



The Messenger

First United Methodist Church Newsletter
446 Camden Avenue, Moorestown, NJ 08057
856-235-0450

Rev. Richard Nichols, Pastor
Kathy Clawges, Director of Youth
Donna Banes, Interim Music Team Coordinator
Devika Gill, Director of First Light Learning Center

Rev. HeyYoung Horton, Associate Pastor
Karen Murray, Director of Christian Education
Doug Hamilton, Maintenance Coordinator

Join us for Worship - Saturday 5:30 pm, Sunday 8:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am
Visit us on the Web at: www.meetwithGod.com -or- Email us at: church@meetwithGod.com

FEBRUARY 2018



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE February 14th

Please join us as we begin the Lenten season on Wednesday, Feb. 14th with a worship service and imposition of ashes, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. A Lenten study on Creed by Adam Hamilton, led by Pastor Richard, will be held each Wednesday evening at 7:00 in the Heritage Room beginning Feb. 21st. See page 2 for more details about this Lenten study.

GROUNDS FOR GOOD COFFEE HOUSE Friday, February 2nd



It's going to be another exciting night at Grounds for Good Coffee House on Friday, February 2. Grounds for Good newcomer Lee Goldberg will perform Contemporary Christian music, and FUMC's very own Abby McGrath will display her artwork for all to enjoy. The evening will also feature free coffee and tea as well as a variety of snacks and baked goods for purchase. Admission is always free, but proceeds and donations will benefit Hydromissions International, dedicated to furthering the gospel of Jesus Christ worldwide by providing safe drinking water. The doors to Fellowship Hall will open at 7:30, with music kicking off at 8. Hope to see you there!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

First United Methodist Church is a community of faith committed to sharing the love of Jesus Christ with a hurting world through words and actions.



Chase the Winter Blues Away February 11th at 4PM

Join the Children, Youth & Adult Choirs, Handbells, and solo acts for an afternoon of wonderful entertainment!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb. 2nd Grounds for Good - 8:00pm
- Feb. 4th Youth Hoagie pick-up - 10:30am-12:30pm
- Feb. 7th Sing-Along at Avista - 10:00am
- Feb. 9th My Abba's Hands - 7:00-9:00pm
- Feb. 10th My Abba's Hands - 9:00am-3:00pm
- Feb. 11th Light Harbor at Avista - 2:30pm
- Feb. 11th Pops Concert - 4:00pm
- Feb. 13th The Serving Plate - 5:00pm
- Feb. 14th Ash Wednesday service - 7:00pm
- Feb. 17th Adult Fellowship - Noon
- Feb. 18th Men's Breakfast - 7:45am
- Feb. 18th Scout Sunday
- Feb. 19th Presidents Day - church office closed
- Feb. 21st Internat'l Women's Friendship Grp-10am
- Feb. 21st Lenten study begins - 7:00pm
- Feb. 25th Parents DIGG - 10:45am-12:45pm
- Feb. 27th Crafts for Good - 7:00-8:30pm



**FROM
PASTOR RICHARD**

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth...” So begin the words of the Apostles' Creed, a creed we often say and affirm in church. It is an expression of our beliefs as a Christian and as a community of faith. A creed is a statement of belief. We all have our own personal creeds that we live by; those things that we value and hold dear in our hearts. These are our convictions and beliefs that we try to follow even when we don't always live up to them. Creeds are important as a compass to guide us in life.

During the Lenten season this year, our Lenten study will be on the book, Creed, by Adam Hamilton. The book explores the words of the Apostles' Creed and challenges us to more fully understand the meaning of its statements of belief. Whether you are fairly new to the faith, or have been a Christian for many years who can recite the Apostles' Creed forward and backwards, I think you will find this study informative and inspirational. You can sign up for this 5 week study to be held on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 in the Heritage Room beginning February 21 by putting your name on the sign-up sheet in the narthex or by contacting the church office. My prayer is that as we gain a deeper appreciation for the words of this ancient creed that we will more faithfully live out our own creeds as a follower of Jesus Christ.



