

ST. MATTHEW'S UCC WHITE DOVE FLYER

"A faithful family reaching out to serve Christ"



MAY 2024

Secretary Office **Hours are:**

Mon., Wed., Thurs. 10am—2pm

Phone: 610-381-2442

Email: stmatts@ptd.net

Website: stmattsucckunkletown.com

Sunday Services

9am Worship

CIA Class

start at 10:30am following
worship services.

Diann Bittenbender

Council President

Starlene Barr

Treasurer

Staci Gower

Christian Education

Renée Keiper

Office Manager

Dan Smale

Music Director

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Kunkletown, Pa 18058

102 Church Road

St. Matthew's UCC

LEHIGHTON, PA 18235

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LETTER FROM LINDA

Dear Friends in Christ,

A few weeks ago I watched a Hallmark movie titled "The Blessing Bracelet." It's based on a true story about a woman, Dawn Spencer, who is a single mom of a son, barely making it after her husband left her in dire financial straits. She is facing the foreclosure of her home when she decides to take on a second job waitressing in a restaurant. She shadows another waitress that tells Dawn she can insure good tips if she not only gives excellent service but leaves a small gift when presenting the bill. Her mentor leaves a butterscotch candy with her customers that she buys herself. She advises Dawn to find something of her own to leave her customers.

Dawn remembers the Blessing Bracelet she and her girlfriends made back in high school. She digs up all her beading material and makes Blessing Bracelets to give her customers. The beads look like pearls. When she hands them to the customers she explains that they should hold one of the four pearl-like beads and think of a blessing in their life. Then they should do the same with each of the other three pearls. Hopefully it reminds them to count the blessings in their lives.

She soon discovers that by following her own words and despite her problems, she still has blessings in her life. Things begin to turn around and the Blessing Bracelet leads to an amazing turn of events, thanks to true friends, her church community and her faith.

I like that the beads in "The Blessing Bracelet" look like pearls. It brings to mind a verse in Matthew 13: 45-46: "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who is a merchant seeking fine pearls, who having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." This parable illustrates the incomparable values of the Kingdom of Heaven and the supreme importance of prioritizing our relationship with God above all else.

A pearl begins as a tiny irritant inside a humble mollusk's shell, which the mollusk then coats with layers of nacre, a substance that forms the iridescent layers of the pearl. The process is gradual but eventually, a tiny irritant becomes something of great beauty. Like the formation of a beautiful pearl, Christians are called to embrace humility, allowing God to refine our character through trials and challenges, building up our spiritual maturity, hopefully drawing us closer to God and developing our character in Christ. Are we like pearls? Taking time to form in our faith journey? Are we humble? Sometimes are we just a little sad, going through trials and challenges, feeling kind of sorry for ourselves? Do we forget to thank God for the blessings He bestows upon us?

I recently had a doctor's report that didn't please me. A little upset, I couldn't help but want to throw a pity party for myself. Then walking into the grocery store, I passed a woman in a wheelchair. I noticed another woman who had badly diseased legs. I found myself counting my blessings that I had two healthy legs to walk.

When Harry and I walked today, we spotted a beautiful bluebird, trees blooming with pink and white blossoms and flowers of all colors decorating our neighbors' and our yards. I counted my blessings for sight.

LETTER FROM LINDA CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



LETTER FROM LINDA CONTINUED:

Get it? Blessings abound in our lives. The trick is to recognize them. Hopefully they will fill our hearts with gratitude to God for each and every one. Just as the pearl is a lovely gem, so is God's love for us. I loved the Blessing Bracelet story! It reminded me that even when I'm feeling down, or sad, it's the perfect time to take a few moments to remember all that God has blessed me with. I shared this story with my sister, Diane, with a vision to create our own Blessing Bracelets for our Bazaar and Craft Show this November. Our bracelets have five pearl-like beads instead of four.

I wore my bracelet yesterday for the first time. I was driving and thought, "This is the perfect time to count my blessings. I touched one pearl and came up with a blessing. I touched the next one and another came to mind. I did all five and realized how rich I am in all that God has given me. I'm not saying we all need a Blessing Bracelet to remind us to thank God, but it doesn't hurt and it's pretty.

Guess what I'm giving my mom for Mother's Day? Guess who I count as one of my blessings? Guess who I think is like a pearl of great price?

Happy Mother's Day to all moms! You are all blessings and pearls of great price!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Linda

Staci's Stuff

By Staci Gower, Coordinator of Christian Formation



I can't believe it's May already, and our Sunday School year is ending.

Our end of the year party will be held May 19 at 10:30 a.m. at the grove. We will hand out certificates, have snacks, make a craft, and play games. Bring a towel – there may be water games too!

