



First News First

From the Pastor's Desk.....

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“To the Angel of the Church at 135 West Simpson Street, write...”

It's not my line. I borrowed it from the Book of Revelation, chapters 2-3, where the Lord addresses seven “angels” of their respective congregations from Ephesus to Laodicea. Those angels are the corporate spirits of those congregations. The writer assumes they are actual agents like the invisible “principalities”, “cosmic powers”, and “spiritual forces in high places” Paul talks about. Many read those “angels” of Revelation as colorful metaphors, but I side with theologians such as Walter Wink who take them as real beings and worthy of attention.

I'm not a fast learner more like a plodding learner, so one month's experience is not enough to go on. But I can have some first impressions of the Angel of the Church at 135 West Simpson Street and here three. **(1)** General church decline, covid, and disaffiliation have left their mark on you, but the wound is far from fatal. You remain strong in spiritual gifts, volunteers, commitment to the community, presence of generations, and stewarding of resources. **(2)** You are what I would call “staff-inspired” not “staff-dependent”. There's a big difference. It's the difference between large scale participation in active ministry and a handful of actors performing in front of a big passive audience. **(3)** You have a warm and welcoming ambience. It's a spontaneous hospitality not programmed. Peggy and I have experienced it firsthand – for which we are grateful. You expect visitors to have a positive encounter with you. You give to them space to take the next step but have suggestions at hand should they ask. Your hospitality is contagious.

I so look forward to what we might accomplish in this year together. And in the words of the Lord to the Angel of the Church at Philadelphia: “I know your works. Behold! I have set before you an open door that no one is able to shut.” So may it be!

-Pastor Lew



Summer Sunday School
Sunday Mornings | 9:45-10:45 A.M. | Multipurpose Room

During the summer, many of our regular classes and groups take a break. Instead we offer opportunities to gather and learn and serve together.

- **August 16 – Service Project: Back to School**

Mechanicsburg churches pray and care for our nearby schools. Come help prepare items to donate to the schools and to learn how you can be praying for the school communities

- **August 30 – Presentation: Bells Scotland Presentation**

The Bells are back from Scotland and want to share their trip with you. Come learn about the music ministry of bells and how they connected with other choirs from around the world.

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 and continues to meet during the summer months. Anyone looking for a class to attend is welcome here! This class will often join the combined offerings, but will notify the class when doing so.

Class leaders: Steve and Deb Noss, sdppp@msn.com.

-----Summer Study: Cokesbury's Adult Bible Study

This quarter's theme: Spirit, Boldness, Opportunity

Summer is a great time for your church to reflect on what God is doing. This study will read the Book of Acts, exploring how God worked in the early church, and how God can work in today's church.

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.

- **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 -Next meeting: September 1st

This circle meets every other month at church in room 105 at 7:00 PM and meets together off site for a meal on the opposite months. This circle has been studying women of the Bible.

- **Picnic in the Park: Various Wednesdays | 5:30-7:00 P.M.**

Join us for a time of connecting in a space suitable for our younger friends. Bring a picnic lunch for you (and your family). Kids can play on the playground, and student/parents/adults have time for small group connection and a short devotional. Sign up on Church Center to be notified of weather changes/location details.



FROM THE LIBRARY....

"I hope you are having a great summer and staying cool. Since the country is celebrating our 250th anniversary, I thought an appropriate read would be The Belle of Chatham by Laura Frantz. The story begins in a small New Jersey village in 1777. Many books have been rewritten about the Revolutionary War, but this one is from a woman's perspective. Sisters Maebel and Coralie Bohannon are caught in the crossfires of war as their village is housing American officers. Not everyone in the village is a patriot. Many are still loyal to England. The chasm divides not only neighbors but even families. This is very evident as Mae is in a growing friendship with American General Rhys Harlow, while Coralie continues her relationship with her childhood sweetheart, a British officer stationed in New York and could be acting as a British spy. Mae leaves home for a life in the dangerous New York frontier. Leaving her family and starting an uncertain life is difficult for Mae, but her devotion to the cause and Rhys never falters. I will let you find all the twists and turns of this book and enjoy this heartfelt story steeped in our history.

