



Our Spire
Volume 40
June 2020
Number 5

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

Dear Congregation,

Attention! Beginning Sunday, June 7, 2020, the worship service will be livestreamed live at 10:00 am.

We have been eager to worship together again. Our council met Thursday night to discuss how we can safely begin this process. We are now able to meet in groups of less than 25 with masks, distance, and additional sanitizing.

We would like invite those who feel ready to worship in groups to come to the livestreaming of our worship June 7, 2020 at 10:00 am. Masks are mandatory. We must keep our distance. We will not use the hymnals and Bibles or have bulletins. All needed text will be projected for you. We will enter and exit through the glass double doors.

Because we must limit our attendance, please notify Holli Chichester if you are attending so we might be prepared for you.

For those who feel it is best to stay at home and continue online worship, which, at the moment, seems to be the majority of us, please know our council supports and appreciates your participation as it has been. Safety first is a key to our wellbeing.

We look forward to worshipping with you online or in person on June 7, 2020 at 10 am.

Holli Chichester

text or call 301-643-1775 cell
call 570-851-5109 home
email hollischichester@gmail.com



Pastor's Page

Absence Makes The Heart Grow Fonder: Who will we be?

Dear Congregation,

What we are learning about God and ourselves during this time is tremendous. What has been taken from us, which has been our custom and ritual of gathering at the church, enables us to see what—exactly—we value in our church, in our worship, and in our Christian community.

Maybe now we can start to see with clarity what it means to be “church.” Given this time we have had, we can begin to discuss what it means to worship. We can also have active conversations about what it means to be a part of our community as Christians.

I don't hold the answers singularly. This is collective. We all have a say here.

This being said, I welcome conversation with you. The questions that follow may help us learn about how Christ is directing His bride, the Church. Here they are.

Without the church being as assessable as it has been, what have you learned?

Where are our strengths?

What are we missing?

There have certainly been losses, but are their places where we experienced any gains?

If so, what were those gains?

No one would suggest—let alone agree to—a church “experimenting” with going to online services only. THAT would be CRAZY. This has happened though, and the information we have as a whole cannot be tossed away. Absence does make the heart grow fonder, so, in this absence, what will be held so much more fondly?

Consider with me having round table discussions later this year. Nothing needs to be formalized churchwide per se, but exchanging our experiences, gains, and losses with intentionality can certainly prepare us for effective, compassionate, inclusive, and vital ministry in the days ahead. God has provided us with a great deal of valuable information. Let's use it!

I'm including the column I wrote recently in *The Susquehanna Independent* because it speaks to how we will make our way in a post pandemic world. Some of us have enjoyed the quieter aspects of these past few months. It's like the winter snow day that went on and on (and on). It will be time to gather again, however, and our diverse experiences of the pandemic will equip us with the information we need to be the church we are called to be.

Continued blessings and wellness to each of you,

Will

Absence makes the
Heart grow fonder.

We decide how we live Post-Covid lives

Even though the county will officially move to yellow this week, you may be one of the angry people out there. After all, some lament, our rights have been taken away for too long! The argument goes that the government shouldn't decide when this shelter in place bit should end and non-essential businesses should open. This is up to us!

I will tell you what—exactly—is up to us. How we live our lives when this pandemic becomes a memory will be ours. No one can order, mandate or write how this will be for us. We will do this collectively.

As 9/11 changed the world, this virus will present a similar outcome. In the wake of this heart-crushing, crippling time of great loss, what we do will be up to us.

We decide how this will change us. What will we carry when pocket-sized hand sanitizers go by the wayside? In addition to the masks, what will we let go? There are deeper questions. What will we remember? What will we value? How will life change?

On May 15, the CDC reported that 86,607 people have died from this virus. Globally, that number is 302,493. This tremendous impact will forever inform us, but again it is up to us individually and collectively to decide what we'll do with this information.

Maybe we will learn to run less and listen more. Maybe we will learn to spend extra minutes with the ones we love. Maybe we will learn to appreciate the paper goods aisle in our grocery stores. Maybe we will remember what it feels like to send and receive a smile when not wearing a facemask.

There is much more to do, too. We should consider how we are going to mourn collectively all those who have died, and, in turn, salute all those who have experienced and endured such hardship because of social distancing and sheltering in place.

I wrote a moment ago about 9/11, which, of course, is an actual date. Understandably, this pandemic won't have an "anniversary date" per se, but we cannot just move forward without looking back at what this pain and loss has brought and taught us.

These past few months have changed us as Americans and as individuals. This has certainly changed the church, the locus of this column. Having completed my dissertation on online worship a month ago, I propose we do not "just go back" to what was. As believers are called to fish for people, we have experienced gains with sharing worship to those who are unchurched or consider themselves distant from a church via screens. This should not stop. If anything, how to reach the world with Jesus' message needs to continue.

