

OUR SPIRE




Volume 37 November 2018

Number 10



Reaching Up to God,
Reaching Out to People



Thanksgiving

(Lizella Augusta Jenkins Moore)

Let us give thanks to God above,
Thanks for expressions of His love,
Seen in the book of nature, grand
Taught by His love on every hand.




Let us be thankful in our hearts,
Thankful for all the truth imparts,
For the religion of our Lord,
All that is taught us in His word.

Let us be thankful for a land,
That will for such religion stand;
One that protects it by the law,
One that before it stands in awe.

Thankful for all things let us be,
Though there be woes and misery;
Lessons they bring us for our good-
Later 'twill all be understood.

Thankful for peace o'er land and sea,
Thankful for signs of liberty,
Thankful for homes, for life and health,
Pleasure and plenty, fame and wealth.

Thankful for friends and loved ones, too,
Thankful for all things, good and true,
Thankful for harvest in the fall,
Thankful to Him who gave it all.

Merissa Cope Nunn

Pastor's Page

Those in heaven hold an inspiring message for us

We celebrate All Saints Day uniquely in our church by remembering loved ones now in heaven. The origin of the day is Catholic and honors the known and unknown saints of the (capital C) Church. The real deal saints. The big wigs. The movers. The shakers.

I'm not sure when First Congregational-UCC started celebrating All Saint's Day by remembering those we know who have passed on before us, but I like this loving tradition—a lot. It says those we love are not far from us, and I believe this is true.

I also believe those we love and miss continue to have an inspiring message for us, a message we need to hold close to us. What is the message?

Think about those ahead of us in heaven. If we had a direct pipeline into a conversation with them, what they would say to us about what is important (and what is not important) is something we should hear.

Think about it. Should we sweat the small stuff? Should we spend time thinking about why we should spend less on church programming and outreach?

Think some more. Should we hold to the 'big picture' of what the Church is called to do, even when some challenges seem to be in the way? Should we spend more minutes loving those close to us and seek ways to love those we can reach who are just beyond our community?

I remember the saints ahead of me, those wonderful people I know from our congregation who have inspired me. You have your saints, too. They were wonderful. They were also real. By this I mean they were not perfect. But in love, they are telling us today what we can do today, and that is move forward not with fear but in faith. Namely big, bold faith.

Consider what a loved one would say to you. Keep your money. Watch your retirement funding. Those kids don't need that. What this Church has now is more than good enough. You need your time for yourself.

Yeah...you're right. They wouldn't say **any** of what you just read. They would encourage you to be generous with your money. Your retirement is with God one day when you see Him face to face, not in some care home for the aged. Kids do need what you can offer in terms of financial gifts. Help them now. First Congregational-UCC has spark and joy and will continue do follow God's call for care in the community because you are—or can be—a tangible part of its vital life today. And your time? Your time is blessed not when you seek actions and activities for yourself only; you and others are blessed when you give your time, talents and treasures away.

Those in heaven do have a message. Think specifically of a loved one or two who is free up above when you can feel chained here below. What are they telling you? Listen to how are they inspiring you to be a saint—a real, live saint—in our Church today.





10 Year Anniversary
for
Pastor Will Hagenbuch
at
First Congregational Church
of
Harford, PA

Will Hagenbuch became the pastor of First Congregational Church of Harford, PA in 2008. During his 10 years as our pastor he has conducted sermon preparation, visitations, committee meetings, weddings, funerals, baptisms, and confirmation classes.

