

What We've Been Up To...

Lovefeast

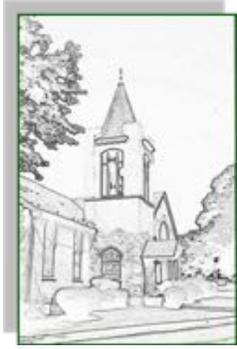


Roller Skating



Lent





Positive psychology guru and speaker, Shawn Achor, was once asked to speak at a prestigious boarding school in New England. “We’re having a ‘Wellness Week’” he was told. “Monday night, we’re going to talk about Adolescent Depression, Tuesday, it’s School Violence and Bullying, Wednesday we’re dealing with Eating Disorders, Thursday we’re going to discuss Illicit Drug Use, and Friday it’s Risky Sexual Behavior.” Achor responded, “I would love to come talk to your students, but, just so you know, that’s not a ‘Wellness Week’, it’s a ‘Sickness Week.’”

We tend to focus, so prominently, on the negative, even in the best of times. In these trying times we are living in, that tendency, perhaps, is exacerbated even more so. The news stories that I read every day, in my opinion, seem to emphasize the worst things that are happening; they seem to thrive on it.

So, in the midst of these unsettling times we are living in, I thought I would share some positive stories. These stories are courtesy of the “Good News Network.”

A 15-year-old girl is helping to protect some of California’s most vulnerable people from the dangers of the novel coronavirus outbreaks. Shaivi Shah has rallied her fellow honor society students into helping her give away more than 250 low-cost “sanitation kits” to homeless shelters around Los Angeles. Each kit contains hand sanitizer, lotion, antibacterial soap, and handmade reusable face masks to help homeless people stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. “They don’t have necessities right now that are crucial to remain clean and stay germ-free,” Shaivi told CNN. “It’s important for people to step in and just do whatever they can, even if it helps just one person.”

Another story: Although popular television shows are filmed with fake medical professionals, they do use real medical supplies—which is why the production crews are donating it all to real hospitals and firefighters combatting the COVID-19 outbreaks. In an Instagram post from the Ontario Fire Department, firefighters can be seen holding several boxes of protective face masks that were donated by firefighting TV drama *Station 19* earlier this week. Medical supplies from the set of *Grey’s Anatomy* are also reportedly being donated to hospitals in Los Angeles. At Grey’s Anatomy, we have a backstock of gowns and gloves which we are donating as well,” she added. “We are all overwhelmed with gratitude for our healthcare workers during this incredibly difficult time, and in addition to these donations, we are doing our part to help them by staying home.”

And finally this: Atlanta-based marketing firm Trevelino/Keller is just one of many companies that have temporarily closed down during the quarantine. With storage closets filled with enough toilet paper for 1,000 employees, the company decided to give away all of their TP for free. The company has since launched the Toilet Paper Exchange—an employee-run initiative to distribute the toilet paper to the community through “Toilet Paper Tosses”. Company employees have already given away heaps of toilet paper by hosting drive-thru giveaways during which they maintain social distancing by hurling rolls of TP through peoples’ car windows.

I hope that these stories can bring a little positivity to your day. Be safe. Stay well. And remember, as the season of Spring begins, and the story of Resurrection approaches, that these trying times will never have the last word. I hope to see you all soon.

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

Evangelism and Outreach

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.

Fresh Air Fund - Hosts Needed

Have you been wondering how YOU can make a difference in someone's life? The Fresh Air Fund, a non-profit organization started in 1877, is actively seeking hosts to provide children ages 7 to 13 the chance to escape NYC for one to two-week trips this summer (July & August). Hosts can be singles and couples with or without children. FAF covers all costs. Children arrive in our area. All you need to do is show them a fun time! Imagine the things you could offer a child during their week away from the heat of the city streets. You can select the gender and age of the child. There is no long-term commitment. We offer local support and great activities! We have the chance to make a difference. So why don't we? Visit freshair.org or contact Alice Hornbake at lvfaf@yahoo.com or 610-703-3095. Like our page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/freshairfundlehighvalley or tweet us @LVFreshAir!

