



First News First

Opening Doors with Christ, One Another and Our Neighbors

From the Pastor's Desk.....

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Each church has the same mission, making disciples for Jesus Christ, but each church does that in its own unique ways. Here at First Church, there are many ways I have seen you sharing the light and love of Jesus this past year. As we looked at photos during the Church Picnic to kick off fall, I remembered serving meals, knitting projects, volunteers painting, laying flooring, working in the office, food donations for New Hope and Little Free Pantry, senior events, greeters/ushers/media team/choir/praise team making Sundays happen. This is just a few of the ways we are making disciples by showing and sharing our love for Jesus – plus all the class, kids ministry and youth ministry activities too!

This fall our worship series will be “I ❤️ My Church.” We will spend four weeks thinking about why we love our Church and how our church is unique in how we make and grow disciples of Jesus. We will also consider our response to support our Church and its ministries financially. The things we love about First Church, and the ministries that are growing disciples and the community built here require our giving to happen and so that these ministries can continue in 2026.

In worship we will focus on four areas that we love about our church: All Are Welcome celebrating Disability Sunday, a Love of Serving Others, being and sharing a Legacy of Faith and our Love in Giving. We will also have ways to share together what you love most about First UMC – its people and ministries.

During this series, I would ask you to prayerfully consider: How might we expand our love of First Church with others? How can we strongly support and grow its ministries this coming year, together?

Could you step up \$5 or \$10 per week to help share what God is doing at and through First Church with others? The opportunities for ministry and needs of our community continue to grow.

We will find inspiration and challenge from the early church as they learned to share and bless others in Acts 3:33: With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

May this season be one in which we understand, testify and celebrate the grace of Jesus that we embrace at First Church. This defines our ministries and the opportunities we have to share Jesus’ love and grace with our community.



I ♥ My Church Worship

Oct 19 – All Are Welcome: Disability Awareness Sunday

Rejoicing Spirits leaders and rejoicers share in both worships

Oct 26 - Being the Church: Love in Sharing With testimony from our adult mission trip to North Carolina

Nov 2 – Legacy of Faith: All Saint’s Sunday Celebrating Communion

Remembering those who died since Nov 1, 2024

Estimate of Giving in 2026 cards available

Nov 9 – Love in Giving: Consecration Sunday
New Members Join FUMC

Lifelong Learner



Sunday Morning Enrichment | 9:45-10:45 | Sunday Mornings

Sunday School:

As summer comes to a close, our Sunday School classes will be resuming towards the end of August and kicking off by September 14th! This is a wonderful opportunity to find consistency and accountability in your faith journey while studying God’s Word. Here are the list of opportunities for enrichment during the Sunday School hour (9:45-10:45 AM). We look forward to growing together!

Growing in Christ, B006

A welcoming group that enjoys digging deeper into the Scriptures to seek the knowledge and wisdom to apply Scriptural truths in our everyday lives. The class generally consists of prayer, a video, and a group discussion. Drop in for a single class, or a specific study, or stay as long as you like! If interested, contact Marjorie Snyder at 57masnyder@gmail.com.

Christian Fellowship, Room B003

A friendly and caring group of adults, eager to apply God’s Word to life’s challenges. The class generally explores scripture and faith themes through book or video-based series. If interested, contact Wayne Leister at waydeleister@outlook.com.

Helping Hands, Room B004

A group of active seniors who focus on encouraging instructions for faithful living, and who enjoy fellowship activities together outside of class. If interested, contact Bob Wertz, Sr., at robert_wertz@plantsitelogistics.com.

Guyer Class, Room 123

This class, comprised of a wonderful group of seniors who are young at heart, is taught by a variety of church leaders. Lessons follow the Adult Bible Study series which includes daily devotions. If interested, contact Steve and Deb Noss at sdppp@msn.com.

Small Groups:

There are also Small Groups that regularly meet during the Sunday School hour and strive to not only support each other through faith growth in a classroom space, but also through fellowship and connection as they navigate similar stages of life.

Faithful Families

Contact: Bob and Tracy Wertz at wertzfive@gmail.com. An active group of parents with college-aged and young adult children who study Scripture, encourage one another and celebrate life together in and out of the classroom.