Moving on to the war that changed the lives of millions of people is the book, Saving Amelie by Cathy Gohlke. My sister is reading this book, and she gave it a great recommendation, and I am passing it on to you. It is widely known that Hitler's great plan was to create a super race without flaws like deafness, mental problems, or physical impediments. Kristine Schlick is married to SS officer Gerhardt Schlick and she has given birth to a deaf child: a child marked as unworthy of life by the regime her husband has given his allegiance to. Kristine reaches out to an estranged friend from America, Rachel Kramer, begging her to save her daughter. Rachel was once courted by Schlick before the war and knows he can be a dangerous enemy. But how can she refuse? She enlists the help of American journalist Jason Young who connects her to Dietrich Bonhoeffer. All involved in saving Amelie are risking their lives. Can they save Amelia before it's too late for all of them? You won't want to miss this story of heroism.

As most of you already know, August 15th is the annual book and rummage sale here at the church. If you haven't already donated gently used books, puzzles, CDs, or DVDs, please consider doing so before August 13th, the day we set up the sale. The library is completely self sufficient using the profits from this sale to keep the best of Christian literature on the shelf for your reading pleasure. We have a vibrant puzzle exchange which is all fueled by donated puzzles. I will thank you in advance as you have always supported us, and we deeply appreciate your support. Come to the sale and get some great bargains to restock until next year. "

See you in the library,

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



Praying for our Graduates

Congratulations to all of our graduates! In June, during our Sunday morning services, we celebrated our graduates. As fall approaches and these students prepare for their next steps in their academic and employment journeys, please keep them in your prayers. To our graduates: Whether you've conquered high school, college, or any other academic milestone, we are immensely proud of your dedication and hard work. As you embark on your next exciting adventure, may God's light continue to guide your path. Remember, your church family is always here to support you as you grow in your faith.

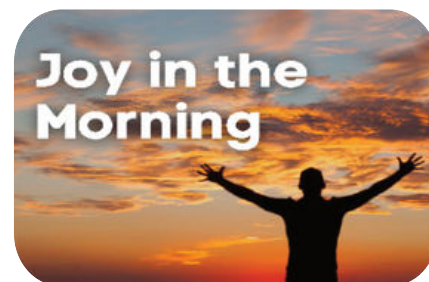


Prayer Room | Tower Room located off the back of room 216

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, August 17th

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 1pm 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.



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.

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 someone who may appreciate receiving a card, please contact Janice Bowen wecare@fumchurch.com.

Travel Blessing Cards

Please join the Handbell Choir in prayer, as they prepare for the exciting opportunity to participate in the 22nd International Handbell Symposium in Aberdeen, Scotland. Travel Blessing Cards are available to take at the Handbell Hub table in the tower entrance. Each card features a ringer attending the symposium, and offers a chance to get to know the bell choir members while keeping them in your prayers before and during their journey. Thank you for your generous support, encouragement, and prayers as they get ready for this special experience.



Fairest Lord Jesus | New Sermon Series Begins August 2

From the beginning, the most decisive characteristic of the followers of the risen Jesus is this: we worship him as “Lord”. We pray to him as we pray to God. We sing hymns to him. We renounce other lords on his behalf. This lord holds together power and love like no other. In this August sermon series, we will unpack the implications of having such a Lord, starting with four stories from Matthew’s gospel and leaning into the words, imagery, and haunting tune of a 350-year-old hymn.

- **August 2 - Who Makes the Woeful Heart to Sing**
- **August 9 - Ruler of All Nature**
- **August 16 - Pastor Jason Mackey preaching**
- **August 23 - Son of God and Son of Man!**
- **August 30 - Beautiful Savior**

ONE Church Sunday Combined Service & Picnic | September 13, 10:00 am

SAVE THE DATE! Join us for a [combined service at 10:00am](#) followed up by our Church picnic on September 13th! As summer winds down and fall begins, this is the perfect opportunity to reconnect with friends and family in our church community. Enjoy good food, yard games, worship, and fellowship. We can’t wait to see you there!



Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry and Easier Way to Support! | Next Opportunity is Aug 19

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 opportunities are Wednesday, August 19 at 6:30 p.m. To find out how to get involved, contact Tiffany Holland at tholland1967@gmail.com. We now have a simpler way to sign up for items, see the Time to Sign Up link on Church Center and the church website at fumchurch.com.



Gleaning 2026 | Meets at 6 pm in the Oak Grove Parking Lot (846 Fisher Rd., Mechanicsburg)

Remaining Opportunities: 8/20, 9/17, 10/15

This growing season, we are excited to once more have the opportunity to glean locally in partnership with Oak Grove Farms! We will share the fresh produce with our local community at One80 Ministries, Keller Senior Living, and the 3 in-town Little Free Pantries. If you haven't gleaned with us before, please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com to have your contact information added to the FUMC 2026 "Glean Team" list to receive additional information!

New this year.....come at 5 pm for picnic table fellowship, a chance to purchase ice cream before Oak Grove closes, and to share in a devotional from the book "Playing in the Dirt."

"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.

Relationship Builder



Pickleball in the Park! Tuesday 5-7 pm



Join us on the Pickleball courts every Tuesday evening, either at Soldiers and Sailors Mechanicsburg Park or in the church gym, depending on the weather! No experience is necessary. Paddles/balls are 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 list for weekly 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 at wecare@fumchurch.com with questions or to be added to the list to receive volleyball communications.



Men's Breakfast | August 1 and September 5th at 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 | September 12, 7:30 a.m., Down To Earth Café

While this group takes a hiatus in the summer, it's not too early to add the second Saturdays to your calendar. Restarting in September, join us for a warm cup of coffee and encouraging conversation. 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.

Community Day in the Park | Saturday, August 1

We look forward to meeting our neighbors at Community Day in the Park on Saturday, August 1 at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Park. We will set up a table and canopy at the Kid Zone area and we would love to have extra helpers to be present at the table to run the simple activity. Please contact Katie Knorr at kidscount@fumchurch.com for more details or to volunteer for an hour or two. You can also sign up on 'Time to Sign Up' at <https://ttsu.me/r7v2tp>.

Yard, Book and Bake Sale | Saturday, August 15

We are looking forward to the annual United Women in Faith Yard, Book and Bake Sale in our church parking lot on Saturday, August 16 from 8:00 a.m. to noon. See all the details below:

Yard Sale Spots in the parking lot (2 parking spaces) have sold out!

- Support our wonderful Youth by donating your treasures! The Youth will sell the items to raise funds for future mission trips. Last year, they made over \$2,700 at the sale! NEW COLLECTION DATES! The collection will start Monday, August 3 through Friday, August 7 (please note, we are only donations this week) in the multipurpose room. The collection times will be from 9:00 am to 2:00 p.m. Please bring only clean, unbroken and working items. Questions about your donations, contact Lisa Aronson at uthrock@fumchurch.com or Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

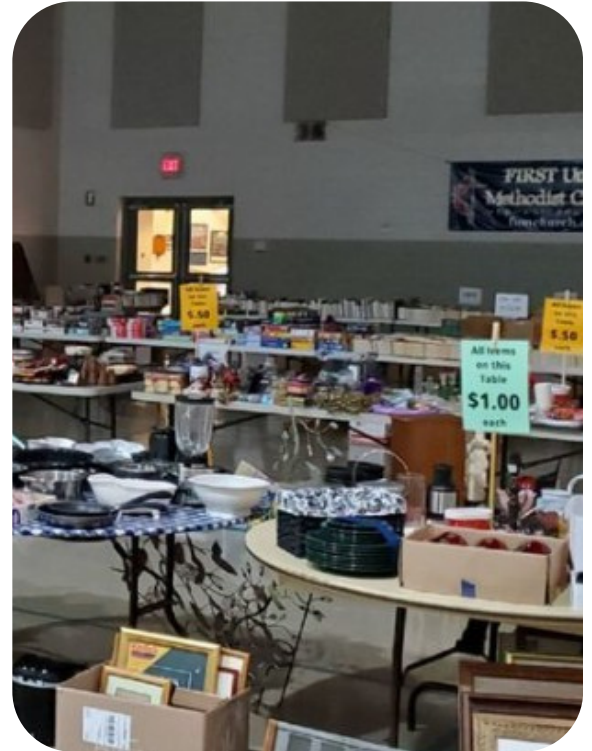
- The Children's Department will once again hand out **FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES** in handmade pencil pouches (thanks to our Squares and Prayers Group) to children who visit the sale.