Soup Kitchen

We have a few soup kitchen opportunities coming up. Please mark your calendars for May 16th and August 22nd and see Sharon Merluzzi for details.

Christian Education

Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School this year: July 27th-31st. Please see Amanda Knitter Williams if you'd like to volunteer!

Offering Envelopes

Do you use your offering envelopes? If not, please contact Cheryl in the church office (610-759-5676) to cancel your order. These envelopes are purchased and if you are giving electronically, we'd rather not waste the paper and money. Thank you!

Emergency Prayer Chain

An outreach for prayer when you or someone you know and love has an emergency, unexpected surgery, accident, etc. The place to call is:

- Church Office - (610) 759-5676
- Lois Steward - (610) 759-3519
- Rita Blossey - (484) 373-0614

One of us will start the chain. Anyone who would like to join our Emergency Prayer Chain, please call Lois Steward or Rita Blossey at the numbers listed above.

Call the Church Office When...

- A member of your family is admitted to the hospital so the proper people are notified.
- Your home phone, email address, or mailing address has changed.
- An addition to your family has occurred.
- You want your birthday and/or anniversary added to our newsletter list.
- You feel the church can help you in any way.

A Fun Learning Experience

When we are over the isolation of the covid-19 pandemic, those of us at Forks Church will be wanting to get together again, shake hands, ask how we are, worship, learn, and pray together! We wait with patience, care, and joy.

In the meantime it is not too early to imagine some things we might do.

Those of us who have lived in different places know that what we know about religion varies by where we live. Denominations present, religious customs that have invaded the culture, ideas about morality are different.

Last year I prepared a set of ten maps to illustrate how the United Church of Christ varies according to the geography of America. It includes a study guide that not only teaches some UCC history, but also helps us to think about some of these wider questions.

Some of us have discussed doing this as a one time event.

If this is something that you would like to attend, please let Bob or I know. We'd particularly be interested to know what time would suit you best: a weekday afternoon, an evening, or a weekend morning or afternoon. We'll then try to plan a time best suited to those interested.

Thanks!

Rick Taylor

Stewardship and Finance

You can always give your special offerings (envelopes) online at:

<https://forksucc.breezechms.com/give/online>

The special offerings this month are as follows:

4/5 - maintenance and repair fund

4/9 - Maundy Thursday

4/12 - Easter Offering

4/12 - O.C.W.M. special offering

Please note those words in the "comment" box while completing your online gift to allow your gift to be moved into the correct account.

ONA Corner

Visit this area of the newsletter for current Open and Affirming information.

As Forks UCC considers joining with more than 1,500 Open and Affirming (ONA) UCC churches, the Forks ONA Committee is committed to helping you clearly understand what this means and why it is important.

To be ONA means not only that all people are welcome in our church, but that we hope they will become vital parts of our church family—where they can celebrate their joys and share their sorrows, use their gifts and benefit from the gifts of others. It means that everyone can feel safe and comfortable in our worship, in our work, in our fellowship.

This is difficult because we come from different backgrounds and have differing viewpoints on almost everything. So to affirm that we want to be ONA affirms that we want to do better at accepting each other. What can help is sharing our stories—stories with which the rest of us can identify.

We invite you to tell us **YOUR STORIES**. When did you or someone you know feel unwelcomed, excluded, put down, or powerless? How did you overcome that experience? When have you as a stranger been made to feel at home and warmly welcomed? When have you been affirmed because your gifts were needed and gratefully used?

You can write up your story or share it with one of the committee members to write it up for you. Your story will be printed in our newsletter. We will put your name on the story only with your permission.

ONA Committee members are: Gary Barraco, Brenda DeLong, Bob Gutekunst, Alice Hornbake, Carolyn Mitch, Rick Taylor, and Betsy Warner

Good Reads

Welcome to our section sharing what we're reading now. Please send your recommendations to wmhornbake@yahoo.com to be featured next month.

