First United Methodist Church
MECHANICSBURG, PA

First News First

From the Pastor's Desk.....

For All the Saints Who from their Labors Rest

There are many ways to stay connected with the dead, some of them healthy, some of them not so much. One of the healthiest is this: to release them irreversibly to God, to intentionally remember them in God, and to anticipate the day when in the words of one of our funeral service prayers, God will "bring us at last with them" into the joy of God's eternal home.

To release them irreversibly. The Bible sets firm boundaries between the living and the dead. It's there in the ritual laws about careful and limited contact. It's there in the dark story of King Saul in desperation consulting a medium (1 Samuel 28:3-20). In our series, Things that Go Bump in the Dark, the perfect "thing" to explore these themes is the folklore of Zombies, and we'll do that this Sunday. God intends for us to live life forward. In the breakthrough words of David who ends his season of mourning for a lost infant son: "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Sam 12:23).

To intentionally remember them in God. To remember them gently, yes of course. To remember them nostalgically as we will with the stories we tell around the Thanksgiving table. But also, to remember them "in God". One our committal prayers asks God to acknowledge, "a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming". Earlier in my ministry I played with the idea of omitting that last phrase as too harsh. The older I get, the more I see the damage that occurs when truth gets smothered by false memories. In the end we are all saved by an amazing grace and best remembered under that cover.

To anticipate the day. All Saints is one of my favorite Sundays. It invites me to invoke the memories of those who have had indelible impact on my life: relatives, preachers, teachers, colleagues, friends. Each year there are new names; the experience becomes deeper. But also, each year All Saints invites me to imagine the reunion when God will "bring us at last with them" into an eternal home. "Eye has not seen." What further surprises await?

I hope you will be able to join us in person or online at 8:30a or 11:00a Sunday as we worship God on this All Saints Sunday morning.

Yours in the Journey,
Pastor Lew



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Lifelong Learner

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.

Sunday Morning Enrichment | Sunday Mornings | 9:45-10:45am
As summer comes to a close, our Sunday School classes will resume towards the end of August and kick off by September 20th! This is a wonderful opportunity to find consistency and accountability in your faith journey while studying God's Word. Here is a 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.

Fall Study: Short Stories of Jesus by Amy-Jill Levine
This video study explores the parables of Jesus in the NT by taking readers back in time to understand how their original Jewish audience understood them. Levine reveals the parables' connections to first-century economic and agricultural life, social customs and morality, Jewish scriptures and Roman culture.

- **Christian Fellowship, Room B003**

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

Fall Study: *Awe of God* by John Bevere
In this video study, John Bevere invites you to take a fresh look at what it means to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. This healthy, holy, and largely forgotten virtue is the uncommon path to a more fulfilled and fruitful spiritual life.

- **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.

Fall Study: Cokesbury Adult Bible Study
This quarter's theme: "Faith and Faithfulness"
What does it truly mean to live by faith? And how do we remain faithful when life makes that difficult? This study explores the book of Hebrews and OT prophets and the relationship between faith and faithfulness, two foundational traits of the Christian life, and how together they shape the way we walk with God.

- **Guyer Class, Room 105 *NEW LOCATION**

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.

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- **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-- Next meeting: Nov. 3rd
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: Nov 3rd
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.

- **Short-Term Class Offering: The Bible Simplified, Room 123**

This video-based series by Zac Windahl, led by Lisa Aronson, offers participants a chance to gain an overall understanding of the Bible. When read in chunks or maybe only read when listening at church, the Bible might seem daunting or confusing. Yet, this literary masterpiece is a gift from God and well worth exploring! This 8-week class, beginning on September 20th, will help you go from feeling lost in Scripture to making Scripture clear, accessible, and life-changing so you can gain confidence in your faith. Open to high school students and beyond. Sign up on Church Center or at the Registration Table. For questions, contact Lisa Aronson discipleship@fumchurch.com

Small Groups:
There are Small Groups that regularly meet during the year 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.