In addition to the day to day duties of a pastor, Pastor Will has also been responsible for the following:

- Over saw the church building addition to completion
- Encouraged and participated in the planning of two Fall Festivals
- Has implemented the Pet Blessings ministry
- Wrote and directed the community play "*Answered*"
- Has continued his involvement with the youth Group, Game-On
- Helped with a Memorial Day Parade (the church won a prize)
- Wrote and acted in the Harford Fair dining hall Skit with our youth
- Has moved our church into the Digital age by writing a BLOG and a VLOG
- He is currently writing articles for the local newspaper - "*Keeping the Pace*"
- He participates in keeping our worship space beautiful by decorating the church
- He has initiated the Monday Morning Quarterback Meetings to encourage communication and stream-line new ideas
- He is presently studying for his Doctor of Ministry to bring new innovations to our church
- He has been instrumental in the development of a world-wide website for our church to reach our members and the unchurched
- He has initiated the live-streaming of our worship to reach those not worshipping in the church Proper
- He initiated a first-ever ecumenical Prayer Service which was held at the Mountain View School's High School auditorium
- He has actively engaged the community in working together (Christmas Tree Lighting, 1st Responder and Police Recognition Sunday, Scouting participation)

Thank you Pastor Will for your dedication and sacrifices!

SpireSponsor

"In honor of Will's 10 years of service to the church."

Dottie Hagenbuch

Message from the Stewardship Committee



“It’s NOT About the Money, It’s About How We Serve”

We are wrapping up our fall Stewardship Campaign and looking forward to a bright 2019. Our beginning thoughts brought the quote **“It’s not about the Money, it’s how we Serve”**. Yes, absolutely, it takes a substantial amount of money to support the day to day operations of the church and we want to thank each and every one of you for your pledges up to this point, and if it slipped your mind, there still time!

But, is the money all that we need to be concerned with? Is that all it takes....a good cash flow?

NO!

It takes dedication. It takes talents. It takes love and understanding. It takes someone that talks, listens, preaches, teaches, bakes, sews, drives, cleans, someone good with tools and the lists goes on. There are a few things listed on the Time and Talents Sheet that could be your way to serve. You might even add something that’s not on the list!

We can’t continue to grow if we don’t use our Faith!

We need to **“Reach Up to God and Reach Out to People”!**

We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit that blew into our Sanctuary. We need to heed the nudges we are getting from God. You care and you love! You care, because if you didn’t, you wouldn’t be reading this!

Step Up! Step Out! Yes, it might be a bit uncomfortable at first, but have faith! Pray about it! Help all of us be the hands and feet of Jesus!

May God Bless you in your spiritual journey and your serving in Jesus’ name in the year to come!

The Stewardship Committee





All Saints Day Service

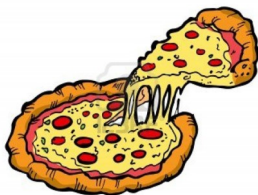
November 4, 2018

November 4, 2018 we will be remembering loved ones who have passed away in our All Saints Day service. We will have a slide show as we did last year.

If you would like to remember your loved one and would like a photo of that person or persons to be included in the slide show that Sunday, please email the photo to Tammy Stout at stout4@nep.net or text it to her 570-396-7081 or leave the photo in the office with a note on it that says for Tammy. Please include the name of the person in the photo.

Adult Fellowship

An adult group is meeting for food and fellowship each Wednesday evening from 5:15 to around 7:00 at Armettas's Restaurant in Gibson. All are welcome!! Just text Holli at 301-643-1775 if you are attending so that enough chairs will be reserved.



Interfaith Clothing Drive

Yes, it's that time of year again to begin our drive for fall/winter clothing for Interfaith. The bin is located in the Gathering Room. Only items for Fall/Winter clothing will be accepted at this time, if you have other clothing please wait for our Spring/Summer clothing drive to donate them. Thank you for all that you donate.

Love in Christ,
The Stewardship Committee



Council Minutes

9-27-18

September Flash NEWS

Pastor Will opened the Council meeting with a reading from Mark 9:38 and prayer.

Financial Secretary /Treasurer's report: Dottie Hagenbuch. The reports were read. All bills are paid and up-to-date. The steeple is being repaired by Benington and the first payment of \$15,679 is to be paid.

Christian Education: Kay Gow. Advent supplies are being ordered for the Sunday School children. The attendance has been good in Sunday School. The book of Proverbs will be studied next. Payton Colwell is assisting with the younger children's Sunday School class. The older students are meeting in the music room.

Church Cupboard: Maureen Warren: Serving families and 5 individuals.

