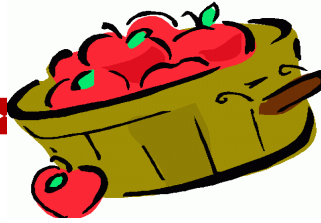




The VOICE



Pastor's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

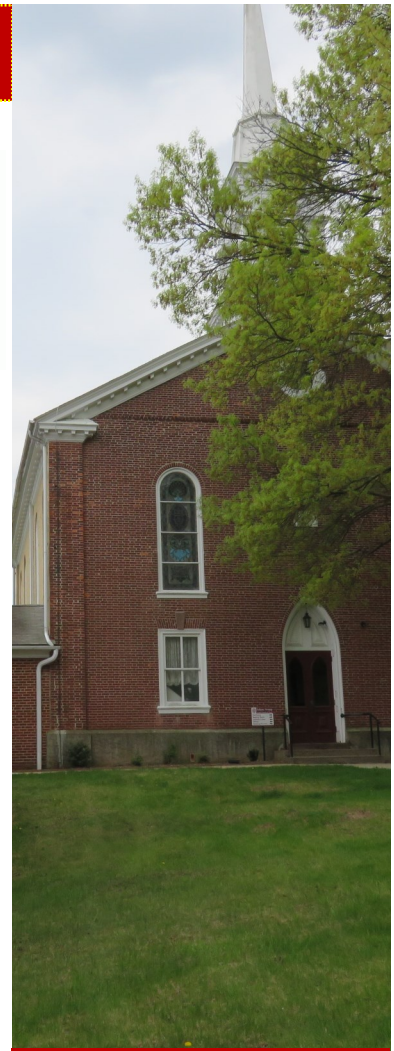
"I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:4).

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is **thank** you, it will be enough." - **Meister Eckhart, 13th century German mystic.**

I am grateful to all of you for granting this newly-called pastor two consecutive weeks of summer Sabbath. My family and I enjoyed a week in New Hampshire and a "stay-cation" where household and yard projects finally received attention. Time "away from it all" included a break from scheduling, incessant cell phone scrolling, and computer screen time. Sabbath rest also brought gentle moments of remembering you and offering prayers for your well-being in community with one another. This assembly of Christ appeared in the eyes of my heart, for which I gave prayers of thanksgiving.

When I returned to church I was reminded of my thanksgiving prayers --p. 15 "Check this out" gives us a glimpse of behind-the-scenes details that keep our church available for worship and mission. And I offer my thanks for these other tasks, done quietly and lovingly: to Arlene for hemming my pastor's robe; to Robin for re-planting my windowsill cactus and for hanging new blinds in the Pastor's Study; to many who remind me of dates and help me with names (always needed!). I echo the apostle Paul as he writes to many churches, represented by the scripture above in 1 Corinthians, that I never cease to offer my thanks to all of you who are enlivened by the still speaking God we know in Christ Jesus.

~continued on page 2



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Worship News/Speakers
- Lectionary Readings
- New Choir Director
- September Birthdays
- "Check This Out"

^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^

~continued from page 1

Safe Church - The recent Grand Jury report detailing the sexual abuse in six Pennsylvania Catholic dioceses highlights, among many things, the insidious nature of systems to protect themselves instead of helping those hurt by those very systems. Many of the victims in these cases are finally receiving justice by people willing to listen and choosing to stand with them against powerful forces intent on burying scandal and ignoring evil. As your pastor, I am available to listen and stand with you and your loved ones in the face of abuse.

All churches are places where children and adults deserve and need to feel safe; it's why the UCC adopted "Safe Church" policies in 2006. Furthermore, PA House Bill 435 passed in 2014, mandates, among other things, that employers and volunteers complete child abuse clearances that remain on record at the site where work with children occurs. Our church volunteers over 18 who teach Sunday School and help in the nursery completed these clearances in the summer of 2015, thanks to Becky Comer's leadership. These clearances are active for 5 years, then new clearance checks must be performed.

The Christian Education and Faith Formation committee will continue to review our church's Safe Church Policy for updates as the new Church School year gets underway. If you have any thoughts about our church practices or wish to talk about the Grand Jury report, please see me.

