



Falkner Swamp U. C. C.

The VOICE



Pastor's Message

Dear Falkner Swamp Community,

On June 10 I was voted by the gathered membership to be the settled pastor of Falkner Swamp, three-quarter time, a calling which I accepted. I am grateful and honored to continue serving in this new capacity.

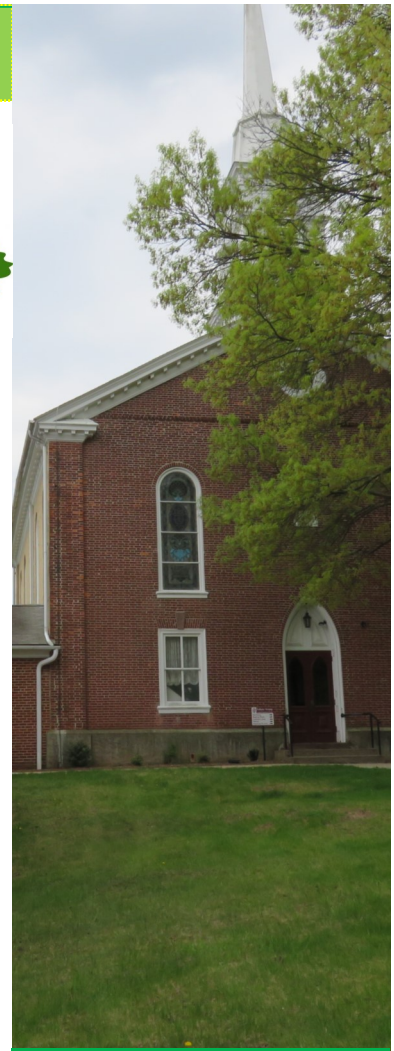
Sailing toward the 300-year mark of Falkner Swamp's first gathering as a church community, we live in the present while casting a vision for the future. A few years ago, this church faced closing its doors in the foreseeable future. That tide turned. It may be tempting to think those days are past, and church life here can bump along on the slow currents of maintaining how and what we do. Such a false gospel has run many churches aground. My role as your spiritual leader is to guide Falkner Swamp, with sails up, into the winds of the Holy Spirit, taking us to God's mission fields.

Churches that live out the gospel of Jesus Christ seek to do a new thing. The church moves as Jesus moved. Jesus stayed in relatively familiar territory but crossed seas and rivers to approach the unseen and unheard, and often least desirable people of his culture. Honestly, it doesn't sound like a recipe for success. Which is why we're asked to change our idea of success. Success in church means the lost are found, hungry people are fed, the rich go away empty and the poor receive what they need to live.

If all that sounds strange to you, familiarize yourself once again with the gospel, such as Mary's song when she consents to bear God's son (Luke 1:47-55) and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7). The church succeeds when it takes seriously these uncomfortable truths that our material comfort and emotional well-being rests in that of *every one of God's people* also enjoying the same. This is the in-breaking of God's kingdom, God's *shalom*; the truth in the Lord's Prayer, "on earth as it is in heaven."

We look together to our future with anticipation, moored in the hope of the One who lived only to God's purpose for his life. Listen to the ancient prayer penned by the apostle Paul for the church in Ephesus, as if it were written anew for the gathered community at 2077 Swamp Pike in Gilbertsville, PA: "*I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.*" (Ephesians 1:17-19 NRSV)

Onward in Faith,
Rev. Frances



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Lady and the Tramps
- Devotional Reading Ideas
- Worship News/Speakers
- August Birthdays
- Save the Dates

Hello from your Consistory! It's been a busy summer for us; let's get to our report:

After attendance was taken, we offered an opening prayer to God once again to give us the courage to do the work He asks us to do in our community. This is my opening prayer at every meeting. In my opinion, this is what we are supposed to be doing; trying to help ALL people as Jesus commanded.

This month we changed the order of the meeting to accommodate two guests. Sue Dickey came to remind us all that the 300th anniversary of the first service at Falkner Swamp will be here in October of 2020. This date will be on us before we know it! She offered several ideas for how we could celebrate this special event. Robin Zerr has graciously volunteered to lead the committee to guide us in this celebration. Brenda Semach will help, and there will be a sign-up sheet posted for anyone who wants to join them in this exciting project!

Our second guest was our church secretary, Sharon Sgriccia. She reported 3 improvements to the church office: a new laptop, occasional advertising "boosts" to our Facebook page to highlight specific events, and another answering machine or service for more personalization of our outgoing message. All of these improvements will help us reach out more to our community.

