



# First News First

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

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

The first week of each new member's class we begin talking about what makes the United Methodist Church unique compared to Lutheran, Baptist, or Catholic churches. Each believe in Jesus Christ, but what we emphasize, how we are organized, and our history has shaped our foundation and shapes how we think about ministry today.

In late 2024 the Council of Bishops and Connectional Table shared a new fresh vision that is deeply rooted in our Wesleyan roots and honors our denominational DNA of extravagant grace, joyful discipline, fearless leadership, and passion for our neighbors in our communities and throughout the world.

In John Wesley's series "The Character of a Methodist," he begins by telling readers that Methodists are not defined by distinct doctrine or unique rituals. Instead, he describes a Methodist as "one who has 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him.'" The first love of a Methodist is to be bold and complete love of God. He later continues that our love for God awakens our love of neighbor to see them as beloved children of God. Historian Philip Brooks writes, "For Wesley, everything Methodist is and does, begins with love of God and love of neighbor." Today we affirm United Methodists are to LOVE BOLDLY.

The first Methodist church in London in 1739 didn't just hold worship services and class meetings, but also hosted a children's school, a shelter for the poor and even a makeshift hospital. From the start we have been churches devoted to serving God and serving the needs of our neighbors and community – not out of obligation but with joy because we focused on sharing our blessings and gifts with others. Today we affirm United Methodists are to SERVE JOYFULLY.

Early Methodists were faced with practical challenges, lack of money and trained pastors, churches vandalized and their practices mocked in the press. Wesley preached against slavery and led economic boycotts against cotton and tobacco industries. He pushed for preaching in new ways that included open air spaces and engaging social issues of his day. Today United Methodists seek to reach others in creative ways and new spaces locally while combining our efforts and resources in ministry in many parts of the world beyond our local communities. Today we affirm United Methodists are to LEAD COURAGEOUSLY.

This new vision is to help us reclaim the passion and holy fire of John Wesley that deepens our faith in Christ and empowers us through the Holy Spirit to LOVE, SERVE and LEAD. Now through May 17th we will be exploring this new vision in worship. We will celebrate how we are living into these ministries already and dream where First Church might go in the future.

I hope you will join me as we live into this new vision – growing and forming disciples, developing Christ-like leaders, and serving in our community here and throughout the world.


If you want to read more about our new vision or see Brook's full article, visit [ResouceUMC.org](http://ResouceUMC.org)

-On this journey with you,  
Pastor Mira

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The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, **love boldly**, **serve joyfully**, and **lead courageously** in local communities and worldwide connections.



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

### Sunday School:

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](mailto:57masnyder@gmail.com).

**Current Study:** Faith over Fear by Matt Rawle. "Through Abraham's imperfect journey, Rawle explores how faith means showing up despite doubts, teaching us to embrace uncertainty while trusting God's promises."

#### ◇ 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](mailto: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: [robert\\_wertz@plantsitelogistics.com](mailto:robert_wertz@plantsitelogistics.com).

**Spring Study: Cokesbury's Adult Bible Study**

This quarter's theme: Lament. Confession. Rebirth

This spring, our Bible lessons follow the theme "Exclusion and Embrace," and encourage us to consider what we need to let go of and what we need to take on as followers of Jesus.

#### ◇ 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](mailto:sdppp@msn.com).

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### 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](mailto: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](mailto:amyerno@gmail.com) or Jenell at [jparis@messiah.edu](mailto: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:

- ◇ **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.
- ◇ **Mom Connection: Better Together. Next Class: May 18, 6-8pm**  
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 September-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 (or a one-time suggested donation of \$30 for the full year). Mom Connection monthly gatherings begin Sept. 15 and last through May 18th. Sign up now at [fumchurch.com](http://fumchurch.com) or on Church Center. Contact Katie Knorr ([kidscount@fumchurch.com](mailto:kidscount@fumchurch.com)) with questions.
- ◇ **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 at 1:00 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 (Next: May 5) and meets together off-site for a meal on the opposite months. This circle studies women of the Bible.

