



Our Spire
Volume 40
March 2020
Number 2

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

LENT 2020: How the suffering servant still relieves suffering today

Think of the times we moved out of the way so that Jesus could be the way, the truth, and the light in someone else's life. Those awesome ministry moments are such a high!

Disciples Peter, James and John experienced such an awesome ministry moment when, called apart from the others, they climbed this spectacular mountain and witnessed at its summit the absolute marvel of a transfigured Jesus who was *dazzling* white. Perhaps those moments aren't just for Peter, James and John. I think we can experience them, too. How? We get our Jesus on.

The phrase may be a little campy to some, but "Get our Jesus on" is the sermon series that takes us through the six weeks of Lent. I titled this series this way so that we can easily recall it. "Get your Jesus on" aims at our understanding of why we need to get our Jesus on so that it is Jesus who is seen when others look at us. It is Jesus who is heard when we speak. It is Jesus who is experienced when we act.

How Jesus is seen, heard and experienced in us has everything to do with patterning our lives after Jesus, the suffering servant spoken of in the ancient text of Isaiah 53, also known as Second Isaiah. Getting our Jesus on is never about our own glory or our own gain.

Through prayer and scriptural research, I would like to share that this 2020 6-part Sunday morning Lenten series aligns us to our servant's place in this world. Humility is our role as we follow and understand the wounds in our world in the way our Savior did. We do not take the place of Jesus; instead, we will see more fully through this series what his suffering on the cross does in our lives and in the lives we are called to minister to, care for, and love.

Our world needs to be ministered to, cared for, and loved. We do this best by understanding, embracing, and then putting into action sacred text like this one which we will open and embrace on March 22nd.

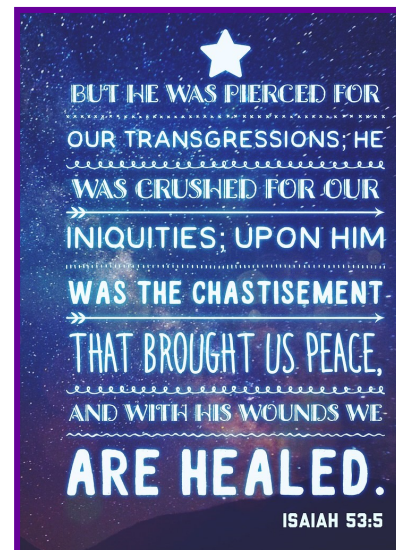
"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

— John 13:12-15

Jesus, the suffering servant, still relieves suffering today. He does this when, with humility, we embrace those who suffer in the world by washing their feet, feeding their souls, holding their hands, touching their hearts, and providing grace and mercy not through ourselves, but with Christ in us.

OUR LENTEN TEXT:

March 1	Isaiah 53:3-12
March 8	Mark 10:42-45
March 15	Luke 22:24-30
March 22	1 Corinthians 10:24
March 29	John 13:12-15
April 5	Matthew 21:1-11



Lenten Schedule

All Services begin 7pm

Theme: The Voice from the Cross

First Wednesday in Lent: March 4th: The Prayer of Forgiveness

Host Church: First Harford Congregational

Special Music: Great Bend Choir

Preacher: Lynn Wilcox

Children's Message: Luke Taylor

Refreshments provided by the Host Church

Second Wednesday in Lent: March 11th: The Promise of Life

Host Church: UM Community, Great Bend

Special Music: South Gibson Choir

Preacher: Will Hagenbuch

Children's Message: Lynn Wilcox

Refreshments provided by the Host Church

Third Wednesday in Lent: March 18th: The Word of Kindness

Host Church: First UMC, New Milford

Special Music: Luke Taylor

Preacher: Ho Shik Kang

Children's Message: Will Hagenbuch

Refreshments provided by Host Church

Fourth Wednesday in Lent: March 25th: The Cry of Dereliction

Host Church: First Universalist, Brooklyn

Special Music: First UMC Choir, New Milford

Preacher: Margie McCarty

Children's Message: Jane Pykus

Refreshments provided by the Host Church

Fifth Wednesday in Lent: April 1st: The Call for Help

Host Church: South Gibson UMC

Special Music: First Harford Congregational

Preacher: Jane Pykus

Children's Message: Will Hagenbuch

Refreshments provided by the Host Church

Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.*

E C C L E S I A S T E S 3 : 2 0

Boy Scout Sunday
February 2, 2020



Project: MountainView Elementary Snack Collection

Some children come to school without the proper supplies and without snacks. Our snacks will be given to the classroom teachers to be distributed to children that don't have a needed snack.

First Collection.



The Boy Scouts are helping us.



The problem of hunger is growing in our area. The principal of MountainView, Dr. Lake, has requested help supplying his teachers with snacks for children that do not have snacks.

