

Welcome to
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Opening Doors with Christ, One Another, and Our Neighbors
November 29, 2020



“LifeSong: Zechariah”

135 West Simpson Street, Mechanicsburg
717-766-4611
www.fumchurch.com



LifeSong

Prelude

Introit

"Give Thanks"

Welcome

Opening Hymn

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

Lighting of the First Candle of Advent

Praise and Worship

"How Great is Our God"

The Gospel Reading

Luke 1: 67-79 (NRSV)

Sermon

"LifeSong: Zechariah" - Pastor John

Anthem

"It Is Well With My Soul"

Prayer & The Lord's Prayer (sins)

Announcements

Closing Hymn

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

Blessing

Postlude

LEADING IN WORSHIP

Preaching Pastor John Shellenberger

Worship Leader..... Pastor Dennis Keller

Worship Team Kathie Bittenbender, Don Coldren, Stu Diehl,

..... Caleb Flick, Sarah Pugh, Flossie Ryder, Handbells

Sound & Media..... Ron Nichols, Jason Kichline, Ken Rapp

“LifeSong: The Song of Zechariah - Benedictus”

Luke 1: 67-79

In the Bible, choruses of praise _____.

Backstory of Zechariah

- Living the Dream

*In the time of Herod king of Judea **there was a priest named Zechariah**, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; **his wife Elizabeth** was also a descendant of Aaron. **Both of them were righteous in the sight of God**, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly.*

(Luke 1: 5-6)

- Experiencing the Pain

***But they were childless** because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.*

(Luke 1: 7)

- Chosen by Lot

*Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, **he was chosen by lot...** (Luke 1: 8-9)*

- Startled by an angel

***When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.** (Luke 1: 12)*

- Message becomes reality

After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.

(Luke 1: 24)

Benedictus – the Main Message

1. He sings of _____.

He has visited and provided redemption for His people. (v. 68)

2. He sings of _____.

He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets in ancient times. (v. 70)

3. He sings of _____.

a. There will be spiritual transformation: to serve Him (v. 74)

- b. There will be emotional transformation: to serve Him without fear (v. 74)
- c. And there will be behavioral transformation: In holiness and righteousness in His presence all our days. (v. 75)

4. He sings of _____.

- a. He calls this the Dawn of Heavenly Sunlight – "The Dawn from on high will visit us." (v. 78)
- b. It is End of Hopeless Living – "To shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death." (v. 79a)

This is the song of an old man who held a miracle child in his arms and contemplated the seismic shift that was taking place as the way of the Messiah Jesus Christ was breaking into his life. Nothing like this had ever happened and Zechariah had to sing.

What is your LifeSong!

Weekly Bible Readings:

Week of November 29

Sunday ***“LifeSong: Zechariah”***

Monday Isaiah 40: 1-11

Tuesday Psalm 85

Wednesday 2 Peter 3: 8-15

Thursday Luke 1: 26-38

Friday Luke 1: 46b-55

Saturday Rest and Reflect





First News First

Weekly Edition

Opening doors with Christ, one another and our neighbors

November 29, 2020

Lifelong Learner



Because our building remains closed right now (with the exception of a few vitally important ministries) we are continuing to offer studies and groups in alternative and Covid-safe ways. Even if you were not previously a member of these groups, you are welcome to join any group at any time:

- **Wednesday evening men's group** – This “garage group” meets at 8:00 pm on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. Contact Barry Eaton at 1785eaton@gmail.com if interested. Masks required, heaters provided!
- **Faith in Everyday Life** – This small “garage group” meets on Sunday mornings and focuses on fellowship and friendship. Class members share in leading reflections and discussions based on Scripture. Contact Jenell Paris at iparis@messiah.edu for more details.
- **Faithful Families** – This group, comprised of parents in the child-raising stage of life, meets on zoom on Sunday mornings and focuses on discussion-based Bible studies. Contact Bob Wertz, Jr. at wertzfive@gmail.com for more details.
- **Christian Fellowship** – This class is currently engaged in a study by Bob Goff, entitled "Dream Big", which helps participants to recapture the version of their lives they dreamed about before fear started calling the shots. For all ages/stages of faith. Meets on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am. Contact Wayne Leister at waydeleister@outlook.com for more details and the zoom link for this online study.
- **Growing in Christ** – This class is studying “LifeSong”, a study based on the current sermon series for Advent. For all ages/stages of faith. Meets on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am. Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com for more details and the zoom link for this online study.
- **Helping Hands** - Meets on zoom at 10:00 am. A group of active seniors who focus on studies which provide encouragement and instruction on faithful living. Contact Bob Wertz, Sr. at robert_wertz@plantsitelogistics.com for more details.
- **Guyer Class** – A group of elders in the church who use the United Methodist quarterly adult Bible lessons for daily independent study. Contact John Nesbit by phone or Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com for more details.

