



# First News First


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

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

## In This Issue...


 *Lifelong Learner* 2

 *Praying Follower* 4

 *Passionate Worshipper* 5

 *Dedicated Missionary* 5

 *Relationship Builder* 6

 *Generous Giver* 7

### "First God Loves, Then God Gives"

On Nov. 12, we'll celebrate Consecration Sunday at First Church. During worship services that day, you'll be invited to make a financial commitment to "Open Doors with Christ, One Another and Our Neighbors" in 2024. As you consider what your gift will be, I want to ask, "What inspires you to give?" When I think of what inspires me to give, a beloved verse from John's Gospel comes to mind:

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have eternal life. (John 3:16)

This verse tells us three things about God's giving through Jesus:

1. God's motivation was love. (God so loved the world...)
2. God gave sacrificially. (... that he gave his only Son...)
3. God gave in response to our need. (... so that everyone who believes in him won't perish...)

God loved us. Then, out of this great love, God gave! In the same way, our giving flows out of our love for God and for others.

First, we give in order to express gratitude. Giving is one of our most important ways to say "thanks" for God's love toward us. A friend once called the annual stewardship Sunday in his congregation "Glad Response Sunday." I like that because that's what our giving is: a joyful response to God's love for us! Christ-centered giving is motivated by love.

Second, we give in order to grow. By now, you may be familiar with the step-up chart we provide as a tool for your growth through giving. Each year, you're invited to ask, "What's my next faithful step?" That step may involve sacrifice, as we allow God to reorder our priorities to kingdom priorities. The record is clear. Generous givers are typically happier and more spiritually vigorous than those who are not generous. Christ-centered giving is sacrificial.

Third, we give in order to be involved. On Consecration Sunday, we also want to honor the way that your tithes, time and talents edify our church and enhance our community through a variety of ministries and missions. We celebrate all ways we as a church are involved in God's good work and encourage everyone to take part.

We give because something in the church has caught our eye or warmed our heart or stirred our mind. We give because of the love we have experienced in our church family. We give because a small group or class which has nurtured our spiritual life. We give because the worship or the sermon has touched our hearts. We give because together we make a difference in the lives of our neighbors near and far away. We give to bring light into darkness.

As you consider your financial commitment to God's ministry at First Church for 2024, remember God's gift to you in Jesus Christ. God gave lovingly, sacrificially, and in response to our need. God calls us to give in the same way. God is able, through our giving, to do abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine!

Taking the next faithful step with you,

Pastor Denny



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)).

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

This group enjoys great fellowship while focusing on discussion-based Bible studies. In their current study, "Kingdom Heroes," Dr. Tony Evans explores 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! | Oct. 11-Nov. 15, 5-7 p.m.**

Children and adults are all invited to participate in this family fellowship and learning program. Come at 5 p.m. for 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.

### **Wednesday Bible Study | Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m.**

Jump into Pastor Denny's current study, "Deepening our Prayer: The Heart of Christ" (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! 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.**

Looking for opportunities to learn and deepen relationships on Sunday mornings? Check out one of our Sunday School classes! Current classes include:

- **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 "It's Not Supposed to be This Way" by Lysa Terkeurst. Come to learn how to find strength when disappointments leave you shattered.

- **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 out of the classroom. Currently watching season 2 of "The Chosen" along with a guided discussion.

- **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.

- **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. Discover how every part of our lives is touched by the loving and liberating rule of Jesus through studying the book of Colossians.

- **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."

- **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."

### **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. 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 | Jan. 7, 9:45-10:45 a.m.**

Join us in the multipurpose room to hear from Bob Buhrig with Buhrig's Funerals and Cremations. 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.

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

Preparations are underway for the 2024 Women's Retreat at Mt. Asbury Retreat Center! Once again, we'll offer a one-day option for those who wish to attend just on Saturday, as well as an overnight option. We're excited to welcome local author and Bible study teacher Tabitha Deller as our guest speaker this year. Tabitha will speak on how God's Word offers a way to exchange stress for rest as we learn to abide rather than strive. Allowing His Holiness to make us whole is truly the only way we'll thrive! Pick up a registration form at the display window (around the corner from the Church Library or on page 11) or sign up on the Church Center app. Contact Patti Herring ([familyzeke@verizon.net](mailto:familyzeke@verizon.net)) with questions.

