



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* 3

 *Passionate Worshipper* 4

 *Dedicated Missionary* 5

 *Relationship Builder* 6

 *Generous Giver* 8

Hello, First Church!

It was great to join you in worship on July 7 and to think about what it means to love God, and then on July 14 to explore how to love our neighbors. I hope in those worship services you heard my passion for ministry and my prayer for each of you, for my life and for First Church together. I yearn for us to love God and love others so that we're known as people working to bring the kingdom of God to Mechanicsburg and wherever we go.

In July, "wherever we go," included a few unique places for me. From July 8 to 12, I joined 20 other clergy and laity from our Annual Conference at the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. During that week of worship and work, we heard a State of the Church address from Bishop Thomas Bickerton. Bishop Bickerton shared how we can take the outcomes of this year's General Conference and move forward to collaborate together in new ways, revive our own spirituality, respectfully agree to disagree, grow in grace together, and celebrate on our shared values and purpose.

During this conference, Bishop Bickerton called us to listen deeply, remain committed to one another, collaborate to create a better future, and seek God's direction as we innovate and move forward as a denomination.

The Northeastern Jurisdiction Bishops called us to be a "big tent church," where people of multiple perspectives and opinions can together work to make disciples of Jesus Christ in our local communities. While our churches are made up of many different people, we're all united in knowing Christ's love and a desire for others to know Him too.

At First Church, our Administrative Board continues to work to determine what the outcomes of General Conference mean for us locally and how we can best have conversations around them.

Later in July, I spent my 23rd year as a camp counselor at Camp Spifida, a camp for kids with spina bifida at Camp Victory in Millville, Pa. The kids at Camp Spifida face many more physical, medical and emotional challenges than I ever have, and spending a week caring for and playing with them is one of the best ways for me to live out my love for Jesus. I stayed in a cabin with girls ages 10-14 and several other staff members. We encouraged our campers to grow in many ways and helped them know they're not alone in the challenges they face.

As we head into August, we'll start a new sermons series, "In the Garden" (a place where many of you love to spend time!). We look at scripture around trees, birds, and gardens and explore how they can help us see God in new ways during this season. As summer rolls on, I hope you enjoy God's creation and keep your eyes open to see how God is at work in you and through you each day.

Be God's always,

Pastor Mira





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:

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

This July and August we'll offer one combined class for adults entitled, "Finding Balance Through Christ." This series features a collection of Bible lessons, mission presentations, and a hands-on mission activity. Together, we'll look to Jesus, not to others, to determine our priorities for a fruitful and balanced life. Bible lessons will be held in room 123 (Guyer Classroom).

- Aug. 4 | Mission Presentation: Mission Central and New Hope Ministries (Multipurpose Room)
- Aug. 11 | Lesson: Finding Balance
- Aug. 18 | Special Mission Activity: Brace Painting for Hope Walks (Fellowship Hall; activity appropriate for older children, youth and adults)
- Aug. 25 | Lesson: Finding Balance
- Sept. 1 | Lesson: Finding Balance

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

This group enjoys great fellowship while focusing on discussion-based Bible studies. Contact John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. for more information about summer plans.

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 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



Church Conference | Thursday, Nov. 7, 6 p.m.

This year's annual Church Conference will take place at Shiremanstown United Methodist Church (125 E. Main St., Camp Hill) with other United Methodist Churches in our Mechanicsburg cluster.

Upcoming Retreats

Want to get away with God? Our annual Men's Retreat will take place at Mount Asbury from Nov. 8 to 9. The 2025 Women's Retreat will be Jan. 24-26 at Rhodes Grove. Registration information will be available soon!

From the Library

Here we are in July. I remember not too long ago how I wished it were summer and warm. Maybe I wished for too much — now I'm wishing for some rain. I just hope that doesn't turn into a Texas-type rainstorm! Instead of spending all my time wishing, I'm enjoying some really good books. Plus, I'm spending hot afternoons inside at the puzzle table, thanks to the library's robust puzzle exchange.