**Summer Studies** – Consider gathering a group of friends and digging into God's word through a Bible or Book study this summer. Gather on a back porch, make plans to meet at a café –whatever it might be, summer offers the space to connect and grow. Reach out to Lisa Aronson if you need help with resources, studies, or other group ideas.

## Upcoming Special Presentation! The Ministry of Rev. Donald Ciampa and the 1997 Addition to First Church | May 3, 9:45am

On Sunday, May 3, at 9:45 a.m., all are invited to hear a presentation on the ministry of the Rev. Donald J. Ciampa and the 1997 addition to First Church. The presentation will be by Sophia Snyder, a recent Messiah College graduate. Pictures of the construction will be shown.



# From the Library



As I write the May newsletter article in April and the temperature is supposed to be close to 90 degrees, I wonder where spring went. Will it show up in May after summer has tempted us this month? Earlier I was telling you to get extra books during cold weather, and now I am telling you to get extra books so you can read either by the pool or inside with the air conditioner blasting. I guess I always have a few books or some puzzles handy as you never know when you will want them. And of course, I have some great books to tell you about.

Susan May Warren never fails to write heart pounding mysteries and includes very vivid scenery that makes you feel like you are right there with the character. Her latest book is **Over the Edge**, and is the first book in the Summer Rangers series. Main character is Nimue Hart who is hiding out from the Russian mob. But when a rescue mission forces her out of hiding, her life begins to fall apart. Enter Grand Canyon Backcountry Ranger Liam Kingsley who buried his heart in the Swiss Alps after a tragic climbing accident. But that is about to change when he meets Nimue. And things begin to explode at the edge of the canyon. This book will keep you reading well past your bedtime. What I like about this review online is it says, "it is perfect for readers who love romance with a shot of adrenaline"—my kind of book and I think it will be yours, too.

While I love a good mystery, I also love World War II fiction and Sarah Sundin is another author that never fails to deliver well-researched historical fiction. **Mists over the Channel Islands** is set in a place not many books have focused on, and many people are not even aware that they were part of the war. When the Germans invade Jersey and the Channel Islands, Dr. Ivy Picot is forced to take over her father's medical practice and try to hold her family together. Thousands of forced laborers are brought to the Islands to build Nazi fortifications, and Ivy secretly helps escaped workers. When she meets Dutch Engineer Gerrit van der Zee, she has nothing but contempt for him as he is there to help the Germans. Or is he? He plans to send maps and diagrams to the Allies. Both Ivy and Gerrit walk a dangerous path of acting compliant while committing sabotage at every turn. Can love bloom on the path of such danger? Will their efforts turn the tide or will they be found out? I will let you find out the answer to these questions.

If these are not your favorite genres, stop by the library and let our volunteers help you find just the right books for you.

**-Annette, Debra, Kathy, Marge, Mary, Pam, & Donna**



## Praying Follower



### Prayer Room | Tower Room located off the back of room 216

We learn in scripture that Jesus often withdrew and found a quiet place to pray: "Early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went out to a solitary place to pray (Mark 1:35)." A place where his focus could be on his Father. The prayer room will be available as a quiet place you can sit with God on Sunday mornings during the Sunday enrichment hour (9:45 AM-10:45 AM).

### Joy in the Morning | A small group invitation, Monday, May 11th, 1pm

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 at 1 pm on a Monday afternoon at Bethany Village's West Apartments Commons Room. Janice Bowen facilitates, drawing upon readings and devotionals. For more info contact Janice [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com).



### Visiting with Friends!

If you miss seeing a special friend at church, Janice Bowen would like to hear from you! Janice enjoys 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, missing your friends who are at home..Janice would love to hear from you! [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) x112 or [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com).

### Greeting Cards to Share!

Looking for a birthday card or a way to send 'get well' wishes to a friend? Stop by the 'Card Ministry' display in the lobby and help yourself to a card! If you'd like a bigger supply or know of who may appreciate receiving a card, please contact Janice Bowen [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com).



