



**Our Spire  
Volume 38  
October 2019  
Number 9**

**Reaching Up to God,  
Reaching Out to People**

**Pastor's Corner: GOD IN US: you've seen or heard God speak to you through someone in this church.**

I know this about Harford First Congregational-UCC. You do, too. We are gifted to hear from God through others. It's not just auditory, sometimes we see the joy of the Lord shining in someone's soul. That's a gift! Consider the face of someone you see whose soul is lit when they sing a certain hymn in church. Or how about when a ministry is done well by hardworking souls whose passion is so invested in what God has called them to do that your heart swells. Think about those who have spoken up in times of joy or in times of prayer. You hear the individual's voice; yes, they are speaking; but God's words are coming through them.

You have heard God, or a godly message, from someone in church. Maybe it is advice. Maybe it is a pat on the shoulder. Maybe it is smile, a laugh, or a touch of your hand. Maybe it is praise or a prayer. Maybe it is a tear in their eye because they feel your pain through your hard time.

God works His love in a myriad of ways. Some we see and understand. Others we cannot. **One way God works His love into His world is through the people of this church in Harford.**

It's true that we say things that should never be said. There are times we put our foot in our mouth, react rather than respond, or think of ourselves (or, actually, think *from* ourselves) rather than allowing God as the Holy Spirit to speak through us.

We can also hold to our agendas, not God's. Rather than stopping and listening to God at work in His church through other people, rather than seeing a possibility as a new ministry or a way to continue an existing one, God's church becomes our church. We know it's our church when how we think things should go trumps the Spirit of God at work in someone else.

God is never done creating new things, opportunities, and ways of learning about Him. Some of God's work in others is easy on us. "Yes," we think when we hear a spark from someone else. "That's a great idea!"

Other ways of learning about God aren't so easy—or obvious—to us. Sometimes we have to struggle in our love for others. God is at work in what others are saying, but it can be tough. We've been inflexible. We've even stayed away from church or from certain people because to let God move the way God wants His church to move challenges our thinking.

**But one of the joys in this congregationally-based United Church of Christ Church is our recognition of God at work in others and how God uses this congregation to work on us. This always comes through.**

Think about a time when someone greeted you before worship and you knew your being there mattered. Think about the banter and quips we have during worship. Think of the love shared when someone is hurting, or a love is lost. Think about the time someone looked at you and you knew they were seeing your soul, and the care for your soul comes through clearly. THAT'S GOD AT WORK IN THIS CONGREGATION THROUGH OTHERS, and it's amazing, sustaining, and life-giving.

*Dear Lord, thank you for those in this church who speak from You, and speak for You. Not every word we say to each other is perfect in Your plan. But as Your Son has forgiven us, let us forgive others. As Your Son welcomes lost sheep now home, let us reach for—and welcome—those who have been away, or whose feathers have been ruffled. And Lord, may we continue to be guided by You in what we say and in what we do, so that Your will is done, not ours. In the presence of the Holy Spirit, we, who hear and love You in Your church, say... AMEN.*

## COMING TO YOU OVER THE FOUR SUNDAYS IN OCTOBER:

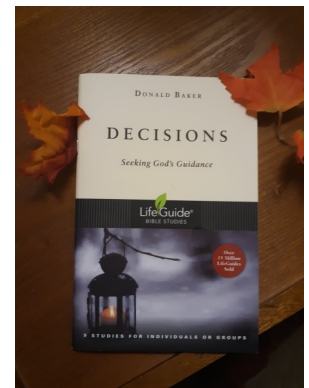
### Four different Sundays, Four different Bible studies, Four different Teachers

You can attend the same study each week, or explore as many as you feel called to do. Each study is independent. No prior “knowledge” is needed. The teachers have a heart and a passion to share God’s exciting, revealing, and life-changing Word with you!

The studies are glimpses into what may come and are planned to last 30-minutes. They follow a quick and easy lunch in the Lecture Hall. (The meals have been provided.) Each teacher has one week with each study in the hope that you experience the joy of small group Bible study.

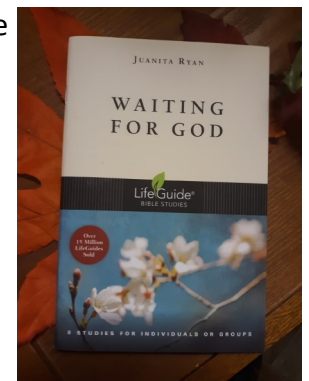
Your teachers are Paula Bailey, Bonnie Love-Colwell, Kay Gow and Pastor Will. Each week, the four will engage one of the four studies described below:

In ***Decisions: Seeking God’s Guidance***, author Donald Baker confesses that the studies he wrote on this topic happened when he was struggling with decisions concerning his future. He says, “While the Bible cannot give us the answer to every decision that we face, it does teach us how to make decisions. Prayer, study, the leading of the Holy Spirit, circumstances, seeking advice and common sense are all involved. Still there is no formula that works for every decision. [Instead], God shows us the way in his own time and by his mysterious methods.” He adds, “These Bible passages have been important to me as I have been knocking on God’s door.”



### ***Decisions* location: All four Sundays, Pastor’s Office**

In ***Waiting for God***, author Juanita Ryan shares a common experience, waiting in the midst of uncertainty, suffering, or great need. She shares, “During these times we may feel desperate for something to change or for a sign of hope that things will change soon. But often in our periods of waiting, nothing happens, nothing changes.” She continues, saying, “The following studies are designed to help you give voice to your distress and gain perspective on your fears in times of waiting, and to open your heart and mind to the One who is with you always.”



### ***Waiting* location: All for Sundays, the choir area in the sanctuary**



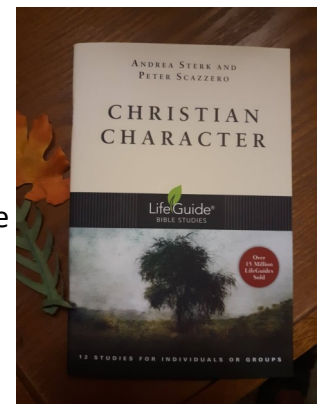
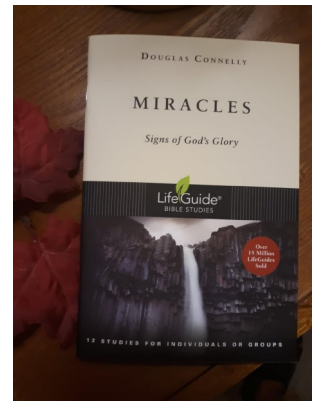


In *Miracles: Signs of God's Glory*, author Douglas Connelly writes, "When we open the pages of the Bible, our desire for a miracle intensifies as we read astonishing stories of God's power poured out on people just like us. We come away wishing God would do something supernatural in our lives. What can we do to experience the power of God unleashes in the struggles and problems we face every day? The study helps us discover the answer to that question."

