

Valley Forge UMC Vision Statement

We are a Christ-centered community learning and striving to make our faith a way of life as we share with each other and all people the love, acceptance and forgiveness lived and proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth.

Valley Forge United Methodist Church



Open Door Tidings

From the Pastor

God is With Us



Dear Friends,

***For the fig tree does not bud, and there is no yield from the vines.
The olive tree's crop is shriveled and the fields do not grow grain.
The sheep are gone from the fold, and no cattle are in the barns.
But I in the Lord will exult, will rejoice in the God of my rescue.***

Habakkuk 3:17-18 (Robert Alter)

My time with you has been during a time of hardship due to a global pandemic. I believe I will have preached more on Facebook than I did from the pulpit at Valley Forge United Methodist Church. It has been a delight to be your pastor for this short time. We may or may not be back meeting in the building when it is time for your new pastor to arrive. Our caution is never really about ourselves as much as it is our concern for the health and safety of others. I have never known a time when singing together in church could be the death of people I love. At times we feel like we have given up much, but as Habakkuk proclaimed even when we seem to lose everything important to life, and question our survival, we still can rejoice in the presence of our God.

Even when we can gather again, when the government allows groups of over 25 to gather in one place, it still will not be the same. We will need to continue to practice social distancing. We will need to wear masks. We will need to keep our distance going in and going out of church. We will not be allowed to sing hymns together. We will need to use prepackaged communion elements. We will need to use hand sanitizer, and if we expose ourselves to this virus all of us will have to become quarantined for 14 days. Until this is all over and we are free from this threat we must protect each other, especially all those at greater risk. We must continue to watch over each other with love and patience.

Spiritually this is a “dark night of the soul” time. A time of great loss when we feel distant from the blessings of God. It is a quiet time and often a lonely time. Our regular rhythms are out of sync and so we just don’t feel the same as we did before these changes. It feels so different when we’re forced to worship alone, sing alone, and pray alone. For some they may also feel distant from God’s presence when they are not able to enter into the familiar sanctuary of the Lord. Some of us may feel fear for ourselves or for those dear to us, as we wait for a virus that strikes without warning. Some of us may also go through grief without the comfort of the gathered community. Some of us may grieve the fellowship of choir practice and Sunday School or just talking over coffee with friends.

The gift of going through times such as these, is realizing that God is still with us. God is still teaching us truths we would never have realized in any other way. God is revealed to us in a fresh light. When everything else seems to be taken away, our God remains. When all the other blessings of life seem to fade away, the eternal nature of God’s presence remains. If God is with us, can there be anything more wondrous? When all of this is over, and it will one day end, God will still be with us and this fine congregation. We will be able to testify to the fact that God did not leave us to face this pandemic all alone. If another one would ever come in our lifetime and continued global warming makes it likely, we know God will see us through that one too. We have assurance about this because of the lessons we are learning together today.

Thank you for your graciousness to me as your pastor. It has been a rich honor to worship among you. Thank you for your faithfulness and support. Enjoy always, the blessing of being you.

Blessings, Pastor Michael Johnson

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June Lectionary



June 7 – Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1:1-2; 4a Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13 Matthew 28:16-20

June 14 – Second Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 18:1-15 Psalm 116:1-2; 12-19
Romans 5:1-18 Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

June 21 – Third Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 21:8-21 Psalm 86:1-10; 16-17
Romans 6:1b-11 Matthew 10:24-39

June 28 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 22:1-14 Psalm 13
Romans 6:12-23 Matthew 10:40-42

Short Sayings . . .

- Never say anything which doesn't improve the silence. *Anonymous*
- Everyone is a Christian until it gets biblical. *Anonymous*
- A Bible that is falling apart is an indication of a life that isn't falling apart. *Greg Laurie*

Submitted by Bob Erb

Scripture of the Month



For June the special *Scripture* is:

*“When I consider your heavens, the works of
your fingers, the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?
You made him a little lower than the heavenly
beings and crowned him with glory and honor.”*

Psalm 8:3-5

Thank you letter from PACS

“Everyone who works at PACS, whether staff, board members, or volunteers, sincerely thanks you for your recent contribution of \$5000.00. Most importantly, we thank you on behalf of our neighbors who we are able to help through your generosity.

Over the past few weeks, life has dramatically changed. Unemployment is rising and more people continue to need our services . . . Your generosity helps ensure that PACS will be here for them. Our dedication to not only help them throughout their crisis, but assist them in getting back on their feet is stronger than ever!

Your neighbors in need—and all of us at PACS—deeply appreciate your support which enables us to continue our mission of helping those facing food insecurity within our community. By reaching out to help, you truly are making a real difference in their lives.

Thank you for supporting our mission and sharing our commitment to positively affect our community, providing hope and building a brighter future for those in need. As the saying goes, sometimes we're tested not to show our weaknesses but to discover our strengths. We are incredibly grateful to be part of the Phoenixville community.

With gratitude,
Mary Fuller
Executive Director

Hand-written addition: *Many thanks to your congregation for their generous support! It allows us to help many!*

Prayer List



Health Concerns

Patrick Talbot—C. Gallis
John DeLuca—L. Gular
Scottie DeMartinis
Marie Jordan—S. Jennings
Charlotte Krutsick—L. Austin
Jeff Austin—L. Austin
Pat Ronk—P. Torres
Richard McLean—L. Austin
Meghan McLean—L. Austin
Theo—L. Gular



Important Announcement . .

Please note that the sanctuary is now available for individual prayer. The Administrative Board asks that you please enter the back door and follow all Pennsylvania regulations now in force. The Board requests that you wear a mask and to apply sanitizer on areas in use, including door hardware. Sanitizer will be supplied and kept on Julia's desk in the parlor. You will need your key.

