17th century as thin pancakes made from a flour, milk, and egg base. However, today's version likely developed in the Victorian era when bakers added yeast and then baking powder to the recipe. Traditionally, the mixture is poured onto a griddle or baking sheet fitted with special crumpet rings and then baked on one side only, leaving the uncooked moist, sponge like top full of its distinctive nooks and crannies. (American-invented English muffins, on the other hand, are firmer and more bread like, cooked on both sides, and split before toasting.) Before being served, crumpets are toasted, generously buttered, and often sprinkled with a pinch of salt. They may be topped with a poached egg or a slice of bacon or smeared with honey, jam, or syrup.



I could go on with so much fun and interesting tidbits I will have to save them for a future article.

I am missing you all still. How wonderful it will be when we can get together again over our favorite tea or coffee. Stay safe and trust our God has a plan for all this.

Karen

Health and Welfare

There is no Caregiver Conference for 2020. We continue to initiate the Caregiver Support Group ministry.

Fund raising for 2020... We cannot use restaurants to raise funds this year. But we can again participate in Boscov's Friends Helping Friends Discount Coupon Sales Event.

Kudos to Boscov's for getting creative in addressing social distancing and all the requirements. They have made BIG CHANGES from previous years.



Bosco's Friends Helping Friends is going contactless for 2020! They have implemented changes to allow us to raise funds for our organization while staying healthy and safe at home. They recognize the way we sold tickets in previous years is no longer possible, so they have simplified the event by eliminating selling tickets all together.

Here's how it works...

We must raise awareness of the event by sharing Boscov's Friends Helping Friends event with friends, family, and supporters of the Caregiver Support Group. When these supporters shop with Boscov's online or in-store they must pick our non-profit organization at checkout. After the Friends Helping Friends event concludes Boscov's will write us a check for the amount our supporters raised.

Mr. Boscov posted a video explaining this year's event. The link is on our Facebook pages: Schuylkill Caregiver and FUMC.

The Caregiver support Group is for caregivers to meet and share mutual concerns, fears, and joys with other caregivers who understand because they are experiencing or have experienced similar situations.

The registration form to participate in the Caregiver Support Group is on the Schuylkill Caregiver website. You may register your name, and contact information so we may contact you about the dates and times of our meetings. We will meet Thursday evenings at the church. Meeting dates TBA.

We are still considering Zoom or WebEx meetings for those who may not be able to leave the care receiver or are concerned about social distancing. Depending on attendance we may have a social distancing face to face meeting and be able by video to include participants not able to physically attend. An interesting project to be sure.

We ask for your support for this ministry through prayers and when possible, financially through our fundraisers or private contributions to First UMC designated for the Caregiver Support Group ministry.

Karen

HELP SUPPORT

FUMC Caregiver Support Group & Conference

(Non-profit organization)



Bosco's

*better
than
ever!*

FRIENDS *really*
HELPING
FRIENDS



2 BIG DAYS

SHOP OCTOBER 14TH & 15TH, 2020
NO SHOPPING PASS TO PURCHASE!

YOU SAVE
20%*
OFF
LOWEST SALE PRICES
ON ALMOST EVERYTHING

*10% discount items and exclusions apply.

WE RECEIVE
5%
BACK
OF YOUR TOTAL
PURCHASE

MENTION OUR ORGANIZATION BY NAME
IN-STORE AT THE REGISTER OR ONLINE AT CHECKOUT
& WE'LL RECEIVE 5% OF YOUR TOTAL PURCHASE.

Visit www.boscovs.com/friendshelping friends
for a listing of items receiving a 10% discount and exclusions.



Stephen Ministry Update

As with every ministry of the church, the current Covid crisis has affected the Stephen Ministry program. During the Covid-19 Quarantine our Stephen Ministers have kept in contact with their care receivers via text, email and phone meetings. This has been very critical for those care receivers who became isolated during this time.

Stephen Ministry also provides grief support. Stephen Ministry has a series of 4 books in the "Journeying through Grief" series. They are sent to people at 3 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 11 months after the death of a loved one. For people who have lost loved ones during this time of isolation, these books have been particularly helpful for dealing with grief.

Currently we have several Stephen ministers available to minister to a person who needs support and encouragement.

Stephen Ministry is a program that also trains lay people to minister to

someone going through a time of crisis. We are considering offering another a Stephen Ministry Training course in the future, if there is sufficient interest.

If you are interested in more information about Stephen Ministers, the grief book series or the training, please contact either Lynne O'Connell (570-449-2355) or Nancy Kraft (570-385-4431), your Stephen Ministry Leaders.