Speaking of hot weather, we invite you to come into the air-conditioned multipurpose room on Saturday, Aug. 17, for our annual book sale. If you haven't donated your gently used books, CDs, DVDs or jigsaw puzzles, you only have about 2 weeks to accomplish that mission. Just leave them outside the library or call Pam Van Kirk or Donna Nichols to drop off large donations. Our book sale supports our library all year long and helps us supply you with the newest Christian books. We're so grateful for your support! Now, let me tell you about a couple of new books, and you can stop by to see all the current titles.

The Divine Proverb of Streusel by Sara Brunsvold is something new for our library. Having seen it displayed on both Amazon and Christian Publications and noticing it's nearly-five-star review, I thought you might like it as well. Shaken by her parents' divorce and a floundering relationship with her boyfriend, Nikki Werner retreats to her uncle's farm in a small Missouri town. While trying to get her bearings, Nikki discovers her late grandmother's notebook filled with German recipes and wise sayings from the book of Proverbs. She starts cooking and invites locals to tell her about her ancestors and try her food. This sweet novel layers heartbreak and healing with forgiveness and family. Plus, the book includes recipes!

I also enjoy historical fiction, especially when it's inspired by true stories. *The British Booksellers* by Kristy Cambren is just that type of book. The story starts before World War I when Charlotte Terrington, an earl's daughter, falls in love with Amos Darby, the son of a tenant farmer. Amos comes home from the trenches a scarred man and retreats to a reclusive life of a bookshop owner. Charlotte has been married off to another earl, and it is a loveless match. When she loses her husband to the war, Charlotte opens a bookstore across the lane from Amos. Neither reaches out to the other until the German blitz begins to devastate their town and their lives. Can they put aside their past lives and many differences to save their town – and maybe even find that elusive life they planned so many years ago?

If neither of these titles interests you, stop by the library and let one of our volunteers help you find just the right book for you.

See you in the library and at the book sale!

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

Praying Follower



Share Your Joys and Prayer Concerns

We want to pray with and for you! You can share your prayer requests on Sunday mornings during worship by filling out a green prayer card (located in the pews and at the prayer station under the balcony) and placing it in the offering basket or Janice Bowen's mailbox. You can also share your prayer requests and subscribe to our weekly prayer letter by contacting Janice directly (wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611, ext. 112).

Backpack Blessings | Sunday, Aug. 25, 8:30 and 11 a.m.

A new school year is coming quickly, and we can trust that God is with us wherever we go, in every season. Teachers, students, and school staff are welcome to bring their backpacks or school bags to worship at 8:30 or 11 a.m., where we'll have a special time of prayer as they kick off a new school year. Please contact Katie Knorr (kidscount@fumchurch.com) with questions.





Salt 'n Light Worship Night | Sunday, Aug. 4, 7 p.m.

Join us in our parking lot and green space for a campfire style worship night, led by our friends at Salt 'n Light Youth Ministry. Please bring a bag chair and come ready to worship. In the case of inclement weather, we will worship in the sanctuary.

Rejoicing Spirits | Sunday, Aug. 25, 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 takes place in the sanctuary and includes music, scripture, prayer and a brief message, along with refreshments and fellowship afterward.

Join Sounds of Worship!

Ready to make a joyful noise for the Lord? Our Sounds of Worship Choir is welcoming new members! This choir sings on Sundays at our 8:30 a.m. Foundation Service. Rehearsals take place on Thursday nights from 6:45 to 8 p.m. in the music room (in the back of Fellowship Hall). All voice parts are welcome and no auditions are required. Contact Sounds of Worship Director Flossie Ryder ([717-766-0811](tel:717-766-0811)) with questions.