- The Church Library will have a variety of books, puzzles, CD's, DVD's available for purchase. The library is asking for gently used children and adult books, puzzles, cd's and dvd's (Please no VHS videos, cassettes or encyclopedias) for our annual sale. Proceeds from the sale keep the most current Christian fiction on our shelves for your reading pleasure. Donations can be left outside the church library (near Alley entrance) on Sunday mornings or in the multipurpose room starting August 5. If you have a large book donation, call Pam Van Kirk at 717-903-9196 or Donna Nichols 717-574-9894 to make arrangements for a drop off. Thanks in advance.

- Our Little Friends Preschool will have food available for purchase to support their scholarship funds.

- Enjoy tasty treats from the United Women in Faith Bake Sale! (We will be asking for donations of baked goods, so start thinking of something yummy to make!) To donate baked goods, contact Denise Swank at dmom64@gmail.com or 717-795-8747.

There is something for everyone at the sale! If you have any questions, please contact Donna Nichols at djnichols43@hotmail.com or Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com. Thanks for your support!



Camp Recap & Thank You

As the 2026 Summer Camp season winds to a close, we as Camp Coordinators would like to extend to you our thanks and appreciation for making this year's camping season memorable and successful. It seems like only yesterday when we had Camp Sunday in February to kick off the year with the camping theme: "In The Wilderness"

Campers learned this year about Biblical and real-world examples of awe, wonder, and finding courage within community and connection with Christ.

So, we would like to thank:

- Parents who made it a priority to register and take their children to camp this year;
- Campers who went into less familiar places yet willing to explore creation in search of fun, friends and fellowship;
- Volunteers (Deans, Nurses, Counselors, Special Guests, etc.) who took time away from their regular lives to provide programming and a safe and fun environment for campers to make new and lasting friendships with others and with Christ;
- Prayer Partners (at least 26) who prayed for individual campers, others attending camp and all the volunteers/permanent camp staff - for safety, fun and to grow relationships with the Lord;
- Members of First Church who support this ministry through your willingness to help pay half of camper registrations – this was a huge blessing to our camp families;
- Individuals (at least 3) who gave special scholarship gifts to help cover additional fees and expenses; and
- You for ongoing support for this vital program with your gifts and prayers!



This year, there were [43 First Church campers](#), families and volunteers with 24 receiving financial assistance.

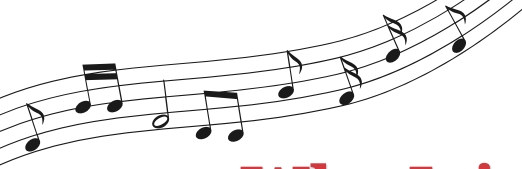
FUMC, along with the Conference Camping ministry, provided financial support to [The Journey](#) church in Harrisburg to fund their initiative to send 15 children from their church to camp, some for the very first time. You also extended financial support to 4 additional campers that were not affiliated with [The Journey](#) church or FUMC.

Over the course of the summer, there were [75 unique experiences](#) by those noted above. Each was covered in prayer and supported by card correspondence. The prayer partners were both busy and a blessing!

How has being a member of FUMC who in some way supported camp this year helped you to be in awe and wonder while finding courage within our community and building connection with Christ? We would love to hear from you as our partners in the Camping Ministry. If you'd like to share, please email Steve Noss at sdppp@msn.com.



Your Sisters and Brother in Christ,
Amy Ortiz, Deb Noss and Steve Noss



Why Join Sounds Of Worship Choir?

