

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...

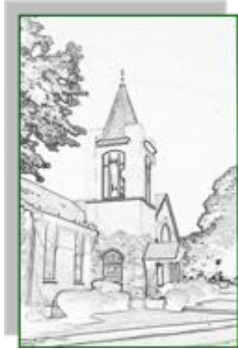


Easter Fun



Palm Sunday





A few months ago, a group of friends and I went out to lunch at the restaurant, *Thai Thai II*, on Main St. in downtown Bethlehem. It was the first time I had eaten at a Thai restaurant. My friends had to order for me- I didn't recognize anything on the menu. I'd like to think that, since meeting my wife a few years ago, she has sophisticated my tastes somewhat and expanded my horizons on the food front (I'm sure she would agree). But, the result of these culinary adventures has been a few uncomfortable, even unsettling experiences- staring at a whole Maine lobster and asking, "What am I supposed to do with this?"...learning the incorrect way to use chopsticks, attempting authentic Indian fare...even sampling caviar (that's fish eggs for the uncultured).

In a recent UCC Daily Devotional, pastor Vince Amlin describes some similar experiences when he says, "I think of the confusion and self-consciousness of sitting down to a meal I don't know how to eat. My first time negotiating crawfish or tamales. The discomfort of eating with my hands on low stools at an Ethiopian restaurant. The embarrassment of chewing on an edamame pod for minutes until I realized I was only supposed to eat the beans."

He goes on to talk about a restaurant in Pittsburgh called *Conflict Kitchen*. The restaurant changes its menu every 3 to 5 months or so, only serving food from countries that are or have been in conflict with the United States. Previous versions of the menu have included dishes from Palestine, North Korea, Afghanistan and Cuba. The most recent menu offered food from the Iroquois Confederacy, a Native American tribe from our own country. Diners could enjoy such selections as succotash, cranberry and juniper braised venison, and a root tea called *Okdeaghi*. In addition to the food, customers also learn Iroquois perspectives on such topics as Indigenous Sovereignty, economic and environmental conflict, and cultural erasure. As the mission of the restaurant states, "At Conflict Kitchen, we use food and innovative storytelling to engage the public in discussions about cultures and people that we often know little about." It's all about growth, and openness, and taking some risks.

I think that it's probably true that when it comes to table fellowship, we most often seek out the familiar- in terms of the food that we eat, and the rhythms and habits of our eating, and the kinds of people we sit down at the table with. We learn from a very early age- in the school cafeteria- that people sit down to eat with same kinds of people. In Jesus' day, this was even more pronounced. People didn't eat with people from other cultures, with people from different economic situations, with people from different social classes, and not just because of comfort and familiarity. Business relationships, economic opportunities, entire livelihood depended on eating with the right kinds of people.

Jesus, on the contrary, sat down at the table with whomever he liked. He demonstrated what scholar, John Dominic Crossan, calls, *Open Commensality*. Commensality comes from the Latin word, mensa, for "table." Basically, when it came to table fellowship, Jesus broke down any and all barriers that separated people from one another. And, of course, table fellowship was a microcosm for his entire ministry, in which he crossed borders into countries that were in conflict with his country of Judea, and told stories in which those foreigners were the heroes, and his countrymen were the villains. The Kingdom of God, Jesus taught, was not about familiarity, and comfort, and the status quo, but more about growth, and openness, and taking risks for the sake of the gospel.

I'm not suggesting that we serve Thai food at the next church dinner. But, when it comes to those church dinners... and Adult Fellowship, and Consistory meetings, and Vacation Bible School suppers, what I notice is that people sit and eat with the same people. Over and over again. What might happen if we decide to sit with someone new, if we decide to get to know someone different? How might that translate into our ministry? In our entire congregational life together, what might happen if we decided that growth, and openness, and taking risks were more important than ease, and comfort, and familiarity?

Blessings,
Pastor Bob

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. Consider donating spices. Spices allow cooks to add flavor to food without additional salt. Think about buying cumin, cinnamon, coriander, onion powder, garlic powder, cloves, oregano, basil, parsley, cayenne pepper, rosemary, thyme, bay leaves, or any other spices you commonly cook with.

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

Trinity Soup Kitchen

Our next date to serve lunch is April 14th from 10:30-1:30. Please see Sharon Merluzzi with questions. We'd love to have you!

Clean Up the Bushkill!

We will be helping to clean up the Bushkill Creek on **Saturday, April 21st** from 9AM-12PM. Lunch will be served afterward. See Pastor Bob with questions.

Hoagie Sale

Relay for Life Super Bowl hoagie sales totaled over \$700. Thank you!

Christian Education

Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School this year: July 16th-20th. Please see Amanda Knitter if you'd like to volunteer!

CPR Class

Ever wonder if you could help out if you saw someone collapse in front of you? Knowing how to perform CPR would certainly be beneficial if you ever found yourself in this type of situation. Forks UCC will be hosting a CPR class on Saturday April 14, 2018 at 9 AM which will include instruction, a manual, and hands on training to teach participants the necessary skills to perform adult, child, and infant CPR. Instruction in using an automatic external defibrillator (AED) will also be included. If you are willing to sacrifice 1 1/2 hours on a Saturday morning to learn the skills to help someone in need, please sign the sign up sheet in the social hall, or call Jeff Stoudt @ 610-863-8764 if you have questions. Cost is \$30 per person.

