



First News First

Opening Doors with Christ, One Another and Our Neighbors

“You Are the Body”

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (I Corinthians 12:27)

As I was meditating on this short verse, the word **Now** leaped out at me. Rearrange the words, and it reads: *You are the body of Christ and individually members of it **Now***. What does it look like for you and me to be the body of Christ **Now**?

Now is not the past. There is little doubt in anyone’s mind that COVID has changed our lives. COVID has changed the church. We carry with us **Now** a wealth of gifts from the past. We bring the old, old story of Jesus and his love. We bring the mission Jesus gave his Church long ago, “Go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19-20). We bring the unchanging Word of God and hearts open to the Holy Spirit. We bring prayer and worship, study and service, generosity and witness. We bring our building, our church website, our programs, our commitment to love our neighbors near and far, our connections with other churches. First and foremost, we bring ourselves. “**You** are the Body, **Now**.”

We bring many gifts from our past, but **Now** is not the past. **Now**, as we begin 2022, brings with it new challenges and new opportunities. Here are a few examples...

- Attending worship **Now** means attending in-person **and** online. Currently, in-person worship attendance in our church is running a little over half of what it was before the pandemic. And yet, because we offer services online, more people are worshipping with us than before the pandemic. In effect we are a two campus church **Now**. God is calling us to find new ways in 2022 to engage people in **both** in-person **and** online campuses.
- Meeting for Sunday School classes, Bible studies and other groups **Now** means meeting in-person **and** online. It’s a joy to see adults, youth, and children returning to classrooms and other settings for spiritual growth. **Now** we have new possibilities for connecting via zoom and other platforms. I’m excited that in January we’re launching *Study Gateway*, an excellent resource that will give our entire congregation access to resources we can use individually and in groups, in-person and online.
- Congregational care **Now** means pastors, staff, and care team members keeping in touch with in-person visits, phone calls, prayer teams and Senior Fellowship **and** it means new ways of helping senior adults and others stay connected with worship online, meetings on Zoom, and safe small group in-person gatherings.
- Missions **Now** means our longstanding commitment to give financially and with our time to serve locally and beyond **and** it means responding to the many new opportunities to help our neighbors of **Now**.
- The church parking lot **Now** means a place for parking, conversation, special events, and receiving donations for the Little Free Pantry and Community Aid **and** it means a great outdoor location for creative ministry and increased visibility in the community. We **Now** have a newly constructed stage, beautiful outdoor decorations, and numerous opportunities for connecting with one another and our neighbors.
- Receiving the offering **Now** means multiple ways to give: in-person Sunday morning **or** via the U.S. Postal Service **or** online at fumchurch.com **or** electronically (contact office@fumchurch.com).

I’m sure you could add to this list of how the experiences of the past two years have opened up new possibilities for us. Being the body of Christ **Now** means leaving some things from the past behind. Discerning what is no longer relevant or effective in accomplishing Christ’s mission **Now** is a challenging process. It requires prayer and listening, study and discussion, flexibility and an openness to our Lord who makes all things new. I value your involvement as we work together **Now** as staff, leaders, and congregation.

If **Now** is not the past, it is also not the future. The body of Christ is not something we will one day become. We do not wait for a better day or another time to be the body of Christ. **Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.**

I’m excited to be part of the body of Christ with you **Now**, as we begin this New Year together with all of its challenges and opportunities.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Denny

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Adult Discipleship

As we start a new year, take some time to assess where you are in your journey with Jesus. Are you just beginning to explore faith? Maybe you are growing into a more mature disciple? Or perhaps you are becoming a fully devoted follower? There is always something new to learn, and First Church is here to help by providing a variety of offerings for your next faithful step in the process:

