



# First News First


*Opening Doors with Christ, One Another and Our Neighbors*

*From the Pastor's Desk.....*

## In This Issue...


 *Lifelong Learner* 3

 *Praying Follower* 6

 *Passionate Worshipper* 7

 *Dedicated Missionary* 7

 *Relationship Builder* 7

 *Generous Giver* 9

## "The Best Thing About First Church"

"What's the best thing about First Church?" If a friend asked you that question, what would you say? Would you talk about our great location, a visible presence in the community? Would you mention our building, a center for ministry throughout the week? How about our beautiful sanctuary, our excellent music programs or our weekly worship in-person and online? Maybe you would tell them about our commitment to prayer, or the care you received during a difficult time. Or, perhaps a Sunday school class or small group that's been important to you. How about programs for everyone from preschoolers to older adults? Or the hospitality or generosity of our congregation? There are so many good things you could say to answer that question.

For me, the answer to that question is simple. I have no doubt that the best thing about First Church is the people. It's you! You are the best thing about First Church! All of the other great things we've mentioned are only possible with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness. Buildings and programs are important, but our greatest resource is people – people called by God and committed to serving Christ, one another, and our neighbors.

I was recently reminded of this while reading Exodus for our fall worship series. Getting out of Egypt and across the Red Sea was not easy for the Israelites. Moses and the other leaders faced a vast wilderness and a seemingly endless list of challenges and tasks to manage. Like many leaders, Moses began to do too much. In a great scene in Exodus 18, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, pulled the exhausted Moses aside and helped him delegate the appropriate work to others. As we read on, we discover that it took the involvement of every person to move toward God's vision of the Promised Land. (See Exodus 18:13-27)

The same is true of us: it takes the involvement of every person to move toward God's vision of opening doors with Christ, one another and our neighbors. Each Sunday in October, we'll highlight a different ministry area during worship. As we do, I invite you to celebrate the people of our church and consider how will you be involved in God's great mission here.

I have no doubt that you are the best thing about First Church! I rejoice to be together on the journey with you.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Denny



# *A Special Message...*

On Sunday, Sept. 17, I announced my plans to retire from full-time active ministry as of June 30, 2024. After 44 years in ministry, this was not an easy decision. Betsy and I have found such joy in serving Christ together, especially with you over the past 8+ years. You will always have a special place in our lives.

Over the next few months, our Staff-Parish Relations Committee will meet with our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver. They will develop a profile of our church and provide input for our Bishops and Cabinet as they prayerfully consider the appointment of a new pastor beginning July 1, 2024. We will keep you informed as there is information to share.

I'm excited that we still have 9 months to serve together! Please pray for me, as well as for the staff and leaders of our church, as we prepare for this important transition in pastoral leadership. Pray as well for our Bishops and Cabinet as they identify and appoint the next pastor for First Church.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Denny

## *Sermon Series*

### **"Exodus: Seeing God on the Journey"**

God didn't promise Moses that leading the Israelites would be easy; God promised, "I will be with you" (Exodus 3:12). As we follow Moses and Israel through the book of Exodus, we see powerful signs that God is with them. Even when they can't see it, when they grumble and complain, and when they turn away to worship other gods, God is intimately involved in their lives. In this series, we'll lift up some of the powerful signs of God's presence as we journey through Exodus together. As we do, we'll be invited to look for signs that God is at work today. Whatever our circumstances, God still promises: "I will be with you."

Oct. 1	"Water from a Rock" World Communion Sunday	Exodus 17:1-7
Oct. 8	"Laws Etched in Stone"	Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
Oct. 15	"The Lord Reconsiders"	Exodus 32:1-14
Oct. 22	Preaching: Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver, District Superintendent Annual Church Conference (9:45 a.m.)	
Oct. 29	"The Glory of the Lord"	Exodus 33:12-23



Whether you're just beginning to explore faith, growing as a disciple or becoming a fully devoted follower, there's always something new to learn on our journey with Jesus. First Church is here to help by providing a variety of offerings for your next faithful step:

### **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 and on our church website ([fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com)).

### **Next Step Class: A Disciple's Path | Begins Sunday, Oct. 1, 9:45-10:45 a.m.**

Ready to explore the foundations of our faith or become a First Church member? Join Pastor Denny in room 207 for this six-week study to discover what it means to faithfully participate in the life of the church through your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Child care will be provided. Register on Church Center, at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com) or by contacting Tina Eaton ([adultministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adultministry@fumchurch.com) or 717-766-4611).