Do you feel called to offer something **new** for a few weeks this winter? Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com for study ideas and to get the ball rolling!

Little Friends Preschool is seeking a church member to serve on the Preschool's Board. A background in education, childcare, or finance would be helpful, but more importantly, needed is someone with the desire to support the ministry of ensuring our little ones have a robust Christian educational foundation. The Board meets once a month on Wednesday evenings (currently, on Zoom). Also involved would be a commitment in support of the Preschool's fundraising efforts for program development. If interested, please contact Devon Betz at devonbetz@gmail.com.



Praying Follower

Hospitalized: Rose Rohlmeier

Recovering at Home or Rehabilitation: Paul Cain, Richard Hayworth, Marilyn Seig, Donnie Wright

As your church family, we so value receiving your prayer requests! Please use this [google link](#) to share your joys and concerns with us, or share your prayer requests by contacting Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112.

Passionate Worshipper

New Advent Sermon Series – LifeSong: Song is the beautiful marriage of emotion and words, heart and mind. Songs allow us to respond to God in greater capacity than words alone muster up. Song is indeed a gift from our Maker. Join us this Advent season as we dig into the praises of Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds, who each sang their own unique song to God to express their joy upon learning of God's plan for humanity through the birth of Jesus the Christ! These were the original carols, and together, we will uncover the Glory that was found in Jesus through their praises. And, as we enter into the Christmas season, may you discover your own LifeSong – the melody of your heart and joy in knowing Jesus.



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|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| TODAY | LifeSong: Zechariah | <i>(First Sunday in Advent)</i> |
| December 6 | LifeSong: Mary | <i>(Second Sunday in Advent)</i> |
| December 13 | LifeSong: Joseph | <i>(Third Sunday in Advent)</i> |
| December 20 | LifeSong: Shepherds | <i>(Fourth Sunday in Advent)</i> |

Join us by Zoom for a **Fireside Worship for Rejoicing Spirits** on Tuesday, December 1 at 7pm. We will participate in many wonderful Christmas activities. Materials are being prepared and will be delivered to Rejoicing Spirits families. Again we encourage all families with special abilities and disabilities to join us. If you have a friend in these life circumstances, we would be glad to help make the connection. Watch for the link to be distributed or email Pastor John at pastorjohn@fumchurch.com for more information.

If you are grieving this holiday season....missing your loved ones, experiencing loss and isolation....please join us for worship and reflection to remember and honor the memory of cherished family and friends at our **Service of Remembrance and Hope**. For those desiring in-person worship, we will gather in the sanctuary at 4 pm on Sunday, December 6th. (The service will be recorded and available afterward for virtual viewing from home.) Contact Janice Bowen at 717-766-4611 x112 or wecare@fumchurch.com for more information.

On Tuesday, December 15 at 7pm the Rejoicers will be Zooming together for their **Jesus Birthday Celebration**. A dramatic reading of the Christmas story, cupcakes, candles and favors will be distributed in our “Joy to the World” bag of materials for Rejoicers. We will be singing “Happy Birthday Jesus” and enjoying a time of fellowship. Again we encourage all families with special abilities and disabilities to join us. If you have a friend in these life circumstances, we would be glad to help make the connection. Watch for the link to be distributed or email Pastor John at pastorjohn@fumchurch.com for more information.

Join us and invite others to worship from home with us any day of the week! All worship services are posted on our church website, fumchurch.com. Sing, pray, hear the message proclaimed and respond through your weekly giving. If you, or someone you know, are unable to access the online worship service, please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112 for other ways to connect with our worship.