- **Daily Bible Reading Plan:** God speaks to us through His Word, and our daily Bible reading plan is customized to go along with our weekly sermons! You can find the plan in our weekly worship bulletin, which is posted on our church website, fumchurch.com.
- **First Step - Newcomer Gathering:** Are you relatively new to First Church and interested in getting to know others better and learn more about First Church? If so, you are invited to attend a special newcomer gathering on January 30 from 9:45 - 10:45 a.m. in our Fellowship Hall. Pastor Denny and the staff are looking forward to connecting with you there to share more about the many ministries and missions of First Church. Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com if you are interested in attending.
- **Next Step - New Member Class:** Are you ready to take your next faithful step by exploring church membership? If so, our next 4-week new member class will be held in our Fellowship Hall from 9:45 - 10:45 a.m. beginning on February 6. Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com if you have questions or are interested in attending.
- **Steps Beyond:** As you learn and grow, consider these next steps on your path to becoming a fully devoted follower of Jesus... new participants are encouraged to join at any time!
 - **Sunday School Enrichment** — If you are looking to add a time to learn, grow and enjoy fellowship with others to your Sunday morning routine either before or after worship, here is a list of opportunities for all ages. All Sunday school enrichment groups meet at 9:45 a.m.
 - ◆ **Faith in Everyday Life**
Target: 30-50something
Location: Room 207
Contact: Jenell Paris at jparis@messiah.edu
 This small group enjoys being out in our community, and focuses on fellowship and friendship/mutual support. Class members share in leading reflections and discussions based on Scripture.
 - ◆ **Growing in Christ**
Target: Adults all ages/stages of faith
Location: Hybrid Class, meets on Zoom and in-person in room 105
Contact: Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com
 Currently studying the Gospel of Mark through January 9, then will move on to study 1 Peter from January 16 – February 27. Join us as we walk through this short letter and discover the importance of our witness in this imperfect world.
 - ◆ **Christian Fellowship**
Target: Adults all ages/stages of faith
Location: Room B003
Contact: Wayde Leister at waydeleister@outlook.com
 A friendly, caring group, eager to apply God's Word to life's challenges. Enjoys short-term Bible studies that challenge and inspire.
 - ◆ **Faithful Families**
Target: Parents
Location: Room B005
Contact: Bob and Tracy Wertz at wertzfive@gmail.com

An active group of parents with older school-aged and young adult children who study Scripture, encourage one another, and celebrate life together in and out of the classroom.

◆ **Helping Hands**

Target: Primarily 60+

Location: Room B004

Contact: Bob Wertz, Sr. at robert_wertz@plantsitelogistics.com

A group of active seniors who focus on studies which provide encouragement and instruction on faithful living, and who enjoy fellowship activities together outside of class.

◆ **Guyer Class**

Target: Primarily 70+

Location: Room 123

Contact: Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com

This lecture-based class, taught by a variety of pastors and church leaders, is comprised of a group of elders in the church who use the United Methodist quarterly adult Bible lessons.

○ **Mid-Week ReFuel** — Current mid-week learning and fellowship opportunities for adults include:

- ◆ **Wednesday Men's Group** – Through the winter, this group will meet on Zoom on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Contact Barry at 1785eaton@gmail.com if interested.
- ◆ **MOPS** – Connects moms with young children to a community of women who meet to laugh, support and embrace the journey together. Meets once a month from 6:00 to 8:15 p.m. on Wednesday evenings at the church. Meetings begin with fellowship over dinner, followed by a speaker/discussion time and end with a devotion/prayer. Additional outings with kids are also scheduled all through the year! Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com for more details and to register today!
- ◆ **Draw the Circle** – Ash Wednesday is March 2, and Pastor Denny has a special sermon series planned for Lent that is based on the book, "Circle Maker", by Pastor Mark Batterson (from National Community Church in Washington, DC). As a part of this sermon series, a 5-session study called "Draw the Circle" will be offered, but we need small group hosts! All groups will begin meeting the week of March 6, and together we will dedicate ourselves to a special 40-day prayer challenge, designed to grow us and help us to experience God in new and exciting ways! Please prayerfully consider gathering a few friends to host a group and let Tina Eaton know so she can get materials out to you in February. Contact Tina at adultministry@fumchurch.com for more details and resources that will make this both an easy and meaningful experience!