### **Wednesday Night Men's Group | First and Third Wednesdays, 8 p.m.**

This group enjoys great fellowship while focusing on discussion-based Bible studies. A new study, "Kingdom Heroes," starts Oct. 4. In this six-session series led by Dr. Tony Evans, you'll discover how the journeys of Old Testament heroes, such as Abraham, Noah and Moses, can help you build a strong and enduring faith. Contact Barry Eaton if interested.

### **Wonderful Wednesday – Expanded! | Begins Oct. 11, 5-7 p.m.**

Children, youth and adults are all invited to participate in this family fellowship and learning program. The six-week fall session will begin at 5 p.m. with prayer and a family-style dinner in Fellowship Hall, followed by small group learning for all ages at 6 p.m. Register on Church Center or at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com) and contact Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) with questions. We recognize that families may have a conflict some weeks – don't let that keep you from joining us for the weeks that you can! Groups include:

- Kids Study – For kids in kindergarten through fifth grade (child care will be offered for children under the age of 5). Contact Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) for more details.
- Youth Study – For youth in grades 6-12. Contact Lisa Aronson ([uthrock@fumchurch.com](mailto:uthrock@fumchurch.com)) for more details.
- Multigenerational Study – For young people and adults together. Study to be determined. Contact Tina Eaton ([adultministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adultministry@fumchurch.com)) for more details.
- Adult Study – Adults of all ages will gather to study "Irresistible: Reclaiming the NEW that Jesus Unleashed for the World" by Andy Stanley. Together, we will consider the faith modeled by early believers, what made it so irresistible, and how we can reclaim that fire. Contact Tina Eaton ([adultministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adultministry@fumchurch.com)) for more details.

### **Wednesday Bible Study | Begins Oct. 18, 6:45 p.m.**

Join Pastor Denny for a six-week study, "Deepening our Prayer: The Heart of Christ" (which is part 3



of the full "Companions in Christ" study series) in room B003. Together, you will engage in a journey of spiritual growth and discovery like no other! The study guide for this 6-week study is \$10, or you may purchase the complete set for \$20 if you'd like to continue on through the year with Pastor Denny for the two additional studies that will come next in the series. Register using on the Church Center app, at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com), or by contacting Tina Eaton ([adultministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adultministry@fumchurch.com))

### **Sunday School | Sundays, 9:45-10:45 a.m.**

Fall classes kick off on Sunday, Sept. 10! New participants are encouraged to join any class, anytime.

- **Faith in Everyday Life**

*Location: Room 105*

*Leader: Jenell Paris*

This group is for adults of all ages and focuses on fellowship, friendship and mutual support in and outside the classroom. Currently watching season 2 of "The Chosen" along with a guided discussion.

- **Growing in Christ**

*Location: Fellowship Hall*

*Leader: Tina Eaton*

This group provides a welcoming space for newcomers who are looking to pray and study God's Word together. Currently enjoying an in-depth study of the book of Romans.

- **Christian Fellowship**

*Location: Room B003*

*Leader: Wayde Leister*

This friendly, caring group, is eager to apply God's Word to life's challenges. Currently studying "Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People," by Bob Goff.

- **Faithful Families**

*Location: Room B005*

*Leaders: Bob and Tracy Wertz*

Join 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**

*Location: Room B004*

*Leader: Bob Wertz, Sr.*

This group of active seniors focuses on encouraging instructions for faithful living and enjoys fellowship activities together outside of class. Lessons this fall are focused on the theme "God Provides."

- **Guyer Class**

*Location: Room 123*

*Leader: Steve Noss*

This class, comprised of a wonderful group of elders in the church, is taught by a variety of church leaders. Lessons this fall are focused on the theme "God Provides."