A December to Remember Calendar

Advent & Christmas Services and Events Schedule

November 29 **1st Sunday in Advent**

- ☆ Worship 8:15 am - LifeSong: Zechariah
- ☆ New Advent Sermon Series Begins - LifeSong

December 1

- ☆ Rejoicing Spirits Fireside Worship 7:00 pm (on Zoom)

December 6 **2nd Sunday in Advent**

- ☆ Worship and Holy Communion 8:15 am - LifeSong: Mary
- ☆ Service of Remembrance and Hope 4:00 pm

December 13 **3rd Sunday in Advent**

- ☆ Worship 8:15 am - LifeSong: Joseph
- ☆ Christmas Caroling 4:00 pm (rain date December 20)

December 15

- ☆ Rejoicing Spirits ~ Jesus's Birthday Celebration 7:00 pm (on Zoom)

December 20 **4th Sunday in Advent**

- ☆ Worship 8:15 am - LifeSong: Shepherds

December 24 **Christmas Eve Worship Services**

- ☆ **4:00 pm ~ Outdoor Service** ~ Come as you are for this special 45-minute worship service designed for all ages. Will conclude with candle lighting. Bundle up, bring your own chair and enjoy the beauty of the evening as we celebrate our Savior's birth!
- ☆ **7:00 pm ~ Sanctuary Service** ~ Enjoy all of the sights and sounds of the season inside our beautiful sanctuary at this worship service designed for all ages. Includes communion and will conclude with candle lighting outside as we sing Silent Night at 8:00 pm. ***Note: Depending on circumstances with the pandemic, this in-person service, which will also be available as a live-streamed service, may be changed to be fully online. Please check the bulletin and our church website for more details/updates closer to the date.***
- ☆ **Any Time ~ Family Service** ~ Designed with children in mind, this service will actively engage the whole family in a very meaningful worship experience. Pre-recorded (and available on our church website) so that you can worship any time that is convenient for your family. Contact our Children's Directors, Dawn Fisher/Anna Harris at kidscount@fumchurch.com ahead of time to receive a special Christmas kit, which contains items to be used during the service!

(Please see the December newsletter or the church website for more information about each of our special December to Remember activities and services.)

Dedicated Missionary



Please see page 10 of the bulletin for more information regarding ways that you can give back this year and donate to organizations like **New Hope!**

Relationship Builder



Merry Christmas Greetings! If you are looking for a copy of the 2020 FUMC Christmas Card Address Listing or if you need a supply of Christmas cards to send, please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112.

If you're a young adult (age 22+) in search of connection and Christ-centered community, please check out a new ministry in our area: **Zoe Mazi**. Check out the Facebook page OR email Shannon Zimmerman at zoemazi.lifetogether@gmail.com for more information. (Zoe Mazi means "life together").

For all bird lovers and watchers, the group **Faith, Feathers and Friends** meets each Tuesday at 1pm on Zoom for a time of studying God's Word, fellowship and learning about His marvelous creation. Contact pastorjohn@fumchurch.com if interested.

Ministry Safe Training- All volunteers who help in the children or youth areas should be watching their email for the new on-line Safe Sanctuary training. You will receive an email with a link to the training. The email will appear as it is coming from Pastor Denny. Anyone working with children or youth in any capacity is required to complete this valuable on-line training. Questions can be directed to Dawn Fisher at kidscount@fumchurch.com.

If you are in need of a **facemask** or supply of **greeting cards**, please contact Janice Bowen (717-766-4611 x112 or wecare@fumchurch.com)

Generous Giver



Save yourself a night of cooking and help support a worthy cause! **Little Friends Preschool is hosting a fundraising night at Chipotle** on the Carlisle Pike in Mechanicsburg on Saturday, December 12 from 4:00-8:00pm. Simply mention the preschool at checkout, or use the unique code L3DE2EA to order online for pickup to ensure that 33% of the proceeds are donated to Little Friends. Thank you for your support! Questions? Contact Jemma Church at lfns@fumchurch.com.

Please see page 10 of the bulletin for more information regarding ways that you can give back this year and donate to organizations like **New Hope!**

The Youth Department unfortunately announces the **cancellation of the 2020 Cookie Walk**. Due to the pandemic it has been decided to forgo the walk this year in order to comply with current health and safety guidelines. We look forward to being back in business next year!

