

*Let us not become
weary in doing good.*

THE PROCLAIMER

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2023

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC) – MONONGAHELA, PA

Editor—Barbara Henderson

Message From Your Pastor:

Hello Christians,

It's hard to believe that we are entering the season of Fall—that time of year when Pumpkin-Spice Lattes, candy corn, apple cider, and colorful fall leaves are all available. Time to put away your sandals and get out your sweaters!

July 29th through August 1st, Barbara Henderson, Nikki Mazza-Fredley, and Marci Mazza-Fredley attended the 2023 General Assembly entitled the **KINDOM OF GOD: WITHIN US AND AMONG US** in Louisville, KY. "KINDOM" is not a typing error. The theme of the Assembly was that we are all "kin" to each other regardless of our gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or citizen status. The theme exemplified our Disciples of Christ identity statement: *We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.*"

What does this mean? We honor the heritage of Christian unity by staying together in covenant as a witness to the world that even when we disagree we can still make room, welcoming all to the table as Christ has welcomed us. Our spiritual ancestors were fond of saying, "unity, not uniformity." (disciples.org)

One of the challenges that was given to us is to confront Christian Nationalism. "Christian Nationalism is a cultural framework that fuses a radically exclusionary form of Christian identity with the public political and civic participation of a nation's citizens. It upholds white supremacy, xenophobia (hatred or fear of outsiders. This can manifest as hostility toward immigrants, but it can also manifest as hatred toward members of another tribe, culture or religion.), and heteropatriarchy. It asserts that power belongs in the hands of persons who are white, natural-born citizens as stated in the background information of GA-2341, **Calling The Church to Oppose Christian Nationalism**. This resolution was adopted at the General Assembly. For more information on Christian Nationalism or the General Assembly, please see me, your pastor.

Blessings as we move forward into Fall,

In His Service,

Reverend Janet Scott-Mace

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Sermon in Song

On Sunday, July 30, 2023, in the absence of Pastor Janet as she was attending the 2023 General Assembly, Shepherd's Voice provided a "Sermon in Song". Shepherd's Voice is comprised of Debbie Harn, Debby Petrosky and Connie Watkins. They share their faith through word and song. Thank you, Shepherd's Voice, for being part of our worship service and spreading the good news of Jesus. May God bless you and the message you share in song.



Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into His presence with singing.

Psalm 100:1-2 (NRSV)

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Gathered As One Body

On World Communion Sunday, October 1, Christians across the globe gather at the Lord's Table for the sacrament of Holy Communion. The Lord's Table stretches around the entire earth. Catholic, Coptic, Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical, Lutheran, Baptist, Anglican, Methodist—Christians all, and Christians who worship in churches bearing names that are unfamiliar to us—all join in worship and do what Christ asked his friends to do: remember Him!

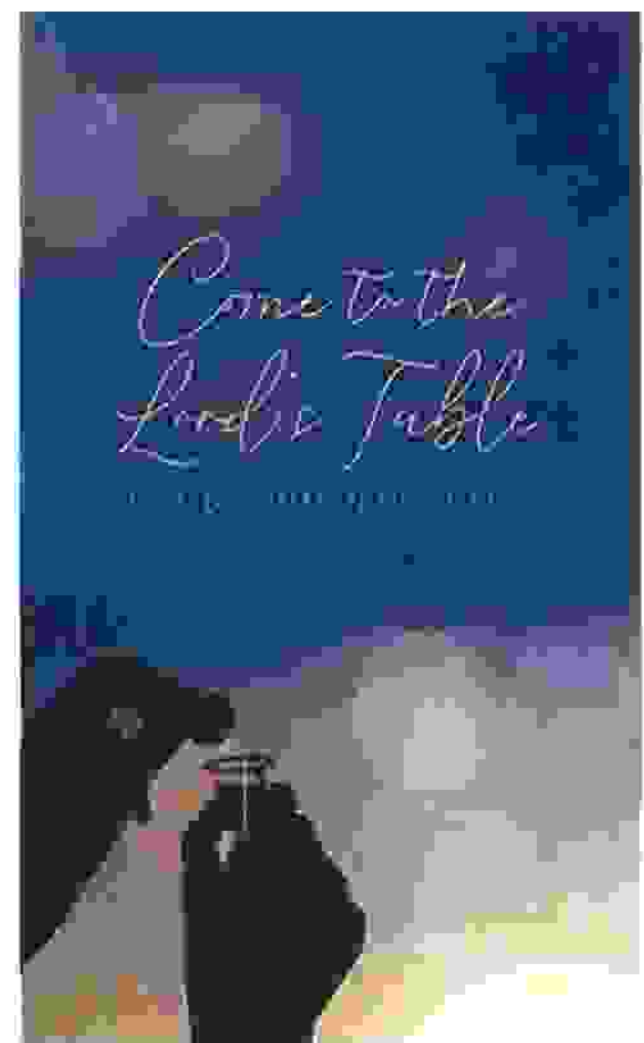
"This do in remembrance of me," Jesus said during the Last Supper with his disciples. Then he broke bread as a reminder of his sacrificed body and lifted the cup of wine representing his blood. The sacrament is a vivid symbol of Christ's sacrifice, love and forgiveness for each of us.

