



BEAVER BLESSINGS

July 2023



RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

"Welcoming all with God's love, serving all in God's name as we all grow in faith together"

Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church · 42 South 3rd Street · Lewisburg · PA · 17837

www.beavermethodist.org · (570)524-0809



Sunday Morning Worship Services - 10:30 am
New Beginnings Adult Sunday School Class - 9:00 am

From Pastor Sue's Desk:

Some of you have heard me say that I am a 'political junkie', meaning that I spend a LOT of time reading and talking about these issues. In high school I loved the classes that focused on government and was a Student Council officer. I was President of the Western PA Conference Youth Council my senior year and had to learn Robert's Rules of Order. I graduated in 1976, the year of the Bicentennial celebration of our country's founding, and our caps had red, white and blue tassels. In college I majored in Political Science and spent the spring semester of my junior year in Washington, DC, working as an intern at the Interfaith Coalition on Energy. The year was 1979, when the nuclear meltdown at Three Mile Island happened, and I joke that my daughter became a nuclear engineer because of this. As we celebrate the birthday of our nation this month, the topic of Christian nationalism has been in the news a lot lately so it just seems natural to me to write about it. Most of us would agree that religious freedom is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, yet the meaning of this core value has been debated throughout our nation's history. And there has been much discussion about patriotism and religious freedom as it relates to Christian nationalism.

Amanda Tyler, an attorney and executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, recently wrote: "The First Amendment protects religious freedom in two interconnected and necessary ways—by preventing government establishment of religion and by protecting the free exercise of religion from unnecessary government interference. In my view, both clauses are essential when it comes to protecting religious freedom. Christian nationalism is a political ideology and cultural framework that seeks to merge American and Christian identities. It heavily relies upon a mythological founding of the United States as a 'Christian nation', singled out for God's special favor. It is not a religion, but it intersects with Christianity in its use of Christian symbols and language. But the 'Christian' in Christian nationalism is more about identity than religion and carries with it assumptions about nativism, white supremacy, authoritarianism, patriarchy, and militarism. I am convinced that Christian nationalism is the single biggest threat to religious freedom today. We are concerned not only about the threat of Christian nationalism to American democracy but also its threat to Christianity itself. Christian nationalism, which merges political and religious authority, can quickly lead to idolatry and a confusion of allegiance. Patriotism is a laudable value and one that statement signers embrace as well. But when patriotism requires us to sacrifice our religious convictions, then it has ceased to be patriotism and has become nationalism."

The organization, Christians Against Christian Nationalism, explains things this way: "Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America's constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian. It often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation. Christian nationalism also leads to discrimination and even violence against religious minorities and the non-religious. It is also used as a rationale for getting around laws and regulations aimed at protecting a pluralistic democracy, including nondiscrimination protections for various groups of people. As Christians, our faith teaches us everyone is created in God's image and commands us to love one another. As Americans, we value our system of government and the good that can be accomplished in our constitutional democracy. Whether we worship at a church, mosque, synagogue, or temple, America has no second-class faiths. All are equal under the U.S. Constitution. As Christians, we must speak with one voice condemning Christian Nationalism as a distortion of the gospel of Jesus and a threat to American democracy."

I am sure that the controversy that is roiling the country around these issues will not be settled anytime soon. We can work together to be a witness that as followers of Jesus we can love our country and respect it's laws, but be clear that we do not worship our government. We can respectfully disagree with our governmental leaders and the decisions they make. We can work to change unjust laws. We can celebrate the freedoms that we have, including the freedom to worship as we choose without government interference, and without the government forcing us to worship at all. The first clause in the Bill of Rights states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Thankfully, this is still true today.

JULY FEATURES

► What does it mean to live by faith?

What does it mean to live by faith? Great question!

The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation describes faith as a "personal, positive, and dynamic relationship with God involving one's whole being and life. As the Bible predominantly sees it, faith is trust. Trust is lived, experienced as an assurance, a motivating force. It is not a theory or an idea."