FIRST CHURCH PRAISE RINGERS | MAY 5, 7 P.M



**SARAH PUGH
OCT. 13, 3 P.M.**



**FIRST UMC MECHANICSBURG'S
2024 FREE
CONCERT
SERIES**



**BRANDON RHODY
JULY 21, 3 P.M.**



HOLIDAY HARMONY | DEC. 8, 7 P.M.



Gleaning at Oak Grove Farms | Thursday, Aug. 1, 6 p.m.

We're excited to once again partner with Oak Grove Farms to glean crops. One Thursday of each month during the growing season (June-October), First Church's Glean Team will meet in the parking lot at Oak Grove Farms. Then, we'll head into the fields to collect leftover produce to share with our neighbors in need at One80 Ministries' Friday Giveaways. Contact Janice Bowen (wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611, ext. 112) to be added to our 2024 Glean Team communications.

Hope Walks Brace Painting | Sunday, Aug. 18, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Clubfoot is a common birth defect that can leave children with lifelong mobility issues. Hope Walks is a Christ-centered organization working in developing countries around the world to ensure children have access to braces and casts that treat and correct the issue early. Children are more likely to wear the braces and complete their treatment when they look colorful and fun. Join us in Fellowship Hall to paint a brace that will change the life of a child in need! While brace-painting is for all ages (with parent supervision for kids), we will have alternative painting projects for younger children. Registration is encouraged – sign up on Church Center to help us ensure we have the correct amount of braces. This is a free event, however there will be a donation container if you are interested in donating towards Hope Walks.

YOUTH MISSION TRIP REFLECTION

The youth mission trip to Dayton, Ohio, in July was a wonderful and uniquely memorable week! Through our partnering organization, LeaderTreks, we learned countless lessons through serving and living together. We spent our mornings fixing a house for a Sudanese refugee family. With some fresh coats of paint, new screening on the porch, and several other side repairs, our team helped completely transform that house into a comfortable and livable home.

In the afternoons, we hosted a vacation Bible school for Congolese refugee children. The kids were such cheerful bundles of energy, eager to run around, play games, and accept piggy-back rides from anyone who would offer. It was such a blessing just to spend time with the kids, giving them attention that they might not receive at home, and to share God's love with them through scripture and fellowship and to

While there were certainly moments of confusion and questioning during our week, it's safe to say we all came home with memories and lessons to last a lifetime. From discovering the value of kind leadership, to learning the skepticism one should hold about a run-down Family Dollar on an urban street corner, God truly blessed us in our diverse experiences. In the words of one of our LeaderTreks guides, Dayton is a broken city, but that's precisely why God called us there to serve. There is much beauty to be found in brokenness, and much to be grateful for in every circumstance. We thank God for the experiences we shared throughout this mission trip, and we thank all of the generous donors who helped make this trip possible for us!

Emily Hammaker, Student Participant



Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry | Wednesday, Aug. 21

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 at 6:30. Prior to serving, we also prepare the meal in the church kitchen. Contact Tiffany Holland (tholland1967@gmail.com) or Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) to find out how you can help.

Feminine Hygiene Sewing Day | Sept. 28

In many developing countries, women have to miss school and work and face cultural stigmas due to a lack of feminine hygiene products. Help us support these women by making reusable products that will be distributed around the world by Mission Central. Even if you don't sew, there is fabric to cut and prepare. Save the date for this important event and contact Donna Nichols (djnichols43@hotmail.com) for more information.



Relationship Builder



August Hospitality Tip

Summer is coming to a close, but hospitality doesn't end with a certain season! Outreach Magazine identifies three important points that should be underlying principles in our church's efforts to welcome guests:

- Hospitality isn't a duty – it's a passion. There are many ways to be gracious and welcoming, but having the right heart and authentically wanting to serve makes a huge difference.
- Hospitality isn't a strategy – it's a way of living. While hospitality definitely encourages guests to return, we should focus on treating them well because of who God calls us to be and how much we care about them.
- Hospitality isn't corporate – it's personal. We experience hospitality best when one person engages with another, showing care because they care. Hospitality is personal because it's about people.