As we gather as Christ's family around that table of grace, remember that we are united in Christ with our brothers and sisters around the world. "In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north. All Christly souls are joined as one throughout the whole wide earth" (John Oxenham).

Thank you, Lord!

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26



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Happy Birthday to...

SEPTEMBER

5 **Ralph Filippini**
10 **Jeff Minjock**
22 **Jennifer McMahon**
23 **Kathy McCovish**
28 **Debby Petrosky**
30 **Crystal Gereshenski**

OCTOBER

4 **Mark Hyslop**
6 **Michael Petrosky**
7 **Ruth Richardson**
16 **Patty Miller**
21 **Pat Petrosky**

HAPPY
Anniversary

SEPTEMBER

11 **Paul & Donna Hochendonner**
17 **DJ & Sherri Fogiato**
23 **Rob & Nikki Mazza-Fredley**
23 **David & Beth Petrosky**

OCTOBER

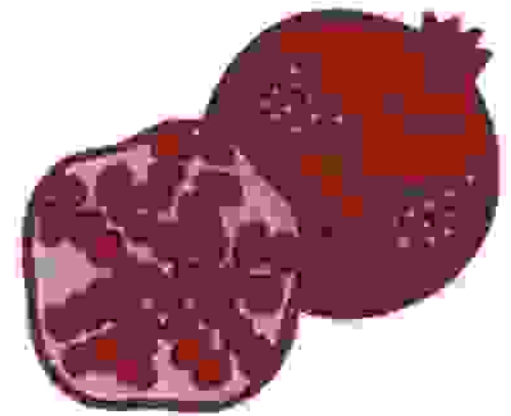
Let us not become weary in doing good.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16



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POMEGRANATE—Because the pomegranate has an abundance of seeds, the fruit is used to represent hope and future life. It also symbolizes the many believers who are individual members of the universal Christian church.



Always room in God's kingdom

Jesus told a parable about a man who invited his friends and neighbors to a banquet, but they declined. So he told his servants to go find anyone who was hungry or lonely or in need. Still there was room. "Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in," the host said, "so that my house will be full" (Luke 14:23, NIV).

In *Searching for Sunday*, Rachel Held Evans retells this story and writes: "This is what God's kingdom is like: a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table, not because they are rich or worthy or good, but because they are hungry, because they said yes. And there's always room for more."

We're all "outcasts and oddballs" in one way or another! May we know that God warmly invites us to his banquet — for no reason but that we're hungry.

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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF THE MONONGAHELA AREA
1004 STEUBEN AVENUE
MARTINSBURG, WV 26101

ELDER'S PRAYER

Gracious God, Summer is coming to an end and the school bells have been ringing calling the children from their playgrounds back to the classrooms. We pray for the protection of each child and teacher. May each child grow, as did our Lord and Savior, in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. We pray for good health, eager minds to learn, and a safe and protected environment for every student and teacher. But Father, we realize that there is more than just learning to read, write and do arithmetic. We pray, O God, to prepare our hearts and minds at First Christian to be inviting, accepting, and eager to teach God's word to all children. Prepare us to lay the groundwork and prepare our hearts to cultivate an environment that is inviting to children and youth. Open our hearts that we are more willing to step forward and teach the children of the Monongahela Area of God's love and His gift of salvation. Many of the churches of today are not filled with youth. However, the schools are still filled. Create within us, O God, a desire to reach out to children