"Luther called it 'a confidence on which one stakes one's life,' building on the claim in Hebrews 11:1 that 'faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.' "

The article explains faith as trust and faith as belief. "Belief is knowledge about God. Trust is knowing God firsthand, made possible through prayerful receptivity and allowing God to live in us and work through us. Both knowledge and knowing are necessary, and each complements the other."

United Methodists understand that faith is about having one's life transformed by the One in whom we put our trust, not simply assenting to some ideas that may comfort us in difficult times and get us into heaven.

John Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism, organized people into small groups whose members could "watch over one another in love." They helped each other live lives that honored God.

They got together and talked about their struggles with sin and the difficulties of life. They encouraged one another to pray, to read the Bible, to attend public worship, to fast and to reach out in love toward

their neighbors. They worked side-by-side to offer health care to the poor, to advocate for safe working conditions, and to abolish both slavery and debtor's prisons.

It was a holistic approach of personal and public piety paired with public and personal service to neighbor.

Today, we continue in this approach. We pray, study and worship with other Christians in order to connect to God and to deepen our knowledge of and love for God.

As we respond with acts of compassion to people's needs and acts of justice to put right what creates some of those needs, we strengthen our ability to love our neighbor.

We also confess and repent of our sins, ways in which we fall short of God's way, and we recommit ourselves to living a life of faith. In this way, our inner thoughts and motives as well as our outer actions and behavior are made more like Jesus.

So, to live by faith is to live in a trusting, loving and ever-deepening relationship with God and every neighbor in which our own lives are transformed and we become part of the way God's love transforms the world.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

► **What is grace? Is it different from peace?**

United Methodists understand grace as a gift from God, "the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit."

Bishop Will Willimon describes grace as "the power of God working in you to give you a transformed life."

We experience three kinds of grace in our life with God — prevenient, justifying and sanctifying.

Prevenient grace literally means "the grace that comes before." Prevenient grace calls us into a relationship with God before we are even aware of God. It prepares us for the dawning awareness that God loves us so much that God seeks us out first.

Justifying grace happens when Christians abandon all those vain attempts to justify themselves before God, to be seen as "just" in God's eyes through religious and moral practices. When God's "justifying grace" is experienced and accepted, it's a time of pardon and forgiveness, of new peace, joy and love.

Sanctifying grace enables us to grow into the image of Christ and leads to inward and outward holiness.

On the gift of grace, Rev. Wendy Hudson-Jacoby explained, "Grace, God acting in our lives, is truly free. However, we know that from God's side, grace is costly. The cross is a stark response of how costly grace is to God. To give ourselves to God in response to this grace costs us our lives.

"However, there is a greater cost — the cost of not responding, the cost of non-discipleship. When we don't respond to God's grace it costs us peace with God, the peace of God, the joy of knowing that we belong to God, and the power of God working in our lives to accomplish what we simply cannot accomplish on our own."

Peace and grace are related. We experience peace, individually and as a community, as we respond to God's grace. "Peace gives Christians the ability to have grace when facing enemies, an inward

knowledge of and conformity to the will of God, a spiritual blessing, and a sense of calm and assurance, a trust that cannot be willed into existence but can only be felt when it is given. Peace found throughout the community and world is considered a sign of God's kingdom as envisioned by Jesus Christ.” (The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation)

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➤ **Volunteers in Mission Immigration Immersion Journey** Tucson, Arizona September 16-22, 2023

Partnering with Arizona Justice for our Neighbors (AZJFON), join the Susquehanna Conference VIM team for an Immigration Immersion Journey. We will hear from Arizona Justice for our Neighbors (JFON grew out of the United Methodist Committee on Relief's commitment to refugees and immigrants), Pima County Medical Examiner, and The Inn of Southern Arizona (United Methodist run program for asylum seekers). We will tour Nogales, Sonora, Mexico led by Border Community Alliance and take a trip into the desert with Humane Borders or the Tucson Samaritans. We will learn about the immigration crisis with the intention of conveying that knowledge to our churches, ministries, and circles so as to support the relief efforts. Must be 18 years old or older and have a valid US Passport. 9 spots are available. Approximately \$400 plus airfare and meals. If interested, contact Susquehanna Conference VIM Coordinator, Michelle Schwartzman at vim@susumc.org.