^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^

Puerto Rico-Starting in August, UCC church members began partnering with others to repair homes on the island that was devastated Sept 20, 2017 by Hurricane Maria. Are you interested in joining Disaster Relief Ministries in this work? From the UCC Disaster Ministries website (http://www.ucc.org/ucc_hurricane_maria_irma_recovery_puerto_rico): "Work may include repairing cement roofs, light carpentry, metal and wood roofing repair, and painting interior ceilings and walls. Most of the work will be done in the Humacao city area, the hardest hit area in Puerto Rico. Volunteers should be prepared to work hard. The work will involve being exposed to a hot and humid climate, some heavy lifting, and climbing ladders. There is also some work that does not entail climbing up onto roofs."

See Rev. Frances if you would like to explore options.

Blessings,
Rev. Frances

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!
- 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.

SUNDAY LECTIONARY* READINGS

Sunday liturgy often reflects the lectionary readings, and the sermon focuses typically on one selection. During the month of September in worship we will focus on the book of James. It is a short epistle (letter) to the early church written in the name of the disciple James, brother of Jesus. See if you can read the entire letter in one sitting – it's only 5 short chapters.

9/2 Song of Solomon 2:8-13, Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9, James 1:17-27, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

9/9 Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23, Psalm 125, James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17, Mark 7:24-37

9/16 Proverbs 1:20-33, Psalm 19, James 3:1-12, Mark 8:27-38

9/23 Proverbs 31:10-31, Psalm 1, James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a, Mark 9:30-37

9/30 Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22, Psalm 124, James 5:13-20, Mark 9:38-50

* The "Lectionary" refers to The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL). It is a three-year cycle of weekly Bible readings used to varying degrees by the vast majority of mainline Protestant churches in Canada and the United States. The RCL is built around the seasons of the Church Year, and includes four readings for each Sunday.. During most of the year, the selections are: a reading from the Hebrew Bible, a Psalm, a reading from the Epistles, and a Gospel reading. During the season of Easter, the Hebrew Bible lection is usually replaced with one from the Acts of the Apostles.

Greetings from your Consistory! This rainy summer is winding down. We are grateful that thus far we have not been flooded out as so many of our neighbors have been. God is good! Here is what happened at our Consistory meeting this month:

After attendance was taken, we offered an opening prayer to God once again to give us the guidance to do the work He asks us to do with our church for 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.

Russ Miller gave the devotion by reading the 23rd Psalm. Always a calming and centering passage from the Bible. Thank you, Russ!

Once again this month we changed the order of the meeting to accommodate guests. Our first guest of note was Isaiah Baez. As part of his Confirmation class he was to sit in on our meeting to see how the business of the church gets done.

Matt Brown announced that the Christian Ed department is changing their name to "The Committee for Faith Formation and Christian Education." This is to more accurately reflect how the committee wants to communicate not just Bible stories, but how lives are shaped by faith. Matt also reviewed all the things he and Laura have planned for the upcoming year. This is discussed further on in this newsletter, but suffice it so say that it is a very full schedule! Thanks again to Matt and Laura for doing a fabulous job with our youth!

Our second guest was Mary Etta Mest. She has been appointed 1/2-time minister at Zion U.C.C. in Womelsdorf, Pa. She will continue being the "visiting angel" for our church in addition to her new pastoral call at Zion. It means she has to change her membership from Falkner to Zion...She just got here! Fortunately, she has agreed to continue doing her visiting of folks who cannot get to church for us. These people REALLY appreciate her visits, and so do we! All our luck, love, and prayers, Mary Etta, as you start this new calling!

Finally, Arlene Umstead announced the passing of Dot Miller, as she had done in church the previous Sunday. She also announced that she had a collection of metal pipes that she was giving to the church, that we might scrap them out and keep the money. She has always been wonderfully generous to our church! Thank you again, Arlene!

Back to our regular business: Minutes from the last meeting were read and accepted. There was no treasurer's report as our financial secretary is on vacation. So is Rev. Frances, so there were no Pastoral Comments or Communiques.

We then moved on to the Committee reports. The largest report was filed by Robin Zerr as head of the property committee. She reported that the re-treading of the steps at the end of the Sunday School building had been completed, and they look GREAT!! Under new projects for the church, the committee is over-seeing some much-needed updates to the lighting and the plumbing of the men's and ladies' bathrooms in the Sunday School wing. They are also working on more effective ways to do the mowing and the trimming of the cemeteries. The grass in both cemeteries has needed constant attention this year because of all the rain. On behalf of the Consistory I would once again like to thank all the members of the Property committee for their hard work on the numerous projects throughout the church.