**Miracles location: All four Sundays, the Music Room**

In *Christian Character*, authors Andrea Sterk and Peter Scazzero reveal that "this study guide is designed to awaken us to the character of a true disciple and move us to hunger and thirst after righteousness." The two continue, saying, "The effectiveness of our deeds in the world is determined by the holiness of our own lives....Through contact with the living Christ, the character of men and women throughout history has been transformed. John, a son of thunder, became the apostle of love. Paul, a hardened persecutor of God's people, gradually took on the gentleness of "a mother caring for her little children (1 Thessalonians 2:7)." Hear the tones of a prayer when they add, "May these studies bring you into vital contact with our heavenly Father who promises to conform us to the image of his Son."

**Christian Character location: All four Sundays, the Lecture Hall**



Sunday, September 1, 2019. Today's **recognition** groups are the **Deacons, Nominating Committee, Stewardship Committee, and Trustees.** (A mild roast and poke at three very important committees vital to our work and function).

During our Christmas Eve service we have candles that are lit and the wax from the candles drips. Open a hymnal to page 89; if you find any wax on the page, pass the hymnal to a Deacon and they will take care of removing the wax.

The Nominating Committee is looking to fill the following positions: Someone to comb David Schulte's hair to make it behave, making a designated parking sign for Judy Mitchell, our church secretary, a dedicated tutor for Pastor will to keep him tech savvy, and after today, Kay, will no longer be wearing her festive hats.

The Stewardship Committee hasn't come up with any goals for 2020 and you know we met in January, so let's get after them.

The Trustees, well what can we say about them, except they are always in the gutters doing one thing or another.

Lord, We ask for your blessing on these committees and those who serve on them. May they continue to serve you, our church, community, and those they may meet. In Jesus name, Amen



**Stewardship 2019: “Thy Word is a lamp onto our feet, and a light onto our path  
(Psalm 119:105).”**

The path we have taken as a church has been one of outreach and growth this year. As we continue to reach our community with God’s love in our well-established giving programs (and the outreach here has been outstanding), we’ve added free community dinners this year. Without charge, we invited the wider community to experience firsthand how God IS good to us (and through us) here at our church. We didn’t do a free meal once but twice—a dinner in late March and a picnic in June. The free, community-wide family event (a.k.a. The Fall Festival) also focused this year on feeding our neighbors.



Also new this year have been two pet blessings in church. (A third is scheduled for 10/27.) Adoptable pets from nearby shelters were blessed by you, the congregation. Both pets found their forever homes!

Our church continues to reach out to those in need spiritually, resourcefully, and financially. A large-scale concert invited many to our sanctuary this past March that included Mountain View student musicians, the church choir had a first-time concert at the HVA, and GAME ON continues to build Christian character in our youth with brand new adventures including a Trampoline Park in Vestal and Laser Tag on the church grounds.

For the second year, our Ice Cream Sandwich Ministry reached those in our area who do not know of our church, belong to a neighboring church, have no church affiliation, or simply need to know God’s love through a welcome summertime treat literally wrapped with a message that God loves them.

Do not forget how you’ve helped with our annual golf tournament and the dinner at the Harford fair (including its basket raffle). Remember the Willing Workers continue to supply so much love and care through their year-long fundraisers and activities. The Food Pantry and our Ugly Quilt makers are angels thanks to your support and prayer. Also, the Missionary Society is an inroad for our continued partnership with Interfaith. Their ongoing work that invites and includes us all IS the heart of this church.

**My point is OUR church is doing SO MUCH because you’re following the lamp at your feet and lighting the path for others to know and experience God through our church.**

**Let’s continue.**

We couldn’t do these programs without your financial dedication to the General Fund. In addition to your time and talents, please continue to contribute to this church through the General Fund which enables more lights to glow in a dark world.

Our 2019 goals were ambitious.

Our 2020 goals for sharing God’s love can continue.

Please give generously.

Thank you, dear congregation!  
Yours faithfully in Christ,  
Will

**Stewardship 2019: “Thy Word is a lamp onto our feet, and a light onto our path...”  
(Psalm 119:105).**

**What is our path?**

Over the four weeks in October, the Stewardship committee asks you to consider the path we are on as a church through what we’ll hear from the pulpit.

**OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup> Fish for people.**

**Mark 1:17 says, “Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people.”**

**-FOCUS:** On World Wide Communion Sunday this year, we will look at how Jesus shows us how to fish for people in this whole wide world, people who are near and far. We will see that all paths lead to one table, the Communion table.

**OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> Serve our community.**

**John 12:26 says, “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My father will honor the one who serves me.”**

**-FOCUS:** While it’s challenging to be a Christian in an increasingly secular world these days, we will see how servant-hood in the Kingdom actually empowers us to keep on the path and encourage others to do the same.

**OCTOBER 20<sup>TH</sup> Let It Shine.**

**Psalm 78:4 says, “We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders.”**

**-FOCUS:** To pass the truths of scripture onto our children, grandchildren, and our youth in our community, we have to be equipped to both tell—and show—the next generation what the pathway of faithful service means to us.

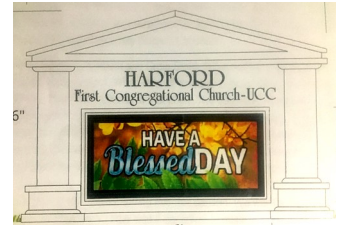
**OCTOBER 27<sup>TH</sup> Spread God’s love.**

**John 13:34-35 says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

**-FOCUS:** The focus here is on the word new—God keeps creating new opportunities and new ministry moments for us. These opportunities and moments are pathways, not highways. More so than super highways, pathways bend, incline and decline, yet we’ll learn how to stay on the path we are called to so that we will show love for one another.