We hope to see you at Moms & Music Faith & Family Night on May 10, 6-8 p.m. in the social hall. I will lead a lesson Mothers of the Bible, there will be music, tea, fruit, and mini sandwiches. We will play Bingo, too.

Children's Church meets each week during worship, from 9:15-10 a.m.

Please see me if you're interested in helping to staff the nursery or assist with Children's Church during worship. You can volunteer once or as often as you'd like. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex.

Ring, ring ... it's Camp Firelight VBS calling you into our grove July 15-19. We are seeking students ages 3 to 12, youth helpers ages 13 to 17 and adult leaders to join our team. VBS will be held 9 to noon daily, and includes Bible storytelling, crafts, science experiments, snacks, games, music, fellowship, and making new friends. Registration forms will be available on May 1. Families are encouraged to fill them out early and submit them!

THE MORAL ARGUMENT | APOLOGETIC CORNER

BY: DANIEL SMALE

Are there things that are objectively right and wrong? How do you know the difference between right and wrong? Does the existence of objective morality point to God's existence?

A common example used when debating the existence of a moral standard is the murder of six million people during the holocaust. In the 1940s, during the Nuremberg Trials, some Nazi sympathizers argued should not be prosecuted according to some arbitrary moral standard because they were only following orders. When the existence of God is rejected, then there is no choice but to believe morality is completely subjective. If God does not exist, then morality can only ever be defined by the experiences and desires of the individual.

However, if unchanging, binding moral laws and obligations do exist, then an objective standard of Goodness must exist. God's nature must serve as a plumb line to what is right and what is wrong. Otherwise what is morally right and wrong becomes nothing more than the opinion of any single individual or culture.

One may argue that morality can be defined by the laws of the country and culture where you live, but as with the example of the holocaust, this argument quickly breaks down. While the laws of a country play an important role in helping to preserve a functioning and safe environment to work and live, they are not immune from abuse and corruption by groups or individuals. If what is right and wrong is defined by the individual, then Hitler, Stalin, murderers, pedophiles, rapists, cannibals, etc. would not be any different than Mother Teresa.

This is what we call the moral argument for the existence of God. It is stated as (1) Every law has a lawgiver. (2) There is a Moral Law. (3) Therefore, there is a Moral Law Giver.

Thomas Jefferson described these moral obligations as truths in the Declaration of Independence, and the founding fathers deemed these "truths" to be "self-evident." C. S. Lewis explains, "If no set of moral ideas were truer or better than any other, there would be no sense in preferring civilized morality to savage morality." (*Mere Christianity*, 13) But, and this is undeniable, we do naturally prefer a civilized morality to a savage morality.

The contention is between being able to say how it "is" and how it "ought" to be. Anyone who denies God's existence can never claim anything "ought" to be a certain way. They must be content to accept everything the way it "is" because, according to their unbelief in a God, there is no objective standard to define what is right and what is wrong outside of their self-defined standards.

One last observation when it comes to the problem of evil. Unbelief in an objective moral standard does not allow a relativist to ask why a good God would allow evil to exist in the world. C. S. Lewis summed it up this way: "Of course, I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own [relativism]. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too—for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please my private fancies" (*Mere Christianity*, 31). To call something evil is to say things "ought" to be a certain way, but that is the very thing the moral relativist denies.

In his book *Tactics*, Greg Koukl states, "Ironically, evil does not prove atheism. It proves just the opposite. There can be a problem of evil only if God exists. It is a problem only a theist can raise, not an atheist. When an atheist voices the concern, he gets caught in a suicidal dilemma." (*Tactics*, 173) Koukl concludes, "Since God's existence is necessary to make the notion of evil intelligible, the existence of evil cannot be used as a proof that God does not exist. It indicates just the opposite. If evil exists, then good exists. If good exists, then God exists. Ironically, the existence of evil is powerful evidence for God, not against him." (*Tactics*, 177)

St. Matthew's

102 Church Road, Kunkletown, PA

CAR SHOW



Sunday, June 16, 2024 (Rain or Shine)

Registration 8 am - 12 pm

Trophies Awarded 3 pm

Breakfast Sandwiches 8 am - 10 am

Worship Service 10 am

BBQ • Hot Dogs • Hamburgers • Salads • Assorted Beverages • Strawberries • Ice Cream • Shortcake
11am—5:30pm

Brian Dean
Moore Band
12 pm - 2 pm

Top 25 Trophies by Participants Choice

100 Dash Plaques

50/50 Raffle

Activities for the Kids Starting at 1 pm

D.J. Eazy E!

Cramer Brothers
Band
3 pm - 5 pm

A portion of the car show proceeds will be donated to Monroe County and Carbon County Meals on Wheels.