The Summer Lunch Box (SLB) program is helping supply this need but most of the SLB funds are earmarked for the summer when children are home and do not receive the free and reduce meals at school.

Missionary Group is asking the congregation to join with us and help supply snacks to hungry children.

Individually wrapped muffins, cookies, chips, pretzels, fruit cups, applesauce, pudding and granola bars are good choices. Please no peanut butter or nuts.

We are placing a bin in the gathering room. These snacks will be collected and taken to MountainView School until the end of March when Hop Bottom Methodist Church will take over for May.

If you want to help but don't like to shop, just place a donation in the collection plate and mark in the memo line for school snacks/missionary.

Weinberg Food Bank is coming to Harford First Congregational Church

**The 4th Friday of each month
Starting February 28, 2020
3:30-5:30**

**Any income can apply
Preregistration is required:
See attached application or
complete the form online firstchurchharford.com
or call Teresa @ 570-756-2752**



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



**Our church will host the first 7 PM Wednesday Ecumenical Worship service on March 4th.
Please join us.**



2020 Spring Conference Meeting

April 24 and 25

The Chateau at Camelback, 475 Camelback Rd., Tannersville, PA

The meeting will be one overnight, dinner on Friday evening, breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

Starts at 4PM on Friday and concludes at 4PM on Saturday.

The Installation of Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates as the
Fourth Conference Minister of the Penn Northeast Conference
of the United Church of Christ

on

Saturday, April 4, 2020

2:00 p.m.

UCC Greenawalds, 2325 Albright Avenue, Allentown, Pennsylvania
There will be a reception following the service in the Fellowship Hall.
There will be a procession of clergy; please wear red.

Your Shoebox Gifts Travel to the Ends of the Earth!



10,569,405 Shoebox Gifts Collected in 2019

Many children around the world have never heard the Gospel message of eternal life in Jesus Christ. They live in hard-to-reach, impoverished communities where parents struggle to provide the basics. Rarely, if ever, do the children receive a present that's just for them.

This year, more than 10.5 million children in over 100 countries and territories received shoeboxes full of special gifts. And, for the first time, these children heard that God loves them. This has resulted in **evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication** across the world!



Shoeboxes were packed by individuals and families in 10 countries: Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Our Operation Christmas boxes went to Malawi in East Africa.

Spire Sponsor

Have a great day.

Elsie Hackbart

**ST. PATRICK'S
DAY**

GAME ON took a road trip to SUNY Broome Ice Center for an afternoon of Ice skating.

We had 17 people join us for a day of fun!



Christian Education

**All of our adult teachers have Child Abuse Clearances*



Bonnie Love-Colwell

Christian Education Director
Elementary Sunday School



Kandy Wellman

Elementary Sunday School



Kay Gow

Elementary Sunday School



Pastor Will Hagenbuch

Middle & High School Sunday School

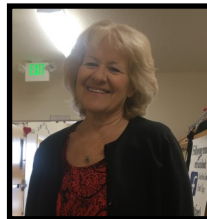


Tammy Stout

Youth Director (Game On)



Charleene Martens



Holli Chichester

Nursery Staff



Payton Colwell



Mikalea Stout

Sunday School Assistants

Notice: Please send all material for March to be included in the Spire to

Firstchurchspire@gmail.com

by the 15th of March 2020!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Commit

Commit to God with love and devotion
Our tasks to complete with blessed emotion
As Deacons, Stewardship, and Trustees
We seek His council on our knees

Others to commit to Him
They never let His light dim
We speak of Ugly Quilts, Willing Workers, Missionary Society, Church Council,
Game-On, and Christian Education
Serving the Lord with steadfast dedication

Today we install new members of committees three
We commit to Him in wholehearted unity
We pray the Lord will bless us as we do His will
So that love and justice shout from this hill

Newcomers are always welcome and with joy find the way
To be present to Christ intentionally each day
For our Savior's love is best when we all share
Together, in harmony, His extended care

We pray not to waver, fear, or turn away
Because it's Christ's mercy and grace we receive on our way
Here in this church in Harford we say
That our Savior is Lord, and we humbly obey

It is not for us that we care
No, it's with Jesus that we all share
Our time, hearts, service, and our emotion
Never sway in our devotion

We commit today and each following day
To love our Lord without delay
With Him we shine
For we know His light in us is divine



Kay Gow



**Help!! We need all types of fabric for craft projects
for the log cabin next year!**

Please call or text Holli Chichester

Pancake Supper

Youth and Outreach along with ARC held a pancake supper fundraiser on Feb. 8, 2020. Together our youth decided that the fundraiser would be used to help a local horse named Philia. Philia is dealing with ongoing medical issues and the kids unanimously agreed that they wanted to use the proceeds from the dinner to contribute towards Philia's medical needs. Our youth hear of a need and they respond...that's what it's all about! This is what we are called to do and I'm so proud of them for setting such a good example of who we are and what First Congregational Church does.