## Front Lawn Sign Update:

Progress on the sign project has been slowed a bit due to the additional requests by Harford Township permitting company, JHA. This issue should be resolved by Sept 27<sup>th</sup> and permitting can move forward. We plan to have the electrical completed and concrete foundation ready so that when the sign is delivered, we are prepared to have it promptly placed in position.



We, David Schulte, Council President and Craig Stout, Stewardship Chairman would like to explain the financial aspect of this project. When council decided to bring this to a congregational vote, the sign and freight expenses had been covered at that point. The concrete, electrical and permit expenses were under discussion by council on where funds would come from to cover this. The sign fund continued after the voting took place in order to help cover any remaining project expenses. In the meantime, council voted to cover the electrical expense as a capital improvement. The Golf Tournament Committee also requested that \$4000.00 from the tournament proceeds go toward the sign fund.

We apologize for any misunderstanding this has caused. We want to be clear that this information was presented to council and at no time was it our intent to mislead anyone that the whole project was paid for. We are a congregation of many voices and opinions. Our job is to love and serve our God, love our neighbor, and lift each other up (1 Thessalonians 5:11) through all times. As the numbers below show, we are happy to be able to say the as of 9/24/19 the entire sign project has been covered with a back up amount in the capital fund for any additional expenses that may come up.

We both care deeply about the future of this church. We are excited and feel that this sign project will help guide us, as a church, into the future. We are truly blessed to serve with you, listen to you, and move forward with you serving our gracious God.

Craig Stout and David Schulte, Jr.

### Project total cost

Stewart Signs-\$26,503.00

Freight-\$950.00

Spectrum electric-\$4,406.00

(covered by capital funds)

Feduchak concrete-\$1600.00

Permit-\$1202.00

—————  
\$34,661.00-(\$4,406.00) = **\$30,255.00**

### Sign Fund as of 9/24/19

Total received-\$28,693.00

Golf Tournament funds - \$1562

Total Funds Available: \$30255.00

Money is still coming in each week to cover the sign costs.

**\$2438.00 of Golf Tournament Funds will be held in the Capital Fund for unexpected costs.**

### Payments made as of 9/24/19

Stewart Sign Co down payment-\$13,325.00

Permit Harford Twp. \$75.00



## Council Minutes

9-26-19

### Christian Education:

- We began Sunday School on September 15th to coordinate with the Fall Festival which happened after church.
- A letter was sent out to let parents and children know when SS was starting.
- Some of the resources we may be using are: Veggie Tales Bible Stories, The Beginner's Bible, and Biblestorytelling.org. These resources will aid us in telling the children the stories of the Bible.
- We are beginning with the days of creation and continue from there. Kandy and Bonnie will take turns doing the weekly lessons and some lessons may go for more than one week. We will tell The Easter and Christmas stories during the holidays. Kandy is going to begin on September 15th.
- We have a Welcome Back sign so the children can see they were missed.
- The Christmas pageant discussion is tabled until next month.
- It was decided to have our meetings on Sundays before SS starts. Our next meeting is October 6 @ 9:00.

### Deacons:

- World Wide Communion- October 6, 2019. Kay will confirm with the following Deacons to be servers Bonnie, Melissa, Gail, and Ginny. They will also be reading from a script written by Kay Gow. Should Communion happen more than once a quarter? Katherine remembered from her past experience as a Deacon, that members of the church seem to dislike when communion was monthly (more often). We will keep it at once a quarter for now.
- Bible Study- Four Sessions: Decisions, Waiting for God, Christian Character, and Miracles. Starting October 6<sup>th</sup> for four Sundays. Teachers will be Pastor Will, Bonnie Colwell, Paula Millard, and Kay Gow.
- Celebrate Children- October 20, 2019. Suggestion that the children will need a lot of guidance for their portion of the service, including putting the bulletin together.

### Honorees:

- Joyce and Richard Berish due to their moving permanently to Ohio towards the end of October. We will find a date to honor them before they leave.
- Rupert Carey will be 90 on October 24<sup>th</sup>. How can we honor him? It was suggested that we make a meal and deliver it to them. We need to keep in mind that they are diabetic. Melissa will make pumpkin sugar free cupcakes. Kay will make chicken and biscuits.
- Fall Festival- September 15, 2019. Greeters were Bonnie, Dave, Kay, Tammy if available. Scouts made the hot dogs and hamburgers. All kinds of activities including pony rides and bouncy house.
- Christmas- Please start thinking about how we can welcome those to our church on Christmas Eve. Last year we sent out a post card of the Season's Events around Thanksgiving. This included the Christmas Pageant, Advent Events, etc. It would be a good idea to send it out to all families that have recently been baptized, new to area, etc.
- Dinner at HVA- Kay spoke to someone living at the HVA and they believe it would go over well. We would do this after the holidays in the cold, dark winter months. It was suggested that we have a hearty meal like lasagna.
- Pot Lucks- Next Pot Luck will be September 29, 2019 when our Conference Minister, Reverend Doctor Bonnie Bates visits. We will be providing Scalloped Potatoes and Ham.
- Event Calendar- for 2020 has been started by Kay. This includes events happening in our church. Please look it over to make any additions.
- Marriage: Engaged couples will be given two books were entitled: Handbook For Engaged Couples and Preparing For Marriage. Several engaged couples who have been recently engaged have been given these books with the sincere hope and wishes they will aid the couples to have a better understanding of each other and their lives together.
- Next Meeting will be October 7, 2019 at 7:00pm in the Pastor's Office.

## **Missionary Group:**

-Least Coin: Read of a Missionary in Lebanon working with refugees

-Letter from Japan Congregation: Pictures of their congregation and a nice note. We discussed our Christmas letter and decided to take a picture of the congregation as usual but add in a picture of the Christmas Tree Lighting also.

-CareNet is having their Fund raiser banquet October 10 at 6:30 at Elk Lake High School. Missionary has a table for 10 people. There are 6 seats remaining to be offered to the congregation. Missionary voted to support CareNet with a check for \$150 this year.

-Disaster Relief – The UCC (United Church of Christ) is partnering with CWS (Church World Service) to provide disaster relief to areas hit by hurricane Dorian. They are offering a Grant to the first 75 churches that qualify and apply. Missionary has decided to sponsor 20 Clean Up Kits and 50 hygiene Kits. The collection will run September 22 – November 5.