Current Small Group Offerings:

- **Faith in Everyday Life**
  A group for adults of all ages focused on fellowship and friendship/mutual support in and outside the classroom. Contact: Amy at amyerno@gmail.com.

- **Faithful Families**
  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. Contact: Bob and Tracy Wertz at wertzfive@gmail.com

Interested in starting a small group?
Reach out to Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com to discuss ideas and options for how to gather people together for intentional connection, support, and faith growth.

CAMPING EXPANSION PROJECT - Building the Future of Sacred Space
After years of prayerful planning and a renewed vision, the Conference Camping and Retreat Ministry Committee has entered an exciting season of investment and growth. A consolidation of resources, honoring the legacy of Mount Asbury and Greene Hills, through the expansion of camp and retreat ministries by enhancing facilities and programs to serve the present and future generations at Camp Penn and Wesley Forest.
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WHY THIS INVESTMENT?
Camp sites are more than just facilities - they are sacred spaces where all can experience the life-changing love of Jesus. To ensure these spaces remain safe, modern, and welcoming for generations to come, the committee has launched a five-year journey of:
- **FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS** - Enhancing the grounds to better serve every camper and guest.
- **NEW PROGRAMMING** - Developing fresh ways to engage and inspire.
- **EXPANDED OUTREACH** - Sharing God's love with new communities.

JOIN THE JOURNEY
The Expansion Project is about more than construction. Through prayer, partnership, and generosity, this journey is creating spaces where faith is nurtured, friendship is formed, leaders are developed, and lives are transformed. You are invited to part of this growth to build a foundation for a **fun, safe, and spiritually vibrant future.**

Please reach out to Steve Noss for any questions or more information! sdppp@msn.com

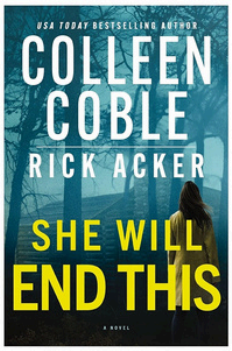


FROM THE LIBRARY....

With a bit of chill in the air, I am ready to think about fall. Before the holiday season is upon us, it is a great time for reading, and I have some books you won't want to miss.



Many of you have enjoyed Tessa Afshar books bringing to life the stories of Queen Esther's Court. **The Palace Spy** is the latest in the series with **The Royal Artisan** and **The Queen's Cook** coming before. Though all of these books are fiction and there is not a mention of any of these stories in the Bible, it is not a stretch to believe that Queen Esther might not have been popular with all the king's subjects. Being chosen from a large group of women who wanted the king's attention and also being a Jew would be reason enough for her life to be in danger. The story opens with Danna, a homeless girl after the death of her master, saving Esther when her horse runs away with her. Esther then secretly employs Danna to uncover the plot to kill her. Esther also brings a friend from her past to work with Danna. Allon would be content to be a simple farmer, but he can not turn down his queen's request of help. Find out how this trilogy ends and if Danna and Allon live to solve the puzzle.



Another familiar author in the library is Colleen Coble, best known for her mysteries. **She Will End This** is a twisty and tangled romantic thriller that will keep you reading well past your bedtime. Britt Olsen is a true crime writer who discovers the father she has known all her life is not her biological father and in fact her real father is a disgraced Mossad assassin. Yikes!! And if that was not enough, she discovers her mother was a CIA agent. But before she can address her own problems, the president's five-year-old granddaughter, Willow is kidnapped. Britt joins FBI Special Agent Stein Nordahl to find the child. Forced to trek through the Pacific Northwest and face many deadly situations, they are still determined to save the child no matter what. Britt realizes she must put her own problems aside and concentrate on staying alive. Stein's personal vendetta against the man who killed his father must also be shelved for the time being. But can there be a person that connects these three people together? I won't spoil the mystery for you–hope you like it.

If neither of these two books is right for you, stop in and check out other new books on the shelf. A volunteer is on duty on Sunday mornings to help you select just the right book for you. Our puzzle exchange is always active and we receive different puzzles almost every week.

