



May 2019

THE VOICE

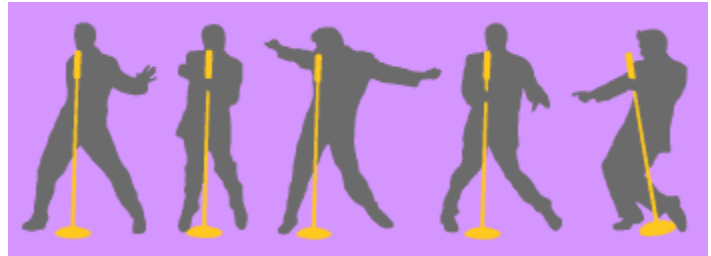
FALKNER SWAMP UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Community Breakfast

May 4th

8 AM–11 AM



Ladies' Night ~ Tuesday, May 14th

6 PM ~ doors open

6:30 PM ~ dinner

**Entertainment provided by
Elvis Impersonator, Jeff Krick, Sr.**

Menu (catered by Women Ministries)

\$15/adult, free for children ages 12 & under



Saturday, May 11, 2019

3 PM to 5 PM

**Evangelical and Reformed
Historical Society (ERHS)
President's Reception at
Falkner Swamp UCC**

Details on page 4

Easter Greetings!

We did it again. Had an Easter celebration, sang “Alleluia,” gathered with family or friends (or both) to eat and maybe participate in an Easter egg hunt or two. We move on though it is a 50-day season of Eastertide, but little else remains that will remind us of this. That chocolate Easter bunny *for sure* is eaten by now, and the lilies, daffodils and hydrangeas are dropping petals like a kids’ ice cream slithers off the cone on a high noon in June.

The wonder and awe of the “high holy days” of Christianity – Christmas and Easter – are often lost to all the hype of sameness. At Christmas if we’re lucky we’ll spend some time with wonder - wonder at the incredible odds that God decided to become human in the form of a vulnerable baby.

At Easter let’s stop and just be in awe for a moment. Like Mary Magdalene, who so poignantly holds this word for us (see especially in John 20:1-18), can we just *stop* for a moment and go, “oh wow, what is happening here?” She approaches Jesus’ tomb to anoint his body for burial but the *body is gone*.

Men (or angels?) appear to remind her of Jesus’ words that he would suffer and die, then rise on the third day. And it’s the third day! Oh yes, she remembers! Like a preferred buyer she is given the right of first refusal, and *she is the first to see the resurrected Jesus!*

Fully bought in, Mary is astonished. I don’t know that Mary Magdalene was the muse, but I think of this moment when I read Mary Oliver’s verse from her poem “Sometimes”:

Instructions for living a life:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

In awe, Mary *runs* to tell the 11 apostles... and most refuse to believe her (see Luke 24:1-12). We might do the same. For resurrection, being raised from the dead by God, is a fanciful story. It sounds too good to be true, that there is something that lasts beyond our fickle nature, greed, addictions and perseverations on what we think is right and good and true. That resurrection happens amidst war and hatred, poverty and disease, and endless cycles of humans reaching for the lowest common denominators.

My God, my God, if you had not given us resurrection in Jesus, we would have needed to invent it ourselves. Thank you, God, that you did, so that we did not have to. Thank you, wow.

Praying for your fifty days of “wow,”

Rev. Frances



*None of us, including me, ever do great things.
But we can all do small things, with great love,
and together we can do something wonderful.*
– Mother Teresa



God's Grace and peace to you,

The Consistory met on Monday April 15th at 7pm.

As believers, we must say goodbye to our old, independent way of thinking and learn how to be integrated into a greater whole. We need each other, for without each other's input and gifts, we are incomplete.

What is one thing you feel God is inviting you to right now?

The Consistory team continues to support the ministries of our church, working together with these committees, Property, Endowment, Kitchen, Visitation, Faith and Formation (formerly Christian Education), Music and Worship, Cemetery, and Reaching New People.

We, your Consistory team, continue to work together prayerfully and faithfully to lead this wonderful congregation to be disciples to spread God's love, grace and mercy to our community. Together we can make a difference.