○ **Bible Studies**

- ◆ **Monday Men's Bible Study** – Led by Ken Guise, meets on Monday evenings at 6:45 p.m. on Zoom. Currently working on "The Key to Living by Faith", a study of the book of Hebrews. Newcomers are welcome anytime! Contact Ken Guise at guiseken100@gmail.com for more details, the Zoom link and a study guide (just \$9.00, scholarships available).
- ◆ **Wednesday Women's Bible Study** – Bring your own lunch and enjoy discussion and fellowship time with other women as you study "Jesus in Me" by respected evangelist and Bible teacher Anne Graham Lotz. In this study, Anne draws on her deep Bible knowledge and personal journey, and shares how to develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit. Facilitated by Tina Eaton, this group will meet for 8 weeks from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. beginning January 12. Special fellowship lunch will be held on January 5 at 12:00 p.m. for those who can make it. Contact Tina at adultministry@fumchurch.com to register for this group and receive the study guide (\$10.00, scholarships available).
- ◆ **Study Gateway** – Don't have time to meet in a group right now, but want to stay in the Word with a guided study that you can do on your own? Study Gateway, an online streaming library, provides a vast number of video-based studies for adults, youth and children. To set up your FREE account, please contact Tina at adultministry@fumchurch.com.

From the Library

Happy New Year! Ever since I can remember, January commercials or ads start announcing new exercise equipment, new diets, new beauty regimens all to make us new and improved. We are encouraged to make New Year's resolutions for a better life. But most of us cast aside our resolutions and improved exercise plans before the last of the Christmas decorations have been put away. On that note I have a few books that will improve your mood and a devotional that will improve your spiritual life fifty-two weeks of the year. Oh, and by the way, what the ads, commercials, or stores don't know, is Jesus offers to make us new and improved any time, no waiting until January first.

John Shellenberger, our retired associate pastor, has gifted us a new devotional he wrote called **Hitches, Hammocks, and Heaven**. In his description of this book, it "is written for those seeking renewal of spirit". There are fifty-two devotions that can be enjoyed weekly. The book is written as a camping companion while you travel, though I am sure you can enjoy it sitting at your kitchen table. If you would like a copy for yourself or to gift another traveler, it is available from Amazon.

The library also has two new Amish story collection books. **The Amish Midwives** and **The Amish Quilting Bee** each contain three novellas filled with charming romances around the title activity. Each of these stories will fit right between your new exercise regimen and shopping for your new health foods. Written by your favorite Amish writers, these are perfect for the new year.

Susan May Warren is not new in the church library, BUT she does have a new series beginning and the first book is called **Sunrise**. Set in Alaska, the series is called the *Sky King Ranch series*. It is a well-known fact that it is not easy to travel around Alaska and many people pilot small planes. Dodge Kingston was heir to the family ranch but after a terrible family fight, he left to become a pararescue jumper. A decade later he comes back to discover his former flame, Echo Yazzie, just might need rescued. Though Dodge has not seen his friend in ten years, he knows when Echo's friend is lost in the woods nothing will stop her from setting out to find her friend. Not even a coming blizzard, reports of a rogue grizzly, or just the dangerous Alaskan wilderness. If he finds her in time, will she still have room for him in her life? I am not giving away this ending, but I am sure this romantic suspense will jumpstart your reading plan in the new year.

As a plus to the new year we have new wall art in the library. Stop in to see the gorgeous paintings bequeathed from Carvel Markley. They are well worth a trip to the library to see them as they are stunning. See you in the library,

~ Pam and Donna

Praying Follower



January Prayer Challenge - New Year Resolution

What does the word resolution mean? It comes from the Latin word "resolvere", which means "to loosen". We can also find it in the Bible in Psalm 51:10... "Create for me a pure heart, O God! Renew a resolute spirit within me!" (New English Translation). In this context, the word means to be "firm, established, rooted, prepared". So, to be successful in making a resolution, we must loosen our grip on the things we hold on to in order to stand firm and be rooted in Christ!

For early Christians, the first day of the new year became the traditional occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future. In 1740, John Wesley, founder of Methodism, created the Covenant Renewal Service, most commonly held on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. Also known as watch night services, they included readings from Scriptures and hymn singing, and served as a spiritual alternative to the raucous celebrations normally held to celebrate the coming of the new year.