### **Zoe Mazi | Mondays, 7:15-8:45 p.m.**

Zoe Mazi (which means "Life Together") is a ministry group that welcomes young adults (18+) from a variety of churches in the Mechanicsburg area. On the first and third Monday of each month, they meet at Strock's Corn Crib for a large group gathering that features of worship and teaching from a local speaker. On the second and fourth Mondays, they meet at the





home of Zoe Mazi Executive Director Shannon Zimmerman for a time of small group discussion. Find more details and get connected at [zoemazi.org](http://zoemazi.org)

### Mom Connection

This group connects moms of children (newborns through high school age) with other moms who are seeking friendship, support and encouragement along the parenting journey. The group meets monthly from September through May. Meetings begin with dinner followed by a theme-based topic designed to help develop connections and offer support (spiritual, emotional, practical), inspiration, and resources for Christ-centered parenting. Suggested donation of \$5 per meeting to cover program materials and dinner. Mom Connection monthly gatherings begin Sept. 18. Sign up now at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com) or on Church Center. Contact Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) or Lisa Aronson ([uthrock@fumchurch.com](mailto:uthrock@fumchurch.com)) with questions.



### Health and Wellness Presentation | Nov. 12, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Join us in the multi-purpose room to hear from Bob Buhrig with Buhrig's Funeral Home. Bob will speak on various points of interest related to funeral planning, including some of the less traditional and newer burial options. This is the first of a two-part series on topics related to death and dying, with a second presentation planned for 2024.

### Youth Winter Retreat | Dec. 8-10

Students grades 6-12 are invited to participate in this year's Winter Retreat at Kenbrook Bible Camp. If you ever wished that Sunday evening could last longer or we had more time to play games, this event is for you! During the weekend we will have tasty meals, gym time, free time in the game room, opportunities for learning and worship, space for rest, and so much more! Retreats are also a great way to grow in your relationships with fellow students and feel more connected to the youth community at First Church. Learn more and sign up on Church Center today! Be sure to register by Nov. 1.

### 2024 Women's Retreat | Jan. 26-28

Save the date for our annual Women's Retreat! Please note that this is one week earlier than our usual February weekend. Keep an eye out for more details in November!

### From the Library

I love books and sewing. Every day I fight the good fight over sewing or cleaning, sewing or cooking, and sewing or anything else. I have conquered the battle of sewing and reading by using audiobooks when I sew or do all the other aforementioned chores. But even at that, I still love books and love introducing you to all my favorites each month. Fall is a great time of year — the weather is crisp and coffee tastes better when it is chilly. Also, fall lends itself to curling up in a chair with a good book. And, now that there is a writers' strike on TV, a book is even more important. Usually, I say October is mystery month in the library, but if you know me, you know I think every month is mystery month. I hope you will enjoy these mystery selections as much as I know I will.

Coming out in the first week of October is *Into the Fire*, the first book in the "Undaunted Courage" series by Irene Hannon. The plot centers on Bri Tucker, a former smokejumper and current arson investigator. When a mysterious blaze takes the life of a friend, Bri takes over the case and discovers it's only one of several fiery deaths. Bri teams up with ATF Special Agent Marc Davis to solve the mystery, and the danger escalates. Someone wants not only to destroy the evidence, but also to incinerate the investigators. This one will keep you reading way past your bedtime, but maybe not by the light of a fire pit.

As I was checking for new mysteries to write about, I discovered that writers don't know this is mystery



month. So, I'm going to let go of my theme and talk about a new romance — but one I'm still looking forward to. In *Wildflower Falls* by Denise Hunter, the main characters have a couple of secrets making this a small mystery. Charlotte Simpson, owner of Stillwater Ranch, is bereft when her mother dies. She has never known who her father was and she longs to know. She hires Gunner Dawson to work with her horses. Gunner has experienced great loss, and he likes to keep everyone at arm's length. He also doesn't like to stay in one place long. But, what he hadn't planned on is getting caught up in helping Charlotte, not only with the ranch but also with her search for her father. Soon he doesn't know if he is falling in love with the ranch or its owner. But, what may complicate his feelings is learning Charlotte's true identity. This could be a page-turner too!

If neither of these books appeal to you, stop in the library and let us help you find just the right book for you. If you like jigsaw puzzles, we have a robust puzzle exchange. There is no checkout or time limit; just take one and at some point, bring one back.

See you in the library! (And now, back to the sewing room...)