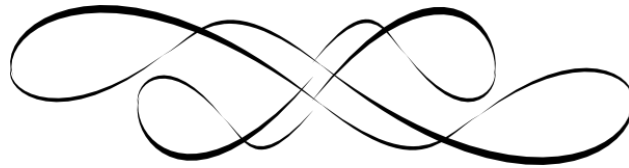
John 21:17 ~ A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep."

Who are you feeding? Who are you sharing the good news with?

God's Grace and peace be with you,
Brenda Semach
Consistory President



*Saturday, May 11th from 3-5 PM you are cordially invited to join ERHS President Richard Berg for an inspiring afternoon of history at America's oldest German Reformed church, right here at Falkner Swamp! There will be a keynote address by The Rev. Dr. Lee C. Barrett of Lancaster Theological Seminary, a presentation by The Rev. Dr. Martha Bean Kriebel on her new book, *Promise Kept with a Paintbrush*, and remarks by our very own Rev. Frances Chester, Pastor of Falkner Swamp UCC. Light refreshments will be served. Admission is free; donations to ERHS are greatly appreciated. Kindly RSVP to ERHS by phone 717.290.8734 or by email erhs@lancasterseminary.edu.*



A heartfelt thank you to everyone for your help and support of our annual Peanut Butter Egg fundraiser. It is amazing what we can accomplish when we all work together. We are all sold out! Final details about the amount of money raised will be in the next newsletter.

MAY 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 PM Choir	2 7 PM AED Video	3	4 8 AM —11AM Community Breakfast
5 Baptism Communion	6 7 PM Music & Worship	7 6:30 PM Property	8 7 PM Choir	9	10	11 9 AM—11 AM Gathering of Consistory Presidents 3 PM—5 PM Evangelical & Reformed Historical Society
	Rev. Frances education week, May 7 –9, Clergy Convocation in Lancaster					
12 <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Rev. Frances Education Sunday</div>	13	14 10 AM Bible Study 6:30 PM Ladies' Night	15 7 PM Choir	16	17	18 8:30 AM Work Day
19 Youth Sunday	20 7 PM Consistory	21	22 7 PM Choir	23	24	25
26 <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Rev. Frances vacation</div>	27	28 10 AM Bible Study 7 PM CE Meeting	29 7 PM Choir	30	31	

Sundays at Falkner Swamp:

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

May 5 — Communion, Baptism with reception for all to follow

May 12 — Rev. Ann Few preaching

May 19 — Youth Sunday, Joyful Noise Offering

May 26 — Beth Eustis preaching

Rev. Frances Hours: (generally) Mondays, varies Tues & Wed mornings & by appt.	Secretary Hours: (generally) Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 9AM-2PM
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- ◇ Saturday, May 18
- ◇ 8:30—noon (lunch provided)
- ◇ inside and outside jobs to be completed



The Dogs of Falkner Swamp

The Dogs of Falkner Swamp will be the featured entertainment at Zion Union Church's Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival on Friday, June 7th. The entertainment, and the festival, run from 7 to 9 pm. Zion's address is 329 Church Road, Kutztown, PA 19530. The public is invited. Food and beverages are available, including, of course, strawberries and ice cream. The event is being held rain or shine. There is no admission charged. Please join us for an evening of entertainment, music and food.

PRC COMMITTEE



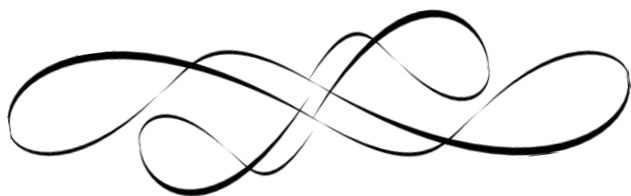
Colossians 3:12

Paul tells them the key to remain unified is to show compassion and forgiveness toward one another.