Thank you to all who supported the dinner by helping serve, helping in the kitchen or a donation...each of act of kindness is greatly appreciated!



Coaches VS. Cancer

Hoops and Hope: our church provides the message and distributes flowers during the Coaches vs. Cancer boys basketball game at the MVHS gymnasium on Tuesday, January 28th.

Craig Stout took center court before the start of the Coaches versus Cancer game by providing details about how the night began. A local coach wanted to make a difference by dedicating a basketball game to the awareness of cancer and to celebrate cancer survivors. He ended his talk with the rousing challenge: **“We all can do something!”**.

Pastor Will continued in the middle of the gym filled with athletes, cheerleaders, coaches, students, parents, grandparents and basketball fans. He shared that each of us **can** do something. We have a **voice**. We also have **prayer**.

Guidelines made it clear that Pastor Will could not pray during this event, but Pastor Will was able to share the importance of prayer before a moment of silence.

Pastor Will also shared a personal story of his Aunt Nancy, an angel on earth and now an angel in heaven who died of breast cancer and to this day, inspires him to speak of love and of hope in the greatest love and hope we have, our Lord Jesus Christ.

To continue our love of and our presence in the community, our church youth passed out flowers to cancer survivors who were asked to rise as they were able in the bleachers. Our GAME ON and Sunday school kids, who could be present at the game, made sure carnations made it into the hands of those survivors so they would know of love and hope with an uplifting, inspiring message attached to each flower with yarn.

May God continue to call us to inspiring ministries within our community. Amen.



April Shower of Blessings “6”

When: The month of April

Where: Harford First Congregational UCC

Benefit: The Women’s Resource Center & CareNet

A “Thank you” reception will be held after church,

May 3, 2020 to display all collected items and

celebrate a gift of love.

We will be collecting:

New Linen

Cleaning Supplies

Gift Certificates

Personal Hygiene Items

Baby Items

* See next pages for a
Complete List

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

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)

Home Bound

The Carey Family

Barbara Pease

Dorothy Greene



Bell Choir Rebirth!!!!!!



Bob DeLuca has graciously volunteered to conduct a bell choir. The Bell Choir will meet Mondays at the church balcony at 7:30.

We need 3 more people to complete our 3 octave bell choir.

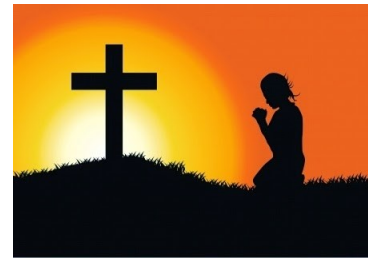
Please call or email Bob if you would be interested in participating.

570-498-7090

gepetto@nep.net



Prayer Concerns



Todd Conner Family
Nicholas (Great Grandson of the Weidemans)
Patrick Simons
Scott Klenk
Heather Warren
Christian Kuhar
Mary Jane Genneken
Sandy Paolucci
Brandi & Dave
Larry Herbert
Shawni Vietri
Joshua (Vietri's foster son)
Karen Jones' Family Members
Joann Titus
Gary and Wendy Phillips
Ellie Miller
Sandi Zapanovich
Pastor Will's new Family
Family of Harriet Cronk
Aunt Dolly (Bob DeLuca's sister)

Evan Clarkson
Lynn Franklin and Family
Sabrina and Jim Hayes(Nancy Burris' daughter)
Greg Symuleski
Rock Estabrook
Joe Batzel and family
Jessica Miller
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

Directory update:



Mrs. Dennis L./Terry Rowlands
57 White Pines Road
Cleveland
GA 30528-3163

Mr./Mrs. Andy/Natalie and Molly Nice
1891 Tingley Lake Road
New Milford
PA 18834
607-760-5960

Evan Clarkson
CMR 411 Box 3844
APO AE 09112

March Birthdays

March 01	Barbara Weideman	March 12	Scott Muller
March 03	Katherine Doolittle		Lyra Brosius
	Kassandra Lamberson	March 14	Harry and Julia Gardner
March 04	Dorothy Greene		Ethan Rodriguez
March 05	Erika Gething	March 20	Linda Arthur
March 07	Dale Grant	March 22	Peg Empet
March 11	Cindy Galambos		Liz Grant
	Judy Mitchell	March 25	Gus Ferrara
		March 26	Susie Chidester



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.

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.

Council Minutes

1-30-2020

Financial Secretary Report: Dottie Hagenbuch – Income in January was \$9732.80 under Budget.

Treasurer's Report: Julia Gardner – Will put income/expense Summary in the Spire each month and also show YTD figures.

\$372.00 was approved to pay for the church's payroll application.

Trustees: Harry Gardner -Problem with the Fire Alarm going off when the power cuts off. The company has said that we need a new system (\$3100). Trustees will look into other products.