Pam, Donna, Sue, Annette, Mary, Marge, and Deb

### **Mental Health First Aid Course | Nov. 7 - 8**

Increase your comfort level in offering initial support to an adult experiencing a mental health challenge or substance misuse problem and connect them with appropriate resources. As certified instructors, Penn State Extension educators teach the National Council for Mental Wellbeing's Mental Health First Aid course. This course consists of two hours of self-paced online learning and a six-hour virtual class. The course includes activities and opportunities to practice support strategies. A certificate will be available online after completion of the course. For more information visit <https://web.cvent.com/event/918e1920-4957-4617-9bd4-01644e1c9dd7/summary>

## *Praying Follower*



### **Moms in Prayer | Mondays, 7:30-8:30 p.m.**

Join us as we unite with women around the world in praying for our children and grandchildren through Moms in Prayer International. Our prayer group, led by Deb Noss, meets on Monday evenings in room 105, and all mothers and grandmothers are invited! No prayer experience is required, and your child can be any age or stage of life. All prayers remain confidential within the group. Please contact Deb Noss ([sdppp@msn.com](mailto:sdppp@msn.com)) if you have questions or would like to join this group.



### **Bless Our Schools Sunday**

This year, First Church will observe Bless Our Schools Sunday on Oct. 8. This is a special time for churches worldwide to pray for the students, teachers and school staff in their congregations and in their communities. Together we will pray "in one accord" during our worship services. Imagine the impact this will have on those who dedicate their days to educating students and on the students who need God's protection, guidance, and encouragement!

In addition to our corporate prayer, we invite you to fill out a prayer card and return it to the basket at worship services on that day. You may request prayers for specific schools, students, teachers and others involved in education, and our Moms in Prayer group will pray over these things throughout the school year. All requests will remain confidential. If you're not in worship that day, but have a specific prayer request, please contact Tina Eaton.

## Passionate Worshipper



### Rejoicing Spirits | Sunday, Oct. 22, 4 p.m.

First Church invites everyone to attend this “shush-free” worship experience that celebrates all expressions of worship and individuals of all abilities. This monthly service includes music, scripture, prayer and a brief message, along with refreshments and fellowship afterward.



## Dedicated Missionary



### Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry | Wednesday, Oct. 18, 6:30 p.m.

Isaiah 61 Ministries serves the needs of the homeless in Dauphin County through a variety of services including a soup kitchen, clothing bank and life groups. First Church members help serve meals to the homeless in downtown Harrisburg on the third Wednesday of each month. We will need additional help for the October meal – First Church has been asked to provide the meal to serve over 100 people! To find out how you can help or if you would like to carpool, please contact Tiffany Holland ([tholland1967@gmail.com](mailto:tholland1967@gmail.com)).

### Gleaning | Wednesday, Oct. 4, 6 p.m.

This growing season, we’re excited to once again partner with Oak Grove Farms to provide fresh produce to families receiving monthly groceries from Fishing Creek Salen UMC’s food pantry. Contact Janice Bowen ([wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com) or 717-766-4611, ext. 112) to be added to our 2023 Glean Team communications!

### CROP Walk | Sunday, Oct. 22, 2 p.m.

Help end hunger locally and globally through our local CROP Walk! Find more details about both events and register for this year’s walk at [crophungerwalk.org](http://crophungerwalk.org).

### Serve with Kids Ministry!

If you love kids and having fun, you might love being a part of First Church Kids! We’d love to welcome some new faces to our volunteer team this fall. Contact Director of Children’s and Family Ministries Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) to learn more.



## Relationship Builder



### October Hospitality Tip: Outreach Hospitality

We can express extravagant First Church hospitality is expressed through our outreach to our surrounding community! Let’s challenge one another to volunteer for one outreach event in October! Here several wonderful options:

- Bake a dessert for the Community Dinner (Oct. 15, contact Lori Hoffnagle)
- Greet in the parking lot at Third Friday Food Trucks (Oct. 20, contact Jeff Hoffnagle)
- Volunteer at our Streets of Treats booth (Oct. 21, contact Katie Knorr)

The way we “attract” people to church has changed. We must go outside the church building and form relationships first, then invite those we’re connecting with to something inside the church. Please consider volunteering for one of these outreach events in October!

**Men’s Breakfast | Saturday, Oct. 7, 7:30 a.m.**

Join other First Church men for good food and light-hearted fellowship on the first Saturday of each month at Brothers Restaurant (705 Gettysburg Pike, Mechanicsburg). Please contact Barry Eaton ([1785eaton@gmail.com](mailto:1785eaton@gmail.com)) to RSVP.