### **From the Library**

I've always loved November. I love that hint of winter coming, and with it Thanksgiving, fire pits, fall decorations and just the change of seasons. Our nation honors our veterans in November, which is another chance to be aware of how blessed we are to live in the land of the free provided by those who sacrificed to give us liberty. On top of all those great blessings are also the little blessings in our church library. We have the best books, and I'm so lucky to get to share some of them with you. Here are a couple of new books I know you'll be eager to read.



Many of us have experienced Beth Moore's exceptional Bible studies, and she is regarded as a leading Bible scholar and a champion for women. Over the years, she has led us deeply into the Bible with insight and knowledge. She has also been a champion of her Southern Baptist faith and shocked everyone when she left the church in 2018. While watching her Bible study videos, I always thought, *Here is a woman who has it all together, and she must have a perfect life.* But now Moore tells us of her struggles in her memoir, *All My Knotted-Up Life*. As a child, she endured abuse from her father and had a front-row seat to her mother's mental health struggles. Yet, she felt God's presence, was baptized at the age of nine and began her journey with God as her guide. She discusses her start in the church, founding Living Proof Ministries, and her journey in and away from the Southern Baptist Church. She also writes of her personal life, which has had its ups and downs. Still, she has kept her faith. She writes candidly and with wit. You won't want to miss her life's story (and you might want to keep the tissues handy).

Beth Moore is a hard act to follow, but Wanda Brunstetter has always been a favorite in the library. Her latest book, *Sisters by the Sea*, is very interesting to me. She is joined by her daughter-in-law Jean, her granddaughter Richelle, and Jean's daughter-in-law Lorraine to write a novella of four stories set in Sarasota, Florida. Not only are the settings all the same, but each writer has also written a story about one of the Lambright sisters. These four sisters are originally from Indiana, but decided to move to Florida for reasons of their own. I won't let the cat out of the bag as to whether the sisters find what they are looking for or if they return home. I also wanted to highlight this book as I find it so special that four Brunstetters have bonded by writing a book together. To have a granddaughter continue her legacy as a storyteller must be gratifying beyond belief, and adding two more family members to that legacy would be hard to imagine.

As always, if these aren't the books that you're looking for, stop in the library, and one of our volunteers will help you find just the right book or jigsaw puzzle.

See you in the library,

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

## 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 Tina Eaton ([adult-ministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adult-ministry@fumchurch.com)) if you have questions or would like to join this group.



### November Prayer Focus: Home

In your prayers this month, try using the word "home" as a focus – it captures so many special things that we celebrate in November!

On All Saints Day, we take time to remember our loved ones who have passed away and honor the impact their lives have had on us, our families and our homes. You may like to use this special prayer (full version available on [umcdiscipleship.org](http://umcdiscipleship.org)):

Thank you, God, for the tremendous sacrifices made by those who have gone before us.

Bless the memories of your saints, God.

May we learn how to walk wisely from their examples of faith, dedication, worship, and love.

Amen.

Thanksgiving also brings home into focus as we come together to share a meal and fellowship with loved ones and friends. This can be wonderful for some and challenging for others who can't be with their loved ones due to deployment, illness, living at a distance, work obligations or other factors. You may want to use this special prayer, adapted from a prayer written by Abigail van Buren (Dear Abby):



O heavenly Father, I  
Give thanks for food and remember the hungry;  
Give thanks for health and remember the sick;  
Give thanks for friends and remember the lonely;  
Give thanks for freedom and remember the oppressed;  
Give thanks for family present and remember family absent.  
Amen.