FELLOWSHIP COM. REPORT FOR AUGUST 2020

Well, it sure has been an interesting 2020.... "The best laid plans of mice and men" has never been more appropriate than this year plans for the Fellowship Committee..... We had two wonderful Sunday Fellowship lunch/brunch get-togethers and planned many more fun and good food Sundays for 2020, but it was not to be.

It looks like it will be a while before we plan another one of these Fellowship Sundays. I think with the continued flair up of Covid19, it just is not safe to have these gatherings and food fixed by many different people....

I pray that in the new year, 2021, it will be possible to get back to a normal planning of these gatherings of fun, talent and food...

I hope all of you are staying safe and taking all the precautions that the Science and Health Specialists are recommending.

Blessings from the Fellowship Com.



LANDSCAPING NEEDED

The Trustees have had to remove the overgrown shrubs by the front of the church and have now also removed 6 diseased trees from around the entire property. There are a few more trees that may soon be culled due to their condition as well.

We hope to have some work done on the drain lines by the front of the church in the next few months and then replant some new shrubs.

Fall is a good time to plant trees and shrubs. The Trustees would like to ask members of the congregation, if they are inspired to do so to donate to this cause. Trees, shrubs or monetary funds are all appreciated. You may also wish to plant a tree in memory or in honor of someone. Please see Randy Helwig or other Trustee members for more details.



Five Steps for Sharing the Gospel with Your Neighbors

by Lucas Burton

Immediately before his ascension, Jesus' promised his disciples that the coming Holy Spirit would empower them to be "[his] witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)). Though they had already been commissioned to "make disciples of all nations" ([Matt 28:19](#)), their instructions were to begin this mission in Jerusalem ([Luke 24:47](#)). While there are significant theological reasons for making Jerusalem the starting point of the church's mission, we should not overlook the simple fact that beginning in Jerusalem meant starting at home in their own community.

In our efforts to bring the gospel to the most distant and unreached corners of the globe we must not overlook the opportunity and responsibility that God has given us to make Christ known to the folks next door—our neighbors.

Some of us may already be making inroads in sharing the gospel with our neighbors, and others may be wracking our brain to remember the name of the person down the hall or across the street. Wherever you find yourself, here are five basic steps toward being a faithful witness where you live.

Pray - It may seem like a given to start with prayer, but ask yourself, "when was the last time I prayed for my neighbors?" If the answer is "I can't remember," or "I don't think I ever have," then begin by asking God to give you a heart of compassion for the people on your block or your apartment floor. Pray that he would help you to see your lost neighbors as "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" ([Matt 9:36](#)). Pray that God would open a door for you to speak to your neighbors about Christ ([Col 4:3](#)) and that he would give you both the words and boldness you will need in those moments ([Eph 6:19-20](#)).

Seek - Jesus described his earthly ministry saying, “the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” ([Luke 19:10](#)). In other words, Jesus did not wait for people to come to him—he went to them. For those of us who have barely ever spoken to our neighbors, this means starting with a “good morning” or “my name is…” Once you’ve introduced yourself, look for common meeting spaces that will provide you with more opportunities to interact—whether it’s the laundry room downstairs, dropping your kids off at the bus stop, an afternoon at the neighborhood playground, or offering to help clear a snow-covered driveway. The goal is to intentionally place ourselves in regular contact with our neighbors in hopes of having opportunities to get to know them and to speak of Christ.

Invite - Some of us may be prepared to interact with our neighbors at the park down the street or even on our front porch, but the thought of inviting them into our homes seems strange or uncomfortable. Sadly, many of us have become accustomed to a culture that says, “my home is my private—my retreat from the business and chaos of life” instead of viewing our home as a resource for living on mission in our community. The reality is, one of the best ways you can build trust and relationship with your neighbors is by breaking the norm and inviting them into the space that culture says is yours alone. Whether it’s inviting one neighbor over for coffee, a next-door family for dinner, or several people for a potluck BBQ, we should be eager to open our doors to those around us. Once we recognize that we are “ambassadors for Christ” ([2 Cor 5:20](#)) we will begin to see our homes as embassies of the kingdom of Heaven, which exist for a greater purpose than our own comfort and escape.

Share - In the midst of seeking our neighbors and inviting them into our homes and lives, we should be looking for and creating opportunities to share the gospel with them. In some cases, an opportunity might present itself in our very first conversation, and in other cases we may need to build relationship with that person before they become open to discussing things of faith. For this reason, we need to approach every interaction prayerfully and listen closely for the Holy Spirit to direct us concerning when to speak and when to listen. While our goal is to lovingly call our neighbors to repent and trust in Christ, we should recognize that doing so may involve several conversations about who Jesus is and what it means to follow him. Instead of saving these topics for one-off “evangelistic” conversations, we should speak openly and regularly about our faith and its relevance to every sphere of our life.

