

Welcome to

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Opening Doors with Christ, One Another, and Our Neighbors

December 27, 2020

First United
Methodist Church

MECHANICSBURG, PA



“God Is With Us In Our Mess”

135 West Simpson Street, Mechanicsburg

717-766-4611

www.fumchurch.com



Prelude
Welcome
Call to Worship
Opening Hymn
"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"
Opening Prayer
Hymn
"What Child Is This"
Gospel Reading
Luke 2: 22-40 (NRSV)
Sermon
"God Is With Us In Our Mess" - Pastor Denny
Hymn
"There's a Song in the Air"
Prayer & The Lord's Prayer (sins)
Offering & Announcements
Closing Hymn
"The First Noel"
Benediction
Postlude

LEADING IN WORSHIP

Preaching Pastor Dennis Keller

Worship Leader Sarah Pugh

Worship Team Handbell Choir, Caleb Flick, Tammy Ingraham, Dean Otto,

..... Sarah Pugh

Sound & Media Jason Kichline, Jim Murdoch

Weekly Bible Readings:

Week of December 27

Sunday

“God Is With Us In Our Mess”

Monday

Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14

Tuesday

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Wednesday

Matthew 2: 1-12

Thursday

Ephesians 3: 1-12

(New Year’s Eve)

Friday

Mark 1:1-8

(New Year’s Day)

Saturday

Rest and Reflect





First News First

Weekly Edition

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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 an Advent Study by Andy Stanley. For all ages/stages of faith. Meets on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am. Contact Wayde Leister at waydeleister@outlook.com for more details and the zoom link for this online study.
- **Growing in Christ** – This class is currently studying "The Good Life: What Jesus Teaches about Finding True Happiness", which focuses on the Beatitudes. 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 substitute teachers to help in their classes. For more information or if interested in a substitute position, please contact Jemma Church at lfn@fumchurch.com or Devon Betz at devonbetz@gmail.com.

explore

life

faith

meaning

Alpha

First Church is excited to offer Alpha!

- Alpha is a place to explore the Christian faith with others in a low pressure environment to discuss the big questions in life.
- Each Alpha session focuses on one question, like "Who is Jesus?", "How does God work in my life?" or "How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit". There is a video, followed by discussion where guests can share their thoughts and questions openly and honestly.
- Alpha is run all over the world. 1.3 million people have tried Alpha, in over 100 countries!

Alpha is very easy to share online for free! Our plan is to offer Alpha using zoom conferencing starting **January 5th** at 7:00 p.m. led by John and Merri Shellenberger.

There are a few different ways you can get involved:

- Pray – This is something I want to ask all of you to do: pray for Pastor John and Merri, who will be leading this course, and pray for the guests and conversations that will happen.
- Seek - Ask God for direction on who you know that has questions about faith or might benefit from participating in Alpha.
- Invite – Ask that person... it might be a friend, coworker, family member or neighbor. Ask if they would be interested in participating. You are invited to participate with them, especially if that makes them more comfortable, but you don't have to.

Registration is easy! Contact Tina Eaton at adultministry@fumchurch.com to sign up or to learn more about the Alpha Course.

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Praying Follower

Our love and sympathy to the family and friends of Art Murray who passed away on December 15th.

Hospitalized: Richard Hayworth, Amy Ortiz, Rose Rohlmeier

Recovering at Home: George, Snoko, Stephen Zimmerman

First Church is being prayed for this week! Our church has been selected, along with ten other Susquehanna Conference churches and covenant churches from Sierra Leone, to be held in prayer this week from today, Sunday, December 27, 2020 to Saturday, January 2, 2021. We hope that you will be encouraged and uplifted knowing that the Connecting Ministries staff, the churches of the Susquehanna Conference, and our brothers and sisters of Sierra Leone (totaling about 800 churches!) are praying for all of us and our ministry!

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

Upcoming Sermon Series - Good News!: Are you ready for a new year? As 2021 begins, we continue to feel the lingering effects of the pandemic and the unrest of 2020, but the new year is a time to embrace new possibilities. At the beginning of his gospel, Mark declares that the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is good news. (Mark 1:1) In this series we're going to walk closely with Jesus through the first chapter of Mark. As we do, we'll discover why the coming of Jesus is still the good news we all need and how believing the good news makes all the difference in our lives.



January 3	"Make Room for Jesus!"
January 10	"Listen to the Voice!"
January 17	"Jesus Uses Ordinary People"
January 24	"Jesus Has Authority"
January 31	"Early Riser"
February 7	"Jesus Isn't Afraid of Your Mess"

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.



Dedicated Missionary

Christmas Blessings Express at New Hope Ministries: Each year, New Hope Ministries blesses each of our guests with Christmas gifts donated by the Mechanicsburg community. This year though challenged with Covid-19, flexibility made the distribution a bit more interesting! However, we were able to adjust and the 3 days of gift distribution went off without a hitch. We were very concerned about the health and wellness for all of our volunteers and guests, so proper disinfecting



of the shopping cars and social distancing was well maintained. This year we found that we didn't have as many volunteers as we had had in the past so a new way of setting up the actual distribution arrangement and we believe that it worked better than in the past! So, a new and better way has been established!!! Amazing how God allowed a better solution to present itself in a time of special need. 212 families were served. Not as many physical/tangible gifts may have been given out because of decreased donations but increased donations of gift cards were appreciated by all of the guests. Thank you to all of you who made donations of either gifts, gift cards or physically coming to help with Christmas Blessings Express....your expressions of love to those less fortunate than us was so appreciated by everyone of our guests. Merry Christmas, *Debbie and Don Karns*

[Relationship Builder](#)



You are invited to please stop by Janice Bowen's porch anytime if you are in search of the following: January church **newsletter** or the January/February **Upper Room**, a **facemask**, or a supply of **greeting cards**. Please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112 if you have any questions.

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.

[Generous Giver](#)

All **offerings or donations** to be given for the 2020 year is due to the church no later than December 31st at 12noon. Questions? Contact Ellen Hill at office@fumchurch.com, or Nancy Robinson, at nrobinson@fumchurch.com.

All invoices from 2020 that need to be payed are due no later than January 8th. Questions? Contact Nancy Robinson at nrobinson@fumchurch.com.

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

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 3years 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.*

YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth will look a bit different, but we are going to navigate things together and still find ways to gather, gain, grow, and give. 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!



To Our Beloved FUMC Camp & Retreat Families and Supporters,

As we look back over **2020**, many thoughts and feelings may be aroused. Difficult decisions were made resulting in placing on hold anticipated experiences.

Yet many found new ways to come close to God!

Some spent special time with family. Others found time to take a hike or a walk getting away from the distractions of life while finding time to truly listen to His words for our lives.

These types of "holy times" have helped cement the community together to launch us forward into **2021**.

Funding was required to sustain leadership, facilities, and programs critical to fulfilling the on-going mission of the Camp & Retreat ministries for 2020.

The "**Camp Comeback Campaign**" goal was set at **\$100,000.00**.

Churches, groups, and individuals from across the conference stepped up in support. We are excited and tremendously grateful to announce that gifts and pledges received to date exceed \$100,000.00

Together we have met this challenge! To GOD be the GLORY!

We will let you know more about **2021** camp plans as we receive information from the conference camping and retreat staff. Please keep them in your prayers for wisdom and discernment.

Let us know if you have any questions.

With Hope and in Christ's Service,

The FUMC Camping & Retreat Ministry Team

Questions? Contact: Deb Noss (sdppp@msn.com) or

Amy Ortiz (amy.ogden7@gmail.com)

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