This window of opportunity God has given all of us to share our faith with others during this often harsh and always limiting time cannot be ignored, downplayed or marginalized. In the name of Christ, the value of gathering cannot be glossed over, or forgotten.

Instead, our worshiping and our connecting virtually must be discussed and considered. These new ways of sharing and living into the gospel message shouldn't be far-off dreams but implemented into the reality before us when we are much more conveniently connected.

When this season upon us does become a memory, I pray we do not say, "I forget how bad it was." Rather, I pray we continue to make what was so hard so affirming (if not beautiful) in our collective future. These lessons from loss can lead to greater love tomorrow. Let's make this happen not just with intentionality, but heart.

Memorial Day

We honor Memorial Day traditionally as the day we Americans honor those who've made the ultimate sacrifice. As Christians, we remember the One who made the ultimate sacrifice so that, regardless of the battle, death would never again win.

Today, as we remember our fallen soldiers, let's look to and remember the cross with new meaning, deeper appreciation, and endless love for our Savior because those nails in our Savior's hands and feet make this freedom timelessly clear: sin no longer has its hold on us. The war between ourselves and sin is over. Our lives with Jesus will never end.

This year, we also honor all active servicemen and women. These men and women work diligently every hour of the day to protect the freedoms many Americans have died to secure for each and everyone of us. The call to justice is still being heard, responded to, and acted upon with brave hearts, determination, and dedication. The love of our nation under God is still, and always, a priority.

Today, we say thank you to those who've made the ultimate sacrifice and to those men and women who continue to serve and keep our country free.

Let us pray this prayer which was written by Austin Fleming:

Hear Our Prayer This Day

In the quiet sanctuaries of our own hearts,
let each of us name and call on the One whose power over us
is great and gentle, firm and forgiving, holy and healing ...

You who created us,
who sustain us, who call us to live in peace,
hear our prayer this day.

Hear our prayer for all who have died,
whose hearts and hopes are known to you alone ...

Hear our prayer for those who put the welfare of others
ahead of their own and give us hearts as generous as theirs ...

Hear our prayer for those who gave their lives
in the service of others,
and accept the gift of their sacrifice ...

Help us to shape and make a world
where we will lay down the arms of war
and turn our swords into ploughshares
for a harvest of justice and peace ...

Comfort those who grieve the loss of their loved ones
and let your healing be the hope in our hearts...

Hear our prayer this day and in your mercy answer us
in the name of all that is holy.

The peace of God be with you.
- Austin Fleming

In Honor Of Every Soldier
Who Lost Their Life While
Protecting Ours
Salute To Our Heroes

Memorial
Day
05/25/20

May We
Never
Forget



You Sacrificed Your Life
For Our Freedom
May You All Rest In Peace
In The Hands Of God.

Kelly's Treehouse



MESSAGE FROM Bonnie Bates

Hello friends,

A couple things have come into to mind and awareness that I want to share with you this week. The first is the need for us to continue to be cautious about the decisions we make: about gathering, about mission, about our public and private stances on issues. These are really difficult times, but the times are not the same for all of us. One of the UCC Daily Devotionals from Vince Amlin reminded me, and I hope will you, that we all come from different places and perspectives in this time of pandemic. Here are his words: The Same Boat, Vince Amlin, May 18, 2020

“The soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners ... but the centurion ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, and the rest to follow, some on planks and others on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.” - Acts 27:42-44, excerpted (NRSV)

“Some say we’re all in the same boat during this pandemic. But as this story from Acts shows, even people in the same boat aren’t in the same boat.

Some can swim; some can’t. Some have decision-making power; some don’t. Some have just been saved from death; others are still heading to their executions. Not the same boat.

When I pray with members of my congregations who still have to leave their homes every day to do work that is unsafe, I know we’re not in the same boat.

When I hear my friends Kaji and Donna describe ministry in New York City, where, as I write, almost 1 in 400 people has died, I know we’re not in the same boat.

When I see that black citizens of Chicago are dying at 6-times the rate of whites, I know.

We are not even in the same storm.

Paul himself offers a different model of solidarity.

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”

Rather than claiming we’re in the same boat, the gospel tells me to find out about my neighbor’s boat. Seek to understand their experience of this storm.

And listen when they tell me what I can never understand.

It prompts me to ask how we ended up in such different boats.

And do something about it. And not stop until everyone is brought safely to land.”

This was a good reminder for me. I hope it is for you as well.

Blessings, Bonnie

It’s Peanut Butter and Jelly collection time!!!

North Harford Willing Workers are collecting Peanut Butter **and Jelly** for the Summer Lunch Program Food Distribution. There will be an increased need for food as there are just under 400 children signed up to receive food this summer!! The collection container is in the Gathering Room and will be placed outside the Double Glass Doors every Wednesday for drive by donations!!



Peanut butter collection as of 2020-05-22---we have received 176 we only need 274 more.