Deaths:

Bruce Slocum
on January 5, 2018

ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTION

If you would like to use your mobile device to make an electronic donation to FUMC Moorestown, just scan this QR code and you'll be connected to our mobile giving page!



MUSIC NOTES

As I sit to write this article the temperature outside is ten degrees with a wind chill below zero.....brrrrrrrrr!! Yet, I find it rather fitting as Lent begins this month, to be stuck inside during this cold spell. Why? Well, I find Lent the beginning of a period of reflection. It is sometimes hard for me to wrap my head around the sacrifices our Lord and Savior made for me in the days and weeks leading up to Easter. As I so often do I find that hymns remind of us of God's abundant love. The words to the hymn O Love, How Deep remind us of just that:

O Love, How Deep

*O love, how deep, how broad, how high,
it fills the heart with ecstasy,
that God, the Son of God, should take
our mortal form for mortals' sake.*

*For us baptized, for us he bore
his holy fast and hungered sore,
for us temptation sharp he knew;
for us the tempter over threw.*

*For us, he prayed; for us he taught;
for us his daily works he wrought;
by words and signs and actions thus
still seeking not himself but us.*

*For us to evil power betrayed,
scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed,
he bore the shameful cross and death,
for us gave up his dying breath.*

*For us he rose from death again,
for us he went on high to reign;
for us he sent his Spirit here,
to guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.*

*All glory to our Lord and God
for love so deep, so high, so broad:
the Trinity whom we adore,
forever and forever more.*

How amazing to reflect and know that God prays for each of us just as we pray for each other. During this period of Lent, I pray that while cooped up inside during these cold winter days that you find a moment to reflect on our God's deep and abiding love for us.

Donna Banes, Interim Music Team Coordinator



**FROM THE DIRECTOR
OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

“I Want to Walk as A Child of the Light” ~ Kathleen Thomerson

*I want to walk as a child of the light I want to follow Jesus
God sent the stars to give light to the world The star of my life is Jesus
In Him there is no darkness at all the night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus
I want to see the brightness of God I want to look at Jesus
Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path and show me the way to the Father
In Him there is no darkness at all the night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus*

Just after I began writing this message I received a call that my mother-in-law had taken a turn for the worse regarding her health. Elsie, (Bob's mother) was in a nursing home in Pennsylvania for the past 18 months before she passed into God's glory on January 3rd. Elsie was not a person who spoke often about her faith and more times than not, she challenged what it meant to have faith at all. Elsie grew up in a very difficult home situation and as a result was bitter toward God for allowing certain things to happen in her life. During our conversations about life and faith I would remind her that God was with her during the hard times as much as he was in the good times. On an occasion just a few months after my father-in-law died (Feb. 2003) Elsie asked me how I hold onto my faith and I shared that my faith was not dependent on situations but it's my faith that carried me through all life's situations.

As Elsie's health began to fail she was more open to having conversations regarding her faith and a relationship with God. She shared that she believed that God loved her and she was learning to trust Jesus. Just before her death she allowed the Chaplain at the nursing home to anoint her and to pray with her. Knowing that she accepted the unconditional love of The Lord before she passed makes her death just a bit less painful.

My hope all along had been that Elsie would realize God's love was/is unconditional and that she would make peace with the very difficult childhood that she was forced to live in at the hands of the adults who were supposed to be protecting and loving her and I believe she did.

The song above continues to remind me and hopefully you that it really is a decision that each of us have the privilege to make, despite our circumstances that we are invited to walk in the light of Jesus and to follow His way. Praise to the Lord that Elsie made that decision but how much more joy might she have experienced if she had made that decision earlier in her life.

Each day we get a chance to decide if we are going to be a follower of The Light or to continue to live in darkness. Let 2018 be the year where you walk in The Light and let God's love shine in your heart no matter your circumstances.

Grace & Peace,
Karen Murray, DCE.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Lent Begins on February 14th - Check the weekly Bulletin Announcement page or the website for updated information on joining a Lenten study group of Adam Hamilton's book, Creed.