No matter what, during this season of thanks, remember to “rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

## *Passionate Worshipper*



### **Rejoicing Spirits | Sunday, Nov. 26, 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.

### **Service of Remembrance and Hope | Sunday, Dec. 3, 4 p.m.**

If you’re feeling the burden of grief this holiday season and missing your loved ones, we invite you to join us for a time of worship and reflection at our Service of Remembrance and Hope. We will gather in the sanctuary, and the service will also be recorded and available afterward for viewing from home. Contact Janice Bowen ([wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com)) with questions.



### **Passion Play Experience | March 28**

Signups are officially open for our 2024 Passion Play Experience! If you’re interested in participating on stage or behind the scenes in our interactive retelling of the life of Jesus, register on Church Center or by contacting Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) or Sarah Pugh ([worship@fumchurch.com](mailto:worship@fumchurch.com)).

## *Dedicated Missionary*



### **Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry | Wednesday, Nov. 15, 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. 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)).

### **Operation Christmas Child | Boxes due Sunday, Nov. 19**

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 both children and their families as they bring hope through the Good News of Jesus Christ. Together, let’s make this our biggest year ever! 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 [samaritanspurserg.org/operation-christmas-child](http://samaritanspurserg.org/operation-christmas-child)). Finally, remember to bring your filled shoeboxes back to the church display in the main lobby no later than 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 all over the world!





### November Hospitality Tip: “Next Level” Hospitality – Disciplemaking!

For the past few months, we’ve been encouraging one another to be engaged in hospitality beyond the church walls and to build relationships with new people. A good next step can be to encourage those we’ve built relationships with to become disciples! Equip yourselves by checking out this link: <https://www.navigators.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/navigators-how-to-have-a-daily-quiet-time.pdf>. Then, if someone new should ask you, “How can I spend time with God?” you’ll be ready with an answer! We encourage you to pray about who you could encourage with this resource, then be bold and share it! Investing in someone else’s walk with God is a great way to take our hospitality to the next level!

### Men’s Breakfast | Saturday, Nov. 4, 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, Nov. 14, 11:30 a.m.

This month, the group will dine at Brothers Restaurant. If you plan to attend, please contact Bonnie Guyer ([717-766-0145](tel:717-766-0145)). Transportation will be provided upon request.

### Joy in the Morning | Monday, Nov. 27, 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).

### Grief Share’s “Surviving the Holidays” Event

Several local churches are offering Grief Share’s “Surviving the Holidays” event in our community. This 2-hour supportive holiday event is designed for people who have lost a loved one and are finding the Thanksgiving and Christmas season to be bleak and challenging compared to years past. The event is offered in person unless indicated to be online.

- **Saturday, Nov. 11**  
Daybreak Church (9-11 a.m.)  
Christ Community Church (10-11:30 a.m.)
- **Wednesday, Nov. 15**  
Aldersgate United Methodist Church (6:30-8 p.m., online)
- **Thursday, Nov. 16**  
Immanuel Christian Missionary Alliance Church (1-3 p.m.)
- **Sunday, Nov. 19**  
Immanuel Christian Missionary Alliance Church (6:30-8:30 p.m.)
- **Sunday, December 3**  
Carlisle Evangelical Free Church (9-10:30 a.m.)
- **Wednesday, December 6**  
Carlisle Evangelical Free Church (6:30-8 p.m.)

### Indoor Pickleball | Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m.

Join us in the church multipurpose room for some fun and games! No experience is necessary, and paddles and balls will be available to borrow. 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 updates and alerts.



## 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, ext. 112).

## Generous Giver



## Financial Report

Through Sept. 30, 2023

75% of year

### General Fund

2023 Budget	\$900,886	
Expected Income – YTD	\$675,664	(75% of budget)
Actual Income – YTD	\$683,825	(76% of budget)
Actual Expenses – YTD	\$677,993	(75% of budget)

Income for the four-Sunday month of September was \$73,884, about \$4,000 more than our average four-week budget expectation. This is likely because the fall months have our congregation and guests returning from summer vacations. As a result, we continue to run ahead of our year-to-date giving budget. In September, expenses were generally in line with budget, and our year-to-date income has outpaced year-to-date expenses through the first nine months of the year. Thank you for giving your prayers, talents and gifts in support of First Church's work to spread the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. And, thank you to staff and volunteers who continue to act as good stewards of all these gifts.

