

The First Forecast of First United Methodist Church

200 East Third Street, Lewistown, PA 717-248-4618

Volume 25 No. 10

‘Words of Encouragement’

December 2017

Do you have a real close friend? Someone you can confide in and share your greatest joys and darkest struggles? If so, you are blessed.

The man in the photo is one of faith whom I happened to meet right here in First United Methodist Church. It was March of 2012 and we were being interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM). As I left my interview room on 2nd floor, I noticed him nervously standing by the stairwell and simply asked him how he was doing. He proceeded to explain that his interviews did not go well and he was a bit apprehensive about the voting outcome. His concern was warranted and the BOOM voted to hold him another year. He would experience the deepest rejection one can know within the ordination process. As we spoke, I encouraged and comforted him. I moved on to my next interview with little thought about our conversation.



I was unaware at the time how much comfort and care I offered Jim that day. He later would tell me my words and prayer were what held him up and encouraged him to appeal the decision of BOOM. He would go onto win that decision and we were then able to both be ordained in June of 2012.

One never knows how important words of encouragement are until we are the ones who need to hear them. If you don't have a friend and confidant, then do I have a great opportunity for you.

Coming in January 2018, we depart on a 11 week journey through the scriptures looking at some of the best mentoring relationships that are on display for us. We'll look at influential people of the Old and New Testaments and see how their relationships were used by God to further the mission of grace and Good News of the Gospel.

Jethro & Moses will begin our journey and we'll ultimately end with the question of our own personal friendships within our immediate circle of life.

Do you know someone in your family, place of employment, or recreation that might benefit from these sermons on building mentoring relationships? Invite them to join with you and invest time into this journey and perhaps the outcome might include stronger interpersonal skills for all of us. January 7th, 2018 (Epiphany Sunday) will begin our journey. Join me, won't you?



ADVENT KICK-OFF





The Advent season is one of wonder. It is a season of promise. The longer nights and the gray clouds seem to provide the perfect background for the lights and the tinsel. The decorations are everywhere we turn. For some this is a time of hopeful anticipation. But for many, Christmas is a harsh reminder of life that once was. So rather than hopeful anticipation, many experience a cloud of despair.

In times like this it is often helpful to carve out a time of quiet reflection, to shed tears, seek support, be reminded that you are not alone, and to give yourself permission to mourn. Whether this is the first Christmas without someone you love, or if you seem to be hurting from loss for as long as you remember you are invited to come to light candles of remembrance, partake in Communion, and receive a memorial gift at the The Blue Christmas Service, on Sunday, December 17, at 6:00 PM in the Sanctuary of First United Methodist Church, 200 East Third St., in Lewistown. A time of fellowship with Light Refreshments will follow the service.



Dear Brothers and Sister In Christ,



It is a natural thing for Christians to want to be around other Christians.

Something special happens in the fellowship of believers. We can worship freely, study deeply, and communicate clearly. Hanging out with like-minded people who (appear to) “have their stuff together” can be a wonderful thing. But how well are we engaging those who aren’t as spiritually stable as we (think we) are? It is fascinating that a number of Christians don’t seem to like non-Christians; otherwise known as “the lost,” “the unchurched,” and many similar terms. Believers often want to keep away from the messy people perhaps missing the obvious that we are messy as well.

It is kind of interesting that after coming to Christ and growing in knowledge, we often end up distancing ourselves from some of our former friends. And then, as we begin to grow in spiritual maturity, we find that we have less and less time for the hurting and struggling. We have found the one thing that meets the need in our lives, but we keep our distance from those who need the very thing we’ve found. This separation is not intentional, but it does happen, and in the end, our intentions don’t matter. Our needs get met and we move on, oblivious to a world that is falling apart all around us. That is not the way of Christ.

Jesus lived differently. One of the common criticisms Jesus faced was that He spent too much time with sinners. He associated with the unwelcomed and unappreciated of society. How many of us could be accused of spending too much time with the “riff raff?” It wasn’t that Jesus was waiting for Paul to write, “Bad company corrupts good morals” in 1 Corinthians. No one better understood the importance of spiritual maturity, Scriptural knowledge, a robust prayer life, and positive influences than Jesus. But He also knew that these things were not just for His personal benefit. These disciplines and lifestyle choices need to be shared with those who are lost. The Christian life is not about finding

safety and comfort; it's about finding yourself in a dangerous place of vulnerable compassion.