**Red Cross blood drive
Harford Fire Hall
Wednesday June 24, 2020
1:00-6:00 PM.**

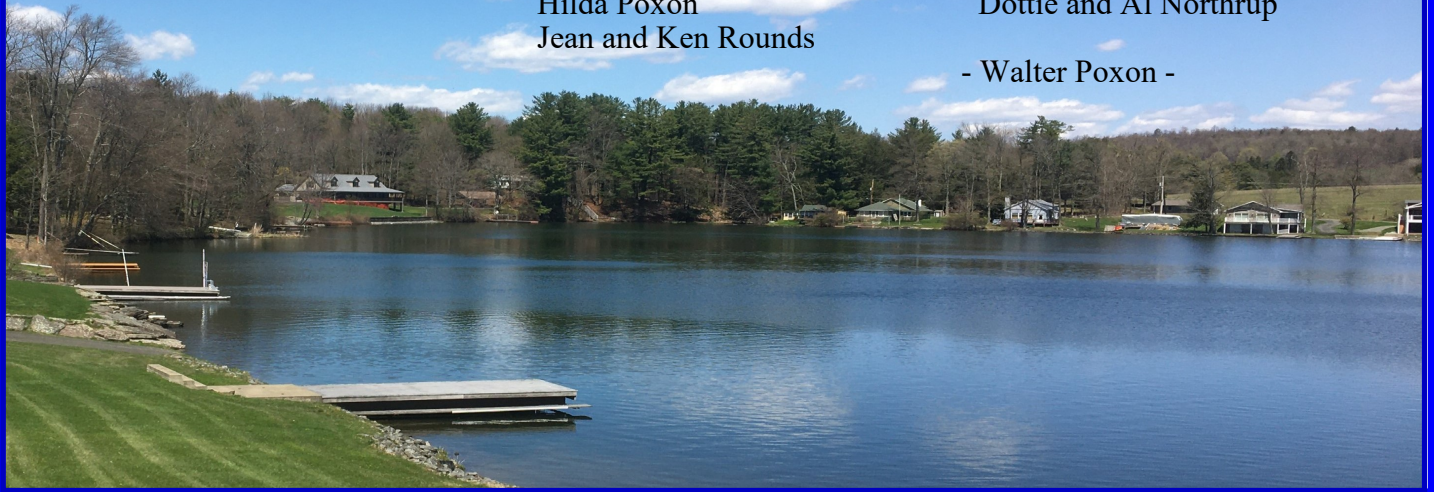
Considering the current COVID situation, I do not yet know if walk-ins will be permitted, or if it will be strictly by appointment. I'll provide more details as they become available, but we wanted to make sure that people are aware of it as early as possible. Thanks, and hope are all safe and well.

George Lotter

In Memory of : Eleanor and Elmer Oliver
Hilda Poxon
Jean and Ken Rounds

Luce Oliver Poxon
Dottie and Al Northrup

- Walter Poxon -



Notice: Please send all material for July-August to be included in the Spire to

Firstchurchspire@gmail.com

by the 15th of June 2020!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Items of information from Bonnie Bates, President of Penn Northeast Conference:
2020-05-21

From Penn Northeast Conference:

Beloved Penn Northeast Conference congregations, Grace, Mercy, Peace and a little of the Wisdom of Solomon to you all!

I needed clothes. And you gave them to me. I was sick. And you took care of me. I was in prison. And you came to visit me.’ “Then the people who have done what is right will answer him. ‘Lord,’ they will ask, ‘when did we see you hungry and feed you? When did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in? When did we see you needing clothes and give them to you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

- Matthew 25:36-39

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial...Let no one seek their own, but the well-being of our neighbor.

- 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

It feels strange to make a recommendation about when to resume in-person worship to our beloved congregations. Nevertheless, we feel it is our covenantal responsibility to offer the following recommendations knowing that each of you may well have different considerations and pressures which guide your decision-making process.

We offer these in prayerful encouragement as you discern your congregation’s future, knowing that your decisions may include struggling with your future ministry.

Our UCC focus is on Love of Neighbor, Love of Children and Love of Creation.

As we reopen our congregations to gathering, it is love of neighbor and love of each other which form the basis of these considerations. We also want to point out that what is legally allowed may actually conflict with what is best for you and your congregation. For instance, is it in the best interest of the safety and health of your congregation and your neighbors to reopen, even if the authorities give permission? Should we reopen quickly, fearful that if we do not our congregation will not survive? Would this not expose greater numbers of people to exposure to COVID-19, affecting the welfare of the very people we are trying to reach with the good news of God’s love? Our neighbors and our communities will be observing what we as congregations choose to do.

With these tensions in mind, we offer the following recommendations which also take into account Pennsylvania’s planned three stage opening and the current CDC guidelines.