Deacons: Kay Gow.

October 7th will be Communion Sunday.

October 28th will be 1st Responder Sunday with a luncheon following the service.

November 11th will be a Christmas Card singing after the service.

November 25th will be the Tree Lighting for the Community.

Historian: an average of 71 people have attended in September.

Missionary: Holli Chichester.

\$1970 from yard sale (donated to Partnership in Hope for Nicaraguan Missionaries)

\$82 collected from all group for Least Coin (to Church Women United). Least Coin encourages women all over the world to pray for peace and reconciliation in their own lives and for the world and to add a coin (the least) to a container as an offering each time they pray for this. The least coin is used so that all can participate. Prayer transcends all barriers.

CareNet a fund- raising banquet on October 11, 2018 at 6:30 at Elk Mountain. Representatives from missionary will attend and give our sponsorship donation of \$100.

Missionary Yard Sale: We will participate in the Christmas in Montrose Celebration this year November 30 – December 2. We will be located at St. Paul's or Lee's Furniture (TBD). We will begin our collection of Yard Sale things now through November 29th. We will separate out Log Cabin Attic Treasure items from the overall donations as much as possible. We will contact Interfaith to determine what their needs are and separate those items also.

Election Day Bake Sale: November 6th. We will contact the Fire Hall to determine if we may hold a Bake Sale on Election Day again. We will ask the congregation to assist us in this endeavor by making announcements and putting up a bake goods sign-up sheet. We will also ask for help manning the table.

Disaster Kits: October 1- November 15. Susquehanna County suffered massive flooding. Over 1000 clean-up kits and hygiene kits were sent in from the CWS (Church World Service) to our area. We will be collecting items to make both clean-up and hygiene kits to help restock the supply of these for the next disaster.

Teacher Support: We will contact Dr. Lake at Mountainview School to see what we can do to help support our teachers after the Christmas holidays.

Next Meeting: October 16, 2018

Choir: Will Hagenbuch. Practice is underway.

Nominating: Jacquie Phillips. Have met twice this month and have filled all but two positions.

Stewardship: Craig Stout. The pledge campaign "It's not just the Money, It's how You Serve" has begun and the pledge cards have been mailed out. Each week a new topic will be presented to the congregation. The pledge drive will end on November 4th.

October 28th will be a combined luncheon between Stewardship (Pledge Drive) and Deacon (1st Responder).

October 21st is the HVA Halloween party.

November 25: We will celebrate our many gifts.

The next meeting is October 18th.

Trustees: Harry Gardner. Kandy is obtaining an update from the insurance company on our Hail Damage Claim.

Looking for a painter to do exterior painting and for a contractor to level the Fellowship Hall for future siding work.

The Sewer Pump will be replaced by the Township and moved from under the steps.

Willing Workers: Joann Titus. The log cabin was a success this year.

Roast Beef Dinner November 17th. See a willing worker for tickets or get them in the church office.

November 7th: Big Group Meeting.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Will.

Wedding renewal of Kim and Ray Eppley at the home on Tuesday, September 18th

Have met twice with Katherine Masters and Eric Doolittle to discuss and plan their October 6th wedding

Organizing a community-wide prayer service to be held at the Mountain View HS auditorium on Sunday, October 7th at 6 PM

Met with Elementary School Principal Dr. Lake and Superintendent Karen Voigt to talk about community needs

Planning Young Adult ministries

Met with Youth For Christ pastor Frank Passetti to discuss youth programming in our area

Teaching Sunday school to the middle school youth

Working with Tammy Stout to implement a new GAME ON this year

Continue to write weekly sermon preps, columns and Wednesday blurbs called HUMP DAY HELP

Met with Jennica Drake for publicity and community mindfulness ideas

Worked with Craig Stout and the Stewardship Committee on an original Stewardship Drive this October

Have new worship ideas the Deacons are considering

Visits to shut-ins and the hospitalized

Thankful for the Fall Festival, hard working Trustees, the Rededication service and luncheon, and our community of care

Prayers to all, and God's continued love and guidance upon us.

