

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!

Lenten Book Study

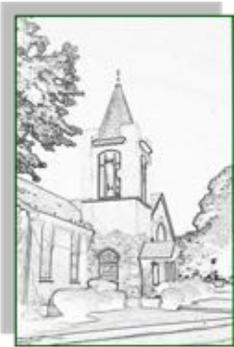


Pulled Pork Dinner



Parish Life Bunny Hop





Last week, I got my first shot of the COVID-19 vaccination. As I went through this experience, I encountered a diverse group of strangers. There was the young nurse, who gave me the shot, and noticed my Duke Blue Devils tattoo, and talked with me, excitedly, about the upcoming March Madness basketball tournament (although my Blue Devils were nowhere to be found). There was the woman behind the registration desk, who was unreasonably bubbly and exuberant, and joked about her computer having a mind of its own. There was a middle-aged woman pushing her mother in a wheelchair. There were people of all varieties. And a thought popped into my head, “These people are doing something good...for themselves, for their communities, for our country.” I had this pervasive thought, I don’t know why, that, despite what I read in the news and am inclined to think, people are basically good- for the most part, they work hard, try to do the right thing, care about their family and friends, and try and enjoy themselves once in a while. Against all rational thought, I was overwhelmed with a feeling of love and affection for these people I had never met, and would probably never see again.

This experience stood out for me, because it occurred in the midst of the season of Lent, a season in which, I think, we so often are led to focus on the sinfulness of people. In a recent Lenten devotional, I read this: “On the one hand, sin can be full of intention. We know exactly what we’re doing when we capitulate to temptation and embrace the distortion as if it’s acceptable. On the other hand, sin is so inescapably a part of being human. We end up not doing the good we genuinely intend, without any desire to disappoint God. In either case, intentional wrong or unintended hurt, sin is the mess we create from the inside out. The task of faith is to reckon with our interior instincts, transgressions, and choices that prevent us from being all God wants us to be. ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God,’ the psalmist pleads.”

I know that the words of this devotional are true- sinfulness is a part of humanity’s nature. And it doesn’t take a whole lot of convincing. I searched CNN.com for ten seconds, and the front page was filled with evidence- another mass shooting in Colorado, the threat of COVID surges because of reckless Spring Break gatherings, unaccompanied minors stranded at the U.S.-Mexico border, partisan political squabbling, and violence aimed at Asian-Americans. It’s enough to make you think, “People are terrible.” And I will confess that just last week, I was driving on Route 33 when another driver, driving way too fast, cut me off, and I said to my wife, “People are jerks.” But I don’t think that’s really true.

During the season of Lent, and the stories of Holy Week, we hear confirmation that people are capable of some really terrible things. But we also receive the assurance that God loves, accepts, and saves those people- all of those people. Jesus, in the story of the Passion, cares desperately for people, even the ones who treated him the worst. The story of Easter is all about transformation- how the worst thing in the world (the Roman cross) was transformed into a sign of hope and new life. Maybe we might allow this holy season to transform the way we look at people.

Yes, I know we all have our imperfections. We make mistakes, and we do wrong. But, what if we, every once in a while, could actually believe this: “People are really, really good.”

A Blessed Holy Week and a Happy Easter,

Pastor Bob



April 2021

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:

- 4/1 - Maundy Thursday
- 4/4 - Easter Offering
- 4/11 - O.C.W.M. special offering
- 4/18 - maintenance and repair fund

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

We're pleased to share our **2020 Fourth Quarter Mission Offerings:**

- \$409.69 - *Our Church's Wider Mission*
- \$405.00 - *Neighbors In Need*
- \$250.00 - *Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross)*

We're pleased to share our **2020 Yearly Mission Offerings through Penn Northeast Conference:**

- \$2,134.50 - *Our Church's Wider Mission*
- \$402.00 - *One Great Hour of Sharing*
- \$555.00 - *Neighbors In Need*
- \$270.00 - *Strengthen the Church*
- \$330.00 - *Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross)*
- \$1,455.00 - *Disaster Relief & National Misc.*

Please note these **2021 Mission Offerings:**

- March - One Great Hour of Sharing (It's never too late to donate!)
- March 23rd - Strengthen the Church (Pentecost Sunday)

Barrels, FINISHED!

Thank you for helping us pay for our barrels of oil again this year!

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!

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. April's food of the month is baby 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: wmhornbake@yahoo.com

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

Those Serving

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 Blossy - (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 Blossy at the numbers listed above.

Housekeeping

In the new year, we will be looking for volunteers to help keep our church clean. Some responsibilities include emptying the trash cans, swiffing 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. Chuck Givler, Anna Laudenslager, Florence Saylor, Janet Rush, Betty Stocker, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

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 Blossey
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	

April Anniversaries

Kim & Duane Edelheiser	04/02/1983
Stephanie & Donald Riehl	04/17/1999

Confirmands

Andrew Biddle, Jacob Hackman, Chloe Miller, Grace Quinn

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Maundy Thursday 7PM Virtual Service John 13:1-17, 31b-35	2 Good Friday 7PM Virtual Service John 18:1-19; 42	3 Holy Saturday John 19:38-42
4 <i>Communion</i> Easter Sunday 6AM Outdoor Sunrise Service 10AM Virtual Service John 20:1-18	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 2nd Sunday of Easter John 20:19-31	12 7PM Stewardship & Finance	13 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory	14	15	16	17
18 3rd Sunday of Easter Luke 24:36b-48	19	20	21	22	23	24 8-11AM Earth Day Clean Up
25 4th Sunday of Easter John 10:11-18	26	27	28	29	30	

Sundays
10AM - Worship