- Churches that have been worshipping and ministering virtually should continue this ministry even when it is prudent to worship in person as well.
- When you do resume in-person worship, please remember that it will not be the worship experience you had prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Implementing measures to mitigate and reduce the spread of COVID-19 is an expectation of our members, the public and our state public health guidelines.
- Live in covenant with each other by planning and implementing mitigation measures before you choose to resume in-person worship and other ministries. A plan needs to address who should not attend in-person, how to ensure a safe and clean worship environment, and how to meet current public health protocols for gatherings of people.
- Involve the Pastor, the congregational staff, the congregational leadership, health care professionals and others in your congregation in developing this plan.
- Take a breath. Pause. Discern. Plan.

Communicate. Communicate! Communicate!!

Your neighbors and members need to know what to expect when they do show up.

- If you reasonably expect more than 25 people gathering for worship, it is recommended that you do not re-open in-person worship until such time as public health policy changes and allows large groups to gather again.

As we live in covenant, we want to prevent having any of our congregations or ministries from becoming the source for a local outbreak of COVID-19. We can find ways to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 before there are effective treatments, but only with clear and consistent preventative measures.

The public health authorities and the Governor have offered a multi-phase process for re-opening our communities. Until the final phase of reopening, gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited.) There have been suggestions that places of worship can meet in limited capacities (less than 25 attendees, including the pastor, organist and others) when a region enters the Yellow Phase, and then with larger attendance only if the church is able to meet the standards set out by the CDC and health departments that can prevent further spread. The Pennsylvania plans (presented in the table below) provide a framework for steps to take to mitigate the virus's spread and to gradually re-establish our in-person connections.

Worship Considerations Church Events/Activities Action Red Phase, Yellow Phase, Green Phase

In Summary: Church services should not be conducted in person. Yellow means proceed with caution and may be viewed as a planning and preparation phase, rather than a full reopening phase, even after moving into the green phase, social distancing measures will likely still need to be maintained to keep people safe and healthy. In-person worship no more than 25 total attending, Yes, with limitations on who should attend. Those considered high-risk should be encouraged to continue virtual worship. Minimum of 6 feet separating family units. Masks required for all attendees above 2 years old. Food Events, No.

Other Considerations in Yellow Phase-In any case, to reduce the incidence of severe, possibly life-threatening disease, individuals over the age of 65 and/or who have health conditions that make them more vulnerable, or who live with others with such conditions should continue to avoid in-person gatherings as much as possible. Please know that the individuals over 65 that we mention also includes our pastors. We want our pastors to be as safe as our congregational participants. If the church pastor, organist, liturgists, etc. are over 65 we need to maintain social-distancing and stay-at-home standards.-

Yellow Phase-gatherings can begin church worship leaders (ushers, readers, etc.):

Are younger than 65, Have no auto-immune or underlying health issues,
Will wear mask, gloves, and practice social distancing-

Offerings can be left in basket/plate by to sanctuary door. Counters should consider wearing gloves and should wash hands after counting. People should be encouraged to give electronically, by credit card, use their bank's payment program of sending checks out, give on-line via pay pal or credit card, or via texting. Congregations are strongly encouraged to invest in any technology that will be "giving friendly" to members and friends.

-Communion elements can be brought from home for each individual/family to use in the pew or served by one person (masked and gloved) up front with individual cups and bread/host/wafers placed in people's hands. Passing of trays should be avoided until further notice.

-Post signs that the congregation is following CDC guidelines for everyone's health and safety including:

Yellow--Very Limited onsite activity. Rules regarding masks, social distancing and limitations on attendees must be followed.

Green --Yes, following CDC recommendations Church Rentals-Not Allowed, following CDC recommendations. Yes as long as CDC guidelines for gathering and sanitation are met. Wearing a mask is required. Discourage those who have a fever, those who have been to high-risk areas and those who may have been exposed to COVID to not attend. This may include health care professionals as well as visitors. –

-Develop a congregational plan to follow CDC guidelines if a parishioner, a visitor, or someone who uses the building tests positive for COVID. There is so much "data" and "guidance" being offered that it is hard to know what to believe or who to trust.

We hope that this information has been helpful for you in your plans for reopening our in-person worship gatherings; however, please keep in mind that, whether we gather together in person, on the computer or just in our hearts, God is with all of us in this walk through a very scary valley.

April 02, 2020
Deacons meeting Minutes

Kay opened the meeting with a reading of Psalm 99:3-4 and Revelations 4:8.

The Deacon's questioned when we should video and post the service online. It was discussed that maybe we should go back to being live on Sunday Mornings, while others thought that posting the service Saturday Evening may invite more people to view the service. The decision was made to post the service to YouTube and Facebook on Saturday at 7:00pm. When summer service starts on June 7, 2020, we will try going live at 10:00am. Some parishioners have expressed that they miss the live chat via Facebook Live.

