

NEWSLETTER

FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF FALKNER SWAMP UCC



See inside for:

- *September calendar*
- *Mission & Outreach*
- *Coffee & Conversation*
- *Children's Church*
- *Upcoming Special Offerings*
- *Peter Detterline Affirmation of Ministry*



Thank you to Bob for working on the 1st step (no pun intended) in getting the steeple area prepared and safe for its removal. He and his brother, Rocky, made 25 new steps. Bob has been working on the tedious project of replacing the old steps (behind the organ) with these new, safer ones. Again, thank you Bob and Rocky!

Upcoming Offerings:

Mustard Seed on the 11th
NIN - October 2
Future of F.S. - October 30
All Saints - November 6

Dear Falkner Swamp Beloved,

About Sabbatical

As you receive this, I will have begun my sabbatical, which runs Sept 1 – Oct 31. Sabbatical derives from the word sabbath, which from the Hebrew means “rest.”

The purpose of a sabbatical is *to be restored*. Sabbath rest is a through line in Scripture. From Gen 3:2 when God rests on the 7th day after creating the world, to the law codes of Deuteronomy declaring a day of mandated rest and the Jubilee every 50 years, to Mark 6:31 where Jesus says to the apostles, “Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest awhile.” The centrality of Sabbath as faithful practice emerges in many other locations in our Scriptures.

Someone recently said, “enjoy your vacation.” But sabbatical differs from vacation. A vacation is usually when you schedule time off work to go somewhere else or complete a project that needs some prolonged attention. Even a “staycation” includes some days of local sightseeing. Coming back, we often feel “we need a vacation from the vacation”! It’s not always restful, not always restorative.

A sabbatical affords the opportunity to “let go the nets” and allow oneself to be restored from labor. It challenges the cultural norm that if you are not going after it every day, you’ll lose it. You fill in the blank of what “it” is. On a podcast Curtis Chang posed the challenge of sabbatical rest: “Can you be present to God and can you receive restoration from God amidst incomplete and unresolved tension?”*

In my last sermon Aug 28, I mentioned the following in our church life, things that are incomplete & unresolved: the cleaning and refurbishing to be done after the new heating system is installed; the removal of the steeple for the sanctuary roof repair; a return to fellowship time, and the new Constitution that a few lay leaders will circulate among you in preparation for our November congregational meeting.

Sabbatical demands radical trust. Trust that even while there is work before us, rest is as essential as the work. In particular, centering our rest as a gift from God points to gratitude for the gifts God grants in the created order, in our relationships, and in our minds and bodies. We take Sabbath rest, and we allow the Sabbath to live in and through us.

My Sabbatical Plans

I will follow these 3 R’s: rest, read and reflect. I have a stack (well, *stacks*) of books of all kinds I want to read. I hope to reflect on the past few years, especially the most recent in a pandemic, as well as what the future holds. I will live slowly, resting in a reduced pace.

~continued on next page

I will take a couple, maybe three, trips. One is Sept 6-8 for a Practicum in Gestalt Pastoral Care, held at a retreat center in Maryland. Another is Oct 2-9 for a directed retreat at Mercy by the Sea, a center in Connecticut on Long Island Sound. While there, I will see a spiritual director once daily but otherwise, will practice silence in God's presence. Finally, I may visit family and friends in Columbus, Ohio, my hometown.

I'm aware of the ability to take this sabbatical because of your support. My hearty thanks. I am grateful for your willingness to let me go for these two months.

Rev Ann Few, sabbatical supply pastor

I know you are in loving, capable hands with the Rev. Ann Few. She has been with our church on a few occasions, most recently for Sunday supply. She also serves the Conference as a mentor to Communities of Practice, which are gatherings of active clergy. She is an avid golfer and pickle ball player, and enjoys the beach with her family. I know you will warmly welcome Pastor Ann and her husband, Larry, who reside nearby in Linfield.

Pastor Ann will supply most Sundays. Please see the Calendar page for more details on upcoming services in September and October. She will be available for urgent pastoral care needs. Please see the calendar page for her contact information.

Sharon will continue to be in the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. As always, consult the Calendar for those hours. Sharon also regularly checks the church phone and email, and will be in communication with Pastor Ann.

I conclude this letter to you as I did during my sermon on Aug 28. From the writer of the letter to the Hebrews, "Let mutual affection continue." (13:1). And I will see you in November.

With you on the journey,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rev Frances".

Rev. Frances

*"Good Faith" Podcast with David French and Curtis Chang, Aug 6, 2022.