## VBS 2026

### Vacation Bible School is gearing up!

Registration is now open for kids, as well as teen and adult volunteers to join us July 13-17th from 9am-noon. Kids will Join Activities Director Miss Katie and Ollie the Arctic Seal on an epic adventure filled with games, music, crafts, snacks and amazing Bible stories. Sign up today at Church Center or at [fumchurch.com/vbs](http://fumchurch.com/vbs) and receive a free gift if you register before June 1st.



### Yard Sale Save the Date 2026 | August 15

The annual Yard, Book and Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, August 15 in our church parking lot. The collection for the yard sale will start on Monday, August 3 through 7 only. The Church Library has an ongoing collection of books, puzzles, CD's, and DVDs. Donations can be placed in the blue collection container outside the library (near the alley entrance). Thanks for your support of the sale in the past, as we are only successful because of your wonderful donations! Any questions about the yard sale, contact Lori Hoffnagle at [l\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com) or Donna Nichols at [djnichols43@hotmail.com](mailto:djnichols43@hotmail.com).

### Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry | May 20

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, May 20, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. Food items are always welcome, such as desserts, salad, applesauce, etc. To find out how to get involved, contact Tiffany Holland at [tholland1967@gmail.com](mailto:tholland1967@gmail.com).

### Save the Date! One Church Sunday - Sunday, June 7th | 9 a.m.

Join us on Sunday, June 7th for a special One Church Sunday as we gather together for one combined worship servc at 9:00 AM. On this day, we will not hold our usual 8:30 or 11:00 services.

This is a meaningful opportunity to celebrate who we are as one church family. While we may worship in different styles week to week, we are united in Christ, in community, and in our shared mission. One Church Sunday gives us a chance to experience that unity in a tangible way—lifting our voices together, seeing familiar and new faces, and celebrating the unique ways God is at work among us.

Following the service, we invite you to stay for an extended time of fellowship and coffee as we enjoy Sticky Bun Sunday together—a sweet way to connect and celebrate the beginning of summer as one First Church family. See more info about this in "Generous Giver".

## *Dedicated Missionary*



### **Coffee Ministry**

Coffee is available before the Sunday Enrichment hour (9:45) and the 11:00 Gathering Service. Coffee is located in the main lobby (near the mailboxes), and we hope you find it a welcoming space on Sunday mornings. Contact Lisa Aronson at [Discipleship@fumchurch](mailto:Discipleship@fumchurch) if you have any interest in helping support this expression of hospitality and being a part of the Coffee Ministry Team.

## *Relationship Builder*



### **Pickleball | Tuesdays 4:30 - 7 pm**

Please join us every Tuesday evening for the joy of Pickleball! Weather depending, we play at either Soldiers and Sailors Mechanicsburg Park or in the gym. 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](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com)) with questions or to be added to the Pickleball email list for location updates and alerts.



### **FUMC Volleyball | Wednesdays 6 - 8 pm**

If you enjoy volleyball, please come on out to the church gym Wednesday evenings! Please contact Janice Bowen ([wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com) or 717-766-4611 x112) with questions or to be added to the list to receive volleyball communications.

### **Men's Breakfast | May 2nd 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 | May 9th, 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. (100 Legacy Park Dr. Suite 108, Mechanicsburg)



### **Registration for our 2026 camp and retreat events is open!**

Families can check out the programs offered at Wesley Forest and Camp Penn by visiting the website at [suscrm.org](http://suscrm.org) or check out the registration table in main lobby for more info! You can forward your camp registrations and/or questions to Deb Noss [sdppp@msn.com](mailto:sdppp@msn.com) or to [mattandamyortiz@gmail.com](mailto:mattandamyortiz@gmail.com).



### **Graduating?**

If you or someone you know from our church community is graduating (high school, college, master's, etc.) this spring or this past January, please fill out the graduation information form found on Church Center so that we can celebrate their accomplishments. The deadline for submissions is May 15th.