Mother's Day cards are late, so we will send them as soon as they are received. We will also be sending out Father's Day Cards due to not having a worship in person to honor them at this time. We will be doing a bulk mailing in order to save money on postage.

We have decided to suspend communion until further notice. We were scheduled to have our quarterly communion in June.

Next Meeting will be June 14, 2020 at 11:30am via Zoom.

Christian Education

Once again this month praises and thank yous go out to Miss Bonnie, Payton, and Miss Kandy for the beautiful job they are doing to keep the children aware of God's great love and affection for them and their loved ones.

Miss Bonnie and Payton are doing SS lessons at 10:15 and posting them on YouTube. Miss Kandy is doing daily devotions from a book entitled My Time With God.

God does love each and everyone of us no matter how young or old we may be. He uses many different circumstances to show His love.

Hope all is well with everyone and until we meet again may the Lord continue to bless and keep you in His care.

Stephen Jesse, of Kingsley, PA, was one of 16 students from SUNY Oneonta's Schol of Economics and Business who were inducted into the college's Beta Gamma Sigma honor society chapter during an online recognition ceremony on April 24.

Only the best business students in the world, and the professionals who earned the distinction of "the best in the business" during their academic careers, can claim membership in Beta Gamma Sigma. Students ranking in the top 10 percent of the baccalaureate and the top 20 percent of the graduate programs at schools accredited by AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business are eligible for this invitation. Beta Gamma Sigma has installed collegiate chapters and inducted students on six continents.

Jesse, a senior, is studying Business Economics at SUNY Oneonta.

Report from the Treasurer:

To make expense every month in general (example: electric, payroll, office and programs)
We will need \$12,597.92 a month to meet our Budget for 2020.

Here is the Income and Expenses for April 2019 and 2020.

April	2019	April	2020
Income:	\$30,220.59	Income:	\$27,534.87
Expense:	\$10,020.49	Expense:	\$8,505.54
Total:	\$20,200.10	Total:	\$19,029.33

General Year to Date for 2020

Income:	\$56,385.51
Expense:	\$39,857.81
Total:	\$16,527.70

Stewardship Update

The stewardship committee has been active in meeting during the pandemic. We have met twice virtually online via ZOOM and had some great conversation and discussion on how to keep the church financially and spiritually sound during this time when we cannot be together. Nancy Burriss was going to look into the PPE program to cover paychecks and employee expenses while the church was locked down. This is the first time that the government made any funds like this available to churches. We had discussed moving the fall stewardship campaign forward to help make everyone aware of our financial standing, but the congregation has been very responsive to keeping up with their giving through the pandemic. Yes, maybe we are not quite where we need to be financially, but we will get through this time together. We discussed many ways we could possibly help at this time from drive thru blessings to delivering meals and the general consensus was to hold off on that for now as we have to be very careful how many people we have in one place at a time. We did discuss bringing the online giving spot on the website to light and make sure everyone knew that this was an option.

These are unsure times. There is much uncharted territory that we will face in the future, but if we keep our trust that God will see us through this, as he has with this congregation so many times before, we will survive and be stronger for it. Stay healthy and pray for our future.

Craig Stout

Stewardship chairperson.

Weinberg Food Bank is coming to Harford First Congregational Church

The 4th Friday of each month
Next distribution June 26, 2020
3:30-5:30

Any income can apply
Preregistration is required:
See attached application or
complete the form online firstchurchharford.com
or call Tammy @ 570-396-7081.



Day of Distribution please bring with you a photo ID and a current household bill with your current Susquehanna County address



Weinberg Food Bank:

May: - We served 123 families this month. Thank you to all that help unload, repack and distribute!

Weinberg Food Bank Prep and Distribution



ATTENTION

June 14th is Children's Day along with Flag Day. We would like to do a slide show of all of our "kids" whether they be our kids, grandkids, great grands, nieces, nephews or simply a child that is special to you during the special music time in our Sunday service. Please send pics to Tammy Cooley Stout via email at stout4@nep.net. Can't wait to see your kids!

Preparation for May 24, 2020 Worship



Nicaraguan CHE (Community Health Evangelism) group help supply community with masks and supplies.



Message from Susquehanna County Interfaith

INTERFAITH IS MOVING AND NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Yes ! You did read that right! Due to the uncertain economic times and the additional requirements from the CDC, Department of Health and Department of Labor; the best place for Interfaith is a sanctuary where we can continue to fulfill the mission of helping people.

PS. our community has been very generous so that we can help our neighbors. Interfaith is NOT using that money to move with.



Where are we going? We are acquiring the United Methodist Church right across from the old hospital building in downtown Montrose. This will be our forever home.

When are we moving ? Now, we are hoping to re-open in the new building July 1.

YES! We need help! We would love to have crews helping us to paint, rejuvenate the front with flowers and landscaping, and move items. Please email director@interfaithsc.org, text 570-396-0642 or call 570-278-1776 to get signed up .