-Bake Sale during Voting at the Fire Hall **on November 5** to help fund disaster relief. Bake Sale Signs ups sheets will go up Sept 22. The first kit **assembly will be October 18 at 1:00**. The next kit assembly date and time will be announced. We will do Announcements in church Sept 22 – Holli, Sept 29 – Kay, Oct 6 – Karen, October 13 – Ginny

-Operation Christmas Child: The Operation Christmas Child program will run October 13 – November 15. The Boxes will be taken to the collection Depot November 18-25. We hope to fill 50 boxes this year. Minutes for Mission will be given each week during the program. Money will be collected from people that want to fill a box but cannot shop.

-Missionary Yard Sale: The Christmas in Montrose Yard Sale will be December 6-7. The trailer will be loaded/unloaded Wednesday, December 4. Hopefully the youth and boy scouts will help. Thursday, December 5 we will set up in Lee's.

-Soup Ministry: Will plan soup day next month

## **Trustees:**

### **Old Business:**

-Gutter and leaf guard installation has been rescheduled to September 19<sup>th</sup>.

-Still unsure if the leak in the church roof has been fixed. Harry will contact BSR again.

-We will not be adding a piece of Lexan to the offering table.

-Painting has begun on the lecture hall. The original quote was for \$6,100. There is an additional quote to have the cemetery side of the lecture hall painted as it was not included in the original quote. The additional cost to paint the cemetery side of the lecture hall is \$1800. This may be included in the insurance claim related to the hail damage from last year.

### **New Business:**

-Trustees met with Craig Stout about the proposed position of the new church sign and the future of the sidewalk.

-Oil furnace has been serviced for the season.

-Heating Oil contract has been completed for the season with Lindsey Oil.

-Unhook and drain outdoor garden hose and get a hook to hand the hose on.

-Clean mold off the siding on the back of the lecture hall.

-Brian Kovalesky will be installing a pole with dusk to dawn lighting for the church parking lot.

**Willing Worker News:** Save the date: November 23<sup>rd</sup> is the roast beef dinner.

The next big group meeting is Nov 6 at 1:00PM in the Lecture Hall. Kingsley group is hostess.

## **Pastor's Report:**

Was blessed to bring Cindy Beeman, the chairperson of Interfaith in Montrose, to worship on 9/8 to speak with us about our county-wide mission work.

- Have had three conversations with Jeff Carlton of the PennNortheast Conference. Jeff is part of the Local Congregational Support Working Group. I'll present his request to help us as a congregation to council under new business.
- I have met with Kaylee Parker and Allan Phelps to plan their wedding ceremony. (The two were married on September 21 at the Harford Fire Hall's gazebo). Congratulations!
- I was able to spend an hour with the GAME ON crew's Laser Tag event here at the church before attending the Phelps' wedding rehearsal on September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- With great help, I created the Fall 2019 Stewardship Campaign, "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path* (Psalm 119:105)." This campaign aligns us more completely with the Word of God as a lamp to guide us and others. The more we learn from scripture, the more we become Christ-like. To more we learn from scripture, I am launching with the deacon's blessing four brand-new Bible studies that will begin after worship and a quick lunch in the Lecture Hall. The studies will take place in four different areas around the church over the four weeks in October. Kay Gow, Paula Millard and Bonnie Love-Colwell excitedly join me on the four-person teaching team. This Stewardship campaign is a bold effort led by the Holy Spirit. My goal is to have the congregation see the need and experience firsthand the value of Bible studies as we gift the world through Christ's love here at Harford First Congregational Church-UCC.
- I have spent a great deal of enjoyable prep work with Kay Gow in planning World Wide Communion Sunday this year. A new liturgy involving the deacons participation has been created on this special Sunday.
- I am looking forward to the Missionary Society's presence in worship over the next two months as they share with us on-the-ground mission projects we can participate in through December.
- Retired pastor Kim Bode (from Grace Lutheran Church in Hop Bottom) and I were the only two pastors of six who turned out for the ministerium lunch this month. God is good in that we had an important conversation about our similar calls—pastors staying with their congregations over a long period of time. This September marks my eleventh year at our church. Kim served faithfully in Hop Bottom for 29 years.
- Penn Northeast Conference Minister Bonnie Bates and I have decided to meet by phone monthly to discuss my ministry here in addition to my doctoral work. Bonnie has been a great resource to me. I am grateful she will join us at the pulpit on Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> and pray many can join us for the luncheon following this worship.
- The first chapter of my dissertation has been reviewed by my Lancaster Theological Seminary Advisor Dr. Lee Barrett. The chapter was approved with great reviews. I have three more chapters to complete.
- The website I bought as the project portion of my dissertation has experienced setbacks. Prayers here are welcome.



I have completed two continuing education courses this month in order to remain in good standing with the Penn Northeast Conference. These courses are required from the conference. They are not affiliated with my doctoral degree.

To remain in “Good Standing” with my ordination in the UCC, I am thankful to have taken two short courses as a part of my ongoing education. These courses are apart from my doctoral studies at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

The first was a Cultural Sensitivity Awareness training. Through Barna Group, a pioneer in research statistics, I studied the locations, the needs, and the desires of millennials and Gen Z in regard to religion today. One takeaway from the four-hour training that I want to share in an upcoming sermon series is that our young people today have incredible access 24/7/365 to information, *tons* of information, but what they’re lacking—and, important to us as a church—what they are seeking is experience. Baby boomers and GenXers think there is a major “turn off” with these younger generations and the church. These studies and this training indicate otherwise.

“Oh, *they* should just come to church!” is an answer many of us think. “Then they’ll get the experience.” That is—and isn’t—the answer. We live in a multicultural age, even here in rural NE Pennsylvania. Many cultural and religious influences affect how millennials and Generation Z see the world today. Skepticism in the Institution of religion remains high. Glossy marketing, branding, and slick campaigning doesn’t work. Authenticity does. This said, the role of the congregation sharing their faith *directly* to these generations is now key.

Keep your eyes and ears open for the November sermon series on this vital topic of millennials and Gen Z, and plan to be in church during this vital time of generational faith exchange.