Another piece of new business: Reverend Frances Chester's name will be added to the board of ministers that is in the sanctuary in the next few weeks. She is the first female minister to be added to our "board", a record that stretches all the way back to 1720. We are so grateful to have her here as the spiritual guide for our church!

Vicki Fronheiser passed out the minutes from June's meeting, which we all read and approved. Robin Zerr then passed out the treasurer's report which we reviewed and passed. We had a net loss for the month of \$ 559.42. This is a seasonal event I'm sure, but I would also like to point out that as we continue to become more active in the community and as we continue to grow spiritually, we must continue to financially support our church's efforts. Thank you all in advance for your continued strong support.

We moved on to the Pastor's comments and communiques. Once again, Reverend Frances has been very busy this month; as you can see elsewhere in this issue of the Voice. She continues to be the blessing we all prayed for, and more! Praise God!!

The committees then reported in. Property announced that several projects are under way. Largest, of course, is the re-surfacing of the steps and landing at the end of the hall in the Christian Ed wing. We also had a new rope installed for the church bell. I'm sure there are several more items that will be mentioned elsewhere in the Voice, but on behalf of the Consistory I would like to thank all the members of the Property committee for their hard work on the numerous projects throughout the church.

Visitation as reported by Barb Geary noted that Mary Etta Mest made 8 visits and one long telephone call.. She is a tireless representative of Falkner Swamp, doing so much for our church! Thank You, Mary Etta!



~Continued from page 2

So the summer is winding down, and the new church year is about to begin. A few blessings on the horizon: Sally Fetterman will be joining us as our new choir director. While we are very excited about this, we are also saddened by the fact that our dear Erin Ahart is leaving us to go off to Penn State main campus. She has been a wonderful choir director; she has put up with all us “oldsters” in the choir thru many trying rehearsals, has kept her grades up, and has worked part-time at the CVS pharmacy. Whenever you think that young people don’t seem to work hard enough, or are not compassionate enough, think of Erin. She is all of these things and much, much more! Thanks, Erin, for being our choir director, and thanks also to Mrs. Erica Creed for providing Erica and Sally to us. You all may remember Mrs. Creed as Erica Weil, our former choir director. Erica has cast a long shadow over the music department at Falkner Swamp. All that our program is, we credit to her. Erica and Erin will ALWAYS be welcome in our church family. ALWAYS!

In closing, let me once again encourage everyone to get the message of Christ out to the people we meet in our everyday lives. Think of the joy we share every Sunday as we come together to worship our Lord and fellowship with each other. Aren't we obliged to share this joy with others? Let us say that one little thing, make that one little invitation to join us for worship on Sunday, that could change people's lives for the better...forever!

Respectfully,

Bob Schnaars

Lady and the Tramps



Performing at Frederick Living



For info or bookings contact Mary Ann Erb
@ 610-367-2018
or rbt1409maerb@windstream.net

AUGUST 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 7 PM Choir	3	4
5 Communion Choir singing	6	7 Sight & Sound show 7 PM Parish Relations	8	9 7 PM Choir	10	11
12 Al Benner-Smith Preaching	13 7 PM Music & Worship	14 6:30 PM Property	15	16 7 PM Choir	17	18 Fellowship Hall Rental Noon—?
Rev. Frances' vacation Aug. 11 –25						
19 Al Benner-Smith Preaching Joyful Noise	20 7 PM Consistory	21	22	23 7 PM Choir	24	25
Rev. Frances' vacation Aug. 11 –25						
26 Apostolic Sunday	27	28 7 PM Christian Ed Meeting	29	29 7 PM Choir	30	31

Sundays at Falkner Swamp:

◇ 10 AM Worship ◇ 11:30 Fellowship Time ◇ 7 PM AA Meeting

August 5— Communion, choir singing

August 12 — Al-Benner Smith preaching

August 19— Joyful Noise Offering, Al Benner-Smith preaching

August 26— Apostolic Sunday, Kim Adamson preaching

Rev. Frances
Hours:
(generally)
Tuesdays &
Wednesdays
10AM-2PM

Secretary Hours:
(generally)
Tuesdays,
Wednesdays,
Thursdays
9AM-2PM

Devotional Reading for your Inbox



Summer is a good time to try out some new ways to read the Bible, pray, and expand our understanding of the faith life. Here are some daily or occasional devotionals that you can sign up for to receive in your email in box, or to visit the website and explore:

♦ **Terry Hershey, Sabbath Moments.** Sign up here:

<https://www.terryhershey.com/sign-up-for-the-weekly-sabbath-moment-email/>

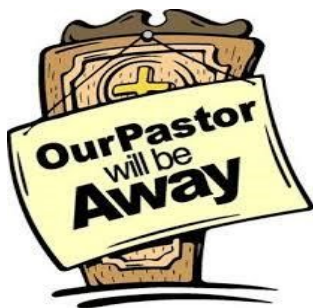
Terry's weekly blog shows up each Monday morning and is a collection of stories intended to reflect God's grace in our lives and how we can be agents of grace in others' lives. Uplifting, thoughtful, and includes poetry and song suggestions.