Faith in Everyday Life

Contact: Amy at amyerno@gmail.com or Jenell at jparis@messiah.edu. A group for adults of all ages focused on fellowship and friendship/mutual support in and outside the classroom.

Discipleship Opportunities:

No matter whether you are just beginning to explore faith, growing as a disciple, or becoming a fully devoted follower, there is 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.

Wednesday Men's Group – 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 8:00 p.m.

This group enjoys great fellowship while focusing on discussion-based Bible studies. Contact John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. if interested in more information.

Never Give Up Study | Sundays Oct. 5-26, 6-7:30 pm in Rm 105

Dig deeper into the story of Joseph who persevered through great challenges in his life in the book of Genesis. Share your challenges and learn how Joseph found strength in the hardest times from God. The class led by Pastor Mira includes videos, discussion, and reading of *Never Give Up* by Max Lucado. Sign up by Oct 1st if you want a book, or order on your own. If interested, sign up by reaching out to Pastor Mira at pastormira@fumchurch.com.

Next Step's New Member Class & Confirmation Class | October 5 – Nov 2 | 9:45-10:45

Looking to be baptized? Ready to become a member of First Church? Just want to explore the foundations of our faith? Join us for a five-week Sunday morning study, "A Disciple's Path." Together with Pastor Mira, you'll explore what it means to faithfully participate in the life of the Church through your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Contact Pastor Mira at pastormira@fumchurch.com with any questions.

Confirmation Class:

If you are a student wishing to join as well, we will be offering a confirmation class at the same time, led by Lisa Aronson. Confirmation is best suited for those in 6th grade and older. (Older high school students can choose to attend the adult class if preferred.) There will be a spring Confirmation class offered too, if that season better suits your schedule.

United Women in Faith Circle Groups:

United Women in Faith Circle groups are small, local communities within the United Women in Faith organization, a mission-focused group for women within the United Methodist Church. These circles are where women gather for spiritual formation, mutual support, fellowship, mission education, and to take action on issues of justice at local and global levels.

Martha Circle – Leader: Marley Ann Schmick

This circle meets in the church Fellowship Hall on the first Tuesday of the month (September meets on 2nd Tuesday) at 12:00 PM, and members rotate in helping to lead lessons.

Deborah Circle – Leader: Sandy Walton

This circle meets every other month at church in room 105 at 7:00 PM (Sept 4, Nov 4, Jan 6, Mar 3, May 5) and meets together off-site for a meal on the opposite months. This circle has been studying women of the Bible.

Wednesday Morning Women's Bible Study – Wednesday 9:30-10:45 AM |Hardwood Cafe

Join other women at the round tables under the balcony as we explore together the books of 1st and 2nd Peter. Sign up on Church Center or at the Registration Table in the Main Lobby. Participants will need the workbook: 1-2 Peter: Living Hope in a Hard World by Lydia Brownback. Study begins on Wednesday, September 24th. Contact Lisa Aronson at adultministry@fumchurch.com for more information.

Growing Together – Sunday October 19th | 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM | Hardwood Café

Paul writes to the Philippians that he is truly happy when believers are “agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose” (Phil 2:2). We too, value learning and serving together with one heart and one mission. Several times throughout the year, we will have a Growing Together opportunity following the 11:00 AM service. Stick around after service at the round tables in the green chair side of the sanctuary. We will provide lunch and a learning/service activity for any and all ages. Registration is encouraged to help us plan for food and accommodate any dietary restrictions. Registration is on Church Center and at the Registration Table. Reach out to Katie Knorr with questions. Future Dates: November 16, January 4, March 15, April 19

Check us out at Streets of Treats!

Come say hello to Miss Katie and pick up some candy and goodies for kids on Market Street in Mechanicsburg from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 18th (near the Rosemary House). Find more info and sign up to volunteer at church center.

Mom Connection | Mon., Oct. 20, 6-8 p.m.

