

TIDINGS

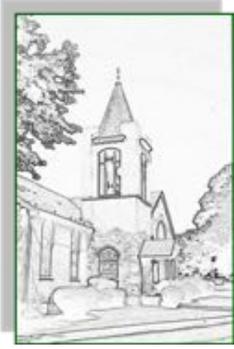
The Monthly Newsletter of Forks United Church of Christ
*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey...
you are welcome here!*



“The Story of Christmas”
production preparations



Shoebox
Ministry



I write this newsletter article on Inauguration Day, 2021, and I'm reminded of all of the tumult, and chaos, and divisiveness that has become a part of our political process in this country. It's a shame. It's a shame that we seem incapable of even having civil conversations with each other. And it's not just the political process. There are so many topics- politics, of course, but also religion, race relations, gun control, immigration, social justice issues- in which we, seemingly, can't even begin to have a dialogue.

This past summer, I was at a family member's house, and a member of my family started railing against a certain political party, apparently unaware that I have been a lifelong member of that certain political party. I kept my mouth shut. Later on, some others started up with the same rhetoric, and I said to them, very politely, "Can you please stop talking about this?" At the time, I was proud of myself for keeping calm and responding with civility. But, now...I don't know. I don't think that "keeping quiet" and "stop talking" really accomplished much of anything. We have to be able to talk about these kinds of things.

I saw a short video, produced by an organization called, "Everyday Democracy." The video offered "5 Big Ideas for Navigating Difficult Conversations":

First, *Start with Hunger*. We are all hungry. What are we hungry for? To be heard. To be understood. To be respected. When these basic hungers are met, most of us can collaborate productively. Kind-hearted questions, equal speaking time, and expressions of understanding and appreciation can help us all get the nourishment that we need.

Second, *Welcome Conflict as an Opportunity*. Conflict is energy, and energy can be transformed, just like our bodies transform chemical energy into kinetic energy. Conflict is an opportunity to appreciate the lifetime of experiences that others bring to the table, and that kind of appreciative energy helps us to make progress moving forward.

Third, *Compassionate Identification*. We all have felt sympathy. Sympathy is feeling sorry for another from afar. Compassion bridges the gap between us and others. We identify compassionately with others when we can connect something from our own experiences with theirs. This creates trust and rapport.

Fourth, *Perceptive Understanding*. When we engage in conversation with others, it is tempting to want to win, to make convincing others the goal of our conversation. A better goal is to understand the other person. Sometimes, what seems like disagreement is just two ways of looking at the same thing. And remember, disagreement in one area can coexist quite nicely with agreement in another.

And fifth, *Practical Love*. Most of us think of love as something we feel, but it can be practiced in a much more active way. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Love is a practical form of strength and power."

None of these ideas are particularly groundbreaking. I'm sure most of us have heard some version of them before. But, they can serve as reminders that difficult conversations are possible. And in our current climate, I believe that difficult conversations are absolutely necessary. The video concludes with these words, "Be strong. Be kind. Be loving." If we can do this, then maybe, just maybe, we can move forward together.

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

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:

2/7 - maintenance and repair fund

2/14 - heat 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.

Barrels, again!

Beginning in September we need to start paying for our Fuel Oil for the upcoming heating season. Again this year we are hoping you help us by buying "Barrels of Oil" for \$50 a barrel. Together we can ensure we can worship in a warm sanctuary all throughout the cold winter.

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!

2021 Offering Envelopes

Have you picked up your 2021 Offering Envelopes? They are available Tuesday through Thursday from 9 am – 3 pm. Come to the back door or call ahead and Cheryl will have them ready for you. Don't forget your mask, please. 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.

ONA Corner

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

ONA Committee members are: Brenda DeLong, Bob Gutekunst, Sharon Solt Harfman, Alice Hornbake, Carolyn Mitch, Rick Taylor, and Betsy Warner

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. February's food of the month is breakfast items.

*****Our blessing box will remain on the front step of the church. Please use it to drop off donations or to fill a need you have.**

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. Or you can watch on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEOmIblk8CHl3wb55Ir-djg>) Never miss a week!

Newsletter Submissions

If anyone wishes to submit any articles for the NEWSLETTER, please have all items emailed by the **20th of each month** to: wmbornbake@yahoo.com



Don West: "An Agitator"

Jesus was a common man, able to slip through a crowd unseen, and often not recognized by religious authorities.