Please continue to show your support for the mission of First Church by participating in our 2024 stewardship campaign, Consecration Sunday, coming up on Nov. 12. Also, we continue to ask for your consideration of making a gift to reduce our Bell Tower loan debt as quickly as possible. We have already reduced the debt from this \$260,000 project to less than \$80,000. You can make a donation on the Church Center app or with a check. Please contact the church office for information. As always, thank you for your faith, talents 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 food 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)). Once again this year, we will collect donations for the Little Free Pantry with the Reverse Advent Calendar! Keep an eye out for more information on how you can support this ministry during the holiday season!

## 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 October totaled \$18.25.

## 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 sim-

ple 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)). Find the sign-up link on our website or on the Church Center app. 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)).



### Handbell Choir Pie Fundraiser | Orders due Sunday, Nov. 12

Support the Handbell Choir by purchasing a homemade pie! See a bell choir member or fill out an order form outside the sanctuary after worship to place your order. Pick up your pies in Fellowship Hall between noon and 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 18.

### 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



## 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 joined 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 One80 Ministries, 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.

# 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.

### 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



## *First Church Mission Moments...*



### **New Hope Ministries**

New Hope Ministries serves the south central Pennsylvania area in so many ways, especially around the holidays. Over the past 26 years, First Church has donated over \$310,000 to New Hope and even more food and other supplies. We're proud to support this organization and invite you to join in their mission of "showing the love and hope of Christ by serving our neighbors in times of need and supporting their efforts toward stability."

At Thanksgiving, New Hope collects food items to help local families celebrate with a special meal they might not be able to afford. First Church has a long tradition of providing canned sweet potatoes. Feel free to drop off your donations at the collection site in the main entrance hallway.

Each Christmas, New Hope holds its annual Christmas Blessings Express, where guests can shop for gifts for the whole family. You cannot imagine the difference this event makes in the lives of local families. I've had the privilege to assist many folks as they shop and experience the joy in their faces as they choose gifts to share with the people they love most. Many of the mothers tell us these will be the only gifts that their families will receive at Christmastime. You can support this program by donating an unwrapped gift or gift card to Walmart or Target. A list of gift ideas will be posted at the display in the main entrance hallway.

If you would like to share the gift of your time by volunteering during the holiday season, visit [nhm-pa.org](http://nhm-pa.org).

With your support, we can help all of our neighbors experience the hope and love of Christ this holiday season.

Thank you for your generosity and love for our Mechanicsburg community!

Debbie Karns  
Missions Committee Chair and New Hope Ministries Volunteer



**Tabitha Deller**

AUTHOR. SPEAKER. TEACHER.

## 2024 Women's Retreat

January 26 to 28, 2024

Mt. Asbury Retreat Center, Newville

Join us for a weekend filled with fellowship, fun, food and faith! Program starts on Friday evening and concludes on Sunday before noon. Hotel-like accommodations and 4 meals included.

**One Day Saturday Option Available!**

Find Church Center registration here: <https://fumchurch.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1985970>

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Please return registration with payment (payable to FUMC)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Medications: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies or Diet Restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

Send payment to Patti Herring, 613 Lavina Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 **OR** via the Church Center Registration (link is available on the app). You may also place payment and registration in the Scrip Box (located near the couches).

Early Bird Registration due by **12/31/2023 is \$155**. After that date, fee will be \$160. **All registrations due by 1/14/2024**. Financial assistance available upon request.