Flash NEWS

10-25-18

David Schulte opened in prayer.

Treasure's Report: The insurance payments (hail) have covered all the repair expenses to date.

-The copier has been Installed. The copier was paid for with \$2503 from the golf tournament profits and \$1000 from a donor.

-Propane Companies will be researched for the best price.

-The current Insurance costs are \$5520 but this may change due to the recent claim.

-All committees must have budget requests In to Stewardship by November 15th or they will receive the same budget amounts as 2018.

-The sound revisions that are being made to the Sanctuary will be paid for with the money in the Tiffany Fund, because Marie would have appreciated the changes to Improve hearing and seeing the service.

Christian Education: Pancake Dinner-Perhaps have it on March 8th or 9th instead of January.

-Advent begins on December 2, 2018. Items ordered for children have come in and will be given to them at the beginning of Advent.

-The Christmas pageant will be presented on December 23rd during church. During the month of December rehearsals for the pageant will take place.

-There will be caroling before the tree lighting ceremony on November 25th.

-The book of Proverbs is continuing this month with the book Ecclesiastes to follow.

-The next meeting will be on November 13, 2018 at 6:15.

Church Cupboard: 2 families and 5 individuals served

Cradle Roll: 1 newborn added, books and corresponding letters were sent to four children.

Deacons: October 28th-1st Responders service &Potluck. Invitations were sent to Brooklyn, Hop Bottom, Harford , New Milford

-November 3rd – Pet Blessing

-November 11th-Christmas card signing event after worship with chili and cornbread for those that stay

-November 25th – Christmas Tree lighting 6:00 with caroling at 5:30

-December 2 – Will is preaching at South Gibson in the evening

-December 15th – Drop and Shop 9:00-1:00

-December 24 – add a children's insert into bulletin

-January 13th will be the next Communion.

-Kay will contact the Welsh Hill congregation to join us during Christmas

-February 10th- Worship in the Lecture Hall with Pot Luck afterward

-April 19th- Good Friday service 7-8pm

-April 21st – Sunrise and Easter services

-April 28th -Community Leader Day

Next meeting is November 12th at 7 pm

Game On:

-Game on kicked off another season on September 28th. We were thrilled to see our faithful "GAME ON'ers" return and we welcomed some newcomers as well! Together we gathered for a movie night. We enjoyed snacking on popcorn as we watched the movie "Heaven is for Real" on a giant blow up screen in the Lecture Hall.

-On October 12th we had our second GAME ON with help from Roy and Jennica Drake. We had pizza to start the night off followed by lots of laughs! The kids enjoyed a whipped cream eating contest, sorting (and eating skittles) and making elephant toothpaste!

-Game On would like to send big THANK YOU to Jean Bonham for always making sure we have some sort of sweet treat to end the evening! The kids always look forward to dessert time!

-Our next Game On is October 26th! Bring a friend and join the fun!

Historian: attendance on 10-7-18 was 58, 10-14-18 was 131, 10-21-18 was 57 for an average of 82 per Sunday.

Missionary: Donated \$100 to CareNet and \$75 to Daily Bread

-Correspondence: In: Letter from our CHE Nicaragua Missionaries on current unrest in the country. Food is in short supply and people are being arrested if they speak against the government.

-CareNet Banquet: The speakers were very good and Jesus Christ was the center of all they did. They presented the ministry and several individual cases. Excellent program, we will promote this program to the church next year.

-Disaster Kit Collection: The Eastern Star – Prosperity Chapter donated \$150 to this collection. We will collect items through November 15th. We will assemble the kits November 20th.

-Election Day Bake Sale at the Fire Hall. Will do a minute for mission to encourage the congregation to participate in the baking of items.

-We plan to do other Penance Calendar this year during Lent. We will work on the calendar at the December meeting.

-Next Meeting is November 20 to assemble the Disaster Kits.

-The December meeting will be December 18th.

Nominating: All positions have been filled.

Pastoral Relations: Meeting again October 29

Stewardship Minutes:

-Financial Secretary Dottie shared the report noting that pledges have increased with total pledges so far being significantly higher than last year.

