

NEWSLETTER

FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF FALKNER SWAMP UCC



Dear Beloved at Falkner Swamp:

Today as I write this newsletter it is the first day of Fall, and our days reveal the change of weather. The smoke from the West Coast fires has been swept away, and our skies now open to a striking blue. Crisp breezes send leaves fluttering to the ground. I'm stepping on the black walnuts that drop without regard to footpaths or parked cars. My allergies are kicking back in!

It's the Autumn equinox, one of two moments in the year when the sun is exactly above the equator. (The second moment is the Vernal or Spring equinox.) It's the time when the nights and the day are of almost equal length. We're heading to the time of the night lengthening, and the days growing shorter as we move toward the winter solstice – the longest night.

Our liturgical calendar somewhat mirrors these changes. By liturgical, I mean the pattern of our church life, the scriptures we read and the sacraments we observe. As we anticipate the longer nights, we gather in to re-meet our church family, returning to school, returning from summer vacations and weekends away.

Our lectionary scriptures in this second half of the Pentecost season follow Jesus in his last days of ministry as he enters Jerusalem. We'll stop short of the dramatic turns of Holy Week as we reach the season of Advent, when we return again to the anticipation of Jesus' birth, the start of our Christian journey.

We take special note of Communion on the first Sunday of October, World Communion Day. It's as if the world's harvests are gathered into one common loaf from which churches all over partake of Jesus' body together. The first Sunday of November brings us to All Saints' Day, and we share in Communion highlighting the presence of all those who have shaped us and have gone before us.

Maybe Fall brings some sadness for you, as the light wanes and night darkens. Perhaps you experience a sharper longing for those no longer living, or for memories of a time that is gone. In our "Covid-tide," maybe those sensations and emotions are stronger still.

Honor this passage. Take time to notice these emotions and memories. God will use them to teach you; humble yourself to receive new perception.

There's a season for everything and a time for every matter under the heavens. (Ecclesiastes 3:1). And remember, the Christ light shines no matter the season.

With you on the journey,

Rev. James

Please join us in supporting the 2020 Neighbors In Need Special Mission Offering. Thank you!

The Neighbors in Need Offering - Oct 4



Housing for homeless youth ... helping hourly wage earners learn how to organize for better pay and benefits to live on their income....backpacks, supplies and food for school children.....shelter in Mexico for those deported from the U.S.

These are some of the missions created through grants given to UCC churches through the Neighbors in Need Offering. This is one of the UCC's "5 for 5" yearly offerings that all members and friends of UCC churches are asked to donate to. Nationwide the offering will be received on October 4. If you want to read inspiring stories of how church members band together to create mission and give hope and new life to their neighbors in need, go here: https://www.ucc.org/nin_grants

If you donate via the Give App, you can click "NIN" to give to this Offering. You can also write "NIN" in the memo line of your check. Thank you for your faith in giving to this fund, and if you cannot give at this time, donations are received throughout the year.



YEARLY BUDGET MEETING UPCOMING

- When? **Tues Oct 6, 7 pm**
- Who? **Consistory Members, Chairs of Committees**
- Why? **To further the mission of our church through a financial budget for the 2021 calendar year.**
- **RSVP if you are coming:**
 - falknerswamp@comcast.net
 - **Call church office 610-323-4053 & leave message**
 - **Please say how you prefer to meet: in person or on Zoom**

Please review your committee's budget from the past 2 years and come informed with what your financial needs may be for 2021.

Christian Mission is like a 3-legged stool:
one leg is the people;
another leg is the Holy Spirit,
a third leg is the resources like finances and other material goods.

But what does it hold up?
The platform of Christ's justice, love, charity and redemption that the church always has and always will act out.



Worship for Sunday, Sept 27

First – sign up to let us know you will be coming. This helps if we need to cancel due to rain (decided by 9 AM Sunday) and for contact tracing if needed.

Check your email or text for the online sign up.

Without email? Please call/text Rev. Frances, 484-995-2705 OR Brenda Semach, 484-686-6549 to sign up.

Some tips to help on Sunday:

- We'll worship by cemetery behind the church
- Plan to drop any offerings in the baskets provided. Thank you for your ongoing support!
- Wear your mask, bring hand sanitizer & your own chair or blanket
- No bulletins will be handed out to minimize contact. The worship order is in this newsletter.
- Plan to arrive no later than 9:45 to get settled at 6ft social distance.

Please follow the guidelines that our COVID 19 Task Force, Consistory, and Music & Worship have worked hard to develop for everyone's safety, and to promote life-giving and meaningful worship. These are below.

Please read these Guidelines thoroughly.

RETURN TO OUTDOOR WORSHIP COVENANT AGREEMENT

When we gather again in-person, we will ask all to covenant together on the following guidelines. Covenant is biblical language rooted in God's love for God's people. When we covenant with each other, it's more than just an agreement to follow rules. It's choosing in love, before God and with each other, to abide by ways of living in community together.

To gather meaningfully and safely for outdoor worship, we covenant together to follow these guidelines:

1. Do I and everyone in my household feel well? If I/we do not, I/we covenant to stay at home.
2. I will wear a mask upon arriving and until I enter my car to go home. This applies to anyone aged 2 and older.
3. I will sanitize my hands before walking up to the worship area, and after touching my face. Please bring sanitizer with you for this purpose.
4. I will keep a physical distance of 6 feet or more from another outside my family.
5. I will graciously accept the guidance of a worship leader or other member to move my chair to be sure I am a safe distance that is comfortable for me and others around me.
6. I understand, though it may sadden me, that we will not have congregational singing during worship at this time. I further understand that Choir may sing, (masked, socially distanced 15-20 feet from congregation), and that their singing will stand in for our collective voice.



- Sept 29, 10 am Women's Ministries meeting in Fellowship Hall
- You can also check the church calendar on our website www.falknerswamp.org



Lord in your mercy ... Hear our prayer

- ❖ for Brenda S. for knee surgery on 9/29
- ❖ for Karen M.'s mother, Linda
- ❖ for Bob & Sharon S., daughter & family's move to Puerto Rico

to add your prayers please email by Tuesday Noon for the next week's newsletter

Order of Worship for September 27, 2020, 10 AM

17th Sunday after Pentecost

We can also call this season "Covid-Tide"

Ken Berkowitz, Lay Leader, Bob Schnaars, Choral Leader

Rev. Frances, preaching

Welcome

Introit

Opening Prayer

*The Lay Leader will begin and gesture toward congregation for response. Congregational Response is: **In you, O God, I trust.***

Leader: We come today renewing our faith.

Response

Leader: God is Creator of all people, land and sea; of what is known and what is yet to be discovered.

Response

Leader: God is Teacher; revealing in our innermost being what is true and right.

Response

Leader: God is Healer; bringing us back to Godself through the paths of joy and the way of sorrow, in community and in solitude.

Response

Leader: Let us worship God -- Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer -- author of our present hope.

Call to Reconciliation, Prayer of Confession, and Assurance of Pardon

Moment for the Children & Youth

Scripture Reading Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21:23-32

Sermon

"Crucial Conversations"

Rev. Frances

Pastoral Prayer, followed by Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Choral Benediction

Departure