February Confirmation Class - Meeting Dates Feb. 4th, Feb. 12th & Feb. 25th

Children's Youth Group - Thursday Feb. 1st, 8th & 22nd

The Education Department's Annual “Winter Mission Adventure” for February continues with the collection of Cleaning Supplies to be donated to *The Neighborhood Center in Camden*.

If you would like to learn more about our “Adventures” please contact Ceciley Binegar, Christian Education Chairperson at 856-345-8785.

Precious Time Between Seasons

February - is winter almost behind us for another year? Can we start to think about springtime? February does give us some invitations for warmer weather, as, for example, we celebrate "National Grapefruit Month." Spring is certainly on the way, as we begin a time of transition.

Transition times are adjustments, in so many ways. I think we all are encouraged to look ahead in our lives, trusting God to lead us. *Jeremiah 29:11* is one of my favorite verses: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Another verse that is most likely in all of our hearts: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding" (*Proverbs 3:5*).

God gives us challenges every day, and knowing that, as it says in *Ephesians 2:10* (*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*) I hope that we can listen to each other, advocating for good changes in the year ahead.

Reading, as I do so often, about our spiritual gifts, and how they can change as we grow in our faith, I am reminded of *Romans 12:4-5* "For as in one body we have many members, and members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

I am hoping that many of you (including myself) have been able to make a new friend, as we talked about in last month's Messenger. I am wondering that, with prayer and thought, as many of our interests do change and develop, we can start to develop new friendships based on our own spiritual gifts? Our church family does have some wonderful opportunities to serve, and finding a place for each of us to do that could be a first step in moving forward. Finding a group to be a part of (thinking of the Servants' Roundtable, as a start?), or again, with prayer and thought, being willing and able to start a new ministry - what an exciting way to develop new friendships!

Children can tell us, too, about making friends, and growing in our relationships. Talking with a group of

second graders, between 7 and 8 years old, I learned that the best ways to make friends are to work together, play together, forgive each other, share, and pray together! These young people will teach us things, when we stop and listen. I believe that as these young people are growing and developing in so many ways, we should encourage them to find their own spiritual gifts, and what better time to start than in this season of transition?

I know that I have questions to ask of God, and try to do my best to pray. However, one of my biggest prayers is asking for help with the distractions that I allow to interfere with my prayer time! I think that we can also learn to pray from children, as they talk to God with what is exactly on their minds, and don't seem to wait until a "better time" comes to pray!

Here are a few of my favorite prayers from children:

"Dear God, are you actually invisible or is that just a trick?"

"Dear God, my Grandpa says you were around when he was a little boy. How far back do you go?"

"Dear God, do you draw the lines around the countries? If you don't, who does?"

"Dear God, in Bible times, did they really talk that fancy?"

Maybe in this season of transitions, in our church, in this month, we can keep on praying, asking to be led in how we can best serve. Check out the church website, monthly Messenger, weekly bulletin, the Servants' Roundtable bulletin board in the Narthex, for opportunities to serve and grow, and to continue making friends.

Maybe you have an artistic talent that you would like to share. As young Reese, who was also very interested in the arts, prayed:

"Our Father, who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen"

Let's work together in this transition time, to grow in our faith and in our opportunities to know one another better!

God bless each of you,
Kathy Appleton
Lay Leader



FROM THE
MISSIONS COMMISSION

These days whether you are a republican, democrat or an independent voter it seems impossible to not continuously hear the buzz words “fake news” being broadcasted over the air waves. The idea that people do not always tell the truth, or deceive people into thinking a certain way gives the impression that this is a new concept in our society today. But truth be told lying and deception are the result of the fall of man when Satan deceived Eve into thinking she would be like God if she ate the apple from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge (Genesis 3:5). Since then sin has been rampant in our world where people continue to falsely talk and discredit the beautiful and miraculous things that God has done through His marvelous works and unconditional love.