Authenticity to serve, genuine care and engagement with others are core ways we can share Jesus' love with everyone who comes to First Church. Let's continue sharing Christian hospital with our guests!

Men's Breakfast | Saturday, Aug. 3, 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 John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. if you are interested in attending.

Third Friday Food Trucks | Aug. 16, 4:30-8 p.m.

Each month, we welcome five to six gourmet food trucks that serve a variety of delicious foods. This event is a great opportunity to meet our neighbors in a fun, casual atmosphere. In August, we welcome Potato Coop, The Italian Job, J&D's Cheesesteaks, MoMo BBQ, East Coast Mini Donuts and Kokua Shaved Ice. The food trucks will be back on Sept. 20 and Oct. 18, along with special music on our green space patio! We're always looking for help with set-up, clean-up and parking. Contact Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) for more details.



Church Picnic | Sunday, Sept. 8, 4-7 p.m.

Each fall, we look forward to reconnecting after the summer months at our annual Church Picnic. Don't forget to save the date!

Widows and Widowers Lunch | Tuesday, Aug. 13, 11:30 a.m.

This month, the group will dine at Marzoni's Brick Oven and Brewing. 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, Aug. 19, 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 at Bethany Village in the West Apartments common room. Janice Bowen facilitates, drawing upon readings and devotionals. For more information, contact Janice Bowen (wecare@fumchurch.com or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112).



Community Dinner | Sunday, Oct. 6, 5 p.m.

The next community dinner will be held at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (132 E. Main St., Mechanicsburg). This collaborative event with other local churches blesses the downtown community with a meal, music and a gift card drawing, free of charge. The concept comes from the book Welcome to Dinner, Church, which encourages churches to share a meal with their neighbors. To learn more or volunteer, please contact Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com).

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

Join us for some fun and games on the pickleball courts at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Park! No experience is necessary, and paddles and balls will be available to borrow. If the weather is too hot or rainy, we'll play in the church multipurpose room. Contact Janice Bowen ([717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112 or 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 or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112).



Visiting with Friends!

If you miss seeing your friends at church due to issues such as aging or driving limitations, Janice Bowen would like to hear from you! Janice is interested in taking people with her for visits so that friends can remain connected by visiting in person with one another. Whether you are feeling "stuck at home," no longer able to get out to church, or are simply missing your friends who can't get out as much, Janice would love to hear from you! Contact Janice for more information (wecare@fumchurch.com or [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611), ext. 112).

Cooking and Caring for Our Community at Broad Street Elementary | Thursday Nov. 7, 5 p.m.

First Church will once again partner with other local churches to cook and serve a meal for Broad Street Elementary families. First Church will provide 60 pounds of BBQ and volunteers. We plan to serve close to 300 for dinner. Please consider making a 5 pound batch of BBQ (using a simple recipe provided by the school) for families in our community. Contact Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) to get involved. Thanks for your support!

Family Movie Night | Friday, Aug. 9, 6-8 p.m.

Invite your friends, family and neighbors to join us for dinner and a movie in the sanctuary! From 6 to 6:30 p.m., we'll enjoy hot dogs, chips and drinks. Then, we'll have popcorn and watch Migration (2023). Registration is not required, but is highly encouraged for this free event. Feel free to bring a blanket or pillow!





Through June 30, 2024

50% of year

General Fund	
2024 Budget	\$925,398
Expected Income – YTD	\$462,699 (50% of budget)
Actual Income – YTD	\$461,926 (50% of budget)
Actual expenses – YTD	\$467,045 (51% of budget)

Income for the 4-week month of June was \$81,450, about \$10,000 more than our average 4-week budget. Expenses for the month were \$69,897, about \$2,000 less than our average monthly budget. Year-to-date expenses are slightly higher than income due to early timing of the loan payments. This month’s strong contributions and lower than average expenses have reduced our year-to-date net deficit to roughly \$5,000. The church debt for the parsonage is now at \$40,751 and our bell tower loan was lowered by a \$10,000 donation to \$45,849.