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 the 3rd Monday monthly September through May. Meetings begin with family-style dinner followed by a theme-based topic designed to help develop connections and offer support, inspiration, and resources for Christ-centered parenting. Sign up on Church Center. Questions? Contact Katie Knorr, Director of Children and Family Ministry.

Lisa Aronson's role at First Church has continued to ebb and flow as we navigated new dynamics to the youth ministry and continued to decide on how to best care for the adult ministries of First Church. Moving forward Lisa's role will be Youth and Adult Discipleship. She will continue to care for our students as well as support the adult leaders who provide discipleship opportunities for adults. In partnership with Katie, the Director of Children and Family Ministries, Lisa will help to assure that we have discipleship opportunities for all people and to be intentional in our intergenerational experiences to learn, grow, and serve together. If you are seeking to grow in your faith, regardless your age, Lisa will help to get you connected to others and to spaces where you can grow. Lisa can be contacted at a new email: discipleship@fumchurch.com

From the Library

Fall is creeping slowly into my days. Even though I like fall, I hang on to summer like Cookie Monster clutches the cookie jar. But fall has its own special features. Cool nights just perfect for wrapping up in a soft throw, sipping a hot latte, and reading a good book. And I have just the titles for you to check out.

As I promised, Jan Karon's newest book, *My Beloved*, is due October 7th and the library will have it on the shelf soon after. The basis of the book is Father Tim writes a love letter to his wife to answer her query about what he wants for Christmas. It is a private tender letter meant only for Cynthia, but somehow it goes missing and to his



complete astonishment it circulates through their neighbors. Can a letter change a life, even if it is not meant for the reader? Each and every character from the Mitford series has a reaction in their lives from this letter. And Ms. Karon brings Sadie into the lives of Dooley and Lacey—something readers have been craving. Don't miss this book—maybe it will bring a change in your life; you just never know. If you know me, you were probably surprised about how much I loved the Mitford series, because I always say I need more adrenaline in my books. Since I have no answer to that question, I will tell you I am also eagerly awaiting Irene Hannon's *Out of Time* book. It is the third book in the *Undaunted Courage* series, and I think it will keep you up late with more coffee and maybe another blanket to keep the chill at bay. Cara Tucker is taking a sabbatical to access a vast library and century old journals at a remote country estate. This is her dream, but it is turning into a nightmare as strange incidents begin to occur. Sheriff Brad Adams is used to his quiet Missouri county, but even this seems menacing to him. As menacing turns to lethal, Cara and Brad work together to find out who has secrets they don't want uncovered. Sounds like a good Halloween read. I will let you see if you can decide who the culprit is before Ms. Hannon reveals it.

But if neither of these books is right for you, stop in and let us help you find just the right genre for you. Thanks to your support of our book sale, we are able to keep up to date with all the latest Christian fiction whether it is historical, Amish, mystery, or romance. Also, our puzzle exchange is growing since the sale, and I know working on a puzzle is a great way to enjoy an evening indoors.

See you in the library!

Pam, Marge, Deb, Mary, Annette, & Donna

Praying Follower



Joy in the Morning

A small group invitation, Mondays @ 1 pm, once a month, stay tuned for the next upcoming date. 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 a Monday afternoon at Bethany Village's West Apartments Commons Room. Janice Bowen facilitates, drawing upon readings and devotionals.. For more info.,information, contact Janice ([717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) x112 /or wecare@fumchurch.com)



Greeting Cards to Share!

Looking for a birthday card or wanting to send 'get well' wishes to a friend? Stop by the 'Card Ministry' display in the lobby outside the multipurpose room and help yourself to a card! If you'd like a bigger supply of cards or suggestions of who may 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 find yourself 'stuck at home,' no longer able to get out to church or you are able to get to church, but you are missing your friends who are 'stuck at home'. Either way, Janice would love to hear from you! [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) x112 or wecare@fumchurch.com

Flu Shots | Sunday, Nov. 2nd, 9-11 a.m.

We will offer flu shots provided by Sandy Leister, RN on November 2nd. There's no need to preregister - simply stop by the welcome kiosk in the main lobby between 9-11 am. Anyone 18 or older is welcome

to receive a vaccine. Some insurance plans will be accepted. Without insurance, the flu shot costs \$40 (cash or check, made out to VNA of Central PA). Please contact Janice Bowen (717-766-4611 x112 or we-care@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.