~Continued from page 4

Music and Worship reported that Sally Fetterman will be starting as our new choir director this Wednesday night August 22nd. Sally is a junior at Boyertown High School, and we hope she can stay with us for the next 2 years. She comes highly recommended by both Mrs. Erica Creed and Erin Ahart. We REALLY are looking forward to her guidance in the choir room!

Also, September 16 is looming large on the Music and Worship calendar. We will be welcoming new members to our church. These include Deb and Wayne Gruver and Pastor Frances Chester. A joyful day!

Visitation as reported by Barb Geary noted that Mary Etta Mest made 11 visits and two long telephone calls and sent out 14 of our Faith Booklets. She continues to be a wonderful representative of Falkner Swamp, doing so much for our church! Thank You, Mary Etta!

Before I close let me touch on some other important dates on the church calendar. One is September 20. On that date we will start making up the budget for the new year to present to the **Congregational Meeting November 4**. The other date is in October of 2020 when we will be celebrating our 300th anniversary. If you can help with this project in any way, please contact Robin Zerr or Brenda Semach. I know they would like the help.

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, President of Consistory

Falkner Swamp U.C.C.



Thank you to all that signed up to be a part of this committee. We have a great group! We will be planning a meeting later in the fall (probably November).

SEPTEMBER 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion	3 Labor Day	4 7 PM Parish Relations	5 7 PM Choir	6	7	8
9 Rally Day PND Meal Choir singing Mustard Seed Offering	10 7 PM Music & Worship	11 Ladies Luncheon @ Vincenzo's 11:30 am	12 7 PM Choir	13	14	15
16 New Members Joining Ice Cream for Lunch Joyful Noise	17 7 PM Consistory	18 6:30 PM Property	19 7 PM Choir	20 Budget Meeting	21	22
23 Baptism 30 Pulpit Swap Future of F.S. Offering	24	25 7 PM Christian Ed Meeting	26 7 PM Choir	27	28	29 9-12 Leaders Retreat

Sundays at Falkner Swamp:

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

Sept 2 — Communion

Sept 9 — Rally Day, Mustard Seed Malawi Offering, Choir Singing, PND Meal

Sept 16 — Joyful Noise Offering, New Members joining

Sept 23 — Baptism

Sept 30 — Pulpit Swap, Future of F.S. Offering

Rev. Frances Hours: (generally) Tuesdays & Wednesdays 9AM-2PM	Secretary Hours: (generally) Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 9AM-2PM
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Hello Members and Friends of Falkner Swamp UCC,



It is a great privilege to serve God with you as the Pastor of Visitation. It is exciting to be a part of this congregation as the Holy Spirit is very much alive here. May God continue to bless each of you and may God continue to fan the flames for worship, for caring and loving, and for outreach to share the Gospel.

God is once again bringing change to my life. I am blessed that I can continue to serve Falkner Swamp as the Pastor of Visitation while I am being called to be the Pastor of Zion United Church of Christ in Womelsdorf which is a part-time position. I will miss coming to the meals after church on Sundays. I hope to participate in other activities of Falkner so our friendships can continue.

Feel free to call me or send an e-mail or a text to just say hello. If you have a visiting need, we suggest that you call the church office and leave a message if no one is available to answer (610-323-4053). However, if it is an urgent need, and your call cannot be answered by anyone in the church office, call 610-659-2775 to request an emergency telephone prayer or a fast-as-possible visit with an individual or a family.

May God's Peace Be With You!
Rev. Mary Etta Mest
mestme@aol.com
610-659-2775 c
610-652-2281 h



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Just want to say hi to all. Summer's almost over. We can put the garden tools away; take a little break before the snow shovels have to come out. But it really doesn't matter. It's still a beautiful time: summer heat, winter cold. God made all the times beautiful for us to enjoy. Love to all. *Erma Frye*

Welcome our new Choir Director

Sally Fetterman is starting her junior year at Boyertown High School. She is involved in band (mallet percussion) and Orchestra (cello) and is an active member of her school choir along with participating in choir festivals. Sally has been studying piano for 10 years with Jennifer Frecon-Smith. She is a member of Good Shepherd UCC in Boyertown. Her parents are Ted and Debbie Fetterman. Her sister Mary is beginning college at Westminster Choir College, and her brother Ben is starting his freshman year at Boyertown. Sally has often thought about studying music education and becoming a choir director. She is excited to get to know everyone at Falkner Swamp and to share her love of music.