Thoughts . . .

I was part of a Zoom Bible study recently, and we were working on a portion of scripture from Acts. Pentecost had just happened, and Peter was talking to a large gathering of people about the new church that was growing among them. What struck me came just before Pentecost. The disciples were trying to choose a disciple to help them in the absence of Judas. They were wondering how to make the decision. It brought up the issue of decision-making. Sometimes we can be faced with a decision, maybe seeing two ways to solve a problem, and both of the ways can be considered right. So how do we decide? The pastor leading this study talked about this, helping us to see that when we have a choice and both or even more choices all seem right, we can think of the choice that has more love in it. Which choice shows more love to more people? This struck me because I had never thought of it that way when studying this part of Acts—when the “church” was just getting started and the disciples were talking about how to proceed after the resurrection. (Of course, Pentecost helped. The Holy Spirit is a great gift-giver.) The pastor teaching the study also said a couple of other statements that struck me. She said, “Life with God and life without God should look entirely different,” and “Choices either take us closer to God or further away from God.” Profound, aren't they?

All of this connects to some recent happenings here in our beloved country. We are being torn apart because of a senseless act of brutality by one person who took an oath to protect and serve. On the news this morning, a God-like person in Flint, Michigan turned the tide on what could have bred violence and instead, bred community and love. This man was a policeman facing a crowd inflamed by what had happened almost a week ago in Minneapolis. Instead of showing force against this crowd, he stopped and took the time to listen with his heart to what the people were saying. After they told him what they thought, he said that he wasn't in favor of senseless brutality and explained that the police in his city are incensed by what happened to George Floyd, and then he said, “What do you want me to do?” The crowd said, “Walk with us,” and they turned together and walked. Community and healing for them began at that moment. If only there was a God-like person in every city in America, doing the same thing when violence begins to break out.

As we make decisions day by day, following the character of God—love, grace, forgiveness—can make a big difference.

The Editor



June Birthdays

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Gabrielle Coroniti | 1 |
| Frank Rechner | 1 |
| Korrine Heit | 4 |
| Maggie Horosky | 6 |
| Steve Hranilovich | 16 |
| Patty Davis | 19 |
| Doretta Erb | 21 |
| Julia Marie Rich | 21 |
| Pat Hepp | 27 |

June Anniversaries

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Jim & Laurie Bohl | 7 |
| John & Patty Torres | 12 |
| Carole & John Gallis | 17 |
| Bob & Doretta Erb | 27 |
| Elaine & Noel Turner | 29 |

All the ways we join together

The following paragraph also appears in the calendar on Page 5 of this newsletter. However, since we seem to be adding methods of taking part in sermons and Bible studies, it wouldn't hurt to repeat it.

Please follow Pastor Mike's sermons each Sunday on Facebook (Valley Forge United Methodist Church) at 9 a.m. We needed to change the time to 9 a.m. so we could fit in the Zoom “service” at 10:30, our normal worship time. (See below.)

You can follow Pastor Mike's **mid-week Bible study** on Facebook (Valley Forge United Methodist Church).

Sermons and Bible study notes also will be e-mailed to everyone from the church office. **Sermons are e-mailed on Saturdays; Bible study notes are e-mailed on Mondays.**

Also, we are now using Zoom to join together for the sermon on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. The Zoom link will be included when printed copies of the sermon are sent on Saturdays.



**Jazzercise Classes
Tai Chi Classes**



While we're sheltering in place, contact Maggie Horosky at 610-343-1343. For questions about Tai Chi. Contact Beth Boyle at 913-233-6625 for questions about Jazzercise.

**Valley Forge United Methodist Church
Administration Board Meeting
May 26, 2020 via Zoom Conferencing
Minutes**

In Attendance: Pastor Michael Johnson, Adam Davis, Tom Davis, Glenn Davis, Patty Davis, John Torres, Robin Coroniti, JoEllen Hippenstiel, Steve McClellan, Jim Martielli, Noel Turner

Pastor Mike opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes of April 27th meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS: Steve McClellan informed the board the new website should be up and running very shortly.

FINANCE: The finance report from Noel, for the end of March, 2020, shows there was an deficit of \$540.00 for the year.

Reporting from Tom Davis shows that, as of May 22, 2020, the Trustees balance is \$485,639.00 of which \$444,648.00 is in the Vanguard account.

SPRC: Will be having a meeting with Pastor Dave Piltz shortly.

UMW: The Shelter meals went very well, as cash donations were made in addition to meals.

UMM: Buildings have been checked. No issues. Will be looking into bids for lawn care, as communication has become a problem with the current vendor. It was discussed and approved by the board to re-open the sanctuary for those who wish to utilize it for individual prayer, with a sign on the door with instructions to maintain cleanliness. A notice will be placed in the June newsletter.

EDUCATION: No Report.

OUTREACH: No Report.

FELLOWSHIP: No Report.

PASTORAL: Pastor Mike reminded us that we are still in the Red Phase for the Coronavirus, and that the Yellow Phase still limits services to a maximum of 25 people. Opening of church services was discussed by the board, and it was decided re-opening church right now is too high risk. The board will revisit the matter in July.

In the meantime, we will be experimenting with Zoom conferencing for church service this Sunday, and see the results. JoEllen will send an e-mail to the congregation.

NEW BUSINESS: None to report.

Pastor Mike closed the meeting with prayer.

NOTE: *NEXT MEETING: Monday, June 22, 2020*

Respectfully submitted,
GD

JUNE, 2020

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

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