As we continue in these summer months, we pray for your safe travels. We’re grateful to all our congregation and guests who continue to support the work of First Church, as we serve the Lord by opening doors for all to know salvation through Jesus. We continue to ask for your prayers, presence and support through service and gifts to First Church’s mission.

Handbell Choir Fundraiser at Isaac’s | Thursday, Aug. 1

Support First Church’s Handbell Choir by dining in or ordering takeout at Isaac’s (4940 Ritter Rd.). Bring a flier (or a photo of it on your phone) and show it to your server to ensure the Praise Ringers receive a portion of the proceeds.

Community Aid Cart

Several years ago, a Community Aid bin was placed on our church property. The bin provided a way for our church and community to donate clothing and shoes. The items in the bin were weighed and Community Aid paid First Church by the pound. Those proceeds supported women, children and youth in our community and beyond through the United Women in Faith. Over the years, the bin has become very difficult to manage due to people overfilling it and dumping items beside the bin. This summer, the bin was removed and replaced with a new Community Aid Cart! You can drop off your donations of clothing, shoes and accessories at the cart (located just inside the main entrance door) on Sunday mornings or during church office hours. UWF continues to receive proceeds from the cart, as well as the opportunity to apply for grants from Community Aid. In addition to the cart, you can drop off clothing or additional household items at any Community Aid store; when you share our church name and partner number (10113), we will receive credit for your donations. Thank you for your support! Thanks again for your support! Contact Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) with any questions.



Share the Harvest

Looking to share extra flowers, fruits or vegetables from your garden this summer? Check out the Share the Harvest display in the lobby gathering area outside the children’s wing. Feel free to leave some produce to share with our congregation and community, or take some with you. You can also place extra

food in the Little Free Pantry alongside our parking lot. Contact Janice Bowen (wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611, ext. 112) with questions.

Change for Water

Water is the foundation of our very lives. Yet, according to the United Nations, over 2 billion people lack access to clean, readily available drinking water. Help us to support well-digging efforts in Africa 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 June totaled \$26.



Little Free Pantry

Thanks so much for your support of the Little Free Pantry through your donations and monetary contributions. We are building up our supply to stock the pantry, but we still welcome your donations, which can be dropped off at the church office or at the alley entrance in the marked basket. We're blessed 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).

Camp Fancy Gala | Saturday, Sept. 7, 4-8 p.m.

Everyone who values the power of our Camp and Retreat Ministry experiences is invited to enjoy an evening of inspiration, fun, and generosity. This annual fundraising event takes place at the Central Penn College Conference Center (600 College Hill Road, Summerdale) and features a catered meal, special music, a silent auction and the chance to honor long-time camp volunteers Rev. Barry and Joanie Robison. Buy tickets, make a donation and learn about sponsorship opportunities at suscrm.org/gala. If you have questions, want to volunteer, or want to donate an auction item, please contact Steve Noss (sdppp@msn.com).

Yard, Book and Bake Sale | Saturday, Aug. 17, 8 a.m.-noon

Our annual United Women in Faith Yard, Book and Bake Sale is back! Here are all the details:

- Yard sale vendor spots in the parking lot (2 parking spaces) are available for \$15. You may reserve up to two spots, and the proceeds benefit the United Women in Faith missions. Sign up at fumchurch.com or on the Church Center app.
- Donate your household treasures to help First Church Youth fund future mission trips. Drop off your donations in the multipurpose room during church office hours starting Aug. 5. Please only bring items that are clean, unbroken and in working condition. Large-back TVs, outdated electronics and other similar items will not be accepted. Contact Lisa Aronson (uthrock@fumchurch.com) or Lori Hoffnagle (l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) with any questions.
- First Church Kids Ministry will distribute free school supplies (including handmade pencil pouches from our Squares and Prayers group) to children who visit the sale.
- The Church Library will sell a variety of books, puzzles, CDs, and DVDs. You can donate your gently used books, puzzles, CDs and DVDs to the sale (please no VHS tapes, cassettes or encyclopedias). Proceeds keep our library stocked with the most current Christian fiction for your reading pleasure. Donations can be left outside the church library on Sunday mornings or in the multipurpose room during collection hours. Please contact Pam Van Kirk (717-903-9196) or Donna Nichols (djnichols43@hotmail.com or 717-574-9894) to make arrangements for dropping off large donations. To help with set-up (Thursday, Aug. 15, 9-11 a.m.) or tear-down (Saturday, Aug. 27, 11:45 a.m.), please contact Donna Nichols.
- The Handbell Choir will have food available for purchase to support their ministry of music.
- Enjoy tasty treats from the United Women in Faith Bake Sale! To donate baked goods, contact Denise Swank (dmom64@gmail.com or 717-795-8747).



There's something for everyone at the sale! If you have any questions, please contact Donna Nichols (djnichols43@hotmail.com).

Scrip Program

Have you heard about First Church's Scrip Program? Scrip invites you to purchase gift cards from First Church for local and national retailers. When you do, the participating retailers give a portion of the proceeds to help fund ministries at First Church, including the handbell choir, the bell tower restoration, women's retreats, mission trips to Sierra Leone and more. Typically, you receive your gift cards one week after placing your order. Pick up an order sheet in the lobby gathering space next to the water fountains, and place your order today! If you have questions or want to access gift cards for additional retailers, contact Kathie Bittenbender (717-697-6257 or rbittenben@verizon.net).

First Church Mission Moments...

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION

My husband, Mike, grew up in Clearfield, Pa. Although not many family members still live there, he has strong ties to that mountainous area. About 10 years ago, Mike heard that Volunteers in Mission (VIM) organized a work camp near Clearfield, so he stepped up to give a helping hand to his neighbors in need. Since then, Mike has returned to the Allport-Bigler-Woodland Work Camp as many years as he could and invited others to join him for a week of serving in that economically depressed area of the state.

I am one that said, "yes" to his invitation, along with a few others from First Church. The work camp is organized by a local team of church members. Through the year, local congregations reach out to community members and invite them to apply for help with specific household projects. The leaders screen the applications to determine the most critical jobs. Then, they purchase materials, build a work team to serve for a week and assign jobs based on their skills. The workers bring their time, talents and skills as an offering, and the Lord uses their offering for His glory.

The people volunteers who serve at the week-long Allport-Bigler-Woodland Work Camp are of mixed skills and ages, but they're mostly retired folks with a few teenaged grandchildren. This year there were about 50 people on the team. Some commuted from home, some lodged at the church and others had local accommodations. All of us were blessed daily with breakfast, lunches and dinner prepared by local area churches and a handful of dedicated women. We joined together in daily devotions, sharing of our experiences, and a service of communion and memorial. We ended our week with a dinner shared with the neighbors we had served all week.

This year, Mike and I, along with two others, were assigned to two specific building repair projects. The people we helped had each lost a spouse and were physically and financially unable to complete the work themselves. This was a common scenario for the people our team served throughout the week. For those being served, seeing volunteers complete this much-needed work was truly a miracle, as there was no way they could have succeeded alone. For those serving, it was a blessing to use our gifts to serve in Jesus' name and to connect with the beautiful people in that area. In total, this year's group completed 35 projects in one week.

Each year at the Allport-Bigler-Woodland Work Camp, we truly witness the Body of Christ working together, whether it is the team of organizers behind the scenes or as laborers on the ground. We all bring whatever gifts we have to share, and the Lord uses them to bring hope to our neighbors and to remind each one how much the Lord loves them. Mike and I feel privileged to serve as part of that Body.