#1. Find Community

Become part of a welcoming group that feels like a second family.

#2. Lift Your Spirit

Singing is good for the soul and a wonderful way to relieve stress.

#3. Grow Musically

Challenge yourself by learning new notes, harmonies, and rhythms.

#4. Make a Commitment

Build consistency while being part of a team that relies on and encourages one another.

#5. Share the Story

Use the gift of music to express your faith and help lead others in worship.



The greatest joy may be waiting for you!



Sounds of Worship is looking for new voices—and we'd love to have you join us!

We sing during the 8:30 a.m. worship service and practice on Thursdays at 6:45 p.m., beginning September 10, 2026. For more information or to join, please contact Flossie Ryder at 717-766-0811. No matter your experience level, there's a place for you!

Generous Giver



2026 Budgeted Income: \$811,683

2026 Budgeted Expenses: \$846,822 (\$35,139 deficit / greater expenses than income)

Expected Income YTD \$405,842 (50% of budget)

Actual Income YTD \$442,249 (55% of budget)

Actual Expenses \$413,857 (49% of budgeted expenses)

At the half way point of 2026 the Church's general fund is doing slightly better than we had budgeted. Income is ahead of estimates, but when compared to pledges our families are giving as we have expected. Thank you all for your continued giving and keeping to your pledges, it is a comfort to know what to anticipate.

Expenses remain lower than we had budgeted for, however there are areas such as missions whose expenses occur in the second half of the year just based on timing.

We received an extremely generous anonymous donation to pay off the remaining loan for the bell tower restoration project, a gift of just over \$25,000 which has paid off the loan! Thank you for your gift, you have made a difference!

The parsonage loan balance is \$38,233, with an interest-free loan through the Conference.

If you are feeling led toward a larger gift for our Stained Glass renewal project or want to direct a gift toward a specific mission, you can specify where the donation is to go. Please reach out to Brian Sanker, chair of the First Church Finance Committee, at sankerb@gmail.com or to Amy Erno, Director of Finance, at financedirector@fumchurch.com (or by calling the church office) if you need assistance. We can also answer some basic questions or help direct you for more information on legacy gifts related to wills and estate planning or how to direct charitable giving to First Church from retirement funds such as a 401(k). For questions on the stained glass renewal project timeline or other project questions please contact Jim Murdoch.

Thank you for your continued support of First Church!

Annual Camp Fundraiser/Gala | Saturday, September 12, 2026, 4:00pm

For decades, the Susquehanna Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry has offered sacred outdoor spaces for rest, renewal, and life-changing experiences. In these inspiring, outdoor settings, young people encounter God deeply, forge lifelong friendships, and discover their true identity and belonging. For many of today's church leaders, camp was the pivotal place where their faith became real.

We're thrilled to continue this legacy of impact at our Annual Camp and Retreat Ministries Fundraising Gala. This event will celebrate the stories, relationships, and transformations that happen through camp, while also looking ahead to how we can strengthen and expand this ministry for the next generation.

We would love for you to join us for this evening as we welcome Jody Oats of Kaleidoscope who will share exciting plans and news regarding our Expansion Project. We will also honor beloved volunteers with our Campfire Awards from Wesley Forest and Camp Penn. Our meal will be catered by friend of camping, Strock Enterprises Inc. See details and registration here: <https://suscrm.org/gala/>. The event will be held at Calvary UM Church, Harrisburg.

Share the Harvest

If you have extra flowers, fruits, or vegetables from your yard or garden this summer, we encourage you to share them with your church family and community! Whether you leave goodies or take some home with you, please look for the Share the Harvest display set-up on the counter space near the children's department.....as well as the shelf attached to the Little Free Pantry alongside the church parking lot. Contact Janice Bowen (wecare@fumchurch.com or 717-766-4611 x112) with any questions.



Penny Bucket/Change Bucket | You can make a change!

Since 2024 First Church has been collecting change to help provide clean water through the UMC Advance to areas in Africa. Change, and bills, are welcome to continue to care for existing wells and drill new wells for clean water in the Mulungwishi, South Congo area. The Penny Bucket/Change Bucket is in the Main Lobby. We thank Barb Strock, who as part of the Mission Team will care for this international mission project. June and July we collected \$52.26! Thank you for your continued support!