➤ **Rummage Give-away**

After discussing the intensity of work involved in our traditional rummage sales, the Leadership Team decided we should take a different path to providing the same sort of service. We plan to experiment with a quarterly “rummage give-away” that will occur on Saturdays when the Beacon Shop is open and during the same hours. We will limit the inventory to kitchen items (dishes, utensils, pots and pans, etc.), adult clothing (seasonal), and linens (bedding, tablecloths, blankets, etc.).

I am happy to co-chair this project, but I would like a second person to share responsibility with me. We will also need a committee to set up on the day before (Friday) and take items back to the storage room in the basement after the hours on Saturday afternoon. We plan to have only 4-6 tables of items each time, so if there is more in the storage room, it will remain until the following event. There will be no charge for items offered, but we will limit each person to 3-5 items, whatever the committee feels is appropriate. We will advertise this ministry with flyers at the Beacon Shop, but people not needing the Beacon Shop services will be welcome as well.

I am hoping to hold the first event in August, but our committee needs to get together soon. Many decisions need to be made as this is a new endeavor. Please let me know if you are willing to help out.

Thank you! Patty Johnston 570-523-3132, 570-713-4659, hoodj1973@ptd.net

BEAVER MINISTRIES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Beacon Free Shop

Beacon Free Shop was held Saturday, June 10. Despite moving the date of the Shop to the second Saturday of the month due to an event that closed South Third Street on our regularly scheduled date, we still served 36 households, consisting of 81 persons.

The July Beacon Shop will resume to the third Saturday of the month, July 15, 2023 from 10am-12noon. As always, thank you to church members for their donations and our dedicated volunteers.

Busy Beaver

Busy Beaver had an exciting month of June! We welcomed a few college students to our team for the summer months and they have been very helpful while staff take their vacations! We also have Ms. Lorna helping out throughout the center to help cover vacations! The parents are always excited to see her return! We added two junior hires as well to help throughout lunch breaks and outdoor time!

We had our 4th annual Dads and Donuts in June to celebrate Father's Day! It was a great turnout and we thank Gabrielle Taylor for stopping by to greet the Dad's as they arrived!

We are hoping the Toddler 2 classroom will be opened beginning Monday July 3rd! This will be a huge help when transitioning kids fast enough to keep those babies coming in!

Altar Flowers

If you enjoy the beautiful flowers displayed on the altar each Sunday, please consider signing up to sponsor altar flowers. You can use the signup sheet on the cabinet in the narthex entry way or contact Mindy for available dates. The cost is \$40 for two vases.

DIG Furniture Bank

DIG, one of Beaver's supported community missions, will be celebrating an Open House at their new warehouse at 14 Elm Street, Milton on July 22, 2023 from 5pm-8pm. DIG restores dignity and promotes stability by redirecting used furniture and household items to local families in need at no cost. Tickets are available for this celebration online at digfb.org. During this event you can enjoy music, drinks and snacks; explore the warehouse; and learn more about their mission. At the same time, the FreshstART auction will be conducted, allowing you to bid on furniture items that have been upcycled and given a new life - much like DIG does for their clients. See Christy Brouse if you have any questions, or contact her at 570-238-5707.

Union County Giving Closet

This ministry being housed at First Presbyterian Church, provides new and gently used clothing for children aged newborn through Grade 12, whose families are enrolled in the Eastern Union County Food Bank Program. They are looking for monetary contributions and donations of clothing/shoes/reusable bags/gift cards to local stores and also need volunteers. You can email them at ucgivingcloset@gmail.com or call 570-524-4419.

Join Our Tech Team!

If you would be willing to learn how to use the cameras on Sunday mornings, please let one of the tech team (Nick Persing, Todd Fogle, Deena Eberhart or Tim Taylor) know. They will train you and promise it is not difficult. Help us keep connected with those who are not able to join us in person on Sunday mornings.

Musicians/Vocalists Wanted!