12 Since you are all set apart by God, made holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a holy way of life: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

The PRC committee is designed to be a safe and confidential place to share any frustrations and struggles, also your joys and ideas. Please reach out to the committee. They can listen and help with a direction for you. We are all here to do God's work in this world together.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Semach, Chair; Bob Erb Sr., Matt Brown



We do not have a Treasurer's Report this month due to tax season. However, we did want to share that we filed a property insurance claim for the plumbing and heating repairs necessary from the frozen pipes in February. The insurance estimate was \$1,998.37 and we received \$998.37 after our \$1000 deductible.

**Christian Education and
Faith Formation**

Growing In Faith Together

SAVE THE DATE
Christian Education and Faith Formation
invite you to enjoy God's Creation.
More details to come.

**A DAY
AT THE
PARK**

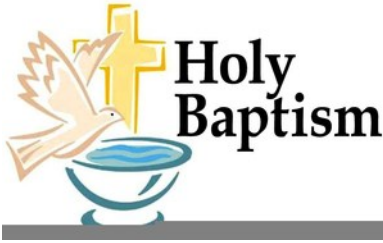
Green Lane Park
Saturday, June 22

A DAY IN
Malawi
SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

A One Day Children's Camp
Connecting Kids Across Cultures.

Children 3-12 will have the opportunity to spend the day learning about the games, clothing, stories, music, and food of our Malawian Friends at The Mustard Seed School.

Falkner Swamp UCC
2077 Swamp Pike
Gilbertsville, PA




On Sunday, May 5 Isaac Connolly, son of Aaron and Rachael (Schwenk) Connolly will be baptized during worship. The family has invited the congregation to a reception in Fellowship Hall following worship.



We welcome new members to our congregation on Pentecost Sunday, June 9th. If you are interested in joining, please see Rev. Frances.

**MAY
BIRTHDAYS**

6 Linda Rennard	18 Finn McDonough
7 Jonathan Berkowitz	19 Olga Rees
8 Lottie Hidenbrand	20 Elijah Brown
10 Maggie Brennan	23 Ron Becker
10 Cayla Duda	25 Jane Wilmer
12 Joyce Rothenberger	26 Bill Scheck
13 Lee Heffner	27 Jason Moser
14 Emily Duda	27 Mary Grace Holcomb
16 Matt Brown	28 Evelyn Isett
17 Tim Keebler	30 Debra Helsel
17 Matthew Moser	



Boyertown Area Multi-Service Family

Falkner Swamp will be adopting an area family for 2019. Multi-Service called us before Easter with information regarding this family. The family consists of a father, a 15-year old daughter and a 13-year old son. Their mother recently passed away. Brenda Semach and Becky Comer put together two Easter baskets including Walmart gift cards for each of the teenagers and a family Giant gift card. There will be opportunities to contribute to this fund as we will be purchasing gifts for birthdays and Christmas as well as school clothes in the fall, etc. More information will be distributed at a later date and giving envelopes will be available to contribute to this family's needs.



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE (CWS) EMERGENCY CLEANUP BUCKETS



We would like to thank everyone who contributed financially to our buckets. Our original goal was to supply 10 buckets, but we have increased our goal to 20 buckets. We have collected over \$500 plus we have received some free items from area businesses. We are still waiting for replies from some of these businesses. We will be applying for a \$250 grant and if we receive this grant money, we plan to possibly supply another 5 buckets. We can use more funds and if you are still interested in contributing, please contact Barb Geary or Becky Comer.

“May is for Moms” - We are trying to collect some special items for Boyertown Area Multi-Service in the month of May that will help out the ladies. When we shop for items for Multi-Service, we usually think of food items, which is great! But, there are items that are needed by the families that Multi-Service serves which are less often provided; so for May we will try to help out with some of those items. We are collecting: Diapers (size 4T and 5T); Wipes & Baby Wipes; Feminine Products For All Ages (you know what they are). These are items that women cannot do without and must buy whether rich or poor. So, let’s help them out in the month of May. Boxes will be in the vestibule for collection. Thank you everyone!!!! This particular collection is sponsored by: Women’s Ministries.



Easter Sunrise



Peanut Butter Eggs

Falkner Swamp U. C. C.

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Gilbertsville, PA 19525

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Facebook: @falknerswampucc



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Peanut Butter Eggs
- Work Day
- May Birthdays
- Ladies Night

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