

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...



Vacation Bible School 2018



just a handful of the backpacks collected for Slater Family Network

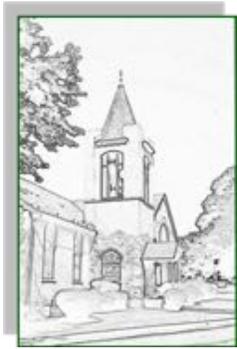


Iron Pigs Game



Pride in the Park





My wife, Ronda, and I attended the “Pride in the Park” festival in Allentown on August 19th. The festival celebrates LGBTQ life in the Lehigh Valley, among other things. Ronda and I were scheduled to work at the UCC table, distributing information about our local UCC churches. Truthfully, we pretty much just stood around, talking with friends, old and new alike. I met some really interesting individuals. It was a fun afternoon. One conversation I had, though, was not a fun one.

I spoke with a transgender woman for about a half hour about her experience in a local UCC church, not too far away from us, geographically. She said that the congregation never accepted her. They refused to speak to her, refused to invite her to church events, pretty much ignored her and pretended that she didn’t exist. Of course, this church says, like we do, that, “No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” But, they didn’t really mean it. I told this particular person that she would be welcome at my church. I hope I was right.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said that the hour of worship on Sunday mornings is “the most segregated hour of the week.” We tend to congregate and worship with people who look just like us. So, even though our motto is, “No matter who you are...”, the truth is that we don’t have many opportunities to put that to the test. I remember reading a story about an autistic boy who would have occasional outbursts in worship. Another story told of a woman, covered in tattoos, who had been invited to a worship service and began lighting a cigarette in the pews because she had never been to a church service before and didn’t know any better. I experienced a homeless person entering a sanctuary on a Sunday morning, reeking of alcohol. In all of these situations, a church elder quietly and politely asked the offending person if they wouldn’t feel more comfortable outside the sanctuary.

When I first started her at Forks, a member of the choir said to me, “We’re just a different breed, here at Forks UCC.” I believe he meant “different” in a good way, as in we accept EVERYBODY and we love ALL people, no matter who they are or what they do, which is a much different response than our society’s usual response to people who are different.

At the UCC table that Ronda and I worked at, there were brochures, listing all of the churches in the Conference that are designated, “ONA” as in, “Open and Affirming” as in, “We welcome LGBTQ folks, the same as we welcome every single other person on the planet.” I was saddened to see that there are only five “ONA” churches in the Conference. Five out of 120 or so. Only five churches, who can say to that transgender woman I spoke with, “It’s okay if you come here.” In a denomination that holds, as one of its core values, “Extravagant Welcome”, five churches is not enough. It’s pathetic, really. We can do better.

I know that there are many people who are uncomfortable talking about this. I know that there are probably many people in our congregation who would rather not have this conversation. But being a member of a church isn’t about easy; it’s about following Jesus, who, by the way, accepted everyone.

At the “Pride in the Park” festival, even though I am a white, straight, middle class, middle-aged, male, different in many ways from a lot of the folks attending, there wasn’t single person who excluded me, ignored me, or insulted me. Everyone there was open to me and affirming of me. Shouldn’t we do the same?

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” (Romans 15:7)

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.

Stewardship and Finance

Text to Give is now set up. You can text the amount you'd like to donate to the church at any time. Text it to 610-981-1921. Then you will receive a link to register where you can verify the amount you'd like donated. You can receive an email receipt. You will then be set up for future text to give donations. We hope this is an option for some of our visitors and current members.

Christian Education

Thank you to everyone who assisted with Vacation Bible School this year. We also appreciated the giving tree donations.

Please join us on Rally Day, Sunday, September 9th for the start of Sunday School. Arrive a few minutes early to register your children for the class. We will have a picnic afterward. Look for a sign up sheet to bring a dish to share.

Thank You

From the Family of Mary Correll – Thank you for your fellowship, cards, visits, and prayers. These moments of kindness provide hours of comfort and memories of joy. To the Adult Fellowship, thank you for hosting the celebration of life. To Pastor Bob, thank you for the countless hours of counseling, prayers, and support. We are eternally grateful.

Youth Group

All teens are invited to attend this year's Sleepout for Homelessness on 9/29-30 at Forks UCC. There will also be a meeting for those teenagers interested in becoming a part of the Youth Group after Worship on 10/7. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to be involved, please contact Lois Steward at 610-759-3519.

Festivals

Thank you to all those who helped with our annual summer festivals. Both festivals were a success!

The Strawberry Festival profited \$2,483. The Ice Cream Festival profited \$2,178

Our Ice Cream Festival Raffle winners were Betty Stocker, Gina Frey, E. Zieserl, Ryan Hawn, Rusty Prutzman, and Jane Follweiler.

Thank you to our sponsors - Schmidts Funeral Home, Ready Set Go Preschool, The Adult Fellowship and Scott's Collision Centers. Also thank you to Bob & Dawn Trimble who donated all the hamburgers and hotdogs for both festivals.