Missionary: Holli Chichester- The MountainView principal has asked for snacks to help feed children that do not have snacks. Missionary Group would like to collect snacks for this program. Council voted to allow the collection of snacks for MountainView Elementary.

Council Business:

1. It has been suggested that a Suggestion Box be set up. Council voted to get a Suggestion Box (Dave Schulte will acquire) and place it on the Counter in the Gathering Room. All suggestions will go to Pastoral Relations for review.
2. The Memorial Fund usage was reviewed. In the future Council will considered items that will enhance or improve the church for funding out of the Memorial Fund.
3. Gus Lotter and George Ferrara suggested that the church should have an AED. Council voted to purchase one using the Memorial Fund (est \$1300). Gus and George will be asked to help locate the proper machine and person to educate those interested in using the machine.
4. Council also voted to offer "Stop the Bleeding" training to Christian Education, youth workers and others interested (Dave Schulte will set up the training).
5. By-Laws: will be reviewed by a committee (Craig Stout, Judy Mitchell, Holli Chichester)
Items for reviews - states that the annual report be in the mail 10 days prior to the meeting
-states that congregational meeting must be notified by mail
-committee member attendance
-will bring items for change to the February meeting
6. Council voted to keep the January Council meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month. The last year's members will attend. The new representatives can start in February.
7. Council voted to not include the final financials in the Annual Report (the figures are not available in time to get the annual report in the mail 10 days prior to the annual meeting). The final financials will be available on the web, via email and at the office.
8. The office computer is very out-of-date and needs to be replaced. The council voted to purchase a new computer and software with Memorial funds. Gus Ferrara will be consulted.
9. The new color printer required maintenance due to improper usage. The printer required two new drums and a maintenance call. The printer now has a code that restricts use. Those needing copies can ask Judy Mitchell to print for them. If Judy is unavailable, Holli Chichester can make copies.

10. The Escrow Capital money in the budget was discussed. We have been placing \$6000/year into the Capital Account for future needs. Trustees will be asked to determine how much should be kept for future needs.
11. Sign -the sign will receive landscaping in the Spring:
 - only church activities and non-profits will be advertised on the sign
 - Tammy and Craig Stout will schedule the sign slides
 - Holli Chichester has received training as an alternate. Any others interested in learning how the sign works should talk to Tammy Stout.
 - Any funds remaining in the Sign Fund after the landscaping will be moved to the General Fund.
12. The remaining Gold Tournament Funds were moved into the General Fund.
13. Some members mentioned that too many Out-Reach Programs were happening in November and December. Holli Chichester said that the Disaster Kits were an unplanned project due to the unplanned hurricane. The Operation Christmas Child program will also be moved to the end of October to the middle of November
14. Dave Schulte was elected Council President and Maureen Warren was elected Vice-President.

Pastor's Report: As we begin this new year, it's time to envision with God what our future holds. What ministries are in store for us? What makes us fearful of new ideas, and what faith is required to first listen and then respond to the voices around us who are calling us further into servanthood here at the church God gave us to use for His Kingdome on Earth?

I remain deeply impacted by the UCC church in Tannersville that closed this past fall due to a lack of many things: vision, planning, goal-setting, hope and, above all, faith in a God who does not keep His people still, but continually and constantly challenges and inspires us to see what beauty and promise await those who seek first the Kingdome of God I just mentioned.

The Weinberg Food Pantry opportunity we have been given by grace is outstanding. In addition to the fine and faithful efforts of our own church cupboard, which, according to Maureen Warren at our Annual Meeting will not be affected by our upcoming monthly food distributions, we have the opportunity and the privilege to feed the hungry. THIS is what we're CALLED to do! Amen!

Let us be mindful of this pantry which provides food at no cost to those individuals and families that experience economic hardship. Our neighbors ARE hungry! Ingrid Balsamo spoke passionately and professionally when she mentioned from the pulpit on January 26th that food gaps and shortages exist in our neighborhoods. Quality, healthy meals are being forfeited to cover costs elsewhere.

This is not acceptable and we have a way to address this! Notify your neighbors of this tremendous free resource that will benefit so many people at no charge whatsoever. Now is not the time we as a congregation are silent. I will be using this gift as a foster dad of five children, and I'm grateful for this help-as we all should be.

Being a foster dad, as many of you know, has been the GREATEST gift in my life. My days are filled with the love and laughter AND hard work! These children come from severe neglect and each has issues I invite you to pray over daily with me. They are wonderful, remarkable children and the next weeks and months ahead are in God's hand when we give this situation to him.

We are called to pray. This past Tuesday Night, we were called by God to be present to the boy's night of JV and HS boys' basketball where we, as a church, handed out flowers to cancer survivors. Along with Craig Stout center court, I had a time to share testimony about the power of prayer and church life. We had an awesome experience in the community.