Prayer requests: Here are the biggest ones: our temporary permit to be give as soon as possible. That we would be able to get a good deal on paint, flooring, decking, flowers (exterior renovations will happen latter) and a commercial washing machine and commercial dryer. Plus, people who would like to help!

For the first time ever - Susquehanna County Interfaith is participating in an area wide friend raiser. We want people to know what Susquehanna County is truly like - people with generous, loving hearts, who care about their neighbor.

We're counting down the days to June 5th and NEPA Gives. We need your help to make our campaign a success, and we've included a few easy ways that you can support us.

Share and share alike. Online days of giving are successful because of our own networks. Help us grow our network by sending this email to your network and ask your friends to do the same.

Be socially (media) active. Use your social media networks: post on Facebook, tweet about NEPA Gives, and share your love for Susquehanna County Interfaith. Ask others to do the same.

Become a fundraising champion. Everyone loves a champion, including us! We really need fundraising champions to help drive people to our NEPA Gives profile on June 5th. Contact us for more information on how to become a fundraising champion!

Thank you in advance for your support!

Spring Shower of Blessings “6”

When: The month of April/May /June

Where: Harford First Congregational UCC

Benefit: The Women’s Resource Center & CareNet

Remember: Many women and children are

currently sheltering in place with abusers.

The need for sanctuary and supplies has increased!

We will be collecting:

New Linen

Cleaning Supplies

Gift Certificates

Personal Hygiene Items

Baby Items

* See next pages for a Complete List

Baby Shower Ideas Care Net Pregnancy Center of NEPA

Car Seats – INFANT – neutral colors

Diapers – (In the SMALL packs of 20 – 30 diapers)
Size N, 1, 4, 5, 6 and pull ups (we have 2 and 3)

Desitin / A&D ointment

Baby Shampoo, Baby Wash , Baby Lotion

Baby hooded towels and wash cloths

Boppy pillow

Nursing covers

Breast Pump

Mobiles

Baby stroller

Wipes – sensitive skin

**Pack and Play and pack-n-play sheets

Changing tables (usually get Graco Freeport to match crib – Espresso or cherry - Walmart)

Clothing up to size 24 months

Onesies through 12 months (colored – not white)

Photo albums

Potty chair

Socks / Baby shoes / boots

**Snuggles (little blankets about 12" square with or w/o animals)

**Teethers & Rattles

Photo albums or baby memory books

Cute things for the mom's are always fun, too. – Body spray, lotions, soaps, gift cards, tea,....

Baby Safe and Gentle Laundry Detergent

High Chair seats that strap onto a regular chair

Anything that you see in a Baby Department we can use at Care Net.

While shopping, try to put yourself in the place of a 15-25 year old mom who loves nice things, but doesn't have money for anything she needs for her baby. If you love it, she will, too. If you used it with your kids, she will use it, too.

We also like to put together a "new mom" gift bag with newborn items and a few "pamper mom" items. So anything towards this end is great – even a good family oriented book (We do give them a "Mother's Comfort" Devotional guide)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!! HAVE FUN SHOPPING. USE YOUR IMAGINATION.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of babies and their families.

Baby Monitors

Burb pads & bibs

Crib Sheets & Crib mattress pads

CD's with baby music (Twinkle Twinkle little star, baby Einstein,...etc, both singing and instrumental)

Clothing – 0 -12 months / snow suits / jackets

Gerber gentle formula 0- 12 months (NOT NEWBORN)

First Aid kit (baby)

\$20 gift cards to Walmart or Target or Price Chopper

Baby bath tubs with sling liner for infants

Medical kits or baby hygiene kit

Diaper Genies & liner bags

Baby Carriers (soft straps)



With the addition of our Fatherhood program, we now have Dad's shopping, too. So think of toys or clothing a Dad would like for the little ones (camo, sports oriented, etc)

WRC WISH LIST

The Women's Resource Center in Susquehanna County is in need of the following donations that will be used to assist survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence in our community. Please call with any questions:

570-278-1800

Gift Cards

Pump & Pantry, \$10 Gas Cards

Price Chopper, Ray's or Rob's \$10 or \$25 Gift Cards

Wal-Mart \$10 or \$25 Gift Cards

New Donations of:

Linens, including sheets, towels and washcloths

Cleaning supplies, such as mops, brooms and plastic pails

Additional Items:

Toilet paper, paper towels and tissues

Shampoo, conditioner, lotion and body wash

Deodorant, tooth brushes and tooth paste

Razors, feminine supplies, nail care items and sewing kits

Hair brushes, combs and hair ties

Laundry detergent (64 oz. or smaller), fabric softener and dryer sheets

Dish soap, household cleansers, sponges and scrubbing pads

Adult blankets, adult and children socks

Baby/children's items (Diapers, wipes, soaps and toothpaste)