Little Free Pantry

Thanks so much for your continued 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 about the Little Free Pantry, contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.



Ringing in the News!



THANK YOU is not enough to show our appreciation for your support and generosity in our preparation for the International Handbell Symposium in Aberdeen Scotland! We truly could not have gotten to where we are without your unwavering support for the Praise Ringers!



[Travel Blessing Cards](#) are available in the Tower Entrance at the Handbell Hub table. You can pick up cards for ringers as a way to connect and pray for us during our stay.

Feel free to [like and follow our Facebook and Instagram pages](#), where you can keep up with our activities, watch the livestream Symposium concert, and more!



Facebook Page: @The Praise Ringers at First United Methodist Church
Instagram handle: @praiseringers

Don't forget to attend the [Symposium Presentation on Sunday, August 30th](#) at the 9:45am Sunday School hour in the MPR! You'll hear about the symposium itself, the classes, seminars, and connections we made as representatives of both First UMC and our country.



COMING UP IN SEPTEMBER...

Chicken BBQ – Save the Date! The Chicken BBQ is BACK!
Saturday, September 26th More details to come!

STAINED GLASS CLASS

"There are two harp stain glass windows at first church. The first one is located on the first floor the 5th window from the Frederick Street entrance. The other is located in room 201, the Pastor's office.

The harp (in Hebrew Kinnor) is the national instrument of the Hebrews. Some think that the word "kinnor" denotes a whole class of string instruments. Genesis 4: 21 states that Jubal invented the harp. In Solomon's time, harps were made of almug-trees (1 Kings 10:11-12).

"The Harp"



The harp is mentioned throughout the bible. While used in both mourning and celebration, the harp appears in more celebratory times. The harp was often used as an accompaniment to songs of cheerfulness and praises to God (see Psalm 150: 3). Harps and harpists were assigned to play as part of worship to God (1 Chronicles 15: 10-21, 16:5 and 25:3, 6).

We cannot think about the harp and its soothing effect without associating it with David. When King Saul was afflicted with an evil spirit, David was brought into King Saul's court for a period of time to play his harp to sooth Saul (1 Samuel 16: 14-21).

The New Testament has references to the harp as well. In Revelation 24: 8-9 the 24 elders sing a new song of praise accompanied by harps. Golden harps appear in the heavenly visions in Revelation 5:8, 14:2, and 15:2. The golden quality suggests the brilliance of light. "

MISSION MOMENT:



Mission Central first opened in 2002 as the mission outreach project of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church. Mission Central's mission is "Connecting God's Resources with Human Need." This is accomplished by following three areas of focus...Mission Outreach, Mission Education and Disaster Response. By partnering with over 180 different organizations, Mission Central provides resources to groups who are doing humanitarian work locally, across the country and around the world. Additionally, Mission Central stands ready to respond to all weather-related disasters or emergencies that occur.

In 2025 alone:

- **8.8 million people helped**
- **\$23.3 million in resources distributed**
- **30,000+ humanitarian aid kits shared**
- **\$2.3 million in free medical equipment**

There are many ways to get involved, such as collecting or assembling Care Kits, Blessing Kits or Activity Kits, verifying cleaning buckets, and warehouse work, just to name a few.

Thank you to everyone who made donations to Mission Central for Venezuela relief throughout July.

Mission Central is located at 5 Pleasant View Drive, Mechanicsburg.

Contact Lori or Joe Holtzinger, or First Church representatives for more information or visit the website at missioncentral.org.

FIRST CHURCH YOUTH

Summer Calendar:

Reach out to Lisa Aronson, discipleship@fumchurch.com, for a summer calendar.

Stay Connected:

Text fumyouthministry to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications. Make sure to save the number as a contact to ensure you don't miss any messages.

Our "Sunday Evenings" will kick off at the end of August, and we would love to see you then! Stay tuned for more information and make sure you are signed up to receive our text communications. Students 6th-12th grade keep your Sunday evenings free to join us for a time of learning, growing, food, and fun!