RELAY FOR LIFE
of Lehigh Valley East
Friday, June 8th – Saturday, June 9th, 2018
12 p.m. to 12 p.m.

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

13 years! That's how long we have been representing Forks UCC at the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. This year the Nazareth, Slate Belt and Easton areas have joined together.

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 for many years. The event 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.

Nazareth Middle School, 94 Friedenstahl Ave., Nazareth, PA

WON'T YOU JOIN US ON JUNE 8TH AND 9TH AT NAZARETH MIDDLE SCHOOL?

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



Making ConneXions

We are eager to know more about the people who worship with us. If you would like to share yourself and “make a connection”, please email Alice Hornbake (wmhornbake@yahoo.com) for the form. Thank you!

Featuring:

Julie Grogg from Easton, PA is a pet sitter for No Worries Pet Sitting, LLC and an independent consultant for Perfectly Posh and has been attending Forks UCC for a year:

★If you had to describe yourself in five words, what would they be?

Friendly, Empathetic, Animal loving, Helpful and Anxious

★Where do you like to vacation?

Anywhere there is a beach

★What’s on your bucket list?

To travel to every state in America

★If you could change something in the world, what would it be?

No more homeless people or pets

★What makes you wildly happy?

Anything to do with dogs



Pulled Pork Dinner

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$11 at the door. See Jacob Allen or call the church office for tickets or questions.

Altar Flowers

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, 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. Another way of showing your love is to opt out of having flowers, rather choosing to have a single candle on the altar and your flower money will be donated to a charity of your choice. This is a powerful way to honor the day but make a difference in our world. Please make checks payable to “Forks UCC” with the notation “Altar Flowers”. Simply drop your payment in the offering plate. Thank you.

Altar Guild for April - Carolyn Mitch

Altar Flower Sponsors for April

April 1 - Brenda DeLong

April 8 - The Steward Family

April 15 - OPEN

April 22 - Carol & Dave Young

April 29 - Sarah Happel

Those Serving

Greeters/Offering Collectors

April 1 - Bob & Dawn Trimble/Deb & Burton Ackerman

April 8 - Margaret Zabe and Brenda DeLong/Ron & Joan Mumaw

April 15 - Tracy & Gregg Cressman/Brandon Cressman and Ashley Cressman

April 22 - Rocky Starner and Barb Huff/Bob Zabe and Jean Cooper

April 29 - Sarah Happel and Joan Jud/Margaret & Bob Zabe

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	20 Kevin Killian
06 Terry Kresge	22 Jason Schaadt
08 Stephanie Riehl	23 Rita Blosssey
09 Mike Boushell	24 Jennifer Warren
09 Matthew Silfies	24 Landon Uhler
10 Betsy Warner	25 Jim Barrick
14 Perma Seiple*	26 Sue McCollian
14 Ayvah Fry	28 Glenn Kromer
15 Ronda Gutekunst	29 Emilee Hendricks

April Anniversaries

Kim & Duane Edelheiser	04/02/1983
Katie & Chris Jesson	04/05/2003
Donna & Fred Bolling	04/11/1970
Stephanie & Donald Riehl	04/17/1999

*Perma Seiple
celebrates her 93rd
birthday on the 14th.
Happy Birthday to
you, Perma. Call the
church office
for her address.

Confirmands

Ashley Cressman, Gavin Gaul, Hannah Gutekunst, Shanon McCollian, Tanner Riehl, Samantha Shook, Tagan Steward, Riley Williams

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, Dorothy Kortz, Marge Markley, Florence Saylor, Perma Seiple, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

Many Thanks

The Allen/Starner Family would like to thank so many who displayed their support, kindness, and love during this difficult time of Debra Allen's passing.

We want to thank those who came to the services, made any food or dessert items, those who helped and served during the luncheon, and those who sent cards, flowers, or gave a donation to Forks U.C.C. in memory of Debra Allen. It was all greatly appreciated.

ALSO...

Thank you to those who volunteered to provide soup for the Lenten Suppers.

April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Easter Sunday 6AM Sunrise Service Breakfast between services 10AM Worship No Sunday School			4 Choir rehearsals to be announced			7 Sing for America presents <u>GodSpell</u> 7PM *free will donations accepted
8 2nd Sunday of Easter	9 7PM Stewardship and Finance	10 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory				14 CPR 9AM Soup Kitchen 11AM Pulled Pork Dinner 4:30-7PM
15 3rd Sunday of Easter	16 6:30PM Adult Fellowship	17 6:30PM Evangelism and Outreach				21 Earth Day Bushkill Stream clean up 9-12
22 4th Sunday of Easter	23 7PM Christian Education	24 6:30PM Parish Life				
29 5th Sunday of Easter <i>Spring Congregational Meeting after Worship</i>	30	Wednesday Small Group gatherings coming soon Saturday Worship returns in May				

Sundays
 8AM - Meditative Worship
 10AM - Worship