\_\_\_\_ Full weekend early bird payment enclosed \$155

\_\_\_\_ Full weekend payment enclosed (if paying after 12/31) \$160

\_\_\_\_ One Day (Saturday) payment enclosed \$45

Is this your first retreat? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Any special concerns? \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions,** contact Patti Herring at [familyzeke@verizon.net](mailto:familyzeke@verizon.net) or 717-795-9721

# **Daily Bible Readings November 2023**

Wednesday, November 1

Thursday, November 2

Friday, November 3

Saturday, November 4

Sunday, November 5

Psalms 34:1-10

Matthew 5:1-12

Joshua 3:7-17

Rest and Reflect

Worship: Climb Higher: Revealed in Prayer

Monday, November 6

Tuesday, November 7

Wednesday, November 8

Thursday, November 9

Friday, November 10

Saturday, November 11

Sunday, November 12

Psalms 107

I Thessalonians 2:9-13

Matthew 23:1-12

Joshua 24:1-25

Psalms 78:1-7

Rest and Reflect

Worship: Climb Higher: Lived in Faith  
Consecration Sunday

Monday, November 13

Tuesday, November 14

Wednesday, November 15

Thursday, November 16

Friday, November 17

Saturday, November 18

Sunday, November 19

Judges 4:1-7

Psalms 123

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:1-13

Matthew 25:14-30

Rest and Reflect

Worship

Monday, November 20

Tuesday, November 21

Wednesday, November 22

Thursday, November 23

Friday, November 24

Saturday, November 25

Sunday, November 26

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

Psalms 65

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Luke 17:11-19 - Thanksgiving Day

Matthew 25:31-46

Rest and Reflect

Worship

Monday, November 27

Tuesday, November 28

Wednesday, November 29

Thursday, November 30

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalms 80

I Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37



## Church Staff

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## God Uses a Gift and a Letter to Change Lives



As a 7-year-old in Mongolia, Jargalmaa (pictured left) described one particular day as “unexpected.” After school, her teacher invited her to a church where she received her very first gift! This Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift included, among other fun toys, stationery, and a set of hairclips. Inside, she also found a letter that said, “You are valuable and so loved by God.” Jargalmaa cherished this message because her parents and grandparents had never told her that they loved her.

Jargalmaa went on to participate in The Greatest Journey discipleship program where she especially appreciated the lessons about God as Creator. Later in 10th grade, she accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. Through her testimony, five of her family members and two close friends also made this life-changing decision.

Now 15 years after receiving her shoebox gift, Jargalmaa, her husband, and two young children (pictured above) have recently moved to a new community where they are ministering to youth in hopes of starting a church. “I would like to challenge people who are preparing shoebox gifts to also write a letter showing God’s love,” Jargalmaa said. “What’s written there may be very simple, but those simple words could completely change somebody’s life.”

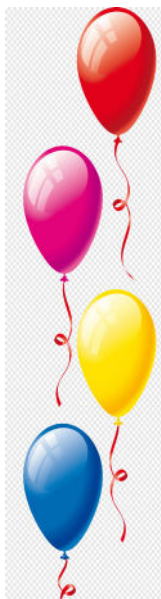
LEARN MORE AT [SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/OCC](http://SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/OCC)

## News and Notes....

"I want to express my heartfelt thanks from my family and me for the outpouring of prayers and cards. We have a lot of good caring people in our church family! Blessings!"

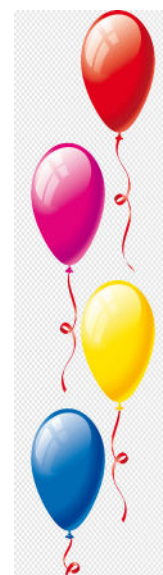
– Ed Meckley

*\*Due to the busyness at the end of December, next month we will release a combined December/January edition of First News First. There will not be a separate January 2024 newsletter.*



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

Joyce Woods.....December 1  
Don Mowrey.....December 8  
Dolores Shell.....December 13  
Darlis Aumiller.....December 21  
Joan Mains.....December 23  
Elaine O'Hara.....December 26  
Sandy Coover.....December 28



- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Paul Cain married 66 years November 1, 1957.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Leon Bricker married 64 years November 19, 1960.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Dave Scholl married 72 years November 22, 1951.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Don Coldren married 61 years November 24, 1962.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Robert Meck married 71 years November 25, 1952.

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

The **deadline** for submitting articles  
for the Dec./Jan. 2023-24 issue is **November 15**.  
Early submissions always appreciated!