The Property Committee has been very busy, as usual. The bell pulley needs some work and Marcus is scheduled to come and fix it. Two new toilets were purchased for the women's restrooms. They will be installed on Sept. 15th. We are still getting prices on the air conditioner for fellowship hall, but we are getting close.

We are asking everyone to please keep the doors to all rooms on both lower levels open, this allows the humidifier to work more efficiently.

I would like to thank the Women's Ministries group for donating money toward the toilets. I also can't thank the people on the property committee enough for all their hard work helping to get stuff done and other people who help that are not on the committee.

If you have any questions or you know something that needs fixing, please let someone on the committee know.

Rob Becker, Bob Erb, Lee Heffner, Rob Krause, Sharon Schnaars and Robin Zerr

*Property
Committee*



An update from the Cemetery Committee

Our monsoon-ridden summer has caused more than its share of problems for everyone, and the cemetery is no exception. When our two mowing personnel (Bob and Rob) actually get a two-day break between the raindrops, the lawn is so saturated by the water, that the mower leaves very unsightly mud tracks. That same mower must be stopped every so-many passes to clean out accumulated cut grass under the deck and mower blades.

Mowing isn't our only problem...there is also the matter of weed-eating around the tombstones. Bob Erb has been mowing and weed-eating the Falkner Swamp Cemetery for 33 years, but Bob's shoulders no longer allow him to weed-eat. He is scheduled for shoulder surgery in January 2019, so for the foreseeable future that job needs to be taken over by volunteers [thank you Bob and Sharon Schnaars, and Jim Kooser and any others who helped].

Rob Erb has been mowing and weed-eating the Hollowbush Cemetery (adjacent to the church) for about 15 years. In addition, for the past two years he's been helping his dad keep up with the Falkner Swamp Cemetery when his job and family schedule allows.

The aging of our personnel and our equipment have conspired with this summer's weather to cause our cemeteries to be in "less than desired" shape. We are very sorry for the "soggy mess" [probably the kindest way to put it] and we ask for your patience and your help.

If you are willing and available to help with the weed-eating, please speak to Bob Erb or Sharon Schnaars. We are hoping to weed-eat the cemetery once a month for the balance of this year. [With the wet weather, that probably means through most of November].

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS		
1	Caitlin Becker	21 Betsy Basile
1	Kenneth Sell	23 Rev. Frances Chester.
4	Carol Stevens	23 Bob Erb, Sr.
4	Frank Straub	23 Moyra Goughnour
5	Marguerite Fronheiser	23 Evelyn Schwenk
5	Beverly Ream	23 Justin Wentzel
13	Jim Kooser	28 Sarah Goughnour
13	Deb Taylor	

From the Desk of the Christian Education and Faith Formation Committee:

What's in store for you and your children here at Falkner Swamp United Church of Christ?

Here is what you will find:

Christian Education for all ages



- Sunday School Program- 9:00-9:45 Sunday mornings
September thru May
- ADULTS/PARENTS/GUARDIANS gather in our Fellowship Hall for casual conversation and reflection, led by lay leaders
- Children are in 2 classrooms, generally, PRE-SCHOOL-GRADE 2 and JUNIORS GRADE 3-6
- CONFIRMATION CLASS- our pastor leads our Middle School students, building on the Sunday School teachings and leads young people to affirm their faith

Note: Lessons are based on nationally recognized curricula and website activities

Children's Moment

- As part of the 10:00 Worship time , this is a time for all children to be invited up to the front of the sanctuary and become part of receiving a Christian message lead by the pastor or various lay leaders.



Nursery Time

- During the Worship, right after Children's Moment, the Nursery is opened for children up through Grade 2
- A Church member volunteer stays with children brought down to the nursery room

Mission Church



- 2nd and 4th Sundays each month
 - During Worship, right after Children's Moment, all children are invited downstairs to work on projects that reach out to serve our communities. This is a way for our children to become part of OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION.
 - Past projects: bookmarks for local library; Christmas cards for our homebound members, our local firemen and police officers, and our troops overseas; Operation: Christmas Child gift boxes; back-to-school boxes
- Note:** All of our church school teachers and nursery volunteers have up-to-date state mandated clearances on file.