♦ **Red Letter Christians.** Sign up here:

<https://www.redletterchristians.org/what-is-rlc> and scroll down to "What we Do" and "newsletters" to click on the red "here" to subscribe. "Red Letter Wake-Up" includes a brief scripture passage followed by a short action/thought item related to it. The Red Letter Christian group, so named for the bibles that have Jesus' words printed in red, seeks "To take Jesus seriously by endeavoring to live out His radical, counter-cultural teachings as set forth in Scripture, and especially embracing the lifestyle prescribed in the Sermon on the Mount." per the website. Wide-ranging topics and writers, people unafraid to live out their calling, pepper these devotionals to provide rich food for thought.

♦ **Ann Voskamp.** Go to website here <http://annvoskamp.com/> and scroll down to "Let's be email friends" where you can click the link to sign up. Ann Voskamp is a Canadian farmer's wife, mother of many children some of whom are internationally adopted, missionary, and exquisite writer of the pain of living and the joy of loving. Many of her devotional books are on bestseller lists.

What are some devotionals or inspirational blogs that feed your spirit? Whether in print or online, share them with Rev. Frances, and she'll be sure to include in the next VOICE.



Rev. Frances is on vacation Aug 11-Aug 25, and Aug 26 is an Apostolic Sunday. Rev. Mary Etta Mest can provide emergency pastoral care during this time. She can be reached on her cell # 610-659-2775. Rev. Frances will be in the church office during the weeks of Aug 6-10 and Aug 27-31.

Symptoms of Inner Peace

Watch for signs of peace. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to it and it seems likely that we could find our society experiencing it in epidemic proportions. Some signs and symptoms of inner peace:

1. Tendency to think and act spontaneously, rather than from fear.
2. An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
3. Loss of interest in judging other people.
4. Loss of interest in judging self.
5. Loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
6. Loss of interest in conflict.
7. Loss of ability to worry (a very serious symptom).
8. Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
9. Contented feeling of connectedness with others and nature.
10. Frequent attacks of smiling, through the eyes and through the heart.
11. Increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
12. Increasing susceptibility to love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

If you have all or even most of the above symptoms, please be advised that your condition may be too far advanced to turn back. If you are exposed to anyone exhibiting several of these symptoms, remain exposed at your own risk. This condition of inner peace is likely well into its infectious stage.

The Property Committee has been busy this summer completing projects around the church. All of the fire extinguishers were hung on the walls (as suggested by the extinguisher company). We bought first aid kits for each floor and they will be hung soon. The stairs leading to the Christian Ed wing are almost completed (we were waiting on more supplies).

We had two work days in June and a variety of projects were tackled. Thank you to everyone who helped!

We are checking on getting the toilets in the ladies' room replaced. We are also in the process of getting quotes for the air conditioner/heat units for fellowship hall. It looks like this project may take place next spring. We have \$12,000 saved toward the purchase of it but we will need more.

Again, if you see anything that needs attention around the church, please inform one of the property members—Ron Becker, Bob Erb, Rob Krause, Lee Heffner, Sharon Schnaars, or Robin Zerr.

Thank you!

... recently there were a couple additional unplanned repairs

- **The fridge has been a disaster! Ultimately, a part has been replaced and it is working well (even though we did have to replace the contents).**
- **The air conditioner in the conference room wasn't working but is now repaired.**
- **The bell tower rope broke and is now fixed.**
- **Check out Rev. Frances' name on the pastor wall!**