Youth Ministry at First Church

Are you a student between 4th and 12th grade? Check out the format for our Youth Ministry here at First Church and consider plugging in and joining us when you can. We would love to see you at our gatherings. For more information contact Lisa Aronson uthrock@fumchurch.com

4G YOUTH GROUPS | 6:00-8:00 | 6th-12th Grade

1st Sunday: Large group Gathering - starts in the youth lounge or gym and begins with a casual time to hang out, play games, and eat snacks. Afterwards, we dig into God's word and listen to a lesson. Our time of learning is a space to ask questions, have discussions, and support you in your spiritual growth. 3rd Sunday: Large Group Gather and Dinner - similar to the 1st Sunday, with the addition that we will begin our youth group time with a meal in the Fellowship Hall.

STUDENT SMALL GROUPS | 6:00-7:30 | 4th-12th Grade

2nd Sundays: A chance for small group interaction with Students of Similar Ages. This Space is intended to allow for conversation, questions, and age-appropriate faith topics.

- Grades 4th - Grade 7th -- Meets at First Church in the gym
- Grades 8th-12th -- Meets at First Church in the youth lounge

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES | 6:00-8:00 | 6th - 12th Grade

4th Sunday: Events will vary and may be at First Church or offsite. Some service opportunities will be open to our younger students (4th & 5th graders), but that will be communicated in the information provided.

SPECIAL EVENTS - See Youth Information Page or the Youth Ministry Event page on Church Center for dates, times, and event information. *Special events may alter the pattern of Sundays

What does the 4G mean? It is our statement of purpose for the youth ministry. While we want Youth Group to be a fun place where you can spend time with your friends, we want to make sure that we GATHER together to GROW as we GAIN from God's Word and learn to GIVE back to God in how we live and treat others. (It is also handy to have a 2-letter way of referencing Youth Group for when a text message only allows a certain number of characters.)

Upcoming Youth Events:

October 19th – Battleball Tournament and Worship Night – Deadline to register: October 5th
November 21-22 – Sleep Out for the Homeless – Deadline to register: November 9th

Passionate Worshipper



United Women in Faith Annual Day, November 15

All women are invited to the Harrisburg District Annual Day on Saturday, November 15 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at Wesley United Methodist Church, Marysville. The program will feature a panel discussion with representatives from Peace Promise, She's Somebody's Daughter, Greenlight Operation and Hope, Love, Inspire (organizations that raise awareness of trafficking and exploitation). The afternoon workshops will be a simulation activity and a testimony from a woman with lived experience regarding recovery and after care. The fee will be \$12 and includes a lunch with a Southwest theme, taco bar, beans, and rice with faux margaritas! Questions or registration information, contact Lori Hoffnagle at L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

October 5th, During the SS hour

This month, in honor of Disability Awareness Month, we'll spend time with Jessica Nupponen, who during the height of the COVID pandemic went from being your average working mom to becoming an amputee in just 48 hours.

From what seemed like a small mistake, her life—and the life of her family—was permanently and drastically changed.

But instead of letting this bring her down, Jessica leaned on her faith and found her way through the muck and mire. She now uses her story to help others. She often says that while she may have lost her leg, she never lost her sense of humor.

It has been a long journey with plenty of dark moments, but Jessica, together with her family and friends, found a way forward. Her two small children had many adjustments to make—maybe even more than anyone else. Yet, Jessica often says that it was her children who gave her the strength to get up, push herself, and do things she may not have done otherwise.

Come and hear Jessica's inspiring story and see how God has worked through her journey. This will be an interactive Sunday school class—Jessica will bring a few items that showcase the tools and practices that helped her emerge from the fog of her hardest days.

With a big smile and a full heart, Jessica hopes to brighten your day, give you hope, and remind you of the joy of living in the Spirit together.

Sunday, October 19th

First Church will recognize Disability Awareness Month during both the 8:15 am and the 11:00 am services. All are welcome as we praise God that we are wonderfully made.