If you want to serve your neighbors through helping with home projects, First Church's Backyard Missions provides opportunities to help neighbors in need in Mechanicsburg (see John Bowen for more information). If you want to join a VIM Team, there are mission work weeks happening all over the country throughout the year. Learn more about VIM and upcoming opportunities to serve at susmb.org/vim. To serve with the Allport-Bigler-Woodland Work Camp next year, connect with our First Church Missions Committee or reach out to Mike or me. We're always happy to talk about our week!

In Christ,
Nadine Ogden
VIM Trip Participant



Church Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Mira Hewlett (As of July 1)
717-766-4611 ext. 103
pastormira@fumchurch.com

Director of Worship Arts:

Sarah Pugh
717-766-4611, ext.119
worship@fumchurch.com

Pastor of Discipleship:

Pastor Lisa Aronson
717-766-4611, ext.113
uthrock@fumchurch.com

Director of Congregational Care:

Janice Bowen
766-4611, ext.112
wecare@fumchurch.com

Director of Office Management and Communications:

Jennifer Myers
717-766-4611, ext.105
communications@fumchurch.com

Youth Pastor:

TBD
717-766-4611, ext.113
uthrock@fumchurch.com

Director of Children and Family Ministry:

Katie Knorr
717-766-4611, ext.102
kidscount@fumchurch.com

Administrative Assistant:

Dawn Fisher
717-766-4611, ext.101
office@fumchurch.com

Facilities Coordinator:

Paul Zito
717-766-4611, ext.109
facilities@fumchurch.com

Custodian:

Candice Rudy
717-766-4611, ext.109
maintenance@fumchurch.com

Director of Finance:

Amy Erno
717-766-4611, ext.120
financedirector@fumchurch.com

Sounds of Worship Director:

Flossie Ryder
missflossie42@gmail.com

Youth Worship Director:

Allison Ometz
allisonometz1@msn.com

Director of Bell Choirs:

Kathie Bittenbender
rbittenben@verizon.net

Praise Team Director:

Sarah Pugh
worship@fumchurch.com

Organist/Accompanist:

Brandon Rhody

**Director of Little Friends
Preschool:**

Jemma Church
717-796-0723
director@littlefriendspreschool.org

Timeless Connections:

Patti Vogl
717-319-7318
pvogl@timelessconnections.org

News and Notes....

The First Church Staff would like to extend their sincere love and appreciation to George Canonizado for not only his hard work and dedication to First Church, but for also being a fantastic co-worker that always keeps us smiling.



Help us celebrate special birthdays for our church members turning 80 or older!

Marty Coover.....August 1	Sally Kauffman.....September 8
Grace Koser.....August 2	Pat Sheely.....September 11
Barry Adams.....August 5	George Carpenter.....September 18
Helen Kelly.....August 10	Sue Shier.....September 18
Joan Maybee.....August 10	Joan Stokes.....September 19
Pauline Trace.....August 12	Marty Otto.....September 20
Al Maybee.....August 14	Marley Ann Schmick.....September 21
Becky Yost.....August 16	Gary Klinger.....September 22
Jerry Sheely.....August 18	Ralph Harkins.....September 25
Kay Coldren.....August 25	Curt Bonser.....September 26
Jo Barth.....August 27	Peggy Shenberger.....September 28
Jeanne Mullikin.....August 29	Kaye Reynolds.....September 29
Dean Otto.....August 31	



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Fred Junkins married 58 years August 9, 1966.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Curt Bonser married 63 years August 17, 1963.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Allan Maybee married 59 years August 21, 1965.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Harry Woods married 71 years August 23, 1953.
- ♥ Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Sheely married 66 years August 24, 1958.

FIRST NEWS FIRST
EDITORS: Dawn Fisher
Jennifer Myers

The **deadline** for submitting articles
for the September 2024 issue is **August 15**.
Early submissions always appreciated!