The second course I took centered on anti-racism training. Oppressed groups in our nation continue to struggle. While we were taught equality and love for all, especially here in the United Church of Christ, white privilege is an ongoing movement in America. Birthed in the Reconstruction period of our American history, this “us” and “them” movement continues to create divides. Awareness, sensitivity, and our Christian love for all is the inclusive message we in this denomination cannot share enough

**OUR PENN NORTHEAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE** is Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9 AM to 4 PM at St. John’s United Church of Christ in Northampton. Join Will in this important day of learning, sharing and growing. Our deadline for registration is October 18, 2019. Contact Will for more details.

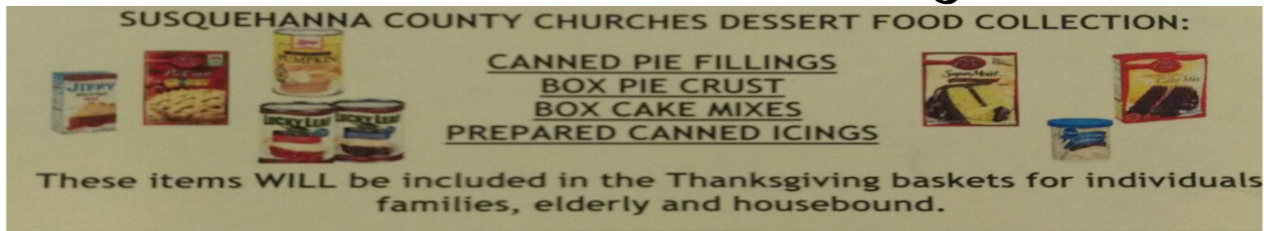
**New Business:** The Hand Bells will be added to the 2020 budget with \$500. Until 2020 supplies for the hand bell choir will be funded by the Regular Memorial Fund out of Peoples Bank.

**Stewardship:** The Stewardship Drive will start October 6.

We are starting to collect dessert items for Interfaith’s “Feed a Friend” campaign. Look for the collection basket in the Gathering Room.

**Stewardship will have a basket in the Gathering Room for donating dessert foods to Trehab and Feed a Friend until November 10th.**

*Thank you!*



**Help!!!! We need all types of fabric for craft projects for the log cabin next year! Please call or text Holli Chichester at 301-643-1775 if you have fabric that you could donate.**



## **Save these Dates Photos sessions for new directory**

**Tuesday, October 22, 2019**

**Wednesday, October 23, 2019**

**2:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.**

Sign up at church or

Call or email the office to make a photo appointment.

The slots are filling up quite quickly.

570-434-2716

## Interfaith's Executive Director has a message for us

Cindy Beeman, Executive Director of Interfaith, joined us for a message about decisions on Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. Her message intentionally fit into Pastor Will's message on the same subject, decisions, which is one of the four Bible study topics open to us as a congregation in October.



Cindy spoke about her most recent mission trip to Guatemala where she, her husband and another couple “got to do fun things” like visit the Mayan ruins. The ruins they visited were 200 feet or higher out in what Cindy calls “the middle of nowhere.” To get to the top of the ruins, she had to climb very steep, narrow limestone steps. “What kind of decisions am I making?” she wondered.

Once she got to the top, a friend on the ground said, “Look! It’s going to rain!”

The local, polytheistic tour guide who was with Cindy immediately prayed to the rain gods. When wet, limestone steps are very, very slippery.

Cindy thought, “Rain gods? MY GOD got me up here and He will help me get down!” And that’s exactly what happened.

**At the heart of her message, Cindy thanked us as a congregation for the many, many decisions we have made over the years to support Interfaith.** She is grateful to us and invited us to celebrate with them at a special dinner on Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Because of our longstanding involvement, she noted that we are extended volunteers to this a county-wide mission group. Our generosity, she said, is a true blessing.



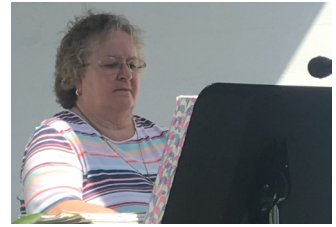
**Stewardship will be collecting Fall/Winter clothing starting October 6  
For Interfaith.**

**Check the Gathering hall for the collection box.**

**donate**



# FALL FESTIVAL



Music with Mrs. Colwell



Picnic with the Community



Kathy Walker with her pony



Bounce House



Dairy Ambassador, Elizabeth Chidester ,  
with ice cream and Brownies



Games and Prizes



# Bake Sale for Disaster Relief



The Missionary Group is sponsoring a bake sale on Election Day, November 5th. It will be held at the Fire Hall in Harford from 7:00am- 5:00. All proceeds will go to support our mission to help provide Disaster Relief to areas effected by hurricane Dorian and other disasters. It is hard to imagine living in an area that is completely destroyed and without a way to get supplies. We are looking for people that would be willing to bake items and people willing to help man the bake sale. Sign-up sheets are in the gathering room. Please contact Holli Chichester if you have questions at 301-643-1775 or 570-851-5109 or [hollischichester@gmail.com](mailto:hollischichester@gmail.com).

We will be collecting items to make Hygiene and Clean Up Kits for Disaster Relief. Please donate items for these kits or donate funds and we will shop. We are collecting items and funds now until November 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **CWS Hygiene Kit - Supplies needed:**

- One hand towel approximately 15"x 28" to 16"x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)**
- One washcloth**
- One wide-tooth comb removed from the package**
- One finger nail or toe nail clipper removed from the package**
- One bath size bar of soap in the wrapper**
- One toothbrush in the package**
- Ten standard size Band-aids**

## **CWS Emergency Cleanup Buckets - Supplies needed:**

- One five-gallon bucket with re-sealable lid**
- Four scouring pads**
- Seven sponges, including one large**
- One scrub brush**
- Eighteen reusable cleaning towels (e.g. Easy Wipes)**
- One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent**
- One 16-28 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap**
- One 12-16 oz. bottle of household cleaner to be mixed with water (no spray bottles)**
- One package of 48-50 clothespins**
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.**
- Five dust masks**
- Two pairs non surgical latex gloves**
- One pair work gloves, cotton with leather palm or all leather**
- 24-28 heavy duty/contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll and removed from carton**
- One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent**

***All cleaning items must be new!!***





Reid Anderson from Rock Mountain spent some time at the end of the evening with the kids talking about how much fun it was to "battle" against their friends in laser tag. Reid also explained how in real life we all deal with battles each and every day. As a group they discussed how using their faith and also having a team to back you up can help to get through the battles in life.