Dedicated Missionary



Why We Serve

Even if you don't love coffee, you can't deny that our coffee space becomes a space of gathering on Sunday morning. It's like an old-time Biblical well or town center that draws people in to have conversations and make connections. Have you considered supporting the Coffee Ministry? Hear from some of these Coffee Ministry helpers about why they serve:

"Just about everyone enjoys a cup of coffee or tea to start their day. Having the coffee ministry at First Church is a way to bring folks together between services and an opportunity to meet new friends. Being a part of this ministry is a way we can help serve and make First Church an open and welcoming place to worship and connect with others."

- Denise Kurtz

"If there were one other thing I could do in life, it would be to run a coffee shop. I find such joy in creating a space where people can gather together and build relationships. Coffee on Sunday morning helps to fulfill that desire - I get to help create a gathering space for our congregation and to offer them a warm drink as they connect with friends and develop new relationships."

- Lisa Aronson

If you are interested in serving on the Coffee Ministry team please reach out to Lisa Aronson or sign up to help <https://www.timetosignup.com/fumchurch/sheet/1363471/sunday-morning-coffee-sign-ups>

Coffee will be in the main lobby from 9:20-11:15. Come grab a cup of coffee or tea and spend some time catching up with friends.

First Church Service Shirts

Designed to unite and identify us as we serve together in our community. Whether you're volunteering at an outreach event, helping with church ministries, or participating in a mission project, these shirts are a simple and powerful way to represent First Church with love and purpose. Wearing a service shirt not

only helps others recognize who we are, but it also shows that we're working together as the hands and feet of Christ. Shirts are available for purchase now — order yours today and wear it proudly the next time you serve! Shirts are available for \$10.00 (\$5.00 for children and youth) and can be ordered at the registration table or on Church Center. Checks made out to FUMC, t-shirt in the memo, and given to Lisa Aronson.

Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry

First Church is pleased to support Isaiah 61 Ministries, a local organization that serves the needs of the homeless in Dauphin County. They provide a variety of services including a soup kitchen, clothing bank and Life groups. Specifically, First Church members prepare and serve meals to the homeless in downtown Harrisburg on the third Wednesday of each month. The next volunteer opportunity is Wednesday, October 15 at 6:30 p.m. To find out how to get involved, contact Tiffany Holland at tholland1967@gmail.com.

Relationship Builder



Friday Food Trucks Farewell

When I was approached by a Borough Council member back in 2017 to host food trucks in our parking lot, I was a little hesitant, as I wasn't sure if they would fit in our parking lot and if anyone would attend. Well, as we've seen over the past 9 seasons, it was a good fit all around! As an outpouring of hospitality, we offered free parking with parking assistance, and set up tables and chairs for the visitors, which offered a nice environment to visit with friends and neighbors. We've had DJ's, live music, mascots, biking groups, police and even fire trucks join the event. We received many positive comments from our community about how much they enjoyed the atmosphere of the food trucks. We have always encouraged church members to attend for a chance to sit down with our neighbors and get to know them in a fun and casual setting. However, as we have seen a decline in attendance over recent years, Jeff and I have decided to retire from the Food Trucks. We feel very blessed that First Church was able to offer this to our community. We have always enjoyed talking with visitors, especially the repeat customers. We are so grateful for those who have stepped up to help make this a great event for our community. We look forward to other ways that First Church can show hospitality and reach out to our neighbors. Again, thanks for your support and attendance at Third Friday Food Truck events at First!



Jeff and Lori Hoffnagle.

50 Days of Hope

Pastor Layne Lebo from Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church is organizing a special event on Saturday, October 4 for cancer survivors and their families. Pastor Layne has been on his own cancer journey found the book '50 Days of Hope' incredibly helpful and has met and invited the author, Lynn Eib, to come and speak. This book offers hope and encouragement for those going through cancer and their families. The seminar is free, but registration is encouraged, to be able to plan appropriately. You can sign up through the link or call the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ office at 717-697-0682 or contact Janice Bowen. See the link here: <https://mcbic.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3039206> or visit their website at <https://www.mcbic.org/>.