				1	2	3
4 10 AM/Worship Communion – Rev. Kevin McLemore 7 PM/AA Mtg.	5 	6 Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM Women's Ministries 10 AM	7 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM 7 PM Choir	8	9	10
11 10 AM/Worship Rev. Ann Few 1 st day of Children's Church Mustard Seed Special Offering 7 PM/AA Mtg.	12	13 Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	14 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM 7 PM Choir	15	16	17
18 10 AM/Worship Rev. Ann Few 7 PM/AA Mtg.	19 7 PM Consistory	20 Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	21 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM 7 PM Choir	22	23	24
25 10 AM/Worship Ms. Liz Brunton Mustard Seed Dedication 7 PM/AA Mtg.	26 7 PM Music & Worship	27 Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	28 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM 7 PM Choir	29	30	

Sabbatical Supply Sept – Oct 2022 Rev. Ann Few cell: 717-468-4981
email: anntfew@gmail.com



On these upcoming Sundays in September and October

Sept 4 – Rev. Kevin McLemore, Associate Conference Minister, preaching and presiding over Holy Communion

Sept 11 – Faith Formation Sunday. Rev. Ann Few, preaching

- Children's Church begins
- Coffee & Conversation begins, 8:30-9:30, hosted by Brenda Semach

Sept 25 – Ms. Liz Brunton, lay leader at Church of the Ascension United Church of Christ in Norristown, graduate of Lutheran Seminary of Philadelphia, preaching.

- We also dedicate in prayer the sitting mats for children at the Mustard Seed School in Malawi. Janice Lee will join us to receive the mats prior to her trip to Malawi in October.

Oct 9 – Rev. Paul Jones, preaching

Oct 16 – Anniversary Sunday. Rev. Ann Few, preaching and presiding over Holy Communion



Prayer requests will be kept on the prayer list for 3 weeks.

Please contact Rev. Frances if the prayer request should be extended.

- Amber Stetler, in rehab and recovering from a fall
- Chris Budgy, Kevin's mother, mother-in-law to Stacey & Grandma to Cailin, Patrick & Maggie, suffering from effects of a stroke
- Jeanne Thierolf, Ed's sister-in-law, as she spends her remaining time here before joining her heavenly home with our Lord
- Betsy Basile for recurring health issues



Thank you to our Cleaning Crew this month! They keep all our church spaces sparkling & fresh.

For September, we thank Bob and Sharon Schnaars.

Always room to add more cleaners and cleaning teams! Contact church office if you have some time & can help out: 610-323-4053 or falknerswamp@comcast.net



@Falkner Swamp



On September 11th we will have a special offering for the Mustard Seed Malawi. There is a need to help cover shipping costs of large containers that will be sent over with various supplies for the school. Each container costs \$200 to ship. Any contributions collected that day will help defer these costs.

Also, Janice Lee will be visiting us during worship on Sunday, September 25th. She will be collecting any mats made for the children at the school. We will have a prayer of dedication during worship for the mats and Janice's trip to Malawi in October.

This Sunday, September 4th, is the last day for the birthday bag collection. Thank you to all who contributed. The bags will be delivered to Multi-Service this week. Much appreciation for helping to make a child's birthday a little brighter! Be on the lookout for information about our next project, Operation 143, coming soon!



Some of the bags collected so far.



Join us in Children's Church!

Falkner Swamp UCC Children's Church begins Sunday, September 11th on Faith Formation Sunday. We hope you can join us on this day as well as other Sundays this school year. Children's Church will be the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and any 5th Sunday of every month beginning in September and ending May 21st. Except for the first Communion Sunday of each month, we meet every Sunday. Church begins at 10:00 and the children will be invited down to our Children's Church room after the sermon (around 10:45). Parents are invited to join us if they would like. We will bring the children back to the sanctuary at the close of worship (around 11:00). Our first lesson will be "The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross."

We hope you can join us on September 11th and other Sundays.

If you have any questions, please call or text

Susan Mercer (610.451.0193) or Becky Comer (610.413.3729).



Join us Sunday mornings @ 8:30 AM for some casual time with God and each other. Starting September 11th in the Conference Room. Hosted by Brenda Semach-Thierolf.



Pennsylvania Southeast Conference ~ United Church of Christ
1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100
Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774
psec.org

**The Ursinus Association
and the
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
invite you to attend the
AFFIRMATION OF MINISTRY
of
Peter Detterline
as
Pastor
at
St. Peter United Church of Christ
1920 Ridge Rd., Pottstown, PA
on
September 11, 2022
at
3:00 PM**

A reception will follow in the Detterline Fellowship Hall. Please RSVP
to mbittner65@icloud.com. Masking is optional.

Did you know

One-Time Boost to Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

Eligible senior citizens and people with disabilities will see enhanced rebates through this year's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program thanks to a one-time infusion of additional funds in the 2022-23 state budget.

The additional funding brings the maximum standard rebate to \$1,105 for both homeowners and renters, up from the usual \$650. People who already received their checks this year will not need to take any further action; the Department of Revenue will automatically send a check for the additional funds starting in early September. For additional information about the bonus rebates, [click here](#).

For those who qualify but have not yet applied, the deadline to do so for rebates on rent and property taxes paid in 2021 has been extended to Dec. 31. Claimants are encouraged to file their rebate applications online by visiting my.path.pa.gov though paper applications are also available at revenue.pa.gov or by contacting my office. We will also provide free assistance with filing the forms.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate program benefits Pennsylvanians age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 annually for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded.