I have been blessed to visit many of you over the past few weeks. These home visits have been gifts to both you and to me, and I'm grateful our God has put us together.

I am grateful too, for this congregation and the hardworking efforts and energies you, people of God, continue to put forth in the community we are called to love and to serve.

February Council Minutes
2/27/2020

Treasurer's Report: Below are the numbers for January 2019 and 2020.

<u>January, 2019</u>		<u>January, 2020</u>	
Income:	\$ 6,674.	Income:	\$ 8,160.14
Expenses	<u>\$12,312.52</u>	Expenses	<u>\$11,347.94</u>
Monies needed	- \$ 5,638.07	Monies needed	- \$ 3,187.80
General Year to Date for 2020			
	Income	\$ 8,160.14	
	Expenses	<u>\$11,347.94</u>	
	Monies short	\$ 3,187.80	

Christian Education:

A schedule was presented for Sunday School. This may change depending on the lesson:

10:30-10:50 Play
10:50-11:15 Church
11:15-11:25 Singing
11:25-11:40 Lesson/Craft
11:40- Snack
12:00-Dismissal

We also discussed finding a Sunday every month or so to allow each teacher to attend church service.

For the Communion Service today we will watch the service on YouTubeLive so when it's time for Communion we can bring the children up so they may participate.

We will be transferring the craft items from the cupboards upstairs in the Lecture Hall to downstairs in the closet to cupboards. The filing cabinets that are currently in the closet will be taken out. Not all craft items will be removed cupboards so that Boy/Girl Scouts will have craft items to use. Kandy will look into getting some cupboards for the closet.

St Patrick's Day decorations will be mad on March 1st and the tree in the gathering room will be decorated on March 8th.

If the palms from last year are still around they will be burned to be used on Ash Wednesday.

Next meeting will be March 1st at 9:30.

Choir: Practicing

Clerk: none

Church Cupboard: Serving two families

Cradle Roll: no activity this month

Deacons:

February 22, 2020 is our dinner at the HVA. Kay is making the lasagna and get drinks, Bonnie will make a salad, Teresa will bring bread, and Ginny will make Jell-O. Arrive around 4:45pm to setup. We will eat and mingle with the residents of the HVA. We will ask our church moderator, David Schulte, to come due to Pastor Will being on vacation.

We will try to order Lent booklets for the children and teens. We will see if we can get them in time. We will also order a dozen to have on hand for adults if they choose to take them. We decided to not order a lot due to the amount of leftovers from last year.

Karen Jones is contacting people to be greeters and ushers. We have decided to not change the letter that she sends out ahead of time. We are very appreciative of her for taking on this job!

Ash Wednesday Service is on February 26, 2020 at 6:30pm. How will Pastor Will serve communion to those with disabilities due the steps. This communion service will have church goers come up to the altar to receive communion. Greeter will be Teresa. Ushers will be Kay, David, and Ginny.

March 4, 2020 at 7:00pm we will be the host of the Lenten Service with the Route 11 Ministry. Ushers and Greeters will be Ginny, Tammy, Bonnie, and Teresa.

Communion Box was hung in the sanctuary. The suggestion box is not ready, but we believe responsibility should be moved to Pastoral Relations and then they can pass down the suggestions to the various committees as needed.

We are still wondering if we should decorate the tree in the front yard. It is thought that maybe if the kids decorate it, it will bring ownership to it and include them. Is it too much for the children to do? Should we have extras for church members to be able to hang? We will ask Christian Education to take this to see if they will take this on.

We will start discussing Easter at our next meeting.

Next Meeting will be March 8, 2020 following Worship.

Missionary Group:

-Least Coin: Bangladesh – Work with 100 people (80% women) and improving their health and nutrition.

-Outreach Project: The principle of Mountain View Elementary School has asked for assistance providing healthy snacks to children that don't have snacks. The teachers get a bag of 20 snacks/month to be used when children are without. This project was approved by Council and will continue until the end of March for April. The Hop Bottom United Methodist Women will cover May. The Boy Scouts will also help.

-Summer Lunch Box Program: Peanut Butter is 10 for 10 at Price Chopper.

-Disaster Kit Drop Off: Broome County/Binghamton April 27 10-2.

-Soup Day: We will make Soup March 3 at 1:00. Beef Vegetable. We will use the dehydrated vegetables in the church cupboard and the roast beef left from the Roast Beef Dinner. The soup will go to fill the Soup Ministry needs.

-Shower of Blessings: We will hold a Shower for the Women's Resource Center and CareNet through the month of April. We will have a light reception May 3, 2020 so that the congregation can see what has been collected. We will advertise in the March Spire.

-Next meeting: March 24, 2020 at 1:00.

Stewardship:

Dottie shared the Financial Report for January, indicating that \$12,500 per month is needed to cover church expenses. We were \$3,000 short for the first month of the year. Some discussion followed as to whether the Cabot monies could maybe go into the General Fund instead of Capital. This would be a decision for council.