See you in the library!
Deb, Kathy, Mary, Marge, Pam, Annette, and Donna



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. We have a prayer room, and it's a perfect place of quiet where you can sit with God. 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). We welcome you to visit the space and use it for your place of prayer.



Joy in the Morning | A small group invitation, November 16 at 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 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 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.

Mission Presentation: CRU – Matt and LeAnn Herring | November 8th | 9:45-10:45 AM
Join us in the Multipurpose Room during the Sunday school hour to hear from Matt and LeAnn Herring on their current ministry experiences with college students. Matt and LeAnn are two of First Church's supported missionaries, and it is a joy to hear about their work in the mission field.

Growing Together – Sunday November 15th | 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 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.

Passionate Worshipper

Home Communion
We offer home communion approximately every other month to anyone who may be unable to attend worship in-person to receive the Lord's Supper. If you would like to receive communion at home, or have someone to suggest for home communion, please contact Janice Bowen (717-766-4611 x 112 or wecare@fumchurch.com)

Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry| How to Volunteer - Next Opportunity is Nov. 18
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, November 18, 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.

Holiday Harmony Concert | Dec. 6th
Celebrate the season with our Holiday Harmony Concert! The fourth concert in the 2026 Concert Series will take place on Sunday, December 6 at 7pm in the sanctuary. Come enjoy a collection of group numbers, solos, duets, readings, lessons and carols concert by our First UMC music and worship ensembles. Light refreshments will follow afterwards.

Sermon Series Bible Reading:
Enhance your experience with the sermon series by following along with the daily bible reading plan. Bible reading plans are found typically in the bulletin but also under the "Daily Reading Plans" on the Church website under the "resources" tab.

Advent Devotional Books:
Grab a free Advent Devotional in the main lobby before the start of Advent (November 29). Books will be available mid-November and are a great way to ready your hearts for the Christmas season. Consider a friend or neighbor whom you could invite to read with you and pick one up for them too.

Save the Dates: As you are planning your schedule for this fall/end of year, please keep in mind these dates:
Youth Retreat – December 4-6, 2026
Zeteo (Sn'L High School Event) – January 29-31, 2027
Women's Retreat – January 29-31, 2027

Dedicated Missionary

First Church Service Shirts - Do you have a First Church service shirt? Contact Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com to order a shirt. 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.

Coffee Ministry
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?
Join the team that helps make Sunday morning coffee possible. Sign up for the Sundays you are available; even just one weekend every several months can be a huge help! Sign up on Church Center or at https://www.timetosignup.com/fumchurch/sheet/1363471

Christmas Decorating | Nov. 23 & 24, 9:30am
It's almost that time! We will be decorating the church for the Christmas season on Monday, Nov. 23 and Tuesday, Nov 24. If interested in helping, please show up at 9:30am, or you can reach out to the office with any questions. Due to safety concerns this is adult only. Thank you!

Relationship Builder



FUMC Pickleball Tuesday 5-7 pm (earlybird start at 4:30 for those interested)
Join us for Pickleball in the church gym Tuesday evenings! We also periodically play outdoors at Mechanicsburg's Memorial Park when the weather suits. 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 | Nov 7th 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 | November 14, 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.

College Connection
Help us gather addresses for our post-high school students. In an effort to send a fall care package to our college and post-high school students, Lisa Aronson is gathering addresses. Regardless of whether addresses are the same or changed from last semester, please email Lisa at discipleship@fumchurch.com with an accurate fall address. Join us at Growing Together in October when we will work together to assemble our college care boxes.

Monthly Ladies Night | Third Mondays September-May | 6-8 p.m.



Join us for our Monthly Ladies Night hosted by the Women's Ministry of First UMC (previously known as Mom Connection). Our goal for this ministry is to be a gathering of women from all stages of life. Women of all stages of life (single, mom (of...), empty nester, grandma, young adult, etc) are invited to a once a month evening of friendship, support, and guidance. We meet together for a meal, learning, conversation and prayer in the hopes of creating connections and cultivating community. Sign up on Church Center or contact Katie Knorr at kidscount@fumchurch.com or Lisa Arsonson at discipleship@fumchurch.com for more info!