During my recovery from hip surgery I had the pleasure of catching up on my reading. One of the books I read was “Apollo 8”, the thrilling story of the first mission to the moon. Being a boy in the late 1960s I wanted to re-think of my childhood memories when I watched those Apollo astronauts on that small black and white TV with long rabbit ear antennas in my school's cafeteria. Whenever there was an important space event that the media was covering, my elementary school would always have an assembly. Oh how I remembered every kid watching those live broadcasts as we sensed something very important was about to happen in front of our eyes. Reading “Apollo 8” was a very enjoyable experience. Besides having been a physics major in both college and graduate school and now an adjunct professor in this field, I could understand and appreciate all of the technical jargon and low level details this book is laced with. Make no mistake traveling to the moon is a modern day marvel that not only showcased our country's spirit toward winning the space race against Russia through the many dedicated and talented engineers, scientists and astronauts; it was an era that allowed people to see for the first time our planet's beauty from far away during that Apollo 8 crew broadcast on Christmas Eve 1968.

Unfortunately I was taken off guard during the climax of the book when the author decided to write false statements and push his agenda about how long it has been for mankind to travel to the moon since evolving over time. He stated that less than a billion years after

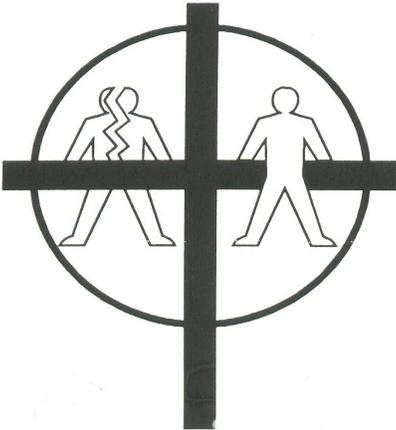
the moon was formed, a one cell organism appeared on the earth. It would then take two to three billion years later before multi-organisms appeared until eventually people would be formed by chance. I remember feeling very sad about how the world continues to discredit and make false accusations about God's marvelous works through His creation, not to mention His glorious plan to redeem man for all of his sins through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Psalm 139:13-14 came to mind which states: “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

About ten years ago I co-taught the senior high Sunday school class during church. One of the demonstrations we did was to disassemble a watch and then put all of its parts in a plastic bag. We asked the youth that upon shaking up the bag, what is the probability that all of the parts would go back to its original state and how long would we need to keep shaking the bag until this happened? Overwhelmingly the youth recognized that even if one could shake this bag *forever*, there is a 0% probability that the watch would be put back together on its own, yet alone work again. In order to make it work, someone had to know how to fix it and then make the appropriate repairs. Even if hypothetically the watch could be put together on its own this can't even compare to the endless miracles God performed when constructing our world and the many living things He made. Thus to no surprise we concluded that it takes a lot more faith to believe in a world where everything occurs by chance than the promises of God, our Creator, and the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John 14:6 “I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Being able to share the truth in love about the good news of Jesus to a hurting world is not only an awesome privilege and honor, it is what the Lord asks us to do as the truth has set us free! This year may God continue to provide us with more opportunities to share the truth so that He can receive the glory!

Allan Estrin
Missions Committee Member

STEPHEN MINISTRY



What is it?

A one-to-one ministry by trained, caring lay ministers who have responded to Christ's call to "carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

What is a Stephen Minister?

A Stephen Minister is...

- a child of God who walks beside a hurting person
- a caring Christian friend who really listens
- a lay person who has received 50 hours of training in how to provide distinctively Christian care

A Stephen Minister is NOT...

- a counselor or therapist
- a problem solver
- a casual visitor

Who can benefit from this ministry?

Anyone going through difficult times who needs someone to care, listen, and share God's love with them on a one-to-one confidential basis.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the one-to-one confidential care, prayer and support of a Stephen Minister, please call the church office, 856-235-0450 or contact one of our Stephen Ministers.