Julie then gave the Treasurer's Report. She will forward each month's figures to both Judy & Holli for this to be shared in the bulletin and Spire. This will include a comparison of this year to last. For January, last year we needed \$12,312, took in \$6,674, leaving a shortage of about \$5,638. For this year, the need was \$11,347 for expenses with \$8,160 taken in, leaving a shortage of about \$3,187. This shows us in better shape than last year at this time. We will continue to pray and prosper!!

The first item of New Business was officers for the upcoming year. Craig will remain as President, with Peggy as his Vice President. Sharon will take Alyssa “under her wings” grooming her for the position of Secretary for the following year. Julie will continue to “balance” the finances, and Michelle will again be our representative to Council. Stewardship meetings will be moved to the third Sunday of the month after church, beginning with March 15.

There was then discussion about the Financial Committee that was formed last year. It was agreed that they need to meet as the 1st step in developing a “back-up” plan for the issue with a shortage in the General Fund. More thoughts on the future handling of “memorial contributions” were shared. Possibly a brochure could be made to highlight memorial contribution options.

A suggestion was made to make cards for the pews that could be used by persons using the online giving option. It would indicate that tithes were given online and put in the collection plate.

The rental prices for the lecture hall and facilities will be reviewed to determine if the prices need to be altered.

We then turned to reviewing the Goal Sheets for future planning, moving (1) increase use of existing church facilities (2) Paving of parking lot, and (3) bring back Bible Study forward to the Goals for 2020 as well.

Next Stewardship meeting: Sunday, March 15, at 12:15.

Trustee Minutes:

Old Business:

- The church needs to have a new fire alarm system installed. The current company has a system for \$3,100. There is a possibility that even with a new alarm system, the alarm may still go off when there is a loss of power. Trustees will investigate systems.
- The aluminum lamp post still needs to be repaired.
- Lingering water leaks seem to be ok. Any issues should be reported to trustees.
- We need to determine how we are going to fix the railing in the gathering room.
- Security cameras are operational, however, there is still some work to be done to provide Judy with a monitor in her office as well as provide her with login information to access the system through her smart phone.

New Business:

- Joe’s Disposal has raised our refuse removal cost an additional \$3 per month.
- To fix the gap of the door leading from the gathering room to the old driveway the sill plate needs to be fixed.
- A light in the kitchen needs to be replaced and the dimmer switch for the Sanctuary Chandelier is broken.

Willing Worker:

-The quarterly meeting of the large group of Willing Workers was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 1:00PM in the Lecture Hall.

-It appeared that the roast beef dinner netted the group \$1,633.04

Old Business:

- Kay thanked the groups for helping at the Annual Meeting lunch.
- Gathering Room Cupboard Committee was rearranged and consists of: Maureen, Sherry D, Connie.
- From the emails that Kandy received it appears that our group does not need Safe Serv Certification for Food Handling; however, Wendy and Gary Phillips have received the certification. Others have obtained a different kind of food certification through the Weinburg food bank: Holli Chichester, Theresa Lamberson, Tammy Stout.

New Business:

-Our church will host the March 4 Lenten Service. Each group needs to provide 3 pies. Kingsley group will also provide a large veggie tray. Ellen has Hawaiian punch.

-Kandy made a motion to create a position of Second Vice President. Maureen made a motion to nominate Sherry Decker for second VP. Passed.

-There was a discussion on disconnecting the phone in the Lecture Hall as most people have cell phones and the phone costs about \$28 a month. ARC uses the phone and doesn't wish anyone to check the messages (although recently there were a number on the machine). Then there was a question of --when we are in the building if we should answer it as it may be for ARC. There is no record of ARC asking to attach an answering machine to the phone. Perhaps the cost of the phone could be split. Ivie made motion with that we take the question to council and ask about ARC and the message sign posted on the wall.

New (but not really) Business

-Communication had been received from the fair asking if we wanted to place an ad in the fair book. Ivie responded that we would like to know where our space will be so that it could go in the adv. They don't know yet. After discussion a motion was made that we not spend \$150 for an ad page. Passed. The reasoning was that the fair puts out a brochure that shows who is where and which groups have meals which days plus there is the new sign in front of the church, Facebook, and the church website to promote us at the fair. Sharon Kinney has sent a down payment for us to have a space wherever it may be. Rick Masters said that we may use his space at the fairgrounds to store our Log Cabin stuff while the cabin is being torn down and before a new area is ready. Maureen expressed her desire to retire from pricing attic treasures. It was suggested that Linda Robinson be asked. We need to ask and advertise in church. Kandy was asked to be in charge of Log Cabin set up. Because of the transition this will be a huge effort and need much help this year.

-The Willing Worker directory was discussed. Since Ivie compiled it, some info has changed. She will contact the small groups for corrections and Holli will be asked to make copies.