Worship News & Upcoming Speakers

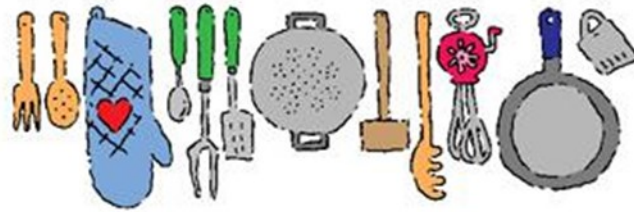
- You may have noticed the Men’s Chorus more often in worship. That’s because they plan to offer 3 pieces of music each Sunday they have a critical mass: an opening piece to take us into worship, a prayerful song to lead us into our communal prayer time, and a closing benediction to go out with into our week. The Men’s Chorus: *on guitar*, Bob Schnaars & Ed Thierolf, with *voices of* Bob Erb, Jim Kooser, Rob Krause, and Wayne Gruver. New members are welcome!
- Look for details for the Installation in September of our settled pastor, Rev. Frances Chester. A date is still to be determined, but it will be a Sunday afternoon service in September.
- We’ll welcome new members in September, including Wayne & Deb Gruver, who recently moved to town and have been attending and sharing their singing talents with our choirs. If you are interested in joining Falkner Swamp as a member, please see Rev. Frances.
- Sunday September 30 will be a pulpit swap: Rev. Frances will offer a message at Trinity UCC in Telford, while Rev. Darryl Cruz will offer the service and message at Falkner Swamp. Rev. Darryl is the Designated Pastor at Trinity and lives around the corner in Gilbertsville.
- Sunday October 14, Anniversary Sunday, will feature Conference Minister Rev. Bill Worley in the pulpit. Rev. Frances will join him in leading the worship service.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



1	Gloria Marriott	23	Shirley Royer
5	Stephanie Bingham	24	Robert Ream
5	Madison Miller	24	Linda Sell
6	Rev. Mary Etta Mest	25	Laura Brown
9	Lucas Krause	25	Glenn Moser
11	Barry Hoffman	28	Abigail Keebler
11	Gail Miller	29	Leon Borneman
11	Karen Miller	30	Bob Schnaars
11	Cassandra Krause		

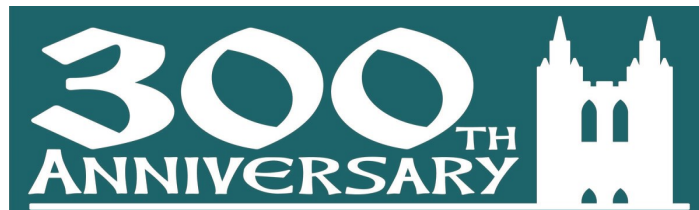
FROM THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE



The kitchen committee has taken the summer off and it was a good decision since it has been so hot outside. Fall will be upon us soon, and we plan to start our PND meals again in September. Please look for sign up sheets on the bulletin board! It is a great time to enjoy a delicious meal and the company of each other.

Thank you,

Robin (on behalf of the Kitchen Committee)



I am starting up a committee for our 300th anniversary coming up in 2020. I cannot do this alone and need your help to organize it. I would like to get together and share ideas. 300 years, it will be here before we know it. We need to start planning now. I figure we can meet sometime in the fall for the first time and then maybe every other month. How many churches can say they're still going at 300? We've come a long way and still have many more years ahead. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board for anyone interested in helping and serving on the committee. I hope you will join me on this journey so we can plan a wonderful event. Let's show people why we are still here!

Robin



Confirmands Serve Dinner at Opportunity House in Reading

On June 30 our four Confirmands, Isaiah Baez, Maggie Brennan, Grace Erb, and Corrie Shaak, helped make dinner then served 50+ adults at the Opportunity House shelter in Reading. Opportunity House, open since 1984, is a remarkable service to the greater Reading/Berks area. Helping the homeless population find a life of dignity, the emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, 24/7 daycare and learning facility, and Children’s Alliance center “change lives by feeding, housing, employing and empowering people to stand on their own feet,” according to their website.

Pictured below are the 4 Confirmands in the Opportunity House kitchen with Kim Shaak, Stacey Brennan, Kim Erb, Luis Baez, and Rev. Frances. The kids unanimously found the evening to be a great experience and eye-opening, recognizing “how lucky I am” and “others don’t have it so easy.”

Opportunity House relies upon volunteer groups to serve 3 meals a day at their housing shelter, and adults are welcome to form a team to serve, too. See Rev. Frances for details if you’d like to sign up.



Falkner Swamp U. C. C.

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Ice Cream for Lunch

August 19th after church

We will walk/drive to Suloman's

Everyone pays for their own

Rain date: September 16th



Rally Day

September 9th

Falkner Swamp's mission is to be a place of Welcome to All of God's children. To be a place of spiritual retreat for all who seek to know the loving Still Speaking God using the scriptures found in the Holy Bible, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and utilizing modern interpretations and resources to make the word alive and well in the age we are in.

~From "Constitution & Bylaws," September 29, 2013