So, as we make our resolutions for the new year, first let's ask God to renew our faith and love for Jesus. Use John Wesley's Covenant Prayer for reflection and allow yourself to be open to his leading:

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
 Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
 Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
 exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
 Let me be full, let me be empty.
 Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
 I freely and heartily yield all things
 to thy pleasure and disposal.
 And now, O glorious and blessed God,
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
 And the covenant which I have made on earth,
 let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

In addition to this prayer, you can try meditating on scripture. Here are some suggested readings: Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 11: 28-30, 2 Peter 1:3-10. May your prayers bring you comfort and gratitude as you step into the next year! Share them with your friends and family to inspire their hearts as well. God Bless!

Weekly Prayer Letter

If you have not already done so, sign up for our weekly prayer email so that you can receive a list of praises and requests from our church family. Contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com to share requests and to sign up for this once-a-week list.

Passionate Worshipper



New Sermon Series: “You Are the Body”

Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem asking, “*Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we have observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.*” They see something of significance in the baby in Bethlehem, even when many of those closest don’t see it. Like the wise men, we who have seen the light of Christ are called to reflect it so that others see Christ through our loving presence.

As we begin 2022, you are invited to journey with us through our daily Bible readings and Sunday worship services. We will be guided by Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians 12-15 to let the light of Christ shine around us and in us, and then through us to a world yearning for the love that “*never ends.*” (1 Corinthians 13:8). **You** are the Body of Christ.

- January 2 - “It Wouldn’t Be Christmas Without...the Wise Men” (Matthew 2:1-12)
- January 9 - “**You** Are the Body: God’s Beloved” (Luke 3:15-22)
- January 16 - “**You** Are the Body: Gifted to Serve” (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)
- January 23 - “**You** Are the Body: Knit Together” (1 Corinthians 12:12-31a)
- January 30 - “**You** Are the Body: A More Excellent Way” (1 Corinthians 13)
- February 6 - “**You** Are the Body: Holding On to The Message” (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)
- February 13 - “**You** Are the Body: Christ Our Hope” (1 Corinthians 15:12-20)
- February 20 - “**You** Are the Body: Raised in Glory” (1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50)
- February 27 - “**You** Are the Body: Christ Alone” (Luke 9:28-36)

2022 Altar Flower Dates Available

We have several openings in 2022 for Sundays needing altar flowers: January 23 and 30, March 6, April 10, July 10, August 28 and November 6. Please contact Gretchen Nesmith at gnesmith@comcast.net or 717-691-9199 if you are interested in putting flowers on the altar in memory of a loved one for one of these Sundays.

Spotify Playlist

On the first Wednesday of each month, we release a new monthly playlist on Spotify. Search for First UMC of Mechanicsburg, and click on the playlist titled “*Where Words Fail, Music Speaks*”. For non-Spotify users, click this link to listen to the playlist: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5rbHEYEfHei97cUI8rjwNJ?si=qzOB7cTVRg6iAU1L4BY2hA>

Dedicated Missionary



First Church Accepting Applications for Director of Children and Family Ministry

First United Methodist Church, Mechanicsburg is seeking a full-time Director of Children and Family Ministry. This person will be responsible for the overall vision and implementation of the faith development of children (birth through 5th grade), in partnership with their families. Education related to children and/or family ministry, or applicable experience is required. To view the full job description, visit the church website at fumchurch.com or <https://fumchurch.com/director-of-children-and-family-ministry/>. Please submit resumes to office@fumchurch.com or to Ellen Hill, Office Manager, at 135 W. Simpson Street, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.

Isaiah 61 Returns in Harrisburg!

First Church is pleased to support Isaiah 61 Ministries, a local organization that serves the needs of the homeless in Dauphin County. They provide a variety of services including a soup kitchen, clothing bank and Life groups. Specifically, First Church members help serve meals to the homeless in downtown Harrisburg on the third Wednesday of each month. The next volunteer opportunity is Wednesday, January 19 at 6:30 p.m. New safety protocols have been established, such as wearing a mask, gloves and physical distancing. If you would like to carpool or have any questions, please contact Tiffany Holland at tholland1967@gmail.com.