Personally, I came from a dysfunctional family—I could list our issues, but that is not my point. One day, I was talking with my youngest daughter about the dysfunction I experienced growing up. That kind of life is hard for her to imagine because of how our family works today. Though we have our own issues, we just don't have the same kind of dysfunction I had growing up. She asked why some families grow together and fall into dysfunction. I told her there are several factors that determine personal and family stability, but in our case, we were changed by the power of the gospel. But in talking about that, I was struck by the fact that having grown up in a broken home, I know what it looks like to be in the mess of day-to-day living. But my daughter has little awareness of the pain of a broken family. I praise God they don't have to deal with some of the problems that come through such brokenness. But I think my daughters may, in a sense, be representative of what many Christians have experienced—they don't know what it's like.

The Christian life is not about finding safety and comfort. Many Christians are “generational believers,” as they have grown up in a Christian home. That is their reality, but there is a bigger reality. Sometimes we can easily forget there's a hurting world out there. We drive through it on the way to church, or on the way to work. But at the end of the day, we don't come to terms with the vast brokenness that surrounds us. Sometimes the hurting make their way into the pews and, by grace and through faith, respond to the good news of salvation. But all too often, the only connections Christians have with broken people are made outside of church.

That's why I love to hear a pastor say, “You know, we're going to be a church that cares about the hurting and serves those in need, showing the love of Christ to the lost.” The true test of our maturity is not measured in how much we leave behind, but how much we love. I'm struck by the fact that Jesus talks about His ministry in two ways. In Luke 4:18, He says, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me.” He goes on to talk about preaching the good news to the poor and the captive. In fact, this type of ministry was a sign that He was the Messiah.

Prophecy was being fulfilled as He showed kindness to those who were hurting. Throughout Scripture we see the work of Christ among the widows, the blind, the broken—whoever had a need. Jesus served with compassion. In Luke 19:10 He says He came to seek and save the lost. And the same Jesus who came to serve and to save then says to us in John 20:21, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” The true test of our maturity is not measured in how much we leave behind, but how much we love. We have been sent by Jesus to join Him in His mission. He came to serve and to save, then so must we. We are to serve others in His name, and we are to share the good news of salvation so that people might trust in Jesus’ work on the cross—His death in our place, for our sin. Serving and saving were marks of Christ's life on earth. They should be marks of His people as well. But to do that, we must engage the broken and hurting people around us. I want to be a part of a church where broken people are welcome—a church where perfect people aren’t allowed, a place where people can embark on this journey without having everything figured out from the start. That’s hard. But it’s what we were called to be. A church without the broken is a broken church. How does your church engage the hurting? What have you done in your own life to avoid insulating yourself from the brokenness around you? Are we so concerned about how people view us that we’ll never be accused of spending too much time with sinners?

Blessings

In Christ’s love and grace

Love, Heidi





Dear FUMC Family,

Thank you so much for all of your generosity, support and help with the Coat Drive Mission. We were able to bless 80 people with coats! We also blessed a few families with gift cards to Sheetz and Weiss, as well as with a basket of food, a basket of cleaning supplies or a basket of supplies for a family movie and snack night! It was a real joy to watch as we blessed so many people.

Below are a few more missional opportunities. Please do not feel obligated, though, to give to any of these projects as you all have already been so generous, financially and physically!

The Youth Meals are being cooked by Randy Snyder, and Tandi Lauver is helping with preparation, setting up, and cleaning up meals. We are in need of gift cards to Giant or monetary donations to provide the groceries for these meals!

We could use some adult volunteers to help with Youth Events and Youth Outings! Currently Jen Lynch, Beth Renninger, and a mom of two teens that are coming to youth group are volunteering on Wednesday evenings.

The family we are adopting for Christmas from the Coat Drive Registration is the Harris Family! They have 7 kids!

- 1.) twelve year old girl
- 2.) eleven year old girl

- 3.) eleven year old boy
- 4.) ten year old girl
- 5.) seven year old girl
- 6.) 4 year old girl
- 7.) 2 year old girl

The Youth Group will take charge of this project. They are accepting monetary donations to go towards a family cleaning supplies basket, a family food basket and \$50.00 gift card to Giant or Weiss, Family DVD's, a small throw size blanket for each kid and one adult throw size blanket, pop corn, hot chocolate, marshmallow fluff, candy for a family movie and snack night, and stocking stuffers.