Hard cover journals, pens

Reusable grocery bags

Donation Box is in the Gathering Room and will be placed outside the Double Glass doors every Wednesday for drive by donations

Home Bound

The Carey Family

Barbara Pease

Dorothy Greene



Prayer Concerns

Craig Stout

Safety for Kailey Bridgeman (has left home)

Comfort for Kailey Bridgeman's family

Businesses under stress and those opening

Nicholas (Great Grandson of the Weidemans)

Patrick Simons

Scott Klenk

Heather Warren

Christian Kuhar

Mary Jane Genneken

Sandy Paolucci

Brandi & Dave

Larry Herbert

Nancy Burris

Shawni Vietri

Joshua (Vietri's foster son)

Karen Jones' Family Members

JoAnn Titus

Gary and Wendy Phillips

Family of Ellie Miller

Pastor Will's new Family

Jack, has covid-19

Evan Clarkson

Lynn Franklin and

Family

Greg Symuleski

Rock Estabrook

Joe Batzel and family

our nation under God

our government

Barbara Weideman

John Butler

Corinne Chichester and job search

Sharon Frantz

Weinberg Food Bank

Emily and Donovan

Albert Oullette

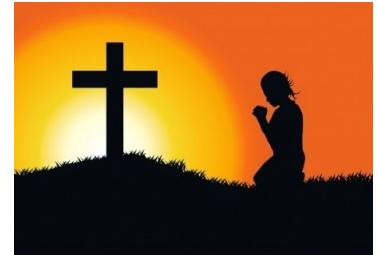
Joe Rybnick

Karin and Art Doolittle

Barb Pompey

The Jesse/Corbin Wedding

Graduates



The Website is up and running.

We have worked hard, but we realize that important things may not have been included.

We are still adding and changing things so if you have suggestions, please email Holli Chichester at hollischichester@gmail.com or call 301-643-1775.

Please check it out at

www.firstchurchharford.com



Directory update:

Valerie Genneken
57 Brushville Road
New Milford
PA 18834



June Birthdays



June 01	Aaron Phillips	June 21	Greta Schulte
June 05	Bill and Dorothy Matthews (60yrs)	June 22	Don and Linda Lindsey
June 08	Christina Zick Tim Higgins	June 23	Lisa Marr Hahn Ivie Simones Irene Deemer
June 09	Calvin Zick	June 24	Eleanor Meyer David Schulte, Jr.
June 12	Matthew Mitchell	June 26	Brad and Paula Millard
June 17	Sue Furney/Wayne Frederici Connie Breese	June 28	Mikaela Stout
June 18	Bob DeLuca	June 30	BethAnn Masters
June 19	Ralph Simons		
June 20	Jessica Miller		

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.

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.

Correspondence

Dear Congregation, Karen sent an email to me today. So you know, all email is sent directly to me or Judy here at the office. We share this computer. No email you send goes out to everyone unless we have your permission to do so (and yes, we ask!).

Karen has much to share in an update, and she gave me blessings to share it with you all.

Please hold Karen, Rick, and their family in your prayers today.

And yes, please write us. Let us know how you're doing so that we can stay connected and in care with each other! -Will

Dear Will,

There's no doubt that we are living in troubling times right now. We are challenged to find ways to keep busy and entertained as we also keep up with our daily chores and take care of our families in the best ways possible.

I have found that I can stay reasonably content and cheerful by reading, painting, and crafting and going for walks between all the cooking and cleaning. Rick and I do Face time, calling, texting, and even rousing, animated sessions on Zoom with family members and friends that keep us connected and up to date. However, the weekly church services online, the calls and email prayers and messages from you and others, and the kindness that we hear about within our church family and others in the world cause me to get a sense of calm and renewal of faith every day.

Many thanks to you, the worship team and other groups in the church working to help us, and to all essential workers who continue to help us every day.

Karen Jones

Happy Birthday Helen!

**Helen Foster's 91st birthday was
May 19, 2020.**



From Teresa Lamberson re: Weinberg Food Distribution on April 24, 2020:

For the month of April we were able to feed 144 families. Thank you to Susquehanna Dairy promotion, The Bewley Family, and The Empet Family for all the milk.

The Harford Fair youth Board and the Susquehanna county Commissioners for all the food. A huge Thank You to all my volunteers without you none of this would be possible.

Graduates!!



Next month is graduate month in the Spire. Please send in your graduates name, school and any future plans that you would like to share.. If you have a picture, we would love to include it with the article. Please send information to Firstchurchspire@gmail.com.

Harford First Congregational Church has supported The Summer Lunch Box Program by collecting the peanut butter needed. This year the program has swelled to just under 400 children due to the economic impact of the pandemic. The summer Lunch Box Program is ready to start food distribution but are unable to purchase the quantity of food necessary due to restriction caused by the current pandemic. If possible, please also bring in Jelly along with the peanut butter. Other groups will be asked if they can also increase foods to help the program start June 13th, 2020.