Invest - Being a faithful witness to those around us means choosing to see them as people not projects. When we think of our neighbors, our goal should not be finding an opportunity to ramble through a gospel presentation so we can check their name off a list and move on. Instead of trying to appease a sense of Christian duty or guilt our motivation should be love. In his letter to the Thessalonians Paul writes: “being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us” ([1 Thess 2:8](#)). One of the greatest indicators that you are growing in love for your neighbors is your readiness to share not only the gospel but yourself with them—to invest in their lives as you lead them to Jesus.

What would it look like if Christians across our country believed that God has empowered us with his Holy Spirit to be witnesses in the very place we live? Imagine how God would transform our communities if together we endeavored to make Jesus known among our neighbors by praying, seeking, inviting, sharing, and investing.

As the Church gives itself for the cause of global missions, may we not forget that fulfilling the Great Commission means not only crossing the world but also crossing the street!



TIME FOR SOMETHING NEW!

HEY EVERYONE, WE ARE VERY EXCITED TO SHARE THAT THIS FALL WE ARE REPLACING THE OLD (SUNDAY SCHOOL) AND CREATING SOMETHING NEW FOR FAMILIES! THE WORSHIP, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH TEAMS HAVE COLLABORATED TO CREATE WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE AS



YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US BEGINNING ON
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH @ 11:00 AM
BUBECK PARK

SOUNDS INTRIGUING BUT WHAT EXACTLY IS A FX SERVICE YOU ASK?

WELL...IT CONSISTS OF WORSHIP AND THE WORD.

SIMPLY PUT, THIS EXCITING WORSHIP SERVICE IS DESIGNED TO BE FUN WITH A PURPOSE AND IS GEARED FOR EVERYONE!

WE KNOW THAT NO ONE HAS MORE POTENTIAL TO INFLUENCE A CHILD THAN A PARENT BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT PARENTS CAN'T DO IT ALONE SO WE AS THE CHURCH ARE WORKING TO PARTNER WITH FAMILIES TO HELP BUILD LIFELONG DISCIPLES FOR JESUS!

We want boys and girls around the world to know that God loves them and has not forgotten them during this time of fear and uncertainty. Children need great joy now more than ever. Most of all, they need the hope found only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Will you partner with us to share that glorious hope with boys and girls around the world—many of whom have never heard the Name of Jesus?



Be on the lookout for the arrival of shoeboxes! Shoeboxes will be due by Sunday, November 8th!

Personalized Parenting

by Jessica Smartt

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." [Galatians 6:9](#) (NIV)

I have yet to manage a successful garden. Honestly, it seems overwhelming to keep 36 little plants alive, when it takes so much energy to keep my own three children alive. But I'm slowly beginning to understand botany.

There have been more than a few little green things in adorable pots beckoning me, saying, *"Take us home! You won't kill us. We're easy."* Given my track record with gardening, the odds were stacked against these poor guys.

But then ... there was The Plant That Changed Everything.

My mother-in-law gave me a clipping of her Swedish ivy vine, claiming it was "trouble free." Originally, this plant's great-grandmother lived in the White House with President John F. Kennedy! The plant did well for a good long while, and then ... the telltale signs began. I was killing another one!

This loss was not going to be OK. I was tired of walking past my sad, unhealthy plants, feeling like a Bad Plant Mother. Mishandling houseplants under my watch was going to end. I did what any modern, self-respecting woman would do. I Googled.

I'd been going through the motions with my houseplants, doing things I thought plants needed. But plants are persnickety. *You actually have to pay attention to them individually*, looking at leaves and soil, noticing what each one needs, watching how they respond to their environment.

During this research, I learned what many of you probably already knew: Overwatering is the leading cause of death of houseplants. I learned to identify the signs of overwatering but also the signs of insufficient watering — and how to tell if the plant doesn't have enough drainage.

And then I started watching my plants. I realized I'd been mindlessly dumping water. In fact, one plant was sitting in an inch of water! Two other plants weren't getting nearly enough sun. Another's roots were exposed, one needed a different pot, and so on. Every plant needed different kinds of care!

In just a few days, I began to see the incredibly satisfying fruits of my labors. Instead of sorry, limp plants, I saw happy little plants with bright green foliage.

The parallel was not lost on me.

If a simple houseplant flourishes with individualized care and attention, how much more do our children?