You can donate money, choose to do one of the baskets, buy some stocking stuffers, just let Heidi know what you want to do if you want to do something for this project.

We will invite the family to our Christmas Eve Service and the gifts will be presented to them after the service.





Youth News

December

Sundays - Dec. 3, 10, 17 8:30 a.m. Breakfast & Music – 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School – No Sunday School program Christmas Eve

Giant Slayers at FUMC – Dec. 6, 13, 18,

December 15th & 16th – Youth Retreat

December 17th Children's Program & Blue Christmas

December 18th – Dinner at Highland & Christmas Caroling for Nursing Home and Shut Ins 5 pm – 7pm

(Youth Christmas Party Methodist and Highland Dec 17th – 7 pm – 8:30 p.m)

December 23rd - Communion at Kish Park 7 p.m.





Christmas Eve Schedule Reminder
Combined Morning Service 9:30
Candlelight Services Christmas
Eve at 7 PM and 11 PM. Join us
for these special services as we
celebrate Christ's birth.



Christmas Card Project

Please remember our Homebound members during the Christmas season by sending cards. Lists are @ the Welcome Center. Please place your cards in the alphabetized bags in the sanctuary overflow area. The cards need to be returned by the end of the 10:30 AM Sunday, Dec. 17th service, and we need volunteers to deliver the cards to our homebound members that afternoon. Contact Lisa Heckman @ 242-0001 for details and with any questions. Let's spread some Christmas joy!



Koinonia Women's Fellowship will enjoy a Christmas Pot-luck Dinner/Party @ Laura Buffington's home Tuesday, Dec. 5th, @ 6 PM. Bring a dish to share. If you have a Secret Sister, please bring a gift (approximately \$15 value) and card revealing who you are. If you don't have a Secret Sister, you may bring a gift (\$5 value) for the gift exchange game. (Secret Sisters may participate in both gift exchanges if desired)
Devotions/Blessing - Carol All women are invited to join us!



The pecans are here! Halves \$11/bag, Chocolate Covered \$8/bag. See Sam Caldwell after services or you may pick up pecans from the church office.



December 3

8:00/10:30 AM Worship
 9:10 Sunday School
 8:30 Youth Breakfast/Music
 9:30 Youth S.S.
 8:00 Liturgist: Karen
 10:30 Liturgist: Karen

December 10

8:00/10:30 AM Worship
 9:10 Sunday School
 8:30 Youth Breakfast/Music
 9:30 Youth S.S.
 8:00 Liturgist: TBS
 10:30 Liturgist: Gayle

December 17

8:00/10:30 AM Worship
 9:10 Sunday School
 8:00 Liturgist: TBS
 10:30 Liturgist: Gayle
 6 PM **Blue Christmas**

December 24

9:30 AM Combined Service

Liturgist: Karen
 7 PM/11 PM **Candlelight Service**

December 31

8:00/10:30 AM Worship
 9:10 Sunday School
 8:00 Liturgist: TBS
 10:30 Liturgist: Gayle

December S.S. Teachers

Nursery – TBS

Pre-School – K *Aleta Harpster*

Grades 1-2 *Bonnie Zannino*

Grades 3-5 *Tina Stoner*

Grades 6-9 *Tracie Hughes*

Grades 10-12 *TBS*



greeters

*Will be scheduled and
 announced in bulletin
 if available.*



Nursery Attendants

Dec 3 TBS

Dec 10 TBS

Dec 17 TBS

Dec 24 Sandy/Stacey

Dec 31 TBS



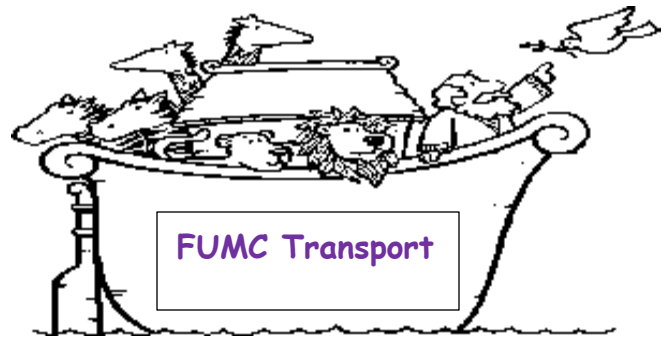
Junior Church

Bonnie/Julie



Kangaroo Kids

Bonnie/Julie



Transportation is available to the Sunday Worship Service. Contact the office to make arrangements.