SUMMER LUNCH BOX

The Summer Lunch box has donated \$9,000.00 in the form of gift certificates, for groceries, to families in need during this pandemic. Gift certificates from the Hometown Market in Montrose, Mountainside Produce Market in Friendsville, and Black's Store in Hop Bottom are in the processes of being distributed.

The Summer Lunch Box, a grass roots, 100% volunteer, nonprofit organization has provided groceries (perishable and non-perishable), to families of the Mountain View School District for over 9 years and added Choconut area families this past summer. This summer we will be adding all of Montrose School District and the Elk Lake School District to our program. We were able to expand our outreach to these school districts as a direct result of a large donation from the Diaz Companies.

Our funding and support has come from the wonderful men and women of VFW Post 8488, Lenox Twp. and this summer we will have the added support from the VFW in Montrose, American Legion and Sons of the American Legion, Montrose.

In addition to the above supporters, local churches, clubs, businesses and the citizens of Susquehanna County have unselfishly donated to the Summer Lunch Box since its existence.

While we are not able to start our distribution to families yet, we hope our donation of gift certificates will help ease their struggles.

We truly live in the best county in the state, a county who strives to look after their neighbor when times are tough.

SUMMER LUNCH BOX

Spring, 2020

P.O. BOX 74

HOP BOTTOM, PA 18824

Entity: #84-2249142

Greetings from Summer Lunch Box,

As we think about the coronavirus, COVID-19 and the ripple effects on our lives, it is time to think ahead...when hand sanitizer and toilet paper will be readily available once again, for example! It's also time to begin thinking about the coming summer and the ongoing Summer Lunch Box Program.

2019 was a very busy season for the group: We served 73 families with a composite total of 199 children. We have been approved for 501c3 status. If you need it, I have included our number above.

2020 promises to be a busy season with some expansions on the horizon. By location, here are some tentative plans:

Mountain View School District -

- For the 10th consecutive year, distribution will resume at Grace Lutheran Church basement, Hop Bottom.

August 29th - Chix BBQ, Basket Raffle, Bake Sale-Gun Raffle - Hosted by - Elk Mountain VFW, Kinsley. Tickets will be available as soon as the date is set.

Montrose School District -

- Choconut Area Children - Distribution at Neumann Center, Choconut

- Montrose Children - Distribution at VFW, Montrose

- Sept 19th Chix BBQ, Golf Tournament, Basket Raffle, Bake Sale-Gun Raffle - Hosted by the VFW, Montrose.

- Area charitable organizations have pledged support and assistance.

Elk Lake School District -

- Distribution will be at the Elk Lake High School Cafeteria

- Local groups have promised support and help.

SLB continues to be a small, community-minded group that has taken action to provide nutritious foodstuffs for children who are food insecure. These are those children who would normally receive free/reduced priced meals during the school year. During summer recess, these same kids face food insecurities. Attempting to alleviate this food shortage, the Summer Lunch Box Program was organized in 2011. Centered in Hop Bottom, our efforts have assisted children from primarily the Mountain View School District. That will soon change, as outlined above. Registration begins soon for eligible families.

While the end of this academic year remains in limbo, SLB anticipates 5 or 6 upcoming food distribution dates. Despite our efforts to shop prudently, grocery costs continue to spiral, and each order seems more expensive than the previous one. Present funding will get us started; we are attempting to raise additional monies to cover any shortfall.

On behalf of the Summer Lunchbox Program, I am asking for your help in meeting our needs. Perhaps you yourself experienced hunger as a child or have been in contact with area hungry children. Many of us know families who often must choose between paying bills or buying groceries for their families. In these instances, food purchases often drop to the bottom of the priority list. **We are 100% community and fund-raiser supported and 100% volunteer based.**

Note that the Elk Mountain V.F.W. Post at Lenox once again is assisting our efforts by helping us sponsor a chicken barbecue. Tickets will be available at the V.F.W. or from any SLB committee member. Donations to the accompanying bake sale and basket raffle are welcome. For details on the basket raffle, feel free to contact Holli at 570/851-5109 or cell 301/643-1775. Bake sale questions can be directed to Paula Smith at 570/289-4102.

We would certainly appreciate any support of Summer Lunch Box Program you can provide. Donations can be sent to the above address.

Thanks in advance for your consideration,

Lorraine A. Stanton, for Summer Lunch Box



Non-Profit Organization

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Montrose, PA 18801

Harford First Congregational Church –UCC
5016 Creek Road
PO Box 217
Harford, PA 18823
Tel. 570-434-2260
Email: firstch@nep.net
Spire email: firstchurchspire@gmail.com
Web URL: www.firstchurchharford.com

.....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
Office Hours: Mon. 4-5:30 pm

Judy Mitchell –Sec

Hours: Tuesday 1:00-5:00
Friday 1:00-5:00