Adult Fellowship

Adult Fellowship returns with a covered dish cookout in the grove on September 17th.

What is the Adult Fellowship? Adult Fellowship is a gathering of church members who once a month get together for simple fellowship. We have a covered dish supper at 6:30 on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Who belongs to the Adult Fellowship? Simply everyone in the church.

Rummage Sale

The Annual Rummage & Bake Sale is coming up October 19th & 20th. Help will be needed setting up starting October 8th. PLEASE do not bring items to the church until October 1st. If you absolutely must bring items before then, please contact Jacob Allen or Sandy Schaadt.

Thank you!

Stained Glass Window

Have you taken notice that the stained glass window in the Social Hall is missing? It will be out for the next couple of months as it is being refurbished. This is just the third window being refurbished out of our 14 windows that need to be refurbished over the next few years. This is a very expensive process. How is it being paid for? Our fundraisers over the past couple of years have been designated for this expense, as well as portions of our Rummage Sale profit will be donated by the Adult Fellowship. We also have families who have donated their loved ones memorials to this project. If at anytime you wish to contribute to the window refurbishing projects please let the church office or Jacob Allen know or simply put your donation in the offering plate marked "Stained Glass". Thank you for your continued support.

FORKS U.C.C.
RUMMAGE & BAKE SALE

4500 SULLIVAN TRAIL
STOCKERTOWN

Friday, October 19th 9am – 4pm
Saturday, October 20th 9am – 2pm

WE ARE IN NEED OF:

- YOUR HELP
- YOUR RUMMAGE
 - Please no donations after Wednesday Oct. 17th
and please no TV's or Upholstered Furniture.
- BAKED GOODS
- SOUP

Call (610)759-5676 or (610) 509-4570 for details



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 September - Rita Blossey

Altar Flower Sponsors for September

September 2 - Shirley Thatcher
September 9 - Doug and Carole Steckel
September 16 - Betsy and Craig Warner
September 23 - Carol and Dave Young
September 30 - Karen and Dale Bernecker

Those Serving

Ushers/Coin Collectors

September 2 - Bob Zabe
September 9 - Sam Kemmerer
September 16 - Steve Dewalt
September 23 - Ron Mumaw
September 30 - Melvin Kresge

Greeters/Offering Collectors

September 2 - Joan Jud & Jean Cooper/Rocky Starner & Barb Huff
September 9 - Lori Avery & Carolyn Mitch/Carol and Dave Young
September 16 - Joan and Ron Mumaw/Amy and Wil Knitter
September 23 - The Cressman Family
September 30 - Donna Lee Cresina/Linda and Dick Armbrust

Celebrate with our Church Family

Happy September Birthdays

02 Larry Lopresti	21 Diane Nicholas
10 Donna Lee Cresina	22 Irene Tenges
10 Bonnie Warren	23 Jacob Allen
11 Mark Hendricks	25 Anna Zeeman
12 Ben Audenried	25 Jayson Mitch
12 Addalai Sales	26 Jane Kemmerer
14 Riley Williams	26 Gary Barraco
15 Aidan Fleming	26 Jack Sales
16 Tayler Ostrander	26 Brittany Hughes
17 Alex Borger	28 Carol Dewalt
20 Zack Shook	30 Larissa Bernecker



September Anniversaries

Jennifer & Brian Lively	9/02/2002
Deb & Burton Ackerman	9/07/1974
Ronda & Bob Gutekunst	9/13/2014
Carol & Glenn Dewalt	9/15/1962
Char & Dale Lehman	9/15/2007
Carol & David Young	9/17/1960
Jane & Sam Kemmerer	9/19/1953
Sandy & Jim Schaadt	9/19/1970
Betsy & Craig Warner	9/19/1987
Dawn & Henry Pump Jr.	9/21/1985
Dotothea & Bill Setzler	9/23/1995
Kim & Tom Gutekunst	9/24/1994
Debbie & Alan Hartzell	9/26/1986
Tracey & Dathan Silfies	9/30/2000

Confirmands

Ashley Cressman, Hannah Gutekunst, Samantha Shook, 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, Corinne Eberts, Tony Jiorle, Dorothy Kortz, Marge Markley, Florence Saylor, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

September 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 <i>Communion</i> 15th Sunday after Pentecost	3 Labor Day - Office Closed	4	5	6	7	8
9 16th Sunday after Pentecost It's RALLY DAY! To 'rally' means to come together again to renew. Renew your relationship with God.	10 7PM Stewardship and Finance	11 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory	12	13	14 Forks Community Days	15 Forks Community Days
16 17th Sunday after Pentecost Forks Community Days	17 6:30PM Adult Fellowship Cookout	18	19	20	21	22
23 18th Sunday after Pentecost	24 7PM Christian Ed.	25 6:30PM Parish Life	26	27	28	29
30 19th Sunday after Pentecost						

Sundays
 8AM - Meditative Worship