Change (or Paper) for Water!

Water is the foundation of our very lives; yet, according to CDC estimates, only 2% of the population in Sierra Leone has access to clean, readily available drinking water! Help us to support the **Well Drilling Fund for Sierra Leone** by dropping your loose change, or even paper bills, into the blue "Change for Water" bucket located back on the Sierra Leone mission table in the Main Entrance hallway. Donations from November totaled \$81.00. 100% of your donations will be used to provide training and dig wells for schools and communities in need.

Get Connected With Service Opportunities

If you have not already done so, sign up to receive our periodic “Service Opportunities” email. Contact Lori Hoffnagle at outreach@fumchurch.com to share opportunities and to sign up.

Relationship Builder



Extravagant Hospitality

As we enter into the New Year, it is more important than ever to show EXTRAVAGANT HOSPITALITY to those both inside our church doors and to the community beyond! Wearing your nametag **inside** the church building helps newcomers to get to know others and feels very welcoming! But we must remember to focus **outside** our building as well to extend our hospitality into our community. Events such as Food Truck nights, the yard sale, the Little Free Pantry, free community lunches, and worship in our church parking lot build community and strengthen our relationships with our neighbors. How else can we extend

the gracious hospitality of Christ to our community this winter? The Lewis Center for Church Leadership suggests that one important way is to get to know the community surrounding the church. We can get out in the neighborhood and walk the streets, observing how the community is changing. We can assess the community needs and determine how we can serve those needs. And, most importantly, we can be attuned to where God is already at work in our community!

Trinity's Closet on Main, January 8

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is holding a Clothing Closet on the 2nd Saturday of each month. They have a variety of gently used clothes (in all sizes) for men and women to choose from. Breakfast to go is provided for each person - including a cup of coffee! The Closet is open from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. every 2nd Saturday. Trinity is located at 132 E. Main Street, Mechanicsburg. The next Clothing Closet will be held on Saturday, **January 8**. They are asking for donations of winter jackets or new socks and underwear for the upcoming winter season. Questions, contact Vanessa Storlie at trinityburgoutreach@gmail.com.

Widows/Widowers Fellowship

The widows/widowers fellowship will dine at Café Magnolia on Tuesday, January 11 at 11:30 a.m. If you plan on attending, please contact Bonnie Guyer at [717-766-0145](tel:717-766-0145).

Joy in the Morning - a small group invitation!

If you live with chronic pain or ongoing health challenges, we invite you to join in sharing discussion and supportive friendship with this spiritually-focused small group. We will meet next on Monday, January 24 at 1:00 pm on Zoom. Terry Ketrow and Janice Bowen co-facilitate, taking inspiration from the book, [With the Dawn Rejoicing](#). For more information and the Zoom link, contact Janice Bowen at [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) x112 or wecare@fumchurch.com.

The River Journey Women's Retreat, February 5, 2022

The women's ministry team is excited to offer this One-Day Women's Retreat at Mt. Asbury Retreat Center, 1310 Centerville Road, Newville on Saturday, February 5, 2022. The River Journey retreat will be based on the book by local authors, Tara Hartley and Robin Holman Loy. We are delighted to have both of them leading this retreat! Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with the first session starting at 9:00 a.m. There will be time for learning, prayer, worship and fellowship as we enjoy both lunch and dinner together. See the registration form in this newsletter or you can sign up through the Google form [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQhNZyoMDIAtQwd-LDj5O4cTjY-jqY2C3BsuRv1TpDb5ezEA/viewform): <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQhNZyoMDIAtQwd-LDj5O4cTjY-jqY2C3BsuRv1TpDb5ezEA/viewform>. Deadline to register is January 22, 2022.

Although not required, if you are interested you may purchase the book, "*The River Journey: Navigating the Way with Jesus*" from Tina Eaton or check it out at the church library. Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com to order it at a discount! Any and all women are invited, you don't need to be a member of First Church to attend. Any questions, contact Patti Herring at familyzeke@verizon.net. We look forward to taking this journey together!