## Senators Baseball Game/Picnic | June 7, 1pm

Invite your family and friends to join us at FNB Field on City Island for a picnic and a Harrisburg Senators baseball game! The buffet-style picnic starts at noon and includes hamburgers, hot dogs, BBQ chicken, baked beans, pasta salad, chips, cookies, soda, and water. The Senators game starts at 1 p.m. Discounted Picnic/Ballgame tickets are just \$26.50 for adults (age 19 and older), \$15 for children/youth (age 4-18) and free for children 3 and under!

New this year...bleacher seats (no picnic included) are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Bleacher seats will be adjacent to the picnic area. Meal vouchers will be available for \$8 (includes hot dog, chips and a drink). All participants must register and pay by May 17th. Contact Jeff Hoffnagle with questions at [jeffrey.hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffrey.hoffnagle@yahoo.com).



*Generous Giver*



<b>2026 Budget</b>	<b>\$811,683</b>
<b>Expected Income YTD</b>	<b>\$202,921 (25% of budget)</b>
<b>Actual Income YTD</b>	<b>\$249,561 (31% of budget)</b>
<b>Actual Expenses</b>	<b>\$207,991 (25% of budgeted expenses)</b>

Revenues are up this month, in fact \$46,640 over where we projected for the end of March, as we saw several larger (expected) gifts as part of pledges along with an annual grant we receive. Though it is wonderful to finally be "in the black" where revenues have exceeded expenses (and expectations at this point in the budget year) we still project more expenses than revenue for all of 2026, and if nothing changes will end up "in the red."

- Expenses are slightly less than where we projected through March, which is good to see, but again same story for the budget year overall as noted above.
- Our Parsonage loan currently stands at \$38,386.99 and the Bell Tower Loan principal balance is \$27,163.83. We thank those who continue to give in service of our debt.
- We thank everyone for their continued commitment and support of First Church through gifts of all sizes and in all the ways we serve our community and our Lord.

### Sticky Bun Sunday | June 7th



In conjunction with our "One Church Sunday" service on June 7th, we will have an extended coffee and fellowship time after the service. And what goes best with a hot coffee or tea? Sticky buns! If you can help in providing sticky buns please sign up at the Registration Table in the Main Lobby or on Church Center.

### 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 are blessed to be able to offer this 'no barrier access point to food' to our neighbors. Questions? Contact Lori Hoffnagle at [l\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com). Thanks also for your generous peanut butter donations during the Lenten season!

### Community Dinner, June 7

Our spring community dinner will be held on Sunday, June 7 at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 132 E. Main Street, 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 idea comes from the book 'Welcome to Dinner, Church,' which encourages churches to share a meal with their neighbors. We anticipate to serve over 100 of our neighbors and friends at this meal. If you would like to help set up, serve or provide a food item, please contact Lori Hoffnagle at [l\\_hoffnagle@yahoo.com](mailto:l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com). Thanks for your support!





# Ringling in the News!

Our annual concert here at First Church will be on Sunday, May 3 at 7pm. Please mark your calendars now as we hope you will plan to attend! The theme this year: **Make Me An Instrument**. This will be Kathie Bittenbender's last concert as Director of the Handbells. Try to come and help celebrate her 37 years at First Church! Refreshments will follow the concert.

The Praise Ringers sincerely thank you for your continued support this year. Many of you enjoyed our annual Spaghetti Dinner – with the added bonus of a Silent Auction and jewelry sale! We hope you were also able to join us dining out at Panera Bread. This month, we are **dining out at Hosses** again on Tuesday, May 26.

We now have a **Whoopie Pie sale** happening with orders due May 4. Weavers Market & Bakery (in Port Treverton, on Rt. 15 North) is making the whoopie pies. We got a chance to try them and had a hard time just picking 6 flavors to choose from! These pies are huge (5") and delicious. They will be delivered Sunday, May 17. I hear they freeze well if you won't be here that day!

We continue to be busy ringing – especially our Outreach Bells as they play at several Nursing Homes/Senior Centers in our area. We appreciated seeing some of you at our concert at the historic Union Church April 19. And we had a good day at the Central PA Handbell Festival on April 18th.