Women's Retreat | January 29-31, 2027



Our 2027 Women's Retreat will be held at Rhodes Grove Retreat Center, 7693 Browns Mill Road, Chambersburg. We are pleased to announce that Lisa Aronson will be leading our retreat. Join us for a weekend filled with fellowship, fun, food and faith! Program starts on Friday evening and concludes on Sunday before noon. Hotel-like accommodations and 4 meals are included. We continue to offer a One-Day option (lunch and dinner included)! You will find the registration form at the end of this newsletter, the sign-up table in the church lobby (outside the multipurpose room), on the Church Center App or send an email to Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com. All women are welcome!

Senior Solo's Fellowship

The Single Solo's fellowship will dine at Olive Garden on Tuesday, November 10th at 11:30 a.m.
If you plan on attending, please call Bonnie Guyer at 717-766-0145. Transportation can be provided upon request

Save the Date: Family Christmas Event- Sat. Dec. 5th 9-11am
Joy Jam: Family Christmas Event | Registration opens Nov 8th

Looking for something exciting for the entire family to do this Christmas? Don't miss The Joy Jam Family Christmas Event! Join us for an unforgettable Christmas Experience complete with fun, games, and music! Invite your friends, family, and neighbors for a morning filled with joy celebrating the best gift at Christmas: Jesus! This free event is for kids and families to participate all together, this is not a drop-off event. Registration opens Nov. 8th!

We are looking for people to help us with greeter, giving out snacks, and running craft/game stations. You can register online or email Katie Knorr, Director of Children and Family Ministry at kidscount@fumchurch.com.



Generous Giver

2026 Budgeted Income $811,683
2026 Budgeted Expenses $846,822 ($35,139 deficit / greater expenses than income)
Expected Income YTD $541,122 (75% of budget)
Actual Income YTD $622,261 (+2% ahead of budget/expected)
Actual Expenses $604,283 (-4% under budgeted/expected expenses)

General Fund Update

Through the month of September the Church's general fund is doing better than we had anticipated, about 2% better in income than anticipated and with expenses 4% lower than expected at this point in the year. Thank you all for your continued giving in service of the ministries of our Church! Thanks to a generous gift from a family we were able to pay off the remaining parsonage loan with the Conference. First Church is debt free!

Special Giving / Estate Planning / Memorials

If you are feeling led toward a larger gift, pease 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 accounts.



Consecration Sunday: Sunday, November 8th

There is much to be grateful for at First Church! We are riding a wave of renewed energy and vitality in our ministries, made possible through the faithful generosity and commitment of our congregation.
As Consecration Sunday approaches, we invite you to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to support the life and ministry of First Church in 2027 through your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Together, we can continue building on this momentum, strengthening our ministries, and expanding our impact in the community.
Thank you for the many ways you help make our shared ministry possible!

Community Aid Cart

Thank you for placing your donated items in the Community Aid Cart located just inside the Main Entrance doors. Please remember, **Clothing and Shoes only** are accepted in the cart. Community Aid is now giving us credit for your other items when you drop them off at the store on the Carlisle Pike. Just give our partner number #10113 and they will give us credit for your donation. If you have any questions about your donation, contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

Supporting Northside Elementary Weekend Food Program

First Church is excited to partner with New Hope Ministries to support the students at Northside Elementary by bagging food for the Weekend Youth Food Program on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month.Volunteers will put together food bags for the students from 10:00 am to 11:15 am at New Hope Ministries, 5228 E. Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg. Volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application through New Hope Ministries. All the details and registration can be found on our Time to Sign up at ttsu.me/mwrbwe. Thanks for helping us to bless the students at Northside Elementary!



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. Thank you for your continued support!



Little Free Pantry – Cereal Needed!
Thanks so much for your continued support of the Little Free Pantry through your food and monetary contributions. We 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. We would appreciate cereal donations, as our supply is very low. Questions about the Little Free Pantry, contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com. Watch for the Reverse Advent Collection to happen in December!