Fund-Raiser Events

- Several times a year, children and adults create activities that include our church and communities in an effort to raise funds for the Christian Ed Program
- 10% of our raised funds are earmarked for the support of [The Mustard Seed School](#) in Africa
- Examples: A Joyful Noise coin collection once a month during Worship; Annual Crockpot Cook-Off



Fun-Time Activities

- Several times a year, activities are scheduled that give our children and congregation the opportunity to enjoy each other's company in Christian fellowship.
- Examples: movie night at the church, mini-golf, doggie roast with a bonfire and movie; ice cream for lunch at Suloman's Dairy

Come and join us in joy and fellowship!

Mission Church

SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS

September 9-No Mission Church for Rally Day

September 23-Tie Dye White Tshirts

October 14-Finish T-shirt's/Start Christmas Cards for the Troops

October 28-Finish Cards for Troops

November 11-Operation Christmas Child

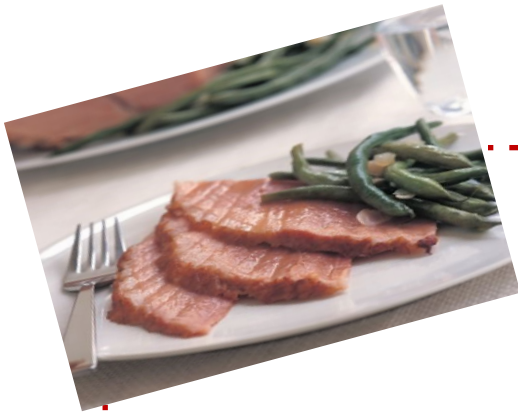
November 25-No Mission Church-Confirmation!

December 9-No Mission Church-Hanging of the Greens

December 23-Birthday Bags for MultiService (Happy Birthday Jesus!)



Pew Pads: The Music & Worship Committee has decided that starting in September, we will only be signing the pew pads when we serve Communion.



PND Meal

Sunday, Sept. 9

Ham & String Beans



Ice Cream for Lunch (let's try again)
Sunday, Sept. 16th following worship
Suloman's Dairy



The FSUCC Ladies are going out to lunch on Tuesday, September 11th ~ 11:30 at Vincenzo's in Douglassville ~ Route 662 or Old Swede Road, about 6-7 minutes past Michael's. Please RSVP to Arlene or Susan Mercer by September 5th. All are welcome!



Send a Pastor Over the Edge!

Fundraiser for Bethany Children's Home

Rev. Corrine Dautrich, new interim pastor at St. Paul's UCC in Pottstown, will be rappelling down the side of the Abraham Lincoln Towers in Reading on September 21.

For fun? Yes, but most importantly, to raise funds for Bethany Children's Home.

Pastor Corrine writes: "Please help me support the great work that Bethany is doing. I promise to climb down a building in return!"

You can send a donation on the website: www.bethanyhome.org/ote4bethany/ or send checks or money orders made out to Bethany Children's Home and mail to 1863 Bethany Rd., Womelsdorf, PA 19567. Include the name, Rev.



- ◇ Tile on the Christian Ed steps has been replaced
- ◇ First aid kits are hanging on each floor (near the fire extinguishers)
- ◇ The refrigerator, bell rope, Christian Ed railing have all been repaired
- ◇ The threshold by the organ has been repaired
- ◇ Youth Room has new furniture, tv, etc.
- ◇ Thank you to the mystery person(s) who pulled weeds around the church
- ◇ Thank you to everyone who has helped Bob Erb with weeding in the cemetery

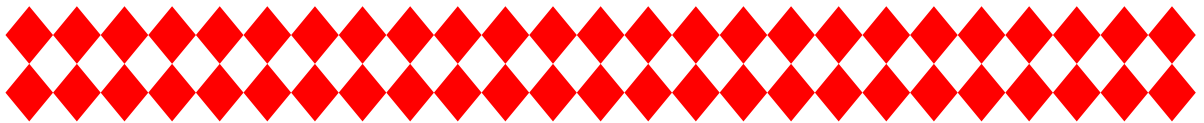
Anything to add to this section next month?

Please let the office know.

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E-mail: falknerswamp@comcast.net
Website: www.falknerswamp.org
Facebook: @falknerswampucc

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



September 9th

- ◆ 9 AM ~ Sunday School begins
- ◆ 10 AM– 11:15 AM ~ Worship with Commission of Church School teachers
- ◆ 11:30 AM ~ PND Meal

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