Group Reports:

-All groups made pies and worked at roast beef dinner, collected Least Coin, and helped at annual meeting lunch.

Kingsley-3 present- Held a December lunch at Speak Easy, bought an Interfaith gift, held a bake sale and soup sale, held a meeting to work on a craft.

Harford-3 present- Held a Christmas lunch at Bingham's, donated \$100 to CYS.

North Harford-2 present- Held a covered dish meeting, sent cards, made hot roast beef sandwiches for annual meeting. Planning for April Showers of Blessing for women's resource center.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 6, 2020 at 7PM in the Lecture Hall. Harford is hostess.

Pastor's Report: I remain in Good Standing with the United Church of Christ here in the Penn Northeast Conference. Continuing education courses are required annually. I needed 25 hours in 2019 and, thanks to the doctoral program, I actually have over 450 credit hours. We are good to go for another year, congregation!

Speaking of the doctoral program, all four chapters of my dissertation are complete. I review them with my advisor who will submit my name to the dean of the school and I will defend my dissertation at Lancaster Theological Seminary on Monday, March 30th. Please lift up my classmates who have not completed the program. 12 of us started. To date, 5 of us remain. This is a difficult, challenging, and expensive road. Prayers are needed

I am excited our church will host the first ecumenical Lenten service here at our church on March 4th. I preach on the 11th in Great Bend. Our choir sings on April 1st in South Gibson UMC.

With a current deacon, I served communion to someone who has been on our homebound prayer chain. Our gathering and Holy Meal was meaningful. Other homebound visits continue to go well.

I took my teenage Sunday school students to two very different church services during my two weeks of vacation in February. We had meaningful, important discussions as a result.

I had the joy of officiating the vow renewal of Gail and Jim Batzel at the family homestead on Saturday, February 22nd. Many blessings to this amazing couple!

We enjoyed a meaningful Ash Wednesday service with several readers, prayers and special music.

For Lent, I have created a 6-week sermon series called "Get Your Jesus On" which speaks to how we are called to be Christlike. Our approach this season is servanthood.

Kandy Wellman worked with me to create a Lenten Tree in the Gathering room that reflects this new sermon series.

Weinberg Food Bank: The first distribution is February 28, 2020 from 3:30-5:30. 45 families have signed up for the program with several more expected to walk-in. The youth will help carry bags to participants cars and hand out dog and cat food for ARC.

New Business: An unused bank account at NBT will be reallocated to hold our Website's online giving contributions. Julia will check this account monthly and transfer funds. She will notify Dottie Hagenbuch of contributions for record keeping.

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

Spire Sponsor

**In loving memory of Catherine Escandel, a former member who sang in the choir and planned the Mother-Daughter Banquet for many years.
Escandel Family**



Correspondence

Dear Tammy & First Congregational Church of Harford:

On behalf of United Cerebral Palsy of NEPA, thank you for your help during the 2019 Holiday Gift Wrap benefit at the Viewmont Mall in Dickson City.

This year, the 2019 Holiday Gift Wrap fundraiser raised **\$11,447.00**. The proceeds you helped us raise from this event will benefit our Early Intervention (EI) program. EI provides therapy and education services to infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays. UCP of NEPA services for children also include our Lekotek and Compuplay programs. Additionally, we provide adult day training, residential community and independent living arrangements and assistive technology resources, as well as advocacy through our home services program, for adults with disabilities. Visit our website to learn more at ucpnepa.org.

For over 30 years we have been wrapping gifts at the Viewmont Mall. Our success is only possible because of **you**, our dedicated volunteers. It is a tremendous team effort and we are grateful to have you on our team. Thank you!

On behalf of the consumers, staff, and board of directors of UCP of NEPA, we hope that you have a wonderful 2020 filled with good health, happiness, and success.

Sincerely, Sarah A. Drob, Chief Executive Officer

Dear Car Seat Assembly Team,

As I was out with my junior high students visiting a neighboring church while on my vacation, I understand it took a crew of you to help where I was stymied, and that was in putting together Emma's car seat. (Emma, my middle skiddle, is four.) It truly does take a village, and I am grateful to this remarkable village for your love, acceptance, concern, prayers and support on this foster to adoption journey.

I picked up the car seat which was fully assembled right beside the LOVE tree in the Gathering Room, an apt place to pick up love and care from a gracious congregation.

My foster to adopt kids and I are truly blessed by you.

Thank you!

Will

I just put a check in the mail for the newsletter. I do enjoying receiving it, although I do have a problem with who's who. My family have been gone from there so many years and my memories are so old but again Sheryl recognizes many names. I graduated with Richard Berish so I was sad to read that. Joyce's grandmother,

Mrs. Williams was my Sunday School Teacher when we moved there in 1941.

Again Thank You for the e-mails.