## Bell Choir Rebirth!!!!!!

Bob DeLuca has graciously volunteered to conduct a bell choir.  
Please call or email Bob if you would be interested in participating.

570-498-7090 [gepetto@nep.net](mailto:gepetto@nep.net)



We are celebrating All Saints Day on November 3, 2019. Please submit to the office name or names of those you'd like remembered this year. Thank you. May God bless the loves you remember.

[firstch@nep.net](mailto:firstch@nep.net)

570-434-2260



## Prayer Concerns

Nicholas (Great Grandson of the Weidemans)  
Patrick Simons  
Scott Klenk  
Heather Warren  
Sandy Zupanovich  
Christian Kuhar  
Mary Jane Genneken  
Sandy Paolucci  
Brandi & Dave  
Larry Herbert  
Sydney Ann (Gamble) Mead and her mother  
Mallory Phelan  
Nancy Burris  
Franny (Kay's friend)  
baby Colden  
Dennis Getz

Elora Race  
Tessa  
Jessica Miller  
Evan Clarkson  
our nation under God  
our government  
Wayne Wellman  
Aspen Batzel  
Barbara Weideman  
John Butler  
Susan Bush  
Dawn Gallinger on the loss of her mother  
Decan Langer and family  
Corinne Chichester and job search  
Sharon Frantz  
Joe Batzel and family  
Hurricane Dorian Relief



## Correspondence

\*\*\*\*\*  
**To: First Harford Congregational Church-UCC Congregation,**

A big heartfelt thank you comes your way for attending the Fall Festival after church on September 15, 2019. Your attendance showed the community we are a friendly, giving, and caring church. The Festival was a great success.

Love in Christ,  
Kay Gow  
Chairperson of Fall Festival

\*\*\*\*\*  
**To All the Wonderful Cookie Bakers,**

Your contribution to the fair dinner was greatly appreciated. Our church has been blessed with so many great cooks and bakers. Your assistance helped make the dinner a success.

Love in Christ, Kay Gow

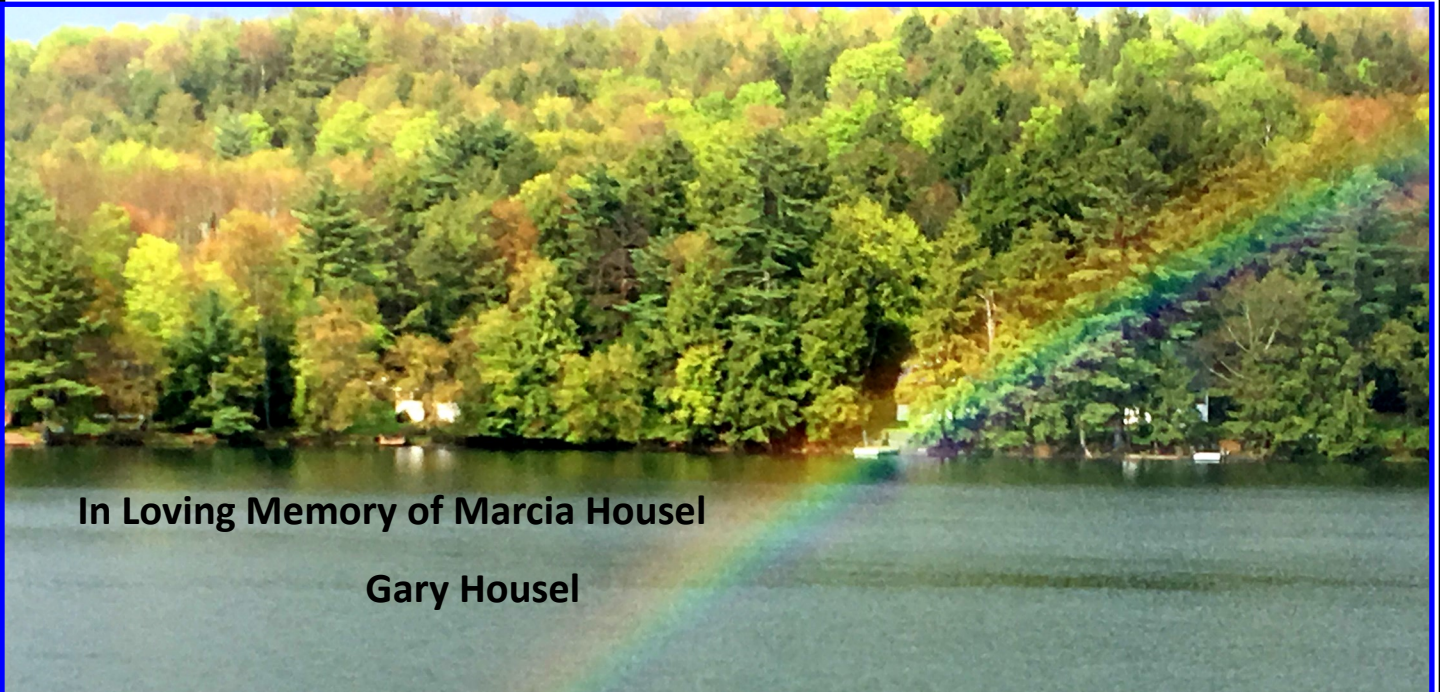
\*\*\*\*\*  
Dear Harford Church,

How is everyone and their families doing? I'm doing so very wonderful. Everyone and their families are in my prayers and thoughts daily. God bless everyone and their families forever. I got an A in my college course with Adams State University. Auto technology class is going good. I hope everyone and their families have a good time at the Harford Fair. I hope to hear from you soon.

Love in Christ, Your Farmer friend, Earl Russell Gow  
Smart Communications/PA DOC  
Inmate Name Earl Russell Gow DC# LN8680  
SCI Forest  
PO Box 33028  
St Petersburg, FL 33733

\*\*\*\*\*  

## Spire Sponsor



**In Loving Memory of Marcia Housel**

**Gary Housel**



# **BON FIRE** **and** **CORN MAZE**

**hot dogs**  
**marshmallows**  
**snacks**  
**corn maze**  
**trike track**  
**corn shed**  
**play area**  
**and more!**

**@ Zembrzckis**  
**Saturday, Oct 5th**  
**2-5 pm**

**Come relax and hang out**  
**with us!**

**RSVP Tammy Stout @ 570-396-7081 by Oct 1st to receive a free admission pass**

**To the People of the Penn Northeast Conference,**

September 12, 2019

Greetings and peace be with you! The Penn Northeast Conference Board is happy to announce that we voted to recommend the election of Bonnie Bates as our Conference Minister at our fall conference meeting.