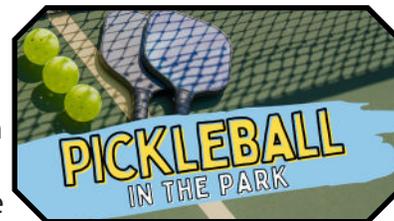
Mechanicsburg Parade and Streets of Treats

We will once again be offering our parking lot and surrounding areas for neighbors to watch the Mechanicsburg Halloween Parade on Tuesday, October 14. Come out for a fun night and enjoy the parade! The annual Streets of Treats will be held on Saturday, October 18 in downtown Mechanicsburg, a free

and low-cost event that provides a safe and fun environment for trick or treating. The Children's Department will have a table to hand out treats, Come say hi to Miss Katie and pick up some candy and goodies for kids! For more info and to sign up to help volunteer at the First Church Kids table, check out Church Center.

Pickleball! Tuesday 5-7 pm

Join us on the Pickleball courts this October at Soldiers and Sailors Mechanicsburg Park! If the weather is unfavorable, we will play in the church multi-purpose room. No experience is necessary. Paddles/balls will be available to borrow if you'd like to learn how to play! Contact Janice Bowen (717-766-4611, ext. 112 or wecare@fumchurch.com) with questions or to be added to the Pickleball email list for updates and weekly alerts of where we will be playing.



Men's Breakfast – October 4th and November 1st, 7:30 a.m., Brothers Restaurant

An open invitation is extended to all men who want to gather for good food and light-hearted fellowship on the first Saturday of each month (Brothers Restaurant is located at 705 Gettysburg Pike, Mechanicsburg, 17055). Please contact John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. if you are interested in attending.

Women's Morning Meet-Up – October 11th & November 8th, 7:30 a.m., Down To Earth Café

Start your morning with a warm cup of coffee and great company. Order food or a drink, or just grab a seat and connect with other women of faith, share stories, and find support in a welcoming atmosphere. Down to Earth Café is located at 100 Legacy Park Dr. Suite 108, Mechanicsburg, 17055.

Wear Your Name Tag!

We encourage everyone to wear their name tags! Name tags help us connect and build relationships within our church family. Need a name tag? Contact the church office.

College Connection

Help us connect with our current population of students away at school or recent grads. Please provide Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com with their updated mailing address. We can't feed their mailbox if we don't have contact information.

Solo Seniors Fellowship

The Solo Seniors Fellowship will dine at the Simpson Diner on Tuesday, October 14, at 11:30 a.m. If you plan on attending, please contact Bonnie Guyer at 717-766-0145. Transportation will be provided upon request.

Final Gleaning 2025!

This growing season, we are excited to have one more opportunity to glean locally in partnership with Oak Grove Farms! We will share the fresh produce with the individuals and families receiving support locally from One80 Ministries, as well as our local Free Little Pantries. If you haven't gleaned with us before, please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112 to have your name/contact information added to the FUMC 'Glean Team' to receive updates of information!



Gleaning 5 – Thursday, October 2nd – 6 pm (meet at Oak Grove Farms parking lot)

"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God" ~Leviticus 19:9-10.



Financial Report

Through August 31, 2025

General Fund

2025 Budget	\$869,000
Expected Income YTD \$	\$578,754 (67% of year complete)
Actual Income YTD	\$513,384 (59% of budget)
Actual Expenses	\$549,044 (63% of budget)

The financial report for August continues to show revenues (giving) falling short of expectations over the summer. Fortunately, expenses continue to be less than expected for this point in the year. As noted in the last newsletter, even after accounting for changeover in membership, we are still behind where we should be and behind where individual and family pledges should be at this point in the year. We recognize that some giving is evenly spread throughout the year (and some automated) while other giving comes all at once. No way is better than the other, we rely on the annual pledges around Consecration Sunday to help understand what to expect and what to budget. We are thankful for all the gifts we receive on behalf of the church and its missions.

Our Parsonage loan currently stands at \$38,387 (after refinancing we do not need to make a principal payment until spring 2026) and the Bell Tower Loan principal balance is \$30,388. We thank those who continue to give in service of our debt.