Have a great day. Elsie Hackbart

New Additions to our church:

There is a suggestion box located on the counter in the Gathering Room for one to drop in their suggestions. The Suggestion Box was donated by Sue Furney and Wayne Frederici .

Thank you!



The Sacrament box for storage of our traveling Communion Set has been located in the Sanctuary the door by the organ. This Sacrament Box was donated by Teresa Lamberson in Loving Memory of her late husband, Patrick Lamberson.

Thank You!

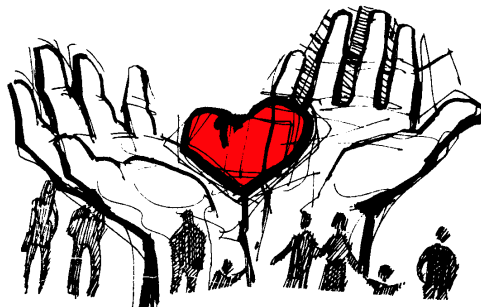
Worship Assistants– February

Greeters

March 01, 2020	Girl Scouts
March 08, 2020	Judy Mitchell
March 15, 2020	Twila Williams
March 22, 2020	Dorothy Hagenbuch
March 29, 2020	Peg Empet

Readers

March 01, 2020	Mikaela Stout
March 08, 2020	Jackie Schulte
March 15, 2020	Bailey or Paula Millard
March 22, 2020	Julie Kesten
March 29, 2020	Gary Housel



Ushers

March 01, 2020	Girl Scouts
March 08, 2020	Sharon Decker and Linda Lindsey
March 15, 2020	Nancy Burris and Karen Jones
March 22, 2020	Rich and Shirley Masters
March 29, 2020	Gary Phillips and Leanne Colwell

FREE

Community Dinner

Saturday, March 28th
4:30-6:30



It's Italian Night!

Just come and eat..
No strings attached!

March 2020

March 2020

April 2020

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	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	31				

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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
Mar 1 7:30am 11:00am Breakfast/fire hall 9:30am 10:30am Adult 9:30am 10:30am Ch Ed 11:00am 12:00pm Wor 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	2 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 7:00pm 9:30pm Fair mtg	3 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 1:00pm 4:00pm Soup making-Missionary (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 6:00pm 7:00pm Choir (LH)	4 9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (H. Chichester) 5:15pm 6:30pm Armettas 7:00pm 8:30pm Lenten (First Church)	5	6 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH)	7 Pastor Day Off
8 9:30am 10:30am Adult SS (PO) 11:00am 12:00pm Worship - Girl Scout 12:00pm 1:30pm Deac 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	9 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 6:00pm 7:30pm Girl Sc 7:00pm 8:30pm Trustee	10 7:30am 9:00am Men's 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Q 12:00pm 2:30pm Rt 81/ 1:00pm 3:00pm NHW 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 6:00pm 7:00pm Choir (LH)	11 5:15pm 6:30pm Armettas 6:00pm 8:00pm Scouts (LH) 7:00pm 8:30pm Lenten (Great Bend)	12 10:00am 1:00pm KWW (LH)	13 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH)	14 Pastor Day Off
15 9:30am 10:30am Adult SS (PO) 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:15pm 2:15pm Stewa 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	16 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 12:00pm 1:00pm Ladies Lunch (Bingh 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office	17 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate (LH) 6:00pm 7:00pm Choir (MR)	18 9:00am 12:00pm Crafts (H. Chichester) 5:15pm 6:30pm Armettas 6:00pm 8:00pm Scouts 7:00pm 8:30pm Lenten	19 7:00pm 9:00pm	20 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH)	21 Pastor Day Off
22 9:30am 10:30am Adult SS (PO) 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:30pm Deac 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scou	23 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office 6:00pm 7:30pm Girl Scouts (LH)	24 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 1:00pm 3:00pm Missionary (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate 6:00pm 7:00pm Choir (LH)	25 5:15pm 6:30pm Armettas 6:00pm 8:00pm Scouts 7:00pm 8:30pm Lenten (Brooklyn)	26 6:30pm 8:00pm Council (LH)	27 9:30am 10:30am Yoga (LH) 3:30pm 5:30pm Weinberg distribution	28 Pastor Day Off 4:30pm 6:30pm Community Spaghetti (LH)
29 9:30am 10:30am Adult SS (PO) 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 7:00pm 9:00pm B. Scouts (LH)	30 9:30am 10:30am 9:30 mtg (PO) 4:00pm 5:30pm Pastor in office	31 9:30am 1:00pm Ugly Quilts (LH) 6:00pm 8:00pm Karate (LH) 6:00pm 7:00pm Choir (MR)	Apr 1	2	3	4

Mar 1 - 7

Mar 8 - 14

Mar 15 - 21

Mar 22 - 28

Mar 29 - Apr 4

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: 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