**Widows/Widowers Fellowship | Tuesday, Oct. 10, 11:30 a.m.**

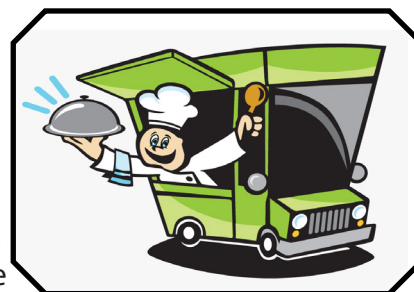
This month, the group will dine at T.J. Rockwell’s. If you plan to attend or need transportation, please contact Bonnie Guyer ([717-766-0145](tel:717-766-0145)).

**Mechanicsburg Halloween Parade | Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m.**

Enjoy front-row seats for Mechanicsburg’s Halloween Parade! The parade passes right by our Simpson Street property, and anyone is welcome to set up seating along the sidewalk. Free parking will be available, along with food for purchase from our Handbell Choir.

**Third Friday Food Trucks | Oct. 20, 4:30-7 p.m.**

Come meet our neighbors in a fun and casual atmosphere at the last Third Friday Food Trucks of 2023! Each month, we welcome several gourmet food trucks that serve a variety of delicious foods. Bring a blanket or chair to enjoy dinner in the green space or sit at the tables and chairs provided. This month, we welcome Midnight Smokin’ BBQ, Audrey’s Cup of Sunshine, The Italian Job, Potato Coop, Scoop O’ Dough and a truck to be named closer to the date. Be sure to check our website and Facebook page for updates!



**First Church Fall Fest | Saturday, Oct. 21, 4-7 p.m.**

Join us in the Community Green Space for our Family Fall Fest! This all-ages event is a chance to enjoy the festivities that make fall so fun. We’ll celebrate the season with hot dogs, snacks, apple cider, pumpkins, crafts and outdoor games. Bring a chair or a blanket and stick around for an outdoor movie as well. Sign up at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com) or on the Church Center app to let us know you’re coming!

**Streets of Treats | Saturday, Oct. 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

Stop by Mechanicsburg Streets of Treats (hosted by the Mechanicsburg Chamber of Commerce)! Pick up a treat bag and map of participating businesses at the Square in Mechanicsburg, then enjoy daytime trick-or-treating, crafts, games and other activities. Be sure to look for our First Church Kids table at this free, family-friendly event!

**Joy in the Morning | Monday, Oct. 23, 1 p.m.**

If you live with chronic pain or ongoing health challenges, we invite you to join in sharing discussion and supportive friendship with this small group. We meet monthly on Monday afternoons from 1 to 2 p.m. at Bethany Village. Terry Ketrow and Janice Bowen co-facilitate, drawing upon readings and devotionals. For more information, contact Janice Bowen ([wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com) or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112).

**Pickleball in the Park | Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m.**

Join us on the pickleball court at Mechanicsburg Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Park for some fun and games! No experience is necessary, and paddles and balls will be available to borrow. In the event of bad weather, we will play in the multipurpose room (enter via the gym door directly across from the flagpole by the office entrance). Contact Janice Bowen ([717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112 or [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com)) with questions or to be added to the email list for alerts.





### Connect with Kids Ministry!

Did you know First Church Kids has a Facebook page? We upload videos, family activities, resources and more for families to use each week. Find us on Facebook ([facebook.com/groups/fumckids](https://facebook.com/groups/fumckids)) or reach out to Miss Katie ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) for more information.

### Greeting Cards to Share!

Want to send well wishes for a happy birthday or speedy recovery to a friend? Stop by our greeting card display in the lobby outside the multipurpose room and help yourself to a card! If you'd like a bigger supply of cards or ideas of church members who would appreciate receiving a card, please contact Janice Bowen ([wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com) or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611)).

## Generous Giver



### Financial Report

Through August 31, 2023

66% of year

General Fund		
2023 budget	\$ 900,886	
Expected income – YTD	\$ 600,585	(67% of budget)
Actual income – YTD	\$ 609,907	(68% of budget)
Actual expenses – YTD	\$ 607,234	(67% of budget)

Income for the four-Sunday month of August was \$57,286, about \$12,000 shy of our average four-week budget expectation. However, the summer months are often our lowest time of giving. Despite this, we continue to run ahead of our year-to-date giving budget. In July, expenses were a bit higher as they included a \$13,000 payment of principal on our bell tower loan. The good news is year-to-date income has outpaced year-to-date expenses through the first eight months of the year. Thank you for giving your prayers, talents and gifts to support First Church's work to spread the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. And, thank you to staff and volunteers who continue to steward all of these gifts well.