We thank you for your continued generosity and prayers in support of First Church.

Little Free Pantry

The Little Free Pantry continues to bless our neighbors! Most needed items are canned goods, such as soups, pasta sauce, fruit, vegetables, canned chicken and tuna. You can bring your donations to the container at the alley entrance or to the church office. The pantry is filled every day and emptied out every day, so we appreciate anything you can contribute to this 'no barrier access point to food' to our neighbors. Questions about the Little Free Pantry, contact Lori Hoffnagle at L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

United Women in Faith Baked Good Giveaway, November 2

Support the United Women in Faith World Thank Offering on Sunday, November 2 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, we'd love your support! Questions about United Women in Faith or the World Thank Offering, contact Lori Hoffnagle at L_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

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 September totaled \$27.25.

Ringling in the News!

October! What a busy month ahead for the bells. But first – let us thank you for September! We not only played at our church, but were honored to be a part of the service at Calvary Methodist Church in Dillsburg on September 28th. We also SO appreciate your support for our 25th annual Chicken BBQ!

At the **BBQ** we unveiled our **“Sponsor a Bell”** fundraiser. Help sponsor one of our bells or handchimes to send it to Scotland with us! With each sponsorship you will receive a card with dimensions of the bell and whether it was purchased in memory of someone – as well as a fun fact about handbells or a choir member that will be attending the International Symposium. Be sure to check out the display in the main lobby!

October 19th – we have **R&K subs** being delivered. Be sure to order yours.

Our “Dining Out” this month is at Red Robin October 21st from 4-8pm. Pick up a flyer on the table – or get it electronically from our new facebook page: **The Praise Ringers at First United Methodist Church!**

We have **Texas Roadhouse \$25 gift cards** available to order for the next 6 weeks. A great idea for Christmas or for yourself. They will have the Praise Ringers logo on them! You can use them anytime – but we will be dining there in the new year!

And of course, we’re busy making chicken soup, chili, and mac & cheese for the Mechanicsburg **Halloween Parade.**

Dates to save for November:

November 15 – Ornament Making Day – shall we make it an annual day?! Sign-ups coming soon!

November 15 - Merchant Day in Mechanicsburg. Bells will be playing by Santa! Come and visit him in his big red truck and take your pictures!

November 22 – Pie Day! Pumpkin, Apple and Mincemeat

And one more thing! A few of us are venturing out and about to play at local nursing homes. If **YOU** have someone you’d like us to visit – please give us the name of their local facility. We’ll see if we can set something up – even if it’s after the holidays!

First Church Mission Moments...

Operation Christmas Child

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 on the display in the main entrance hallway. Next, fill your box with items suggested on the list (also available on the display). Finally, remember to bring your filled shoeboxes back to the church display in the main lobby no later than November 23 (by 12:00PM).



On that day, we'll load them in the truck after the 11:00 am worship service and send them to the distribution center for delivery by Christmas!

What is the purpose of this mission project: "Through Operation Christmas Child, Samaritan's Purse is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with millions of boys and girls in more than 100 countries each year. Many of these children have never before received a present or heard the true meaning of Christmas—until they open a gift-filled shoebox from a person like you." (Excerpt taken from Operation Christmas Child Website)

-Online virtual boxes: Not everyone has the capacity or time to leave their house to gather items to fill a box. You can visit First Church's Online Box page and purchase and fill a box online for \$25.

-The Shoebox Supply House is a local non-profit that serves as a one-stop-shop location to purchase items for your shoe box. They are open for limited hours so make sure to check out their website before going to shop: <https://shoeboxsupplyhouse.com/>. The Shoebox Supply House is located at 709 Marden Avenue, Shippensburg, PA.

-Adopt a box! Operation Christmas Child Boxes require a \$10 donation to get the boxes to their destination, but not everyone can contribute to that need when making a box. Money donations are always accepted on behalf of this campaign. (Memo: Operation Christmas Child).