-Julie shared the Treasurer's Report that showed we are gaining some in our financial strength. The Golf Tournament monies of \$2,503 will be used next month to pay for the new copier, along with a \$1,000 donation to complete that purchase.

-An additional insurance check has been received (\$55,408.83), and \$15,679 was used as a down payment on the steeple repair. Treasurer's Report approved.

-Halloween Party for HVA on Sunday, October 21. Snacks will include cheese and crackers, a Halloween cake baked by Kay, and coffee & apple juice. Bingo Games and prizes will entertain the guests, as well as some stories presented by Kay.

-debit/credit section of the website. At the present time, the GIVE button is not active. Matt Mitchell and Holli are going to attempt to get that function "up and running". Julie will open a new account at the same bank to keep those funds separate, assuring the safety of our main account. Julie will then transfer those funds, possibly monthly.

Trustee:

- Kandy was to contact insurance company for an update on our expenditures and allowances.
- Rick spoke with Kevin Cobb about lecture hall foundation. From his perspective, the job would require a full foundation with many additional expenses.
- Sewer pump replaced this week.
- Need a painter for the exterior of the church.
- Trustees reviewed the annual budget
- Water leaking in balcony on north side of church. Should be resolved with new roof project

Willing Workers: Working on the Roast Beef Dinner on November 17

- New Color Copier is in. Working on the communication between Judy's Desktop and the copier.
- Considering videoing the service from the balcony. This would eliminate interference and electricity already exists.
- We need to have all children complete the video release forms.
- Website- Reviewed the developing website for overall comments and suggestions. Development will continue with Matt Mitchell as Developer.

The next council meeting is November 29th.

Attention all Willing Workers!!

We have an invitation to attend the fair board meeting at the church on November 5th at 6:30 pm to discuss the future of the old log cabin. They would like as many members to attend as possible.



BYOB.... Bring your own blanket!

We are asking for extra or unused blanket/s that can be used in the pews until the new pew cushions arrive. The new cushions are not expected to be in until October.

Pastor Will has sat in our pews and reports that without pew padding, you will be uncomfortable in time. We know people will come to church not thinking to bring something to make themselves more comfortable while seated.



We are asking that you leave your blanket/s in the pew/s until they are no longer needed. All blankets will be returned in October or donated to Ugly Quilts if you do not want your blanket returned. Any help will be appreciated.

Disaster Relief

Northeastern Pennsylvania suffered massive flooding. Our own area suffered significant flooding and damage. Over 1000 clean-up kits and hygiene kits were sent into Susquehanna County from the CWS (Church World Service). We will be collecting items to make both clean-up and hygiene kits to help restock the supply of these kits for the next disaster through November 15th. We are serving our church, our community, our state, our country and the world!

Below you will find the list of items for each type of kits. Please stick closely to the requirements as we have been instructed to make each kit identical. Collection box is in the Gathering Room.

Thank you,
Missionary Group First Church
Contact: Holli Chichester 301-643-1775 or 570-851-5109

CWS Hygiene Kit

Supplies needed:

- One hand towel measuring 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 that can 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!!



It's Time to Declutter, Again!!!!

The Missionary Group is sponsoring a yard sale during the Christmas in Montrose event November 30 - December 2. The proceeds will go to help sponsors two Nicaraguan Missionaries living in Nicaragua. These native Nicaraguans have dedicated themselves to working to improve the living conditions of their fellow Nicaraguans by helping to develop community leaders and working to improve skills within the community.

We will be collecting anything to be sold in a yard sale:

All Christmas decorations, lightly used Clothing, shoes, bedding, electrical appliances, lighting, TVs, furniture, household items, kitchen items, tools, yard stuff, toys, baby items, bikes, etc.

Please bring any items to the lecture hall and label them "Yard Sale" now through November 28th.

If you would like a pick up, please contact Holli Chichester at 301-643-1775 or 570-851-5109

or hollischichester@gmail.com.