* * * * *

FREE TAX HELP BY AARP VOLUNTEERS at Hope Community Church, 235 W. Main St., Moorestown

- By appointment only, 9:30am - 12:15pm
- Friday, 2/2 through 4/13, 2018
- Call the Moorestown Clerk's Office, 856-235-0912, ext. 3002 for an appointment

IRS certified volunteers will assist taxpayers with federal & state tax returns and Homestead rebate and Property Tax reimbursement applications. You do not have to be a senior or AARP member to use this program.

Bring your 2017 Federal & State tax booklets, copies of last year's returns, and forms showing all income including W2, 1099, K1, Social Security, SSI, State Tax Rebates, End of Year statements from brokers, records of other income such as tips, fees for personal services, business records if self employed, etc.

Be sure to bring photo IDs and Social Security cards for you and your dependents. For a joint return both spouses must come for the appointment. Bring records of medical expenses, and if itemizing deductions bring supporting paperwork for contributions, taxes, interest, broker statements for sales of stocks or bonds, property tax records, and any other deductions you are claiming. Affordable Care Act participants must bring Form 1095-A. For tax returns involving complex business, partnership or trust income or extensive capital gains or losses please see a professional tax preparer.

Hope Church is next to CVS and opposite Wawa. There is ample parking at the entrance behind the church that can be reached from either 2nd St. of Main St. Use the door at the back of the church to enter the room where the program takes place.



February Youth News

First United Methodist Church
Jr. & Sr. High Newsletter
kclawges@gmail.com
856-912-1148

YOUTH GROUP - for all Jr. & Sr. High students. We meet every Sunday night 7-8:30pm in the youth rooms, downstairs below Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY - meets every Wednesday night from 6:30--8:00pm in the Sr. High room and is for all Jr. & Sr. High School students. For questions please contact Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER YOUTH LEADERS - Do you like to spend time with teenagers? Do you find them interesting and fun to hang out with? Have you ever considered volunteering in Youth Ministry? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, you just may be who we need. I'm looking for leaders for both Sunday nights and/or Wednesday night Bible Study. Please contact me for more information; Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.



SUPERBOWL SUNDAY HOAGIE SALE

February 4, 8am - 12:30pm

Italian, Turkey or Cheese - \$7.00 each.

Please place your order by January 28, 2018. Email orders to: Robin Stepp rlstepp@comcast.net or drop your order form in the basket in back of the Sanctuary. Forms will be in the church bulletin. All proceeds will support our youth on their mission trips. Hoagie pick up will be in Fellowship Hall on February 4th during coffee hour and after the 11:00am Service. Thank you for your support!

Now What?

Parents Set Example for Distracted Driving

HomeWord.com -HomeWord.com

Children see, children do. Researchers have found that this adage is especially true when it comes to risky behaviors by teen drivers.

Research in recent years has found that teens often learn their risky driving behaviors from watching parents when they drive. These parents practice a "do as I say, not as I do," approach to role modeling. Kids have watched their parents make and receive calls on their cellphones while driving, as well as sending and replying to text messages. The bad driving practices of parents then become the social norm for their kids, despite what parents say.

In the summer of 2014, a new study presented at the annual meetings of the American Psychological Association found that parents are also directly responsible for teen distracted driving as up to half of teens are on calls with mom or dad when they talk on a cellphone while driving.

Researchers noted that parents expect their teens to answer their phone calls, and that teens fear their parents will get angry when they don't.

Now What?

- Parents should make it their goal to set a good example for their teens in regard to cellphone usage while driving. When a child observes a parent answering even one call or sending one text while driving, they send the message to their kid that legitimizes the bad behavior.
- Set clear expectations and consequences with your teenager regarding cellphone use while driving. Then, live by the same expectations.
- Specifically address how teens should handle phone calls or texts while they are driving -- and specifically those received from parents.
- Practice makes perfect. Your teen's driving skills are improved through supervised driving experience. Even if your teenager already has a driver's license, let her or him drive while running family errands. If necessary, pre-arrange for text messages or calls to be made to your teen driver during these trips. This provides your teen with hands-on experience with handling distractions while you are present in the vehicle.