One more date to put on your calendars! We will again be taking orders for **R&K subs/pretzel sandwiches**. They will be delivered Sunday June 14. These are always delicious – and we don't order very many extras, so be sure to order yours in advance! And - One more date for your calendar! **Saturday, July 25** – you won't want to miss it!

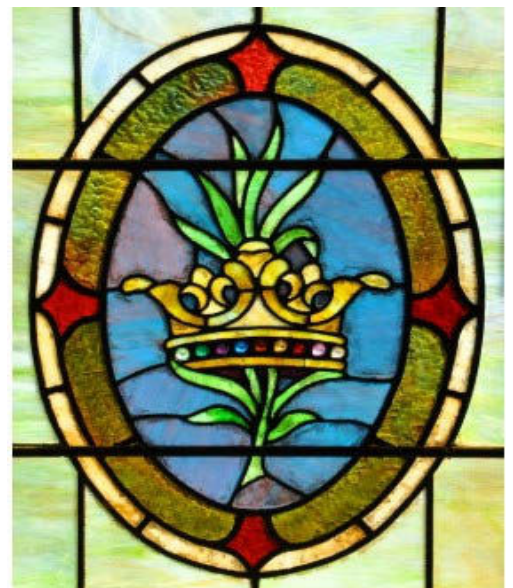
## Stained Glass Class

### THE CROWN & THE PALM

There are two Crown and Palm stain glass windows at First Church. One of them is located in the the sanctuary left of the Jesus ascending into heaven window and the other is located on the second floor the eighth window from the Frederick street entrance.

Several of the stain glass windows are symbols of the passion of Jesus Christ. The palm branch was a symbol of victory during the Roman time period. The crown represents Jesus as the King of Kings. Matthew's account (Matthew 21: 1-9) helps us to further understand this stained glass window.

*1 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." 4 This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through*



the prophet, saying, 5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7 they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (NRSV).

Finally, Revelation 7: 9-10 gives us another depiction of the palm and by using the throne as implication for the crown, these verses:

9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10 They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

## First Church Mission Moments...

### New Hope Ministries

Have you ever wondered what **New Hope Ministries** does beyond providing food to guests? Their impact reaches far deeper into the community than many people realize. In addition to their food programs, they offer vital services that help families stay safe, stable, and supported during difficult times.

Services You May Not Know They Provide:

- Rent and mortgage assistance to prevent homelessness
- Utility assistance to keep families safe and warm
- Transportation support
- Medical assistance and referrals to additional service providers
- A mobile food pantry for increased access
- Job training and employment support
- Budgeting and financial literacy classes
- Resume assistance and interview skills training



These programs rely on the dedication of many volunteers, and New Hope Ministries would love to welcome you into their mission. If you feel called to help with any of these services, please reach out to the center nearest you. To learn more, visit their website: <https://nhm-pa.org>

## FIRST CHURCH YOUTH

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](mailto: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.)

### **Confirmation Retreat**

Did you recently get confirmed or are you planning on participating in the spring confirmation class? Mark your calendars to a conference-wide Confirmation Retreat. This one-day retreat held at Wesley Forest on April 18th will join you with other confirmands around the state, engage in confirmation-related topics, and give you time to meet our Bishop. Please register on Church Center (under the new member class registration) to participate and for more information.

**Summer Missions:** Join us this summer as we care for our neighborhood and stay local and serve the city of Harrisburg. We will be partnering with Wild Hearts "Love the Hill" and lodging here at First Church. We will be serving the week of June 28th- July 3rd. Meet at the round tables in the back of the sanctuary (the Hardwood Café) for an informational meeting on April 12th, following the 11:00 service

**Save the Date:** Volunteer for FUMC VBS from July 13-17, Sn'L "Revive" Camping festival at McBic from July 22- July 25.