Thank you, Missionary Group

Come and stroll through the Memorial Garden and visit the Plaques placed there in memory of loved ones.



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.

This month's Sponsor

In memory of my brother, William "Butch" Hagenbuch

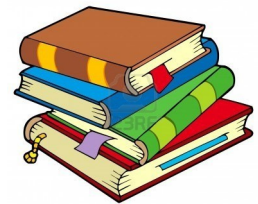
From Harold and Jean H. Kretzing



Susquehanna County Library Help

Do you every shop at ShurSave Supermarket?

One may register their ShurSave Gold Card at the store's customer service counter or online ([www.shursavemarkets.com-programs/Gold Card Program](http://www.shursavemarkets.com-programs/GoldCardProgram))



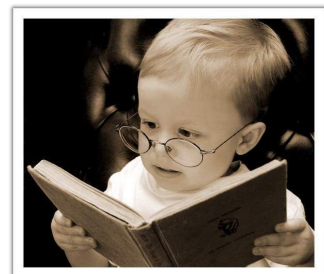
The Susquehanna County Library will receive \$.03 for each can or package of these brands: Best Yet, Nature's Finest, Top Care, Domestix, Academix and others not mentioned in the newspaper article. Hopefully you will be able to sign up on your next shopping trip or from your computer.

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
\$50/month.

Reader Alert: If you would like to be a Reader during our Church Services and are not already on the Reader List, please contact Priscilla Allen at 570-434-2383 or rmallen@nep.net.



An Immigrant's Contribution: Minister observes 50th anniversary of ordination.

BY JILL WHALEN
STAFF WRITER

His parents named him "Ghulam-e-Masih," which translates to "servant of the Messiah."

"I was expected to fulfill my parents' dream and I have," said the Rev. Ghulam M. Nasrani.

Despite some setbacks, the Hazleton man is marking the 50th anniversary of his ordination today.

The retired pastor of the former Emmanuel United Church of Christ in Hazleton, he not only has been involved with a number of



NASRANI

churches across the region, he's been heavily engaged in local community service organizations.

He looks back on his half-century of service to the community as "an immigrant's contribution."

Studied science

Nasrani, 89, arrived in the United States from the Indo-Pakistan region of India.

He was 35 at the time, had

college degrees in chemistry and physics, and had taught both high school and university classes.

His next goal was to earn a degree in geology from The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio.

He hadn't planned on going into the ministry.

"I was doing my field work, digging fossils in a limestone quarry outside of Toledo, Ohio. This was during the 1960s when industries — particularly chemical industries — were applying chemical waste into these deep pits," he remembered.

At the site, Nasrani came into contact with a mysterious chemical. Blisters developed all over his body. His temperature skyrocketed and he became delirious.

The pastor of his church prayed over him each morning he was hospitalized.

"On the third or fourth night, I was crying out to God in tears: 'Please help me. I've dealt with typhoid, malaria, you name it. I just need one more chance. If you give me one, I will do your work,'" Nasrani recalled.

FROM PAGE A1

Hours later, his fever broke and his blisters subsided.

"In the morning, I saw my pastor and asked him, 'Where is the nearest seminary?'" Nasrani recalled.

He received his Master of Divinity degree from the Lancaster Theological Seminary and was ordained on June 9, 1968.

Nasrani is a third-generation Christian.

"In India, where I was born and raised, 80 percent are Hindu, 14 percent are Muslim and 2 percent are Christian," he said. Under India's caste system, Christians are considered outcasts or "untouchables."

"We could not eat with the Hindus or Muslims," he explained.

And in Pakistan, where he earned his chemistry and physics degrees from Gordon College, only 2 percent of the population was Christian.

"There was a lot of persecution. Churches were burned," he said.

Called to Hazleton

Nasrani began his ministry as a pastor for Christian education and youth fellowship at Memorial UCC in Easton in 1968.

In 1970, he was called to head Emmanuel UCC, where he helped the congregation modify its constitution and added two youths to its council. He worked with other pastors from the Penn Northeast Conference to have every church send two youth delegates to the conference's annual voting meetings.

