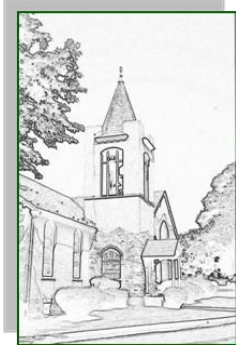


## What We've Been Up To...

The Rev. Lynne Mikulak



Confirmation field trip



As I stopped for my morning coffee at the local mini-mart, the woman behind the counter announced to me, cheerfully, "Happy Spring! It's the first day of Spring!" I looked outside and replied, sarcastically, "There's snow on the ground...the trees are bare...yep, happy Spring!" I have to admit that I've been a bit of a downer lately. Over the weekend, my wife and I attended my niece's basketball playoff game and, with only a few minutes left in the game, her team trailed by six points and I turned to my wife and said, "It's over...they're done." She turned to me and said, "Oh, you of little faith!" Later in the weekend, I had a conversation with someone who was describing one of his church's mission projects, an effort to give overnight shelter to homeless persons in downtown Bethlehem, and he was describing the various logistical complications involved with such an endeavor, and I agreed, "It's great to have these dreams and visions for helping people, but you've also got to be realistic." Like I said, I've been in quite a mood lately.

So I suppose it's perhaps a little easier for me, in my present state, to empathize with the early followers of Jesus after the events of Good Friday. After three years or so of being first-hand witnesses to the amazing teaching and ministry of Jesus, they could rightly look at one another and acknowledge, "It's over...we're done." The reality of the situation was this: The dream was over...Jesus was crucified and dead and buried...the early followers of Jesus were running and hiding in fear for their lives...the snow was on the ground...the trees were bare...Springtime was nowhere in sight.

In the PBS documentary, "From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians" several historians and scholars who were interviewed describe their fascination with this time in the movement of early Christianity: How did this fledgling, fearful, persecuted group of early followers somehow grow into the greatest religion in the world? For persons of faith, the answer is pretty clear. It is found in the story of Resurrection. It is the hope found in that story. It is the power found within that hope.

The friend who was talking to me about his church's efforts to aid the homeless people in his community said, during our conversation, "You know, it's really hard to try and be a good Christian." Yes, sometimes it is. It is especially difficult, sometimes, to follow Jesus in a society that seems dominated by so many negative stories, stories of violence and oppression and hatred, stories that threaten to steal our hope. I suppose that my dismal mood over the last few days could be, for many people, perfectly understandable.

But, like those early followers of Jesus, we are Easter people. And you know what? Even though there was snow on the ground and the trees were bare on the first day of Spring, the sky was filled with glorious sunshine and, somewhere in the distance, birds were singing as I enjoyed my hot cup of coffee. My friend's church, despite the complications, is going to pursue their dream for mission. And, as fate would have it, my niece's basketball team came back in the final moments to claim victory, causing my brother, Coach Tom, to raise his arms in joyous exultation, and causing my wife to turn to me and triumphantly proclaim, "I told you so!"

Yes, we are Easter people. And, even in our society, in which negativity seems so pervasive at times, there are so many glimpses of Resurrection hope. All we need do is look.

Happy Easter,  
Pastor Bob

## Parish Life

We will be hosting our Easter egg hunt and pancake breakfast on Saturday, April 8th for children. The breakfast will begin at 9:15 with the egg hunt following at 10AM. Come visit the Easter Bunny!

## Evangelism and Outreach

### Food Bank

Thank you for continuing to remember the urgent needs which our food banks seek to address. Canned goods and other non-perishables are always in demand. Please bring **anything** you think would be appreciated.

**Please keep your cans coming and place them in the pantry shelf. April's food of the month is baby items and healthy cereal.**

### Clean Up the Bushkill!

We will be helping to clean up the Bushkill Creek on **Saturday, April 22nd** from 9AM-2PM. Lunch will be served!

### Trinity Soup Kitchen

Our next date to serve lunch is June 24th from 10:30-1:30. Please see Gary Barraco with questions. We'd love to have you!