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 discipleship@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-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)

Youth Week of Service

Thanks to all those who participated in our week of service! Despite the heat, this group came together and worked hard to help an amazing ministry and support our neighbors across the river. Our youth group helped to clear trash and clean up alleys in Allison Hill alongside Wild Heart Ministry on Monday and Tuesday. On Thursday, our group consisted of kids, students, and adults and together helped beautify a block in the city by weeding and picking up trash. Wild Hearts is an amazing ministry helping the people of Allison Hill clean up their neighborhood. They are in their 10th year and have cleaned up 3.5 million pounds of trash! Watch for future church service opportunities to serve with Wild Heart and their Love the Hill projects.



First Church uses [Church Center](#) as a platform for sharing information and registrations for events. Church Center can be accessed on both desktops and mobile devices, and will prompt you to create an account to log in. This platform can also be used for electronic giving, registrations, and to access our directory.

How do I learn about events and opportunities?

- The "Signups" option on Church Center is not just for signing up for events. It is the space where you can find information about any and all upcoming events and opportunities (even ones that do not require registration).
- On the app: Choose the "signup" image along the bottom. Click on any box that interests you. Scroll down to see all happenings or use the drop-down bar at the top to filter the category you are interested in seeing.
- On a web browser: Click on "Signups" along the top options. Click on any box that interests you. Scroll down to see all happenings or use the drop-down bar at the top to filter the category you are interested in seeing.

If the event box you are looking at requires registration, a blue/green register button will be visible. Some event boxes only share information regarding the event, and some will include links for signups or information that is outside of Church Center.

CHURCH STAFF:

Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Lew Parks
717-766-4611 ext. 103
pastorlew@fumchurch.com

Facilities Coordinator:

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

**Director of Office Management &
Communications:**

Kelsey Goll
717-766-4611, ext.105
communications@fumchurch.com

Custodian:

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

Director of Administration & Outreach:

Lori Hoffnagle
717-766-4611
outreach@fumchurch.com

Director of Worship Arts:

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

Sounds of Worship Director:

Flossie Ryder
missflossie42@gmail.com

Youth Worship Director:

Allison Shield
allisonometz1@msn.com

Director of Youth & Adult Discipleship:

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

Director of Little Friends Preschool:

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

Director of Congregational Care:

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

Director of Bell Choirs:

Kathie Bittenbender
rbittenben@verizon.net

Director of Children and Family Ministry:

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

Timeless Connections:

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

Director of Finance:

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

Organist/Accompanist:

Brandon Rhody



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



Marty Coover.....August 1
Paula Bergstrasser.....August 3
Barry Adams.....August 5
Carl Hutchison.....August 8
Joan Maybee.....August 10
Pauline Trace..... August 12
Al Maybee.....August 14
Jerry Sheely.....August 18
Kay Coldren.....August 25
Jo Barth.....August 27
Dean Otto.....August 31

Sally Kauffman.....September 8
Pat Sheely.....September 11
Judith Brown.....September 14
Joan Stokes.....September 19
Marty Otto.....September 20
Marley Ann Schmick....September 21
Gary Klinger.....September 22
Ralph Harkins.....September 25
Dr. Curt Bonser.....September 26



Please Note:

We apologize that we missed two special birthdays!

Beryl Morgan June 30th and Mary Jo Skoglund July 19.

If by chance we overlooked your special birthday as well, please notify the church office. Thank you!

**HAPPY
ANNIVERSARY**



- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Fred Junkins married 60 years August 9, 1966.
- ♥ Dr. and Mrs. Curt Bonser married 63 years August 17, 1963.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Allan Maybee married 61 years August 21, 1965.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Harry Woods married 73 years August 23, 1953.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Joesph Semanko married 51 years August 23, 1975.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Sheely married 68 years August 24, 1958.

FIRST NEWS FIRST
EDITORS: Kelsey Goll

**The deadline for submitting articles for the
SEPTEMBER 2026 issue is August 15. Early
submissions always appreciated!**