MATTHEW 19:14

Children's Message

Dec 3 Bruce Buffington

Dec 10 Pastor Randy

Dec 17 Pastor Randy

Dec 24 Bonnie/Julie

Dec 31 Pastor Randy

Acolytes -

Justin Lynch

Serenity Garman

Tristan Hileman





In accordance with privacy policy @ Geisinger-Lewistown Hospital you need to inform Rev. Karen McCachren (248-1011 or 437-6023) or the church office if you are hospitalized and desire a visit.

Prayer Chain Line:

Call 248-8459 or 242-1655

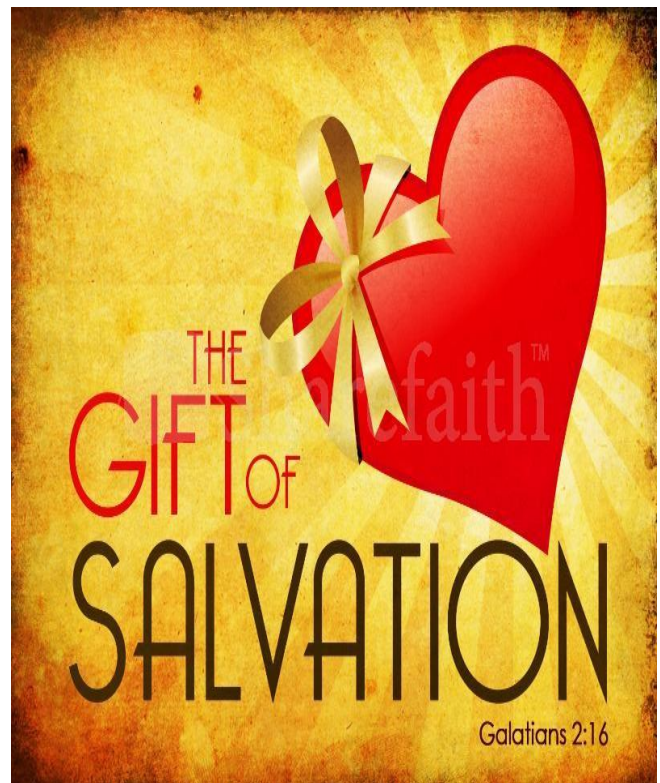
Open to anyone with a prayer request or anyone willing to pray for requests.

Purpose The prayer chain provides confidential intercessory prayer.

To request prayer or to become a praying member call:

Dave or Karen McCachren at 248-8459,
(kmccachren@comcast.net) or
Laura or Bruce Buffington @ 242-1655,
(lkbuff122@gmail.com)

*Our prayers for health and wholeness are shared with:
Vera Harpster, Lantz Heckman,
Bob and Wanda Walters, Phyllis Dickson, Kiera Shuttlesworth,
Nadine Bryan, Jill Bryan, and the family of Julia Butler.*



FUMC Finance and Attendance

Regular Offerings

Nov 5	\$6,759
Nov 12	\$6,497
Nov 19	\$4,330
Nov 26	\$5,701



Unpaid Bills - **\$0.00**

Attendance

Nov 5	157
Nov 12	168
Nov 19	136
Nov 26	146



The 2018 Boxed Offering Envelopes are at the Welcome Center. Please pick yours up soon. If you can't pick them up and would like them mailed please contact the church office @ 717-248-4618.



It is hard to think of
Easter before Christmas,
but so that you can plan
to help with Good Eggs
2018 here are some dates.



Thursday, Jan. 18th @ 10 AM kitchen/equipment cleaning.
Good Eggs work Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays.
Production begins Monday, Jan. 22nd, and continues through
Friday, March 16th.

Production begins @ 8 AM.

Sales begin Monday, Jan. 29th, and continue through Friday,
March 23rd, (unless eggs are all sold sooner.)

Sales are from 9 AM - 11:30 AM on Egg days.

More details coming in January.