Faith-Based Life Coaching Now Available at First Church

First Church is pleased to announce that Timeless Connections, a life coaching practice with a focus on faith and hope, is now available at our Mechanicsburg building.

Timeless Connections is operated by First Church member Patti Vogl, a Licensed Master Social Worker, Certified Care Manager, and Certified Celebrant. Patti has over 30 years of experience with individual and family counseling, as well as in hospice management. She brings her personal and professional experience, as well as her empathy, into her Life Coaching practice.

Master's level Social Workers are specially trained to help people deal with life's struggles and to move forward with hope. Life coaching involves helping people to identify barriers, goals, and strengths and then working toward an action-oriented plan in order to live to their fullest potential. While Patti's social work background allows her to incorporate therapeutic techniques, life coaching focuses on encouragement, hope, and positive steps toward wellness.

Timeless Connections will specialize in grief and loss issues, relationship issues, pre-marital preparation, anxiety and depression issues, and elder care issues and resources. This program is open to those of all faith backgrounds and walks of life.

For more information, call or email the church office at [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) or office@fumchurch.com. To learn more about Timeless Connections visit the website at: <https://www.timelessconnections.org/>.

Squares and Prayers Announcement

The Squares and Prayers Quilting and Sewing Circle will continue to create from home until further notice. Anyone desiring to help sew or donate fabric can find kits or the Squares and Prayers bin by the alley door. Questions, please call Nancy Eddy at [717-448-8353](tel:717-448-8353).

Generous Giver



FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 30, 2021 — 92% of year

General Fund — November giving:

Actual giving in the month of November	\$69,268
Average month per 2021 budget	\$75,416

General Fund — Year-to-date

2021 budget	\$ 905,000	
Expected income	\$ 829,583	(92% of budget)
Actual giving	\$ 851,199	(94% of budget)
Actual expenses	\$ 794,075	(88% of budget)

Our year-to-date financial position continues to be blessed by the faithfulness of our Lord through the gifts of our congregation and friends. While November giving was a bit short of our budgeted average, we remain in line with our financial plans for this year. Thank you again for keeping First Church in your prayers and thoughts as we go through this extraordinary time.

Our expenses remain in good shape as we continue to offer online services, in addition to opening up more and more through this unusual time. Thank you to all those who presented their “step-up” commitment card to help us plan our ministry for 2022. If you have not yet submitted a card, please consider sending it in to the office or contact Ellen at office@fumchurch.com or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) for more information.

UMW Collection for Afghan Refugees

The Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church is working with the International Service Center to support Afghan families that are coming to our area. It has been decided they will settle in Carlisle, and they are looking for homes in that area. The International Service Center in Harrisburg is working with the families to get them settled and provide basic essentials for them.

In response to the needs of these families, the United Methodist Women at First Church will be collecting items to support the women. We will be collecting the following items during the month of January: shampoo, conditioner, body wash, feminine hygiene products (such as maxi pads, panty shields, etc.). Look for the collection boxes and more details the beginning of January. Thanks for helping our ‘sisters in Christ!’ Questions, contact Lori Hoffnagle, UMW president, at outreach@fumchurch.com.

Little Friends Fundraiser, January 19, 2022 at Chipotle

Support our Little Friends Preschool on Thursday, January 19 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Chipotle on the Carlisle Pike. If ordering online, use this code: [436ZKQ7](https://www.chipotle.com/c/436ZKQ7) or show the flyer found [here](#). Thanks for supporting the preschool by eating out! Little Friends Preschool is a ministry of First United Methodist Church, see their website here: <https://www.littlefriendspreschool.org/>.

Sewing for Others!

A talented group of women met in October to work on feminine hygiene kits for underserved women in other countries. They are pleased to announce that they have completed 165 bags, 274 reusable shields and 277 reusable liners! These items are part of a kit that provides basic necessities to young women in underdeveloped nations allowing them to continue in school all month long. Thanks to those who participated in this mission! If you have any questions about the Feminine Hygiene Kits, contact Donna Nichols or visit the Mission Central website at: <https://missioncentral.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MC-Fem-Hygiene-Kit-complete.pdf>.