Bonnie was called by the Board as our Designated Term Conference Minister on September 1, 2017. This call was to a "Designated-Term." This title indicated the intent of Conference Minister to work with the Board and provide leadership for a three year term. During that time, the leadership of the Conference would address many transformational issues. Bonnie worked with the PNEC/PSEC Transition Team which then became the Joint Conference Visioning Team which explored to the possibilities of forming a new Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. The Board assumed this process would take at least three years, and Bonnie's position description as Conference Minister was designed to help us move through that transition while also bringing us together to form a Conference with a clear vision, mission, and purpose.

In the fall of 2018, when the PSEC conference voted "no" to continuing the process, our conversations with the PSEC stopped. The PSEC Consistory has voted to continue these conversations. Our Conference Board has asked for some time, and we may resume our conversations in the fall of 2019. We are engaged in many excited and wonderful ministries together, and these will continue! We are good friends with the folks in PSEC, and we will continue to discern where God is leading us together.

Since the process has ended, the Board began a discernment process for Conference leadership. We had just completed a 360 Review\* on Bonnie's role as Conference Minister, and she is doing an exceptional job. She helped the Board transition into a Governance and Ministry Model. She has helped the leadership in visioning, policy development, and rewriting our Constitution and Bylaws. She has worked with the Committee on Ministry in adopting the new Manual on Ministry, giving them guidance in their new structure to help support the ministry of clergy and local churches. She has applied and received grants to support our search and call process with a new staff position. She supports the stewardship of our Conference, our many ministry teams, and revitalizing our congregations. She has trained coaches to support local church ministry. Bonnie has been passionate in helping to renew and revitalize our congregations. She has visited or worshiped with most of our congregations. She has worked faithfully in developing relationships and connecting congregations for working together.

The Board, in consultation with Lee Albertson from the National Setting, reviewed our process for calling Bonnie as our settled Conference Minister. He shared that since we had just done a search process for Bonnie, conducted a 360 Review\*, and had called her to the position "Designated Term," we could then extend the call to her as a settled Conference Minister. The Board agreed that Bonnie has been doing an excellent job in leadership. We asked the Staff and Personnel Committee to help draft a new job description for Bonnie. We asked Bonnie to articulate a new vision for our Conference.

At the spring 2019 Conference meeting, Bonnie began listening to us to develop a vision for our Conference. She conducted meetings to gather input from many people because the vision is of God for all of God's people. This new vision is attached to this letter along with a brief biography of Bonnie. The Board is excited to begin living into this new vision for our Conference. We have been working to open up communication among our churches so that we can see how we can minister with one another for the good news of God's kingdom.

Letter from PNEC cont.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the Fall Conference meeting on November 2, 2019 at St. John's UCC Howertown (*registration form is enclosed*). In the meantime, if you have questions, I would be glad to connect with you by phone or email.

Peace, Rev. Dr. Joanne Marchetto, PNEC Board Moderator [jomarchetto@rcn.com](mailto:jomarchetto@rcn.com) cell: 610-703-5897

\*360 Review is a process to review the job performance of a pastor which includes feedback from multiple people who work with the person in a variety of settings.

## **A Strategic Vision for the Penn Northeast Conference**

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates

As I am being considered as your called and settled Conference Minister, I thought it would be important for me to share my strategic vision and goals with you. My vision and goals need to align with the vision and mission of the conference. As you know our conference vision is: United in Faith...Committed to Love...Created to Serve. Our conference mission is: Changing lives by equipping, empowering, and supporting those who would spread Christ's ministry.

As such my strategic vision and goals for the conference are:

- Provide spiritual leadership and support for congregations, authorized ministers and Members in Discernment.
- Assure the financial viability of the Penn Northeast Conference.
- Serve as a link between congregations, the conference, the communities we serve, the national setting and the world through actions within and among churches and communities that promote and affirm the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Naturally, there are many subsets to this vision and these broad goals including: communication, education, partnership with the conference board, leadership of the ministry functions of the conference, and representation in the wider denominational, ecumenical, and public spheres. It is my fervent hope and prayer that as we continue to partner together, we will strengthen our congregations, empower our ministers, and make a difference in our communities.

### **Brief Biography**

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates

Born in rural upstate New York and raised in the Roman Catholic Church, I was the oldest of four children, born into a blue-color working class family. I became a member of the United Church of Christ as an adult in 1984. I have now been affiliated with the UCC more than half my life.

My education includes a B.A. in Organization Management, a M.A. in Human Resource Development, a Master of Divinity degree, and a Doctor of Ministry degree in Transformative Leadership. I spent 25 years in non-profit management focused on membership, program development, and human resources. While in those roles I served on congregational, association and conference leadership boards, personnel committees, strategic planning teams, and wider church engagement teams and commissions.

I have served a number of churches as a licensed interim, extended pulpit supply, and ordained and called minister. Additionally, I served in the Ohio Conference as the EOA/WRA Associations Associate Minister for Congregational Vitality and Development. I came to Penn Northeast Conference in 2017 as the Designated Conference Minister as the conference approached a possible unification with the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. In the fall of 2018, that process was halted. Since that time I have continued to serve in Penn Northeast Conference and welcome the opportunity to become your called and settled Conference Minister.

August 27, 2019

# Worship Assistants

## Greeters

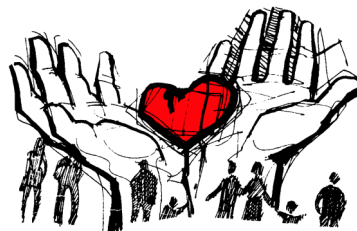
October 06, 2019	Alice Archer	October 06, 2019
October 13, 2019	Julie Keaton	October 13, 2019
October 20, 2019	Judy Mitchell	October 20, 2019
October 27, 2019	Priscilla Allen	October 27, 2019

## Ushers

Alyssa Clarkson and Cody Nolan  
Sharon Decker and Karen Jones  
Harry and Julia Gardner  
Bailey Millard and Mikaela Stout

## Readers

October 06, 2019	Karen Jones
October 13, 2019	Missy Clarkson
October 20, 2019	George Lotter
October 27, 2019	Ellen Holdredge



## Memorial Plaque Information

Are you interested in having a plaque attached to the memorial stone in the memorial garden? One may have a plaque ordered by doing the following:  
Cost---\$25.00



Send check (made out to First Congregational-UCC) along with name of person and the year of birth and the year they passed away to the office.