United Women in Faith Baked Good Giveaway, November 1
Support the United Women in Faith World Thank Offering on Sunday, November 1 with your sweet tooth! Stop by the table, near 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." 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.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle – Go Green!
We are now recycling the following items to keep them from landfills!

- Pens
- Pencils
- Colored Pencils
- Crayons
- Markers
- Highlighters
- Glue Sticks

No need to separate the items, just place in the marked bins at the Donation Station located near the Alley Entrance. Thanks for helping us to care for our environment!

Broad Street Cooking and Caring for Families | Thursday, November 12
First Church will once again be partnering with other community churches to cook and serve a meal for Broad Street Elementary families on Thursday, November 12 at 5:00 p.m. First Church will be providing the BBQ and volunteers. First Church is responsible for 70 pounds of BBQ (the amount is increased due to more people attending the meal) using a simple recipe provided by the school (see below).We plan to serve over 300 for dinner and provide take-home meals to families unable to attend. Please consider making a 5 lb. batch of BBQ or more for the families at Broad Street. Questions or if you can provide BBQ, please contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com.

- 5 lbs. Ground Beef (80% lean or higher, please only use beef)
- 1/2 cup White Vinegar
- 1/2 cup Brown Sugar
- 3 and 3/4 cups Ketchup
- 1/4 cup Mustard

Cook beef and drain fat, mix in other ingredients and heat thoroughly. Thanks for cooking and caring for our community! Details will be sent out as to where and when you can drop off your BBQ donation, thanks!

Cookie Walk | Dec. 12th

Calling all Bakers! It's time for the annual Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser, the Cookie Walk! This year we will be having our annual cookie walk on Dec 12th. This event has become popular in part because of wonderful bakers like you! Try out a new recipe or stick to Grandma's secret recipe. Anything will do! To have enough cookies, we ask bakers to provide 4-5 batches (8-10 dozen) per style of homemade cookie. Fill out the form below (and place it at the display in the main lobby) or sign up on Church Center. Don't forget, cookies freeze well, so you can even start baking today.

Please help us continue this tradition and raise money for the youth mission trip. Any questions please email Lynn Rapp at minion.youth17@gmail.com. Cookies need to be at the church no later than 7:00 A.M. on December 12th. They can be placed in the church kitchen before the walk labeled as "COOKIE WALK." If baking 4-5 batches is too much, please still reach out – we would love to have what you can make.

Please select 2 types of cookies. We will contact you with the type we need most.

Name:_____ **Email:** _____

Phone:_____

Cookie type 1:_____

Cookie type 2:_____

Would you be willing to make both types? Yes No

Ringing in the News!

Back for the fall, the handbell choir is selling

homemade pies!



All pies are $14.

Orders are due by **Sunday, November 15.**

Pick-up will be **Saturday, November 21** from 12-2pm in Fellowship Hall.

**Please note: Payment is due before pick-up or at the time of pick-up on the 21st. If you are paying on the 21st, we can accept cash or check made payable to First UMC.*

You can order pies on the sign-up sheets at the church, through a handbell member, or on Church Center using the link below:
https://fumchurch.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3950237



Pies available to purchase are:

- **Pumpkin** (comes already baked)
- **Mincemeat** - baked or "freeze and you bake"
- **Apple** - your choice of double crust topping or crumb topping; comes baked or "freeze and you bake"

Support Operation Christmas Child



There is **STILL TIME** to fill 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 table 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 22 (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:** This local non-profit that serves as a one-stop-shop location to purchase items for your shoebox. 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. (Checks can be written with the memo: Operation Christmas Child).
- **Processing Center:** Consider gathering a group of friends and volunteering at the processing center in Baltimore, MD. See all the work that goes into ensuring that boxes are ready to be sent to the children who will receive them. Learn about volunteering here: https://www.occvolunteersignup.com/

FIRST CHURCH YOUTH

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.