Don West (1906-1992) could do it all. The son of Georgia sharecroppers, he was a poet, writer, professor, teacher, coal miner, farmer, pastor, labor organizer who immersed himself in the lives and stories of "peasants, slaves, and workers." During High School he led a protest against the showing of the racist film, "Birth of a Nation."

Inspired by the Danish Folk School Movement, he is perhaps best known as co-founder of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. It was begun to "teach Appalachians about their progressive history and to train activists and union organizers." It helped train and support the non-violent work of Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, and John Lewis.



Deeply rooted in the social gospel, and an ordained Congregational Christian and United Church of Christ minister, West developed a curriculum that affirmed the heritage of Appalachian kids, published the songs of Kentucky miners, and defended those who were falsely accused. Hounded by newspapers, he once had to flee a lynch mob, and the KKK burned down his home. In later life he and his wife organized the Appalachian South Folklife Center in West Virginia.

West was an extraordinary writer, and although he studied at the University of Chicago and Columbia, he chose to write in a common vernacular. His activism was controversial and in the 1940s the House Un-American Activities Committee went after him. His family had to hide and perjure academic work and his ministerial standing were laid aside in a difficult time. Later, however, he reconnected with the UCC and its social justice.

Here is one of his poems:

I was raised on a hillside farm
Where my Daddy's sweat
Sailed down the red clay
I'm the son of my mother
The woman who plucks between
the cotton rows—
And I'm an Agitator!

Contributor: Richard H. Taylor

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 February

Those Serving

Pulled Pork Dinner

Come enjoy delicious pulled pork served with seasoned baked potatoes, a medley of roasted vegetables, coleslaw and an array of desserts on March 20th. Tickets are \$12 but are not required. Call Jacob Allen (610-533-9108) or the church office for tickets or questions.

Housekeeping

In the new year, we will be looking for volunteers to help keep our church clean. Some responsibilities include emptying the trash cans, swiffering the floor under the pews, and vacuuming. If you or a group of your family or friends would be interested in doing this once for a particular month, please contact Jacob Allen (610-533-9108) or Alice Hornbake (610-703-3095) for details. Youth can also earn community service hours for their participation. Thank you for caring for our congregation and building.

Visitation List

Please see the Church Directory or contact the Church office or a member of the visitation team for addresses. Bob Egolf, Chuck Givler, Anna Laudenslager, Florence Saylor, Janet Rush, Betty Stocker, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

Celebrate with our Church Family

Happy February Birthdays

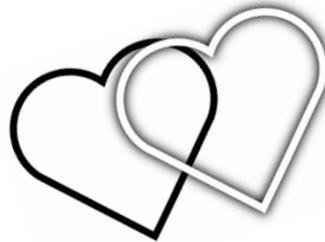
01 Cathy Tirrell	16 Kim Edelhoiser
03 Vilma Milham	16 David Warner
05 Cayden Shook	19 Pauline Frace*
05 Samantha Shook	21 Gloria Burkos
08 Bob Zabe	21 Shelby McCollian
08 Diane Dewalt	22 Will Hornbake
09 Nick Hendricks	23 Kim Starner
10 Shannon McCollian	23 Chris Mumaw
11 Tyler Mitch	25 Patti Starner
13 Jennifer Wood	26 Ron Mumaw
15 Roger Keat	26 Violet Ortiz
15 Lily Ringhoff	26 Abigail Audenried
15 Jakob Herres	26 Devon Clifton
15 Allison Silfies	27 Derek Hammerstone
15 Kelsey Beers	28 Judy Kinsey
16 Dale Wilson	

* Best wishes to Pauline Frace
who celebrates her 91st
birthday!

February Anniversaries

Will & Kerrie Schneebeli 2/23/2002

In this month of 'hearts',
we wish everyone love and health. Stay safe.
Happy Valentines Day everyone!
Why not reach out to someone with a
'telephone' visit?



Confirmands

Andrew Biddle, Jacob Hackman, Chloe Miller, Grace Quinn

February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 <i>Communion</i> 5th Sunday after Epiphany	8 Stewardship & Finance 7PM	9 Spiritual Council 6PM Consistory 7PM				
14 Transfiguration Mark 9:2-9 Racial Justice Sunday			17 Ash Wednesday Drive Thru Ashes 12-2PM and 4-6PM Virtual Service 7PM			
21 1st Sunday in Lent Psalm 25:1-10						
28 2nd Sunday in Lent Psalm 22:23-31						

Sundays
10AM - Worship



February 2021