He served Emmanuel until 1991. During that time, he worked with the late Rev. Richard Abernethy to provide leadership to the local Grace, St. Paul and Christ's Memorial UCC congregations. The churches were facing a decline in membership and financial resources and eventually merged into Faith UCC.

The Rev. Jane Hess was appointed transition minister as the churches combined into the Faith congregation.

"In 1997, she was given the call to be the first pastor of

Faith UCC," Nasrani said of Hess. "Through her guidance in the past 20 years, she has made Faith UCC the most vibrant Protestant church in the area."

Nasrani took on St. James UCC in Sheppton as a mission project for Emmanuel beginning in 1991. When he arrived, the church had 25 members. He was able to bring back several families and create a youth fellowship group. He served for 17 years.

He was interim minister for First Congregational UCC in Harford from 1991 to 1993; Zion UCC in Stroudsburg from 1993 to 1995; and Emmanuel UCC in Mountain Top from 1997 to 1999.

A member of Faith UCC, Nasrani is one of the first charter members and served as an elder on its consistory.

From the late 1990s to the early 2000s, he served as an elder on the consistory of Christ UCC in Conyngham where he organized the Single Adults Group for Entertainment and Service. The group of mostly senior citizens enjoyed trips and lunches together.

He also served as a corporate member of the UCC Board for World Ministries, including four years as a member of the Middle East Committee overseeing missionaries and mission work. He traveled to France, Turkey, Jordan, Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to participate in dialogues about peaceful co-existence with Christians, Jews and Muslims.

'Kept the faith'

In the community, he worked with the Child Development Council of Northeast Pennsylvania to start the first day care center at Emmanuel and co-founded Meals on Wheels of Greater Hazleton. He worked with the Community Relations Council of the Keystone Job Corps Center and was the first Protestant named to the Community Relations Council of St. Joseph's Hospital in Hazleton. He also served with the United Way and USA Bicentennial Celebration Committee.

(PAGE A13)
Nasrani helped organize the first Miss Hazleton Pageant, which evolved into Hazleton's Funfest. In addition, he designed relevant short morning devotions for a local radio station and helped transition a study group into the Interfaith Greater Hazleton Ministerium.

"All my positive ministry activities were never a smooth sailing," he said. "I had several setbacks, a few dejections and some personal struggles. Yet, I kept the faith and went on living by the challenge St. Peter had placed before his fellow ministers with the words, 'Brethren, be more zealous to confirm your 'call' and 'election.'"

Nasrani said one of the most spiritual upliftings he received was during a 1980 trip to the Holy Land.

"Visiting the places where Jesus stood, walked, did miracles and preached the good news of human redemption strengthened my Christian faith," he said.

At the Church of Nativity outside of Jerusalem, he saw where a star marked the spot of Jesus' birth.

"As I knelt on the floor and touched the star, my whole body tinged with a strange shudder. I was filled with the overpowering sense of spiritual awakening," he remembered. "The euphoric joy brought tears in my eyes. I felt greatly blessed and ordained anew for my future ministry."

Nasrani has retired but has done supply preaching in a number of churches across the region.

With his ex-wife, the former Susan Lewis, he has children Paul and Julia. Paul, of New York City, founded and owns the Adirondack Creamery. Julia is a visiting scholar of world languages at Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science. Nasrani has two grandsons.

"I am a man of faith. I think positive. I put things in God's hands," he said.

Contact the writer: jwhalen@standardspeaker.com; 570-501-3592

Worship Assistants

Greeters

November 04 Dorothy Hagenbuch
November 11 Peg Empet
November 18 Judy Mitchell
November 25 Leanne Colwell

Ushers

November 04 Gary Phillips and Kay Gow
November 11 Gus Ferrara and George Lotter
November 18 Sharon Decker and Kay Gow
November 25 Bailey Millard and **Mikaela** Stout

Readers

November 04 Mikaela Stout
November 11 Nancy Burris
November 18 Anita Millard
November 25 Patti Vietri