We encourage you to continue to respond through your weekly giving. **Offerings** can be mailed in to the church office. Alternatively, you can securely give online through our church website, our VANCO Financial "GivePlus" app, or by signing up for electronic giving. Please contact the church office at office@fumchurch.com with any questions concerning financial giving.

CHILDREN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOOMERANG- Sunday, December 13th at 4:00pm. Join First Church for this family event, as we will be joining the Christmas Carol Sing-a-long in the church parking lot. This will be an outdoor socially distanced event. Once seated with your family, you can remove your mask and join in singing some beloved Christmas Carols. There will also be a sweet treats food truck available!

Bible Time Anytime!- Kids will love this weekly on-line Sunday School lesson for children led by Miss Anna and Miss Dawn for kids aged 3 years through 5th grade that is specifically designed to fit into your children's busy schedules at any time that works for them. They can be viewed any day and any time through the week! New lessons will be available every Sunday on the First Church Children's Ministry Facebook page or they can be emailed directly to you. You can find us on Facebook and request to be a part of this private group OR send us your email address at kidscount@fumchurch.com to receive a weekly email. Make time hearing God's word, lessons and teachings a part of your child's week, every week! Email Dawn and Anna with any questions.

Christmas Eve Kits- Reserve your child's Christmas Eve kit today! Because we will not be able to gather in person for our usual family Christmas Eve service, it will be recorded and available to view online. To make it extra special, we have created a fun Christmas Eve activity kit for each child to open as they watch the service. Email Dawn and Anna at kidscount@fumchurch.com to reserve your kit today! (Kits are appropriate for ages 3 and up) There will be a limited number of kits, so reserve your child's today!

YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fall is upon us and yes, youth will look a bit different this year, but we are going to navigate things together and still find ways to gather, gain, grow, and give. **Join us on Sunday evenings after The Gathering for 4G.** Watch your Remind text for weekly details.

Help us **connect** with you!

Follow us on instagram: fourgyouthministry

Request to join our FB page: 4G - First United Methodist Youth Group

Join our **Remind text list** - Text @4Gyo to 81010

Watch these platforms and your emails for **opportunities to connect and learn** with others!

*It's the Most Wonderful Time
of the Year!*

Giving back is easy this year!

**New Hope Christmas
Blessings Express**

- New for this year, you can support New Hope through the church's Scrip Fundraising Program!
- Check off the **\$25** amount for Wal-Mart or Target on the form (included in this month's newsletter)
- Return to the church office or Kathie Bittenbender (292 Founders Way, Mechanicsburg, 17050)
- We will deliver the gift cards to New Hope Ministries for local families.

Questions, contact Kathie Bittenbender
at 717-697-6257 or Debbie Karns at
717-697-1253.



To Our Beloved FUMC Camp & Retreat Families and Supporters,

Good news! The Susquehanna Conference's Camp & Retreat has now moved into the **Winter** season. Check the Camp website for the latest news!

NOW HAPPENING!!!

Christmas Light Drive-Thru
Mount Asbury Retreat Center – Newville

Please pray and ask how you can participate in camp or a camp-like experience.

Let's covenant together to go on a hike or a walk and take time off from everything and go somewhere near where you live and immerse ourselves in beauty. Let's take the time to walk slow miles or some steps with God and diminish every other distraction. Take time to truly walk with God and listen to His words about our hearts, lives and futures and the future of camp. This "holy time" will cement the community together and launch us into the remainder of the camp year in very unexpected and profound ways. It's amazing what setting aside one simple day to walk with God can do.

We hope that you will share your experiences with us!

Funding is still required to sustain leadership, facilities, and programs critical to fulfilling the on-going mission of the Camp & Retreat ministries – not just for this year, but for years to come. There will be opportunities for generosity in financial giving as part of the "Camp Comeback Campaign". Your generosity can be the way God provides "*streams in the wilderness.*"

Donate through the conference website - <http://www.susumcamps.org/>.

Please let us know if you have any registrations questions or need financial assistance. Let us know if you plan on attending a retreat so as to provide a prayer partner.

With Hope and in Christ's Service,

The FUMC Camping & Retreat Ministry Team

Questions: Deb Noss (sdppp@msn.com) or Amy Ortiz (amy.ogden7@gmail.com)

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Organists/Accompanists:

Caleb Flick
Karen Philp

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