We continue to ask for your consideration of making a gift to reduce the debt from our bell tower loan as quickly as possible. At one point, we believed we may need to borrow up to \$200,000. However, by controlling project costs and with contributions from individuals and church groups, we have already reduced the debt to around \$80,000. We will make monthly interest payments and periodic principal payments throughout the year. You can make a donation on the Church Center app or with a check. Please contact the church office for more information. As always, thank you for your talents, faith and gifts that help First Church serve the Lord.

### Little Free Pantry

Thanks so much for your support of the Little Free Pantry through your donations and monetary contributions. We are slowly building up our supply to stock the pantry, but we still welcome your donations! You can drop off donations at the church office or in the marked basket at the alley entrance. You're also welcome to place items in the pantry anytime. We are blessed to be able to offer this barrier-free access point to food to our neighbors. If you have questions about the Little Free Pantry, please contact Lori Hoffnagle ([l\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com)).



## Change 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 well-digging in Sierra Leone by dropping your loose change (or even paper bills) into the blue Change for Water bucket located in the lobby in front of the multipurpose room. Donations from September totaled \$24.20.

## Community Dinner on the Lawn (Fall Desserts Needed!) | Sunday, Oct. 15, 5 p.m.

The next Community Dinner on the Lawn will be held at First Church of God on Main Street in Mechanicsburg. This dinner is for the Mechanicsburg downtown community and includes a free meal, music and gift cards to local businesses. We plan to serve over 130 people. First Church has been asked to provide fall desserts for this dinner. We are looking for cakes, cookies, pies or other sweet treats with a fall theme (pumpkin, apple, etc.). Please consider providing a baked good for the dinner, and feel free to join us in serving our neighbors that evening. Please contact Lori Hoffnagle ([L\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com)) if you have questions or want to donate a baked good.



## Cooking and Caring for our Community at Broad Street Elementary | Thursday, Nov. 2

This event started in 2017 to bring local churches and Broad Street Elementary School together to provide a meal for local families. At this dinner, First Church will provide BBQ and volunteers. At this time, we plan to serve close to 300 for dinner, and we're responsible for preparing 60 pounds of BBQ using a simple recipe provided by the school. Please consider making a 5 lb. batch of BBQ (or more) for the families at Broad Street. If you have questions or would like to help, please contact Lori Hoffnagle ([L\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com)). Thanks for your support!

## Consecration Sunday | Nov. 12

Consecration Sunday is coming soon! On Sunday, Oct. 29, we'll start a three-week worship series, "Climb Higher: Reaching New Heights in Giving and Discipleship." We'll look at Christian stewardship as grounded in gratitude, revealed in prayer and lived in faith. During our special worship services on Nov. 12, you will be invited to make a financial commitment to support First Church's mission in 2024, following Jesus and as we open doors with Christ, one another and our neighbors. Keep an eye out for more information on how you can take the next faithful step as a faithful steward of God's resources on Consecration Sunday.

## World Thank Offering Baked Good Giveaway | Sunday, Nov. 19

Support the United Women in Faith World Thank Offering with your sweet tooth! Stop by the table near the couches (close to the Children's hallway) to pick up a tasty treat and make a donation to the World Thank Offering. "The World Thank Offering is an opportunity for individuals to respond to God's abundant grace in the midst of change. When we share our gifts and they are combined with the gifts of others, our contributions make possible the support of national and international work to meet the physical and social needs of women, children, and youth in your neighborhood and around the world." Visit us between worship services for a sweet treat and a chance to help women, children and youth. If you can donate a baked good, please bring to the display that morning. If you have questions about United Women in Faith or the World Thank Offering, please contact Lori Hoffnagle ([L\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com)).



## Sleep Out for the Homeless | Nov. 17-18

Did you know that our annual Sleep Out for the Homeless has been happening for 30 years? In 2023, First Church will host this event to raise money and awareness for the homeless for the 31st time. Once again on the Friday evening before Thanksgiving, students will line Simpson Street to collect spare change from passing traffic. When not on the streets, students are taking a break in the soup kitchen, praying, or participating in a hands-on learning activity about the realities of homelessness. Students also construct cardboard shelters and face the elements as they sleep outside through the night. In recent years Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ's youth group has join First Church's youth group in making this event possible.