Cookie Walk Thanks!

Thanks to everyone who baked and bought cookies at the Annual Cookie Walk on Saturday, December 11. The cookies were almost sold out by 10:00 a.m. and the youth were able to raise \$1,500 for next year's mission trip to Alaska! Thanks for supporting this sweet fundraiser!

The Endowment Fund

Brenda and Steve Gabler have supported our Endowment Fund and shared the following:

"The Endowment Fund is an on-going assurance for providing assistance to worthy benefactors to invest in a Christian's journey in Jesus Christ. It's a good feeling to contribute toward the church and a worthy Christian purpose."

Brenda and Steve Gabler divide their worship time between Aldersgate UMC, Messiah UMC in Shippensburg, and First Church. The couple moved to Mechanicsburg from Shippensburg four years ago to be near their daughter and grandsons.

Previously, Brenda provided leadership of Messiah's Church Council where she gained a deeper understanding of a church's inner workings and particularly the Endowment Fund. She said it was a great joy for her to see the endowment proceeds support college scholarships for their youth, camperships for children to attend church camp, and many other important activities. When Brenda learned about First Church's Endowment Fund, she and Steve were happy to support it.

Preschool Substitutes Needed

Little Friends Preschool is looking for classroom substitutes. Substitutes work for 2.5 hours and are compensated at \$30 per day. Clearances and masks required when working with the children. If you are interested in this position, please contact Jemma Church, Preschool Director at lfns@fumchurch.com or 717-796-0723. Little Friends is a non-profit, Christian-based preschool that offers classes for children from 2 years and 7 months to pre-kindergarten. All students receive quality instruction led by caring teachers in a safe, nurturing environment. Little Friends is a ministry of First Church. Visit their website at: <https://www.littlefriendspreschool.org/>.

Women's Ministry & SCRIP!

Need a gift idea? Use the SCRIP gift card program and benefit the FUMC Women's Ministry at the same time! For the month of January, proceeds from specific gift card purchases will benefit the 2022 Women's Retreat! The gift cards include Applebee's, Carrabba's/Outback Steakhouse, Cracker Barrel, Dunkin Donuts, Olive Garden/Red Lobster/Longhorn Steakhouse, Panera Bread, Red Robin, Subway, Texas Roadhouse, and TGI Friday's. The SCRIP box and order forms are located near the end of the hallway (to the right) of the main building entrance. Any questions, contact Patti Herring at familyzeke@verizon.net.

Little Free Pantry Update

Thanks for your support of the **Little Free Pantry** on our property. Please consider helping to stock our pantry during this difficult time for families. Please be sure to place items that are not expired or near expiration. If you or your group would like to sign up, see the available months [here](#). A simpler list of suggestions can be found [here](#). **Feel free to sign up for just one week, if that works better for you!** If you would like to choose a week or would like to make a financial donation to the pantry, please contact Lori Hoffnagle at outreach@fumchurch.com.



January Bible Reading Plan

Saturday, January 1

Rest and Reflect

Sunday, January 2

“It Wouldn’t Be Christmas Without... the Wise Men”

Monday, January 3

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Tuesday, January 4

Psalm 8

Wednesday, January 5

Revelation 21:1-6a

Thursday, January 6

Matthew 2:1-12 (*Epiphany*)

Friday, January 7

Luke 3:15-22

Saturday, January 8

Rest and Reflect

Sunday, January 9

“You Are the Body: God’s Beloved” (Baptism of the Lord)

Monday, January 10

Isaiah 43:1-7

Tuesday, January 11

Psalm 29

Wednesday, January 12

Psalm 36

Thursday, January 13

John 2:1-11

Friday, January 14

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Saturday, January 15

Rest and Reflect

Sunday, January 16

“You Are the Body: Gifted to Serve”

Monday, January 17

Nehemiah 8:1-10

Tuesday, January 18

Psalm 19:1-6

Wednesday, January 19

Psalm 19:7-14

Thursday, January 20

Luke 4:14-21

Friday, January 21

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Saturday, January 22

Rest and Reflect

Sunday, January 23

“You Are the Body: Knit Together”