To join the following text groups, please do the following:

- To join the Youth Ministry Text thread (students and/or parents of students 6th-12th grade), please text fumyouthministry to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications.

- To join the Small Group Text thread (our 2nd Sunday of the month gathering for students 4th -12th grade), please text 2ndSunday to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications.
- To join the Post-High School/College Text thread (any student wishing to stay connected to church happenings/reunion events after high school), please text whatsnext to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications.
- To join the Parents Only Text thread (for parents of 6th-12th graders), please text parents to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications.

(If a message is being sent to multiply text threads, due to its relevance for each group, please know that you will only receive one message, not multiple for each group you are sign up under.)

If you wish to be manually added or removed from any list please reach out to Lisa Aronson at Discipleship@fumchurch.com

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
Come and hear more about what this group is and enjoy a night together as a family.
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

Save The Date! Youth Retreat – December 4-6th
Students in 6th - 12th grade are invited to join us for a weekend youth retreat. This fun-filled weekend will be held at Bongiorno Conference Center. Register on Church Center and reach out to Lisa Aronson with any questions.



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.

What is Church Center?

It is a mobile app and web interface for congregations to give, register for events, join groups, update profiles, and stay connected. Here at First Church, you will hear it said, "find more information on Church Center" or "Sign up on Church Center." While there are different ways to get information and to register for events, we hope you will find Church Center as a convenient tool to help you stay connected.

Find First Church on Church Center:

Many different churches use this platform, so connecting to First Church's Church Center is your first step in using this app/web browser. You can do this several ways:

- Use the link/QR code that directly connects to First Church's Church Center
  https://fumchurch.churchcenter.com
- Search for First Church by name or zip code.

If using Church Center for the first time, you may be prompted on a mobile device to download the App. The Church Center App can be downloaded from the App Store or on Google Play. Once downloaded, choose "Get started' and then search for "First United Methodist Church."



Rhodes Grove Retreat Center, 7693 Browns Mill Road, Chambersburg
Program starts Friday evening at 7:00pm and concludes on Sunday before noon.
Hotel-like accommodations and 4 meals included.
One Day Saturday Option Available! (Arrive at 8:30 am, 2 meals included)
Registration and more details also available on our Church Center App

Please return registration with payment (payable to FUMC)
Name_____ Address_____
Phone_____Email_____
Medications:_____Emergency Contact_____
Allergies or Diet Restrictions_____
Send payment to Lisa Aronson, 135 W. Simpson Street, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 **OR** via the Church Center Registration (link is available on the app).
Early Bird Registration due by 12/13/2026 is $175. After that date, fee will be $185. **All registrations due by 01/10/2027**. Financial assistance available upon request, contact Lisa Aronson.

All Women Welcome!

_____Full weekend early bird payment enclosed $175
_____Full weekend payment enclosed (if paying after 12/13) $185
_____One Day (Saturday) payment enclosed $55
Is this your first retreat? Yes___No___ Any special concerns?_____
_____
**There is a limited number of individual beds per room, are you comfortable with sharing a queen-sized bed, if yes, please indicate that person:_____

Questions, contact Lisa Aronson, discipleship@fumchurch.com or 716-510-8948.

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Brandon Rhody

News and Notes....

**Due to the busyness at the end of December, next month we will release a combined December/January edition of "First News First". There will not be a separate January 2027 newsletter.*



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

Pat Bricker.....November 23
Patricia Marr.....November 23
Marlin Simmons.....November 23
Marlin Lehmer.....November 24
Jeanne Eakin-Miller.....November 26
Reeves Power.....November 27



Joyce Woods.....December 1
Don Mowrey.....December 8
Darlis Aumiller.....December 21
Sandy Coover.....December 28

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



- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Leon Bricker married 66 years November 19, 1960.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Don Coldren married 64 years November 24, 1962.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Robert Meck married 74 years November 25, 1952.

FIRST NEWS FIRST
EDITORS: Kelsey Goll

The deadline for submitting articles for the DEC/JAN 2026 issue is NOVEMBER 15. Early submissions always appreciated!