If you would be willing to provide special music on occasion for Sunday worship, please let Pastor Sue or Brooke Persing know. We want to have a nice variety: vocal, instrumental, and combinations of those – we know there is talent among us. *We are also looking for additional choir members! Choir rehearsal are held on Thursdays at 7:00PM in the Choir Room on the lower level.*

We Have Convenient Methods of Giving!

Mail to Beaver Memorial at 42 S. 3rd St. Lewisburg, 17837
drop into our Drop Box outside the office door or
go to our website: www.beavermethodist.org and click on “Giving”.
Thank you!

EVENTS**New Beginnings Adult Sunday School**

On July 2, 2023 we will begin “The Universal Christ” by Richard Rohr. In the book Fr. Rohr explains how God is everywhere. Laying out a convincing argument about Jesus and how he and Christ are not one and the same, you are taken on a trip through the Bible. As you go, you are shown all the ways that mankind has gotten the interpretation wrong and that God doesn’t want to punish, but instead love. Loving you and others through you. The class meets at 9am on Sunday mornings in the parsonage. The cost for the book is \$15.54, please let Travis or Lorna know if you want a copy at tlcinhisservice@yahoo.com.

Monthly Book Study Opportunity

Rev. Daniel Wilt is offering a monthly book study, open to anyone to attend. The first meeting will be on Wed. June 7. Each month a new book (see list below) will be discussed. Subsequent meetings will be on the first Wed. of each month. The meetings will begin at 7 pm and end around 8:30 pm, with snacks and coffee provided. The meeting place will be determined based on the number of people who sign up. Also, you can purchase your own books from your preferred bookseller. Some are older and can probably be found used, or you can get an e-book if you prefer that! If you can’t order them yourself or can’t afford the books, let us know and we will take care of that for you! If you are interested in joining, contact Pastor Daniel: dwilt@susumc.org or 570-524-5011.

- July 5 - Liturgy of the Ordinary by Tish Harrison Warren
- Aug. 2 - Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Sept. 6 - Trouble I've Seen by Drew Hart
- Oct. 4 - Learning to Walk In the Dark by Barbara Brown Taylor
- Nov. 1 - To be Determined
- Dec. 6 - To Be Determined (Christmas Themed)

AT BEAVER MEMORIAL UMC			
Event	Day/Date	Time	Location
New Beginnings Adult Sunday School	Sunday	9:00 AM	Parsonage
NA Meeting	Monday	7:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
NA Meeting	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Fellowship Hall
Leadership Team Meetings	3 rd Tuesday of the month	6:30 PM	Fellowship Hall
AA Meeting	Saturday	7:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
Beacon Shop	3 rd Saturday of the month	10:00 AM	Beaver Memorial UMC
IN THE COMMUNITY			
Event	Day/Date	Time	Location
Pub Theology	3 rd Thursday of the month	6:00 PM	Bull Run Tap House
Monthly Book Study	1 st Wednesday of the month beginning June 7	7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	TBA

BMUMC Staff includes:

Position	Individual	Position	Individual
Administrative Assistant	Mindy Moore	Treasurer	Shirley Brough
Custodian	Greyson Leshar	Youth Group Director	Mindy Moore
Choir Director	Brooke Persing	Pianist	Ryan Hill
Busy Beaver Day Care Director	Charlene Reigle	Kinderfolk Preschool Director	Julia Umstead
Video Team	Nick Persing, Todd Fogle, Deena Eberhart, Timothy Taylor		
Leadership Team	Martha Root - croot@bucknell.edu Rev. Sue Jamison - sjamison@susumc.org Ralph Hibbs - rhibbs@windstream.net Patty Johnston - hoodj1973@ptd.net David Deibler-Gorman - dgorman@windstream.net Gabrielle Taylor – taylorfamily@ptd.net Heidi Gilmore – heidiegilmore@gmail.com Kathy McKibben – klmckibben@gmail.com Krystie Byrum – professorprmaven@gmail.com Chuck Root – croot@bucknell.edu Nick Persing – persing191983@gmail.com Travis Curry – traviseccurry@yahoo.com		

- Submit content for the newsletter to tlcinhisservice@yahoo.com by the 18th of the month prior to the newsletter.