Monday, January 24

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Tuesday, January 25

Psalm 71:1-6

Wednesday, January 26

Luke 4:21-30

Thursday, January 27

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a

Friday, January 28

1 Corinthians 13:8b-13

Saturday, January 29

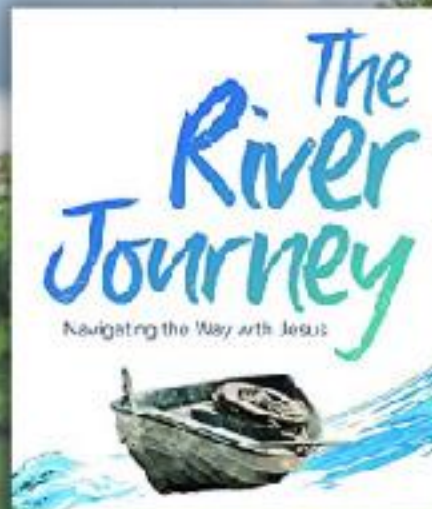
Rest and Reflect

Sunday, January 30

“You Are the Body: A More Excellent Way”

Monday, January 31

Isaiah 6:1-8



The River Journey Women's Retreat, February 5, 2022

The women's ministry team is excited to offer this One-Day Women's Retreat at Mt. Asbury Retreat Center, 1310 Centerville Road, Newville on Saturday, February 5, 2022

The River Journey retreat will be based on the book by local authors, Tara Hartley and Robin Holman Loy who will be leading this retreat. Registration starts at 8:30 a.m. with the first session starting at 9:00 a.m. There will be time for learning, prayer, worship and fellowship as we enjoy both lunch and dinner together. The last session will be at 6:00 p.m., ending by 7:30 p.m. *The River Journey 'Navigating the Way with Jesus'* book can be purchased before the retreat. Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com to order it at a discount!

Please return registration with payment (payable to FUMC)

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

(Please indicate if you need any special options for lunch - gluten free, dairy free or Vegetarian.) _____

Send payment to Patti Herring, 613 Lavina Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 OR, you can pay via the church website at fumchurch.com and may email the form to familyzeke@verizon.net.

Check enclosed for \$25 Payment of \$25 made via website

Register soon, space is limited! Deadline to register is 1/22/22.

Questions, contact Patti Herring at familyzeke@verizon.net

Church News and Notes

Our love & sympathy...

to the family and friends of Morris Barr, who passed away on November 4

A note of thanks...

We want to thank First Church for the flowers, cards, prayers, and meals. Paul has been doing well, and with my new diagnosis he has become my caregiver. Your prayers are appreciated.

~Mary and Paul Cain

Many thanks to all our church friends for the food, cards, flowers, calls and visits after Joe’s mini-stroke and my broken ankle. Consider yourself hugged. ~Kathy Semanko

With special thanks to Janice Bowen and her wonderful care team who have taken such good care of me following my surgery. Thank you especially for the flowers, cards, prayers, and delicious meals that were so graciously brought to my home. Love and blessings, Janie Stover



Special Birthdays

Pat Hutter	January 3	Paul Rynard	February 3
Dick Reed	January 15	Joanne Ciampa.....	February 6
Leroy Weaver	January 15	Janie Stover	February 6
Leta Rohlmeier	January 23	Joyce Parfet	February 12
Don Coldren.....	January 24	Dottie Zimmerman	February 26
Dot Souder	January 27	Gerry Aumiller	February 27
Margaret Baker	January 30		

Special Anniversaries

- ♥ We are currently not aware of anyone who is celebrating a special anniversary (50+ years) in January. If you and your spouse have a special January anniversary, we would love to know! Contact the church office at office@fumchurch.com.



<p><i>FIRST NEWS FIRST</i> Editor: Ellen Hill</p>	<p>The deadline for submitting articles for the February 2022 issue is January 15</p>	<p>Early submissions <u>always</u> appreciated!</p>
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