## **2026 First Church Concert Series**

The Worship Arts Ministry is pleased to announce the schedule for the 2026 First Church Concert Series! All concert and events open to the public to celebrate the joy of music, as we feature various performers and musicians. All concerts are free, though donations are accepted. This year's concerts include:

- **Praise Ringers in Concert** – FUMC Handbell Choir | Sunday, May 3, 7 p.m.
- **An Acoustic Evening of Worship** – Christy Holliday & Jesse King | Sunday, Sept. 20, time TBD
- **"Holiday Harmony"** – First Church Music Ensembles | Sunday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m.



## How do I update my information?

If you have an address change, a new phone number, or need to correct information in your profile, you can do that in one of two ways. One, you can call the church office and update your information or two, you can update it on your own in your Church Center account.

To update your information in Church Center:

- Click on your photo or initials in a circle in the top left corner of the app (top right corner on the desktop web browser)
- Click the arrow to the right of the top block that is saying “hello” (click the words “my profile and settings” on the web version)
- Click the arrow to the right of the heading “My profile and household.”
- Click the “edit” button and proceed to edit whichever information you are seeking to change. Make sure to choose “Update” when complete. (Choose “Save Changes” on the web version.)

**Looking for a sign-up? In the Main Lobby is the Registration Table, where you can register for current studies, fundraisers, events, and more.**



## First Church Service Shirts Reminder

As you prepare for summer, do you have a First Church service shirt? Consider ordering one for the service projects you plan to serve during the summer. Sign up on Church Center or email Lisa Aronson at [discipleship@fumchurch.com](mailto:discipleship@fumchurch.com). The First Church Service Shirts are 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.



# REGISTER FOR SUMMER CAMP!

BUILDING AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS TO  
CHRIST, COMMUNITY, AND CREATION.



## SPECIAL OFFERS:

*Sibling Discount* - Register the one at full price, and additional siblings receive a \$25 discount.

*Invite-a-Friend Gift* - Invite a friend who has never been to camp and receive \$50 off the cost of camp after they register.

*Financial Assistance* - First Church will pay **half** of your camp fees!



## TO LEARN ABOUT:

- Financial assistance for campers
- Details on discounts
- What to expect at camp
- Becoming a prayer partner
- Volunteering as a camp dean, nurse or counselor
- Working at camp
- Campsite workdays

**CONTACT OUR FIRST CHURCH  
CAMP COORDINATORS!**



DEB NOSS: SDPPP@MSN.COM  
AMY ORTIZ: MATTANDAMYORTIZ@GMAIL.COM

Visit [suscrm.org](https://suscrm.org) to register and see a complete list of 2026 camps!

# Church Staff

**Pastor:**

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717-766-4611 ext. 103  
pastormira@fumchurch.com

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**Sounds of Worship Director:**

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missflossie42@gmail.com

**Youth Worship Director:**

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allisonometz1@msn.com

**Director of Bell Choirs:**

Kathie Bittenbender  
rbittenben@verizon.net

**Organist/Accompanist:**

Brandon Rhody

**Director of Little Friends  
Preschool:**

Janet Rice  
717-796-0723  
director@littlefriendspreschool.org

**Timeless Connections:**

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



# Happy Birthday

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



Barb Eckert.....May 4  
Ginnie Miller.....May 4  
Richard Hoffnagle.....May 5  
Annabelle Elder.....May 10  
Nancy Otstot.....May 12  
Denny Kauffman.....May 13  
Marjorie Kohr.....May 15  
Donald Heiges.....May 16  
Roy Miller.....May 16  
Mary Lou Vierthaler.....May 19  
Bob Bittenbender.....May 27  
Flossie Ryder.....May 31

Dick Scott.....June 2  
Marge Scott.....June 5  
Barbara Sill.....June 7  
Kay Simmons.....June 16  
Bonnie Guyer.....June 19



**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**



♥ **Don & Debbie Karns married May 6, 1972 for 54 years**

**FIRST NEWS FIRST**  
EDITORS: Kelsey Goll

The **deadline** for submitting articles  
for the JUNE/JULY 2026 issue is **May 15**.  
Early submissions always appreciated!