In order to grow healthy kids, they need essential ingredients: the water, light and fertilizers of childhood. But children, like plants, are particular. They need watching. We can't assume that what worked for one will work for the next. And most importantly, we can't just bring them home and go on with our business.

I had to toss one of my houseplant casualties in the trash recently. We'll move on. But children, on the other hand, matter immensely. These infinitely complex human beings are gifted to us to steward and nurture. The stakes are extremely high, and our calling to care for them is one of the greatest we'll ever receive in this life.

Today's key verse, [Galatians 6:9](#), reminds us: *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."* So let's remember two things:

1. It's an honor to care for children — a deep and God-given calling with eternal ramifications.

Let's give child-raising the appropriate honor and virtue it deserves, especially in a culture that can make us feel as if there are a million other things that are more important. But if you made it this far, I believe you get it. *Way to go, you!*

2. Let's watch our children, and be willing to change things up.

I've tried to hold my theories and practices loosely. And regularly evaluate each child, to see what they need for the next season. The goal isn't a philosophy. It's being able to watch our plants and children and see them flourish because we've paid attention to their individual needs.

Thankfully, so much of parenting can be learned. I was bad at plants, and now I'm not-so-bad. We can learn, grow and become good caretakers of the plants and the children who live in our houses. It just takes some effort and bravery to get our hands dirty.

Lord, thank You for the good work of parenting, because Your children matter. Guide us with the strength to do it well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



EVENTS

September 12th * 9am-1pm
Community Lunch @ FUMC

September 16-23-30
4:00 PM-5:00 PM
Wacky Wednesdays
Location TBD

September 27th @ 6:00 PM
Pizza Posse
Bubeck Park

October 3 * 9:00am-3:00pm
Servant for a Day Fundraiser
Meet @ FUMC

October 18th
Fall Fun Day @ Gretna Glen
12:00-3:00 PM

October 25th @ 6:00 PM
Pizza Posse
Location TBD



WEDNESDAYS Invite someone new!

Wacky Wednesdays start
September 16th
4:00-5:00 PM
Location TBD



The youth are interested in raising funds to attend their annual winter retreat as well as King's Fest 2021. You can help by having them complete those outdoor chores this fall! Servant for a Day will be held on Saturday, October 3rd from 9:00am-3:00pm. Tasks should be scheduled through April Bergen by completing and returning the attached flyer or emailing her the information. See form for more details!

THE IGNITE YOUTH MINISTRY WILL BE MAKING & SELLING FROZEN COOKIE DOUGH FOR CHRISTMAS.

TUBS ARE 2 QUARTS AND COST \$10 EACH.
DOUGH FLAVORS ARE SUGAR, CHOCOLATE
CHIP AND OATMEAL CRAISIN.

COMPLETE THE ATTACHED FORM TO ORDER

DEADLINE TO ORDER WILL BE NOVEMBER 15, 2020!



Being a parent is challenging, especially if you have teenagers who are quickly becoming young adults entering a fast-moving, complex world. How do you get your son or daughter ready for it? How can you help them hold on to their faith? How do you know if you're doing a good job as a parent?

That's why the Parenting Team at Focus on the Family created "[8 Essential Tips for Parenting Teens](https://www.focusonthefamily.com/8-essential-tips-for-parenting-teens-form/)" — a free series of 8 short videos (they are each 2 – 3 minutes in length), featuring technology use, communication, setting boundaries, faith formation, emotional health, and more. It's like having a panel of experts in your home! Visit <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/8-essential-tips-for-parenting-teens-form/> to sign up today!

SERVANT DAY Fundraiser!

PLEASE COMPLETE FORM AND RETURN TO THE OFFICE, CALL APRIL BERGEN AT (570) 739-1606

OR EMAIL @ ABERGEN@HAVENFIRSTUMC.ORG NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 25TH!

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Task _____

Approximate time to complete _____



TUBS ARE 2 QUARTS AND COST \$10 EACH. DOUGH FLAVORS ARE SUGAR, CHOCOLATE CHIP AND OATMEAL CRAISIN. COMPLETE THE ATTACHED FORM TO ORDER & RETURN TO THE OFFICE, CALL APRIL AT (570) 739-1606 OR EMAIL TO: ABERGEN@HAVENFIRSTUMC.ORG.

DEADLINE TO ORDER WILL BE NOVEMBER 15, 2020!

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____

(#) SUGAR (#) CHOCOLATE CHIP (#) OATMEAL CRAISIN

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"

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

Coming in Sept. @ 11 am join us at Bubeck Park for Haven FX a Family worship experience

During this season you can 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
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