The office will then proceed to order the plaque and have it placed on the stone.  
Thank you.

## Home Bound

The Carey Family

Dorothy Greene

Catherine Escandel

Barbara Pease



Notice: Please send all material for the Spire to  
[Firstchurchspire@gmail.com](mailto:Firstchurchspire@gmail.com)  
by the 15th of October

## Directory update

Eric and Katherine Doolittle  
954 Bennett Road  
Hop Bottom , PA 18824

Chad, Kara, Aspen Batzel and Hunter O'Malley  
5509 State Route 106  
Kingsley, PA 18826

Earl Russell Gow  
Smart Communications/PA DOC  
Inmate Name Earl Russell Gow  
DC# LN8680  
SCI Forest  
PO Box 33028  
St Petersburg, FL 33733

PU2  
Clarkson, Evan  
3501 A. Avenue 5<sup>th</sup> PIT  
Bravo Comp., 266<sup>th</sup>  
Q FT Lee, VA 23801



## October Birthdays



October 02 Ken and Betty Lou Bennett  
Brandon Zick  
October 04 Wayne and Kandy Wellman  
October 07 Matthew and Elissa Mitchell  
Gary Phillips  
Gary and Wendy Phillips  
October 10 Ben and Bridget (Zick) Sherring  
October 11 Paula Millard  
October 12 Craig and Tammy Stout  
October 13 Laura Jane Moser

October 20 Rev. Ghulam Nasrani  
Sharon Kinney  
Michelle Allen  
Kelly Feduchak  
October 23 Rebecca Gardner  
October 24 Rupert Carey (90 years old )  
October 27 Laurie Grant  
October 28 Joyce Berish  
October 30 Maureen Warren



**Congratulations !!!!!**  
**Mr. and Mrs. Allan Phelps**



## Spire Sponsors

We **need Sponsors** to help us cover the cost of printing and mailing the Spire.  
Please let us know if you can help.

The sponsorship can be in Memory or in Honor of someone or just a donation.

Mailing costs approximately \$75/month.



Nashville Recording  
Artists



Songs with a message



Harford First Congregational Church

5016 Creek Road, Harford PA

Saturday, Oct. 19th at 7:00PM

Refreshments to follow concert

*Our Sound is Country, Our Message is Jesus!*

**[www.trueheartmusic.net](http://www.trueheartmusic.net)**



# October 2019

October 2019

November 2019

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Sep 29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Oct 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
		9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (Hollis's) 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 7:00pm 8:00pm Choir (	5:15am 6:45am Armettas 9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (H. Chichester)	1:30pm 3:00pm KWW (Ellen Holdredge)	Pastor day off 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH)	2-5 Game-On Corn Maze
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
7:30am 11:00am Breakfast/fire hall 11:00am 12:00pm Corn 12:00pm 12:30pm Lunc 12:30pm 1:00pm Bible 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 6:00pm 7:30pm Girl Scouts (LH)	7:30am 9:00am Men's brkfst (Binghams) 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 7:00pm 8:00pm Choir (	5:15am 6:45am Armettas	Pastor day off 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH) 4:30pm 9:00pm T. Lamberson wedding (Lake Wallenpaupac		9:00am 2:00pm Orphan school-book sale
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 12:30pm Lunch (LH) 12:30pm 1:00pm Bible 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 7:00pm 8:30pm Deaco 7:00pm 8:30pm Trustee	9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (Hollis's) 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Q 1:00pm 3:00pm Missio 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 7:00pm 8:00pm Choir (	SPIRE DEADLINE 5:15am 6:45am Armettas 9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (Hollis's) 4:00pm 6:00pm Clifford	7:00pm 9:00pm Stewardship	Pastor day off 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH)	10:00am 2:00pm Blood drive (fire hall) 7:00pm 8:30pm Concert-True Heart (Sanctuary)
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
11:00am 12:00pm Worship-Children's 12:00pm 12:30pm Lunch (LH) 12:30pm 1:00pm Bible 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	8:00am 9:30am Pastoral Relations (P 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 12:00pm 1:00pm Ladie 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor i	9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 2:00pm 9:00pm Photos (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 7:00pm 8:00pm Choir (	5:15am 6:45am Armettas 2:00pm 9:00pm Photos (LH)	6:30pm 8:00pm Council (LH)	Pastor day off 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH) 4:00pm 5:00pm Wedding rehearsal (Sanctuary)	9:00am 8:30pm Wedding-Bowman/Rockwell
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Nov 1</b>	<b>2</b>
11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 2:00pm Grace 12:00pm 12:30pm Lunc 12:30pm 1:00pm Bible 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 6:00pm 7:30pm Girl Scouts (LH)	9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate (LH) 7:00pm 8:00pm Choir (MR)	5:15am 6:45am Armettas		Nov 1	

Sep 29 - Oct 5

Oct 6 - 12

Oct 13 - 19

Oct 20 - 26

Oct 27 - Nov 2

Non-Profit Organization

US Postage Paid

PERMIT—#20

Montrose, PA 18801

First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
5016 Creek Road  
PO Box 217  
Harford, PA 18823  
Tel. 570-434-2260  
Email: [firstch@nep.net](mailto:firstch@nep.net)  
Spire email: [firstchurchspire@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurchspire@gmail.com)  
Web URL: <http://www2.nep.net/~firstch/>

.....the people in darkness have seen a great light

Isaiah 9:2

*Join Us Each Sunday!!*



Harford First Congregational Church—UCC

Rev. William Hagenbuch –Pastor  
Home Phone: 570-434-7729  
Email: [wrh@nep.net](mailto:wrh@nep.net)  
Office Hours: Mon. 4-5:30 pm

Judy Mitchell –Sec  
Hours: Tues. 1-5 pm  
Thurs or Fri 11am -