### Tortoise & Hare 5K Run and Walk

The 19th annual Tortoise & Hare Race is now underway for **Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, 2017** at Wind Gap Memorial Park! This event supports Project Child, the Child Abuse Prevention Coalition of the Lehigh Valley and is a program of Valley Youth House. Please run or WALK with us on Memorial Day! Register online at <https://racewire.com/register.php?id=7266> See Gary Barraco with questions.

### Just One Recent Mission

Members of our congregation, friends and veterans from One Fight Foundation have all helped out at Zion's Reformed United Church of Christ in Allentown at their Jubilee Breakfast outreach program. The Jubilee Breakfast Ministry is a shared mission project with St. John's UCC Allentown with support and volunteers from First Presbyterian and other churches and community support. We provide breakfast and warm hospitality on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. to those who are homeless and to the working poor. Most come directly from Allentown's overnight warming shelter. They receive a meal and have a warm place to stay before going to their workplace, or until county agencies and drop-in centers open at 9 a.m. (Why Jubilee? This ministry to, with and for those who are homeless is taking place just a few feet from where the Liberty Bell was hidden in this church during the Revolutionary War. The well-known inscription on the bell ("Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof") from Leviticus 25 proclaims the Jubilee year in which the scales of economic justice are balanced for all people. We pray for that day to come. In the meantime, we work as advocates for those who are in need. And we offer the most basic ministry that Jesus taught us to provide: food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless (Matthew 25).)

## RELAY FOR LIFE

Friday, May 19th – Saturday, May 20th, 2017

4 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Join the Team...Join the Walk...Help Find a Cure!**

12 years! That's how long we have been representing Forks UCC at the American Cancer Society Relay for Life – Slate Belt.

A lot has changed over the years, and yet every day people are still battling cancer.

### **Why we Support Relay For Life**

Relay For Life is the signature fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. Relay is staffed and coordinated by volunteers in more than 5,200 communities and 27 countries. Volunteers give of their time and effort because they believe it's time to take action against cancer.

Forks UCC has participated in the Slate Belt Relay for many years. We set up a big tent, sell baked goods and items we make, and share in fellowship. The event also brings the community together to remember loved ones lost, honor survivors of all cancers, and raise money to help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer.

We hope you will mark your calendar with the dates and come over to walk a lap with us, spend time getting to know us or catching up in the tent, or just connecting with God and those loved ones in your life who have suffered from cancer.

**Bangor Memorial Park, 90 Eisenhart Blvd, Bangor, PA**

**WON'T YOU JOIN US ON MAY 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> AT BANGOR PARK?**

**We walk because no one should have to walk alone on their journey.**

*Having cancer is hard. Finding help shouldn't be.*

American Cancer Society is available at 1-800-227-2345 (24/7) or [cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

## Christian Education

### Sunday School

Sunday School continues through May and will come to a close on June 11th. As we prepare for next school year, please consider **volunteering** to teach Sunday School for a few weeks. We would like to have a co teaching model every week and need lots of volunteers to fill those roles. You would need your PA clearances for volunteering. Please see a member of the Christian Education committee if you have questions.

### Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School this year: July 17th-21st. Please see Pam Davis if you'd like to volunteer!



April 2017

## Altar Flowers

There are a few Sundays remaining in 2017 to sponsor altar flowers. Please check the flower chart on the tripod in the Social Room adjacent the Sanctuary. Select your Sunday and affix your name and intention (“In honor of” or “In memory of” or “To the Glory of God”). The arrangements are \$30. Please make checks payable to “Forks UCC” with the notation “Altar Flowers”. Simply drop your payment in the offering plate. Thank you.

### Altar Flower Sponsors for April

April 2 - Duane & Kim Edelheiser  
April 9 - Brenda DeLong  
April 16 - Gregg & Tracey Cressman  
April 23 - Sarah Happel  
April 30 - Tammy Uhler



## Those Serving

### Ushers/Coin Collectors

April 2 - Jean Cooper  
April 9 - Joan Mumaw  
April 16 - Ron Mumaw  
April 23 - Jean Cooper  
April 30 - Mike Boushell

### Greeters/Offering Collectors

April 2 - Joan & Dave Phillips/Carole Steckel and Sally Dewalt  
April 9 - Linda & Dick Armburst/Rocky Starnier and Jean Cooper  
April 16 - Bill & Lorna Dreisbach/Sandy & Glenn Borger  
April 23 - Barbara Huff and Alice Bartholomew/Bob & Margaret Zabe  
April 30 - Carol & Dave Young/Lori Avery and Brenda DeLong