- Dave





December

3. Krystan Hassinger
7. Helen Searer
8. Dot Berryman
9. June Taylor
9. Anne Becker
9. Jane Wagner
9. Denise Baumgardner
10. Judy Pennepacker
11. Betty Beckwith
15. Paige Havice
16. Al Hughes
18. Edd Burdge
18. R.B. Powell
20. Su Salvatore
20. Ken Baxter
28. Kody Hassinger
29. Bev Miller
30. Jarrett Kratzer
31. Dan Pierce



The Altar Flowers

December 3

The altar flowers are presented in loving memory of Roy Smith by wife and children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

December 10

The altar flowers are presented to the glory of God.

December 17

The flowers are presented to the glory of God.

December 24

Poinsettias adorn the sanctuary today.

December 31

The flowers are presented to the glory of God.

Please use the enclosed poinsettia order form to order flowers for Dec. 24th.

The 2018 Altar Flower Order Form will be available soon @ the Welcome Center. Call if you would like one mailed.





The deadline for ordering 2017 poinsettias is Friday, December 15th. Please make your check payable to the First United Methodist Church. The cost of poinsettias is \$9 per plant this year. Please copy the information section of this order form or pick up a copy @ the Welcome Center and mail or drop off at the church:

First United Methodist Church
200 E. Third St.
Lewistown, PA 17044.

A check must accompany the order form; please write **poinsettia** or **World Hunger** on the check memo line. Thanks!

In memory of _____
In honor of _____
Presented by _____
Name of person ordering _____
Telephone # _____
of plants _____
Will you pick up the poinsettias? _____yes _____no

The Christmas poinsettias are appreciated as they add to our worship experience.
We would appreciate as many as possible left through the Christmas services.
Deadline for picking up poinsettias is Wednesday, January 3, 2018.

In lieu of ordering a poinsettia, I wish to contribute to the World Hunger Fund.
_____ yes (Check only if you want to contribute to World Hunger)

***First U.M. Church Staff
Ministry Staff:***

Pastor: **Rev. Randy Hughes**

Pastor E-Mail: rhughes@susumc.org

Deacon of Caring Ministries: **Rev. Karen McCachren**

Deacon of Caring Ministries E-Mail: kmccachren@comcast.net

Education Director/Youth Leader: **Heidi Bracken**

Education Director E-Mail: heidi.bracken@gmail.com 724-516-5527

Outreach Coordinator: **Jen Lynch** responder1824@msn.com



Music Staff:

Choirs Director: Katie Becker

Organists: Dr. Fred Benner, Lauri Dulis, Richard Hamler

Support Staff:

Custodian: Joe Lingle

Office Manager: Rob Hagenberger

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Friday 7:00 AM - Noon

Phone: 717-248-4618 Fax: 717-242-4757

Email: fumc200@outlook.com

Website: <http://fumclewistown.org>

Facebook: *First United Methodist Church of Lewistown*



FUMC Worship Services Sunday morning @ 8 AM and 10:30 AM.

Sunday School @ 9:10 AM, Nursery Provided, Safe Sanctuaries

Compliant

***The Newsletter Deadline
is always the 15th
of each month!***



December 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12/3, 12/10, 12/17 8:30 Youth Breakfasts/Music 9:30 Youth S.S.					1 Ice Fest 4-6 PM Kiwanis Set-Up	2 7-1 Kiwanis Pancake Festival and SPRC Cookie Sale
3 8/10:30 Worship 9:10 S.S. 1 PM Gift Wrapping	4 7 PM Ray of Hope	5 6 PM Koinonia Christmas Potluck/Party @ Buffingtons'	6 10:30/7 Bible Study 5-7 Youth	7 6:30 Bells 7:30 Choir 8 AA	8	9
10 8:00/10:30 Worship 9:10 S.S.	11 7 PM Ray of Hope	12	13 10:30/7 Bible Study 5-7 Youth	14 6:30 Bells 7:30 Choir 8 AA	15	16
17 8/10:30 Worship 9:10 S.S. 6 PM Blue Christmas Service	18 7 PM Ray of Hope	19 7 PM Trustees	20 10:30/7 Bible Study 5-7 Youth	21 6:30 Bells 7:30 Choir 8 AA	22	23 7 PM Communion Service @ Kish Park
24 9:30 Combined 7 PM/11 PM Candlelight Services 	25 Christmas Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 10:30/7 Bible Study Noon-5 PM Red Cross Blood Drive 5-7 Youth	28 6:30 Bells 7:30 Choir 8 AA	29	30
31 8/10:30 Worship 9:10 S.S.						