The event has shifted and adapted through the years, but it continues to be an important way for the local agencies that benefit from the funds raised. Each year, we have raised upwards of \$5,000 to donate to local organizations dedicated to helping the homeless in our area. This year's recipients will be One80Ministries, Family Promise and New Hope Ministries. These organizations do so much to help those affected by homelessness in our community, and it's a joy to support their continual efforts of caring for those in need.

How can you be involved?

- Pray for our event. Pray that students would learn more about the realities of homelessness, for our students' safety, and for the generosity of those passing by Friday evening.
- Volunteer at the Sleep Out. If you're an adult with current clearances, you can help keep our students safe by assisting in the soup kitchen or being one of the supervising adults along the streets, at our entrance, or at the warming burn barrels. Contact Lisa Aronson ([uthrock@fumchurch.com](mailto:uthrock@fumchurch.com)) if interested.
- Invite a student. Any students in grades 6-12 are welcome to participate. Sign up on Church Center, and be on the lookout for a sizable cardboard box to sleep in.
- Donate. Drive by on the evening of Nov. 17 and make a donation in-person, or access the link on Church Center to learn how you can donate online or at church.

## Cookie Walk | Saturday, Dec. 16

Calling all cookie bakers! It's never too early to start baking for our youth's Cookie Walk. This event has become popular in part because of wonderful bakers like you! Last year, your delicious cookies helped us raise over \$2,000 for our mission trip fund.

This year, we're asking bakers to provide for 4-5 batches (8-10 dozen) per style of homemade cookie. Stick to an old family recipe or try something new! Cookies will need to be at the church by 7 a.m. on Dec. 16. Prior to the event, they can be placed in the church kitchen and labeled for "Cookie Walk". Fill out form below and place it in the display in the main lobby or sign up on Church Center. Don't forget, cookies freeze well so you can even start baking today to get ahead of the Christmas rush.

Please help us continue to carry on this tradition and raise money for the youth mission trip. Contact Lynn Rapp ([minion.youth17@gmail.com](mailto:minion.youth17@gmail.com)) with questions.

**Please select 2 types of cookies. We will contact you with the type we need most.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cookie type 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Cookie type 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to make both types?    Yes / No



# FLU SHOTS

We will once again offer flu shots (quadrivalent vaccine) provided by Sandy Leister, RN. There's no need to preregister — simply stop by **between 9 and 11 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 12**. Anyone 18 or older is welcome to receive a vaccine.

Some insurance plans will be accepted. Without insurance coverage, the flu shot costs \$40 (cash or check, made out to VNA of Central PA).

Please contact Janice Bowen (717-766-4611, ext. 112 or [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com)) with questions.



vaccine

## Accepted Insurances:

Medicare B; Medicare B and a secondary insurance; Medicare B and AARP; Medicare B and commercial (supplement); Railroad Medicare B; GHP; GHP Gold; Humana Gold; Humana Choice PPO

sunday | 9:45 a.m.

OCT.  
22

2023

# CHURCH CONFERENCE

All are welcome to attend our annual conference with District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver for an update on church business from key First Church leaders. First Church members will vote on several matters.



## *First Church Mission Moments...*



Supporting Operation Christmas Child by packing shoeboxes with wonderful things for children around the world has been a long-time tradition at First Church. These gifts impact the lives of countless children and their families as they bring hope through the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Not only do these gifts touch the lives of the children who receive them, they also touch the lives of the children who prepare them. One family has a story to share, as told by Katie Dang, who had this sweet conversation with her kids, Keane and Kimber (the "Little Ks"):

Katie: "What do you remember about Operation Christmas Child from last year?"

Kimber: "I don't really remember. What is that?"

Keane: "Kimber, it was when we got to fill boxes with presents for kids who wouldn't get any since their families don't have a lot of money."

Kimber: "Oh yeah! We picked out presents and wrote notes to the other kids. And then we got to line up and fill the truck with the boxes. That was really fun!"

Katie (knowing the little Ks would be wondering why Santa didn't intervene): "What if I told you that Santa has nothing to do with Operation Christmas Child?"