November Birthdays and anniversaries

November 2 Evan Clarkson
4 Coe Masters
George Lotter
6 Sue Needham
Rich Masters
10 Twila Williams
11 Mark & Pam Lewis
Kari Lynn Zupanovich
16 Julie Kesten
20 Robert Schulte
Vivian Rutherford
21 Brian Tyler
22 Debbie Oakes
25 Tatiana Lamberson
26 Damian Cook
27 Irv & Sue Needham
29 Paula Adams



Notice: Please send all material for the Spire to

Firstchurchspire@gmail.com

Pet Blessing

November 3rd at 10:00 am

First Congregational UCC
Harford

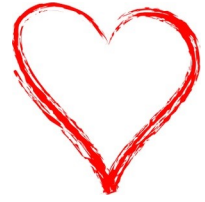


**During our Pet Blessing, we will be launching ARC
(Animal Resource Center).**

**We will also enjoy safe, fun games and activities for
the kids and adults too!**

Correspondence

From: Jim, Erika (Lewis) and Quinn Gething,
*Quinn says thank you for the wonderful book for her birthday.
She loves to read it!
Thanks for thinking of us.*



Community Christmas Tree Lighting

November 25, 2018

Christmas Carols 5:30

Tree Lighting 6:00

More Information

to come





Prayer Concerns

Nicholas (Great Grandson of the Weidemans)

Family of Jodi Rogers

Family of Bethany Millard

Patrick Simons

Scott Klenk

John Zimmerman

Kevin Tingley

Nancy Marr

Dale Grant

Heather Wellman Jackson

Sandy Zupanovich

Gerry Compton

Bob Simons

Bobby Anderson and family

Alice Watkins

Dorothy Greene

Joanne Titus

Gary Phillips

Steve Decker

Home Bound

The Carey Family

Dorothy Greene

Alice Watkins

Catherine Escandel

Barbara Pease



Address and Directory Change

Mr./Mrs. John/Lola Zimmerman

4136 SR 2002

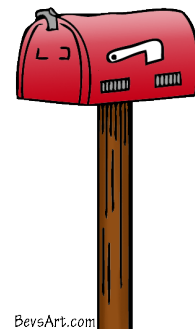
Hop Bottom, Pa. 18824

570-289-8687

Mr. and Mrs. David/Jackie Schulte, III and Sallie

142 South Van Buren Street

Scranton, PA 18504



BevsArt.com

Kids' Corner



On October 7, 2018, a prayer service was at Mountain View Jr/Sr High School. The service welcomed anyone and ALL students were invited to participate. Students took turns coming to the podium and reading prayers. The prayers included safety and wellness including academic, vocational, athletic, social and community safety, health and happiness.

To end the service two flags were presented to the school. The flags had a picture of an eagle with an olive branch in its mouth to symbolize peace and safety in our schools. After the service ended, pastor Lucas Taylor said with his bright, signature smile and optimism, “We made history!”. This was the first time a prayer service was held at the school.

This was a great idea and a great experience! We hope to continue this in upcoming years!



Drop and Shop

Gingerbread Houses

baking cookies

December 15 9am-1pm

First Congregational Church



Drop your kids with us for some fun time while you enjoy free time to prep for the holidays

Contact Tammy Stout for more details or to register your child!

570-396-7081

Movies

Games

Thanksgiving Word Search

R E L A T I V E S T I F S M F
P N R E U K S S N C H A O E A
X I E F B O B E T I L A A O S
O B L Z Y O L T U R K S N T D
W R Y G I C E T R E T P U K Y
T S E V R A H L K N Y F M L S
Y V A R G I M E E N F T I U N
S Q U A S H M R Y I W M A R P
F A L L P R A S N D A L O B A
R M H T N B A G C F A C E K I

cook
corn
dinner
fall
family
feast
food
gravy
harvest

maize
pilgrims
pumpkin
relatives
settlers
squash
stuffing
thanks
turkey





Non-Profit Organization

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United Church of Christ
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Harford, PA 18823
Tel. 570-434-2260
Email: firstch@nep.net
Spire email: 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!!

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

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