The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are by Brené Brown

A motivational and inspiring guide to wholehearted living, rather than just the average self-help book, with this groundbreaking work Brené Brown, Ph.D., bolsters the self-esteem and personal development process through her characteristic heartfelt, honest storytelling. With original research and plenty of encouragement, she explores the psychology of releasing our definitions of an "imperfect" life and embracing living authentically. Brown's "ten guideposts" are benchmarks for authenticity that can help anyone establish a practice for a life of honest beauty—a perfectly imperfect life. Synopsis courtesy of Amazon.com

Recommended by Betsy Warner

How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States, by Daniel Immerwahr (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 2019)

When I was a teenager I was fascinated by maps, and had several of them covering the walls of my bed room. Not only was I fascinated by how many countries there were, but also by little minutia that I found that no one had ever mentioned. For example in the vastness of the Pacific there were islands called Johnston, Palmyra, Howland, and Baker that were owned by the United States! Did anyone live there? Why were we interested in them? How had we come to own them?

Similarly I wondered about Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, Alaska, and Hawaii; the last two not yet states.

I think it was that odd curiosity that first drew me to Immerwahr's book that had maps of some of these places on the cover. But I was soon to learn many things about my country that I had never heard before. The book opened a new world to me. It is basically a history of how a growing America has interacted with the wide world. The book is very well written, some parts humorous, some parts startling, others sobering. How has the United States interacted with the World? What great things have we done? What mistakes have we made? What can we learn from our history?

In this election year it is important that as responsible citizens we learn, we think, we ask, and we decide with enlightened judgment. This book is an energy filled trove that will both entertain and inform us as we prepare us for our task.

Recommended by Rick Taylor

“Forking” Over Blessings

Each month we will choose a charitable organization to donate 10% of a particular Sunday's offerings to. The more we collect, the more we give!

Our **second** collection will take place soon. **We donated \$200 in February to *Feed My Starving Children***. Thank you!

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 Flower Sponsors for April

April 5 - Brenda DeLong
April 12 - Betsy Warner
April 19 - Angelo Lopresti Jr.
April 26 - Sarah Happel

Those Serving

Ushers/Coin Collectors

April 5 - Ron Mumaw
April 12 - Sam Kemmerer
April 19 - Steve Dewalt
April 26 - Glenn Borger

Greeters/Offering Collectors

April 5 - Debbie Hartzell & Ruth Hartzell/The Cressman Family
April 12 - Lori Avery and Scott Reilly/Sharon Merluzzi and Bobbi Ricci
April 19 - Glenn and Sandy Borger/Carol and Dave Young
April 26 - Kim Starner & Rocky Starner/Lori Rowlands and Mike Bruengsen

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 Brooks Kolb	20 Wil Knitter Jr.
04 Tanner Riehl	22 Jason Schaadt
06 Terry Kresge	23 Rita Blossy
08 Stephanie Riehl	24 Jennifer Warren
09 Matthew Silfies	24 Landon Uhler
10 Betsy Warner	25 Jim Barrick
11 Gary Gardner	26 Sue McCollian
14 Ayvah Fry	28 Glenn Kromer
15 Ronda Gutekunst	29 Emilee Hendricks

April Anniversaries

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

Confirmands

Tyler Grogg, Jacob Hackman

Visitation List

Please see the Church Directory or contact the Church office or a member of the visitation team for addresses. Fred Bolling, Bob Egolf, Florence Saylor, Betty Stocker, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

Missing Church this Week?

No fear! You can watch from your computer. If you are on Facebook, go to our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/forkschurch/>) around 10AM and tune in LIVE. If you are not on Facebook, you can still go to our Facebook page AFTER the service and watch. Never miss a week!

Prayers

Pray for everyone who has been affected by COVID-19 to make a full recovery, that those caring for these patients remain healthy, and that there is a swift end to this pandemic!

April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 Palm/Passion Sunday						
12 Easter Sunday						18 Earth Day Clean-Up 9AM-12PM
19 2nd Sunday of Easter						
26 3rd Sunday of Easter					Please check Facebook and Weekly Happenings for events being canceled or reinstated.	

Sundays
 8AM - Meditative Worship
 10AM - Worship



April 2020