Well, the little Ks' eyes got big, and their minds were blown! At their age, Operation Christmas Child provides a wonderful opportunity to tangibly remind them about the true meaning of Christmas. Katie explained how we give presents to celebrate the birth of Jesus and remember how the wise men brought presents to Jesus at His birth. She talked to her kids about how Jesus became a giver of gifts – including the biggest gift of all, which was His life! She told them that before each Operation Christmas Child shoebox gets put on a plane, a volunteer puts a Bible or a message in it so each child who receives a gift can learn about Jesus! The conversation continued:

Little Ks: "So they can go to heaven?"

Katie: "Yes, so they can go to heaven."

Little Ks: "I'm glad I know about Jesus, so I can go to heaven!"

Together, let's make this our biggest year ever! You can support Operation Christmas Child by filling a shoebox with gifts for the upcoming holiday season! Start by picking up the instructions and a shoebox at church (or use your own shoebox). You'll find these items at the display in the main entrance hallway. Next, fill your box with items suggested on the list (available at the display or at [samaritanaspurse.org](https://www.samaritanaspurse.org)). Finally, bring your filled shoeboxes back to the church display in the main lobby by Nov. 19. On that day, we'll load them in the truck after the 11 a.m. worship service and send them off to the distribution center for delivery by Christmas!

To watch special stories from children who have received these gifts, you can visit [video.samaritanaspurse.org/channel/operation-christmas-child](https://www.samaritanaspurse.org/channel/operation-christmas-child). As always, thanks for your support of this special mission!

# **Daily Bible Readings October 2023**

Sunday, October 1	Worship: "Exodus: Water from a Rock" Holy Communion
Monday, October 2	Psalm 19
Tuesday, October 3	Philippians 3:1-11
Wednesday, October 4	Philippians 3:12-21
Thursday, October 5	Matthew 21:33-46
Friday, October 6	Exodus 20:1-20
Saturday, October 7	Rest and Reflect

Sunday, October 8	Worship: "Exodus: The Ten Commandments"
Monday, October 9	Psalm 106:32-43
Tuesday, October 10	Philippians 4:1-9
Wednesday, October 11	Philippians 4:10-23
Thursday, October 12	Matthew 22:1-14
Friday, October 13	Exodus 32:1-14
Saturday, October 14	Rest and Reflect

Sunday, October 15	Worship: "Exodus: The Golden Calf"
Monday, October 16	Psalm 99
Tuesday, October 17	I Thessalonians 1:1-10
Wednesday, October 18	Matthew 22:15-22
Thursday, October 19	Exodus 33:1-11
Friday, October 20	Exodus 33:12-23
Saturday, October 21	Rest and Reflect

Sunday, October 22	Worship: Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver, District Superintendent
Monday, October 23	Psalm 90:1-12
Tuesday, October 24	Psalm 90:13-17
Wednesday, October 25	I Thessalonians 2:1-8
Thursday, October 26	Matthew 22:34-46
Friday, October 27	Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Saturday, October 28	Rest and Reflect

Sunday, October 29	Worship: "Climb Higher: Grounded in Gratitude"
Monday, October 30	Revelation 7:9-17
Tuesday, October 31	I John 3:1-3

## News and Notes....

FUMC family,

Thank you for all your prayers and support during my hip surgery. I received many cards, flowers and phone calls. I am truly humbled by your thoughtfulness. So great to belong to such a loving church family.

Yours in Christ,  
Ralph Haines

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Share the Harvest table! We really appreciate the gifts of fresh produce that were shared!

— Janice Bowen



**Jane Bonser.....October 1**  
**Pam Weaver.....October 7**  
**Peg Hassinger.....October 8**  
**Bonnie Klinger.....October 14**  
**Kay Heiges.....October 18**  
**Jim Siemons.....October 20**  
**Carol Ann Moomaw...October 21**  
**Winslow Brown.....October 23**  
**Don Shover.....October 23**  
**Gail Leinhos.....October 28**

**Sadie Heim.....November 1**  
**Liz Nesmith.....November 4**  
**Elvin Hess.....November 6**  
**Mary Cain.....November 11**  
**Paul Cain.....November 11**  
**Pat Bricker.....November 23**  
**Patricia Marr.....November 23**  
**Marlin Lehmer.....November 24**



**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY**



♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Weaver married 61 years on October 7, 1962.**

♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Harkins married 61 years on October 20, 1962.**

**FIRST NEWS FIRST**  
EDITORS: Dawn Fisher  
Jennifer Myers

The **deadline** for submitting articles  
for the November 2023 issue is **October 15**.  
Early submissions always appreciated!