## Celebrate with our Church Family

### Happy April Birthdays

01 Amanda Starner	16 Dale Bernecker
02 Matthew Audenried	16 Tracey Cressman
02 Evan Whitmore	18 Joan Mumaw
03 Dawn Dewalt	19 Cindy Mohn
04 Lois Steward	20 Dave Young
04 Steve Aicher	20 Michael Correll
04 Tanner Riehl	20 Wil Knitter Jr.
05 Rosemarie Dewalt	22 Jason Schaadt
06 Terry Kresge	23 Rita Blossey
08 Stephanie Riehl	24 Jennifer Warren
09 Mike Boushell	24 Landon Uhler
09 Matthew Silfies	26 Sue McCollian
10 Betsy Warner	27 Debbie Allen
14 Perma Seiple	28 Glenn Kromer
14 Ayvah Fry	29 Emilee Hendricks
15 Ronda Gutekunst	

### April Anniversaries

Kim & Duane Edelheiser	04/02/1983
Donna & Fred Bolling	04/11/1970
Stephanie & Donald Riehl	04/17/1999

### Teen Prayer List

Abbie Buck, Tyler Avery, Larissa Bernecker, Sakura Bolte, Takumi Bolte, Masaki Bolte, Abbey Chesney, Brandon Cressman, Olivia DiPierdomenico, Sophia DiPierdomenico, Makayla Fleming, Christopher Flyte, Karlee Flyte, Ashleigh Gaul, Emily Gutekunst, Julia Gutekunst, Tommy Gutekunst, Derek Hammerstone, Diana Hammerstone, Emilee Hendricks, Abbi Hoke, Kyle Hoke, Michael Lopresti, Jayson Mitch, Rebecca Mitch, Tyler Mitch, Julia Ortiz, Georgia Pump, Hailey Quier, Ethan Riehl, Breanna Schneebeli, Cayden Shook, Alexandria Wood, Emma Wood

### Confirmands

Abbie Buck, Evan Dugan, Derek Hammerstone, Kyle Hoke, Shanon McCollian, Tyler Mitch, Katelyn Raymond, Tanner Riehl, Cayden Shook, Tagan Steward, Landon Uhler

### Visitation List

Please see the Church Directory or contact the Church office or a member of the visitation team for addresses. Earl & Dolly Abel, Fred Bolling, Mary Correll, Corinne Eberts, Tony Jiorle, Charles Kessler, Dorothy Kortz, Marge Markley, Winnie Mengle, Patti O'Donnell, Jane Rader, Florence Saylor, Irene Tenges, Marge (Koch) Ziegenfuss

### Pulled Pork Dinner

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$11 at the door. See Jacob Allen, Margaret Zabe, Joan Mumaw, or Jean Cooper or call the church office for tickets or questions.

April 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> 5th Sunday in Lent Communion	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:30PM Evangelism and Outreach	<b>5</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 6:30PM Lenten Soup Supper 7:15PM Lenten Service	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Parish Life Breakfast/ Easter Egg Hunt 9:15AM Stand Up for Homelessness 9-2
<b>9</b> Palm/Passion Sunday No Sunday School	<b>10</b> 7PM Stewardship/ Finance	<b>11</b> 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory Meeting	<b>12</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>13</b> Maundy Thursday 6:30PM Covered Dish and Service	<b>14</b> Good Friday 3PM Service 7PM Service	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Easter Sunday 5:45AM (approx.) Sunrise Service 10AM Worship No Sunday School	<b>17</b> 6:30PM Adult Fellowship	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Earth Day Bushkill Stream clean up 9-12 Pulled Pork Dinner 4:30-7
<b>23</b> 2nd Sunday of Easter	<b>24</b> 7PM Christian Ed.	<b>25</b> 6:30PM Parish Life	<b>26</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Memorial Service for Frances Uhler Time: TBA
<b>30</b> 3rd Sunday of Easter	<b>Notes:</b>					

Sundays  
8AM - Meditative Worship  
10AM - Worship/Children's Sunday School



April 2017