- Consider also the opportunity to gather a group of friends and **volunteer at the processing center in Baltimore, MD** and see all the work that goes into assuring that boxes are ready to be sent to the children who will receive them. Learn about volunteering here: <https://www.occvolunteersignup.com/>

Stained Glass Class

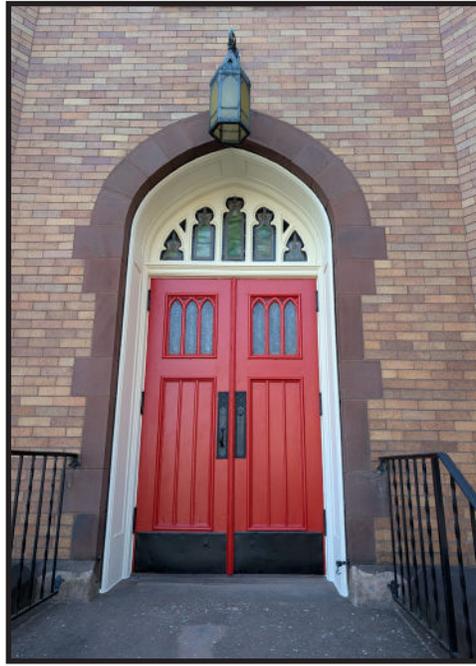


The Purple Cross

The purple cross is located at First Church on the first floor, fifth window near the alley entrance and in the Room 123 Guyer Class the 6th window from the left.

The purple cross is a reference to the story of the crucifixion. Because the color was hard to make, purple was used by royalty. According to the account in John 19, the Roman soldiers dressed Jesus in a purple robe and placed a crown of thorns on his head. The color is also used to symbolize preparation, humiliation and the Passion in general. The color is often used during the four Sundays of Advent, Lent, Holy Week, and Maundy Thursday. The Trustees welcome donations for the preservation of the stained glass windows. If you wish to donate, please make sure that your donation is clearly marked "stained glass windows." Thank you.

-Al Robinson



Recently, the doors on the Simpson St. and Frederick St. sides of the Sanctuary were scraped and repainted red. We want to thank John Bowen, Bob Wertz Jr., Mark Mengle, Tim Witters, and Tom Scully and our facilities coordinator Paul Zito for their work on this project. Some people asked me "why are the doors painted red?" After looking at the United Methodist Church website this is what I found..

The tradition of red doors dates back centuries. There are several meanings associated with red doors. Red symbolizes the sacrificial blood of Christ that saves those who come to him. Red is also a reminder of the Passover and a sign of the Holy Spirit. Church doors began to be painted red as a way of remembering the ultimate sacrifice that others had made for their faith. The red doors of churches traditionally signaled a place of sanctuary, refuge, and safety. Those in need would not be captured or harmed inside the holy walls of the church, which offered physical and spiritual protection.

Some believe that the doors of the Wittenberg Cathedral, where Martin Luther posted his 95 theses, were red. Red doors on Protestant churches indicate their roots in the Reformation. Whatever the meaning, many churches today are recognized by their distinctive red doors.

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Yard, Book and Bake Sale Thanks!

Thanks to everyone who donated, volunteered, baked and shopped at the yard sale! We had another great day that raised funds for Church Missions and blessed our community with good quality, affordable items. The Youth raised over \$2,800 for mission trips, United Women in Faith raised over \$1,000 from the bake sale and yard sale spots for women, children and youth and Church Library raised over \$700 for new books and Bell Choir over \$500. Thanks again for all those who helped make our sale a great success!



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



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

Liz Nesmith.....November 4
Mary Cain.....November 11
Paul Cain.....November 11
Pat Bricker.....November 23
Patricia Marr.....November 23
Marlin Lehmer.....November 24



- ♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Paul Cain** married 68 years November 1, 1957.
- ♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Leon Bricker** married 66 years November 19, 1960.
- ♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Don Coldren** married 63 years November 24, 1962.
- ♥ **Mr. & Mrs. Robert Meck** married 73 years November 25, 1952.

FIRST NEWS FIRST
EDITORS: Kelsey Goll

The **deadline** for submitting articles for the November 2025 issue is **Oct. 15**.
Early submissions always appreciated!