For more information call: Glenn Snyder (610)762-9887

Disclaimer: You are responsible for your own car(s). St. Matthew's will not be held liable for any damages, accidents, theft or loss.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Vehicle Make _____ Year _____

Model _____



Pre-Registration \$8.00

Day of Show \$10.00

Checks should be made payable to: **St. Matthew's CIA**

Please mail pre-registrations to: **Magen Snyder, 1215 Valley Road East, Kunkletown, PA 18058**

LAYMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

We are looking for donations/items for the "PA Dutch Raffle"
(formally called Chinese Auction)

For the Strawberry Festival on June 16, 2024.

Items should have a value of at least \$25



Bring them to the church or give them to Brenda Sheckler or Shirley Brotzman.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS FOR THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

PLEASE SEE DORA TO SIGN UP FOR THE FOOD STANDS. IT TAKES EVERYONE TO HELP OUT TO MAKE A FUN AND SUCCESSFUL EVENT! THE SIGN UP SHEET WILL BE AVAILABLE OR CALL DORA.

Graduate
Sunday
we honor you



Graduates Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Name Of School & Location: _____

Degree, License, Diploma or Certificate: _____

Future Education or Career Plans: _____

Graduates Address So We Can Send A Card: _____

Graduate Sunday date to be announced at a later time.

*Please return to office via offering plate of mail no later
than May 26th.*

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Milton Souders | 14 Brenna Perry |
| 2 Chris Fisher, Samantha Kreger | 15 Robert Dorshimer |
| 3 Darryl Breinich, Bridget Freeby,
Michael Kratz | 16 Brent Dorshimer, Cody Eckhart |
| 4 Joshua Frantz | 20 Michele Gannon, Malvin Meckes |
| 5 Mary Eckhart, Barbara Getz | 21 Lillian Leslie |
| 7 Abigail Huber | 22 Tammy Brown, Karena Thek |
| 9 Delbert Kibler, Sr | 24 Skye Smith |
| 10 Carl Frantz, Alexandria Pfancook
Carl Smith | 25 Linda Greenzweig, Kathy Smith
Cassandra Yost |
| 11 Tom Byrne | 28 Nickolas Snyder |
| 12 Starlene Barr | 29 Jackie Gannon, Ashley Hahn,
Frank Rapa |
| 13 Laura Bealer, Ava Kresge,
Arianna Gutierrez | 30 Deanna Anthony |
| | 31 Dale Greenzweig, Sr |



Prayer Concerns

Beverly Frantz, John Blundetto, Jessica Speer, Wendy Peddigree, Tom and Lee Byrne, Barbara Souders, Rose Fritz, Debra Kemmerer, Brenda Hawk, Joan Madden, Janet Smith, Marilyn McCloud, Ellen Kresge, Kyle Frable, Diane Bonser, Shirley Smith, Edith George, Doris Neumeyer, Janet Gower, Joyce Gower, Conner Brawley, Gabrielle Collins, Gene Borger, Sharlee Ahner, Ronald Frantz, Sheila Sherer, Margaret and Larry Hahn, Hudson Stewart, Conner Bittenbender, Marlene Long, Roberta Heffley, Mike Heller, and Brian Holderman (Wendy Peddigree's brother), Barry Serfass (Brenda Hawk's brother), Sheckler Family for the loss of Ryan's father, Ray Smith family and Leanne Sitler for the loss of her brother, Bobby.



Shirley Kuntz—Getz Personal Care Home, 1026 Scenic Dr, Kunkletown, PA 18058
Edith George, Gladys Smith—Scenic View Personal Care, 1305 Church Rd, Palmerton PA 18071
James Borger—Moravian Village Health Ctr, Rm 142, 634 E. Broad St, Bethlehem PA 18018
Larry Hahn—Gracedale, 2 Gracedale Ave, Nazareth PA 18064
Joyce Smale, Gladys Meixsell—Pleasant Valley Manor, 4227 Manor Dr, Stroudsburg PA 18360
Leah Jane Sterner—300 Covered Bridge Rd, Kunkletown, PA 18058
Kyle Frable—104 5K Lane, Kunkletown, PA 18058
Velma Silfies—Mrs. Bush's Personal Care, 302 Kunkletown Rd, Kunkletown, PA 18058
Jesse Ziegenfus—Brookmont Healthcare Ctr, 510 Brookmont Dr, Effort PA 18330
Joann Hunsicker—Mrs. Bush's Personal Care—2W, P.O. Box 327, Kunkletown, PA 18058

May 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 CE Faith & Family night Social Hall 6pm—8pm	11
12 Happy Mother's Day	13 Council 7pm	14	15 Laymen's Fellowship 10am	16	17	18 BBB Men's Group in the Grove 9am
19 CE Year End Party 10:30am Grove	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Office closed 	28	29	30	31	