

TIDINGS

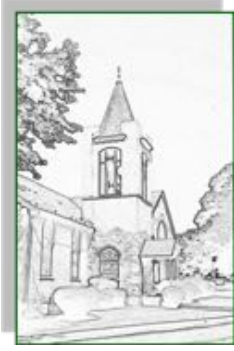
The Monthly Newsletter of Forks United Church of Christ
No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey...

you are welcome here!

What We've Been Up To...

Palm Sunday and Easter





My family is planning a trip out west this summer, to Wyoming and South Dakota, and, in preparation, I've been watching a PBS documentary, "The West", which talks about the history of some western landmarks we will be visiting, such as Devil's Tower, and the Badlands and Black Hills, the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone. The documentary talks about the people who first inhabited this land, Native American tribes, who considered this land to be sacred. As one commentator said, "There are some places in the West that people have never set foot on or seen...there's an air of mystery about this land."

I was thinking about that comment because, as I sit down to write this, we have just celebrated Easter and the central mystery of our faith, "Christ has died... Christ is risen...Christ will come again." I wonder how much we really celebrate and appreciate that mystery. I remember one of the chaplains at St. Luke's telling me a story about one of the Catholic priests there, who described, in great detail, all of the necessary steps required to perform the sacrament of Last Rites, now known as Sacrament of the Sick, and that, if any of these steps were not performed exactly as prescribed, the person's eternal soul would be in great jeopardy. When my chaplain friend asked the priest how he knew this, the priest responded, "It's a mystery." I remember thinking at the time that his response was pretty comical, but, the more I think about it, I'm not so sure.

The Reverend Nadia Bolz-Weber was asked, in an interview, about the traditional worship practices of the church, the liturgy and the sacraments, and how some postmodern people might consider them to be "dusty, old things that have little relevance for our lives today. People who discuss congregational transformation talk about things like a charismatic pastor, or a new trend in music, entertainment, life lessons...things that can be counted upon. I love the liturgy and sacraments because they don't require my integrity, talents, ability to work...there is a mystery there...we are saying words and praying prayers that millions of Christians have also uttered...we are wading into a stream where countless people have gone before and countless others will go after. In a world that is so chaotic, the mystery of the liturgy is meaningful and reliable."

What is it that you find meaningful and reliable in the life of the church? Here at Forks, I know that we have many people who participate in dinners, and festivals, and fellowship, and outreach- those tangible expression of our faith- and those are all good and necessary functions of the church. Might I also invite you to, perhaps, go on a church-sponsored spiritual retreat, or participate in one our small groups as we wrestle with deeper questions of life and faith, or come to one of our early Sunday services and spend some time in silence? As Bolz-Weber goes on to say, "My people are so much more comforted by mystery than they are certainty. I know that certainty sells, but, for me anyway, certainty has always been a liar. We are not called to be stewards of the entertainment of Christ...we are called to be stewards of the mystery of Christ."

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious."- Albert Einstein

Fundraising

Our Strawberry Festival is approaching! It will be on Wednesday, June 21, 2017 from 5-9PM. The Bobby Clark Band will be providing live entertainment. See Jacob Allen or Margaret Zabe for details or to volunteer your time.

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.

Compassion International

Consistory has accepted the recommendation of the Christian Education committee to sponsor a child through Compassion International. This sponsorship began in April with the children in Sunday School choosing the child they would like to sponsor and correspond with. The children were informed of how their weekly offering will specifically benefit their child. The goal is to support at least one child solely through Sunday School offering (\$38 a month) and possibly expand to sponsoring more children if funds allow. Please encourage your child to **donate** a dollar or more to the weekly collection.

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!



Creative Worship

Thank you to those who participated in the Palm/Passion Sunday presentation and Easter morning breakfast.

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. May's food of the month is personal hygiene items and healthy cereal. We are also in need of goodies for kids such as shelf stable jello, pudding snack packs, fruit roll ups, and packs of cookies.

Stand Up for Homelessness

At our last Stand Up, we helped serve 149 meals to 36 veterans and many others. Numerous haircuts were given. If you cut hair, please let Gary Barraco know if you'd be willing to donate your time. The next Stand Up is **June 10th** from 9AM-2PM.

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.

Relay for Life

Relay For Life is coming up on Friday, May 19 at 4PM through Saturday, May 20th at 4PM. 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

Mother's Day Flower Sale

We will be accepting orders for our annual geranium flower sale to benefit Relay for Life on April 30th and May 7th. See Amy Knitter, Denise Polkowski, or Karen Bernecker to place your order.

“I’m going on a trip, and I’m going to take...”

As a small child, we used to play this group game on bus trips or long family rides. It certainly helped keep up entertained and amused at a time when there was not video playing in the back of the station wagon, or an iPad full of various games. So, I ask you – if you were going on a mission trip, what would you take?

Well, one of our congregation members, Eric Hanlein, is planning out what to pack for a week in the remote village of Monte Margarita in Guatemala. This is no vacation holiday though. Eric will be joining others from the UCC Penn Northeast Conference Amigos de Guatemala on a trip to see the initial progress on the construction of a medical facility there.

“Once we take our eyes away from ourselves, from our own interests, from our own rights, privileges, ambitions – then they will become clear to see Jesus around us.” - Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

Over the last few years, the Amigos have been raising over \$125,000 to build a medical and mixed use structure. Construction started in February 2017 and this will be a life-changing project for those who have participated on both sides.

- Imagine not having clean water to drink.
- Imagine not being able to go to your medicine cabinet for an aspirin.
- Imagine not being able to read or drive because you don't have glasses.
- Now imagine what our support will do for a deeply underserved area.

“Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?” - James 2:5

Thank you for your donation to the Lenten Pennies from Heaven collection. The \$350 will be used toward the home church sponsorship of his mission trip at the end of May. (The Amigos de Guatemala pay 1/3 and Eric will pay 1/3 of the cost also.)

But what will Eric take on his trip?

- I encourage you to bring in your old eyeglasses – these will be repurposed for the villagers and surrounding neighbors.
- Get your kids and grandkids involved too – you can make small Ziploc bags with children’s items like a few crayons, stickers, hard candy, pencils, etc.
- Your prayers and if you would like, a written note for him to take with him and read during his trip.
- And candy – Eric never goes anywhere without candy.

If you want to learn more about this mission project or want to donate to our church’s sponsorship of missionaries, contact Gary Barraco @ garybarraco@verizon.net.



construction in Monte Margarita



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 May

May 7 - Rodney & Sheri Burda
May 14 - Gary Barraco & Eric Hanlein
May 21 - Carolyn Mitch
May 28 - Anna & Vic Zeeman



Those Serving

Ushers/Coin Collectors

May 7 - Jean Cooper
May 14 - Robert Zabe
May 21 - Jean Cooper
May 28 - Steve Dewalt

Greeters/Offering Collectors

May 7 - Debbie & Steve Chesney/Joan Jud and Marguerite Obulaney
May 14 - Louise Bruch and Jean Cooper/Betty Stocker and Mel Kresge
May 21 - Mike & Kathy Boushell/Ron & Joan Mumaw
May 28 - Carol Hartway and Sandy Perrine/Donna Lee Cresina and Jean Cooper

Celebrate with our Church Family

Happy May Birthdays

02 Donna Bolling	20 Walt Francis
02 Shirley Thatcher	21 Derick Whitmore
10 Keith Kresge	21 Evan Dugan
10 Ian Wagner	25 Randy Dewalt
11 Ryan Fry	25 Nancy Fry
13 Barry Durie	25 Chris Happel
13 Erika Negrin	27 Margaret Koch Ziegenfus*
14 Dot Setzler	27 Jerry Kinsey
15 Amy Knitter	28 Alison Fleming
17 Gregg Cressman	29 Charise Jones
19 Margaret Zabe	29 Josh Hahn
19 Karlee Flyte	30 John Hartzell
19 Nina Sales	30 Eleanore Hornbake
20 Anna Laudenslager	

Birthday wishes to Marge Koch Ziegenfus who celebrates her 98th birthday on May 27th!



May Anniversaries

Kris & Jack Sales	5/03/1997
Nancy & Randy Fry	5/05/1979
Vilma & Jim Milham	5/11/1996
Debbie & Richard Allen	5/12/1979
Kalyn & Charles Kolb	5/12/2012
Tracey & Gregg Cressman	5/14/1994
Salome & Matthew Audenried	5/19/2007
Jenn & Scott Hughes	5/22/1999
Cindy & Steve Aicher	5/23/1987

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

May 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	4	5	6
7 4th Sunday of Easter Communion Parish Life Mother's Day Tea	8 7PM Stewardship/ Finance	9 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory Meeting	10 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	11	12	13
14 5th Sunday of Easter Mother's Day/ Festival of the Christian Home	15 6:30PM Adult Fellowship	16 6:30PM Evangelism & Outreach	17 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	18	19 Relay for Life	20 Relay for Life
21 6th Sunday of Easter	22 7PM Christian Ed.	23 6:30PM Parish Life	24 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	25 Ascension Day Luke 24:44-53	26	27
28 7th Sunday of Easter Memorial Day Service Ceremony at flag pole following 10AM worship	29 Memorial Day Tortoise & Hare 5K	30	31 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	Notes:		

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





FORKS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 4500 SULLIVAN TRAIL
 P.O. BOX 158
 STOCKERTOWN, PA 18083-0158

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Easton, PA 18045
 PERMIT # 148

DATE MAILED:

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FORKS UCC
 4500 Sullivan Trail
 P.O. Box 158
 Stockertown, PA 18083

PHONE:
 (610) 759-5676

WEBSITE:
www.forkschurch-ucc.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
 MON, TUES, WED, THURS
 8:15 AM TO 3:30 PM

Newsletter Editor:
 Alice Hornbake

Webmaster:

Your Consistory Members

Consistory PresidentPam Davis
 Vice PresidentBetsy Warner
 Consistory Secretary.....Carol Young
 Spiritual CouncilMel Kresge
 Spiritual CouncilBrenda Stoudt
 Spiritual CouncilJim Milham
 Christian EdLois Steward
 Alice Hornbake
 Evangelism and Outreach.....Gary M. Barraco
 Rocky Starner
 Kim Starner
 Creative WorshipJean Cooper
 Parish LifeSue McCollian
 Sarah Ringhoff
 PropertySteve Dewalt
 Sandy Schaadt
 Stewardship & FinanceJacob E. Allen
 Amy Richard
 Margaret Zabe
 Personnel.....Bob Zabe
 Ruth Gable

Staff Members

MinistersEvery Member of the Church
 PastorBob Gutekunst
 Music Director Tony Moore
 Director of Outreach Ministry.....Gary M. Barraco
 Office Manager.....Cheryl Hahn
 Groundskeeper.....Frank Mengel, Jr.
 HousekeeperLoretta Seruga

About Forks UCC:

We carry on the traditions of the faithful who founded this church in 1812. A landmark along Sullivan Trail, the congregations have been proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ for over 200 years.

Our Mission Statement

God calls and empowers us to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of all people, through our gifts of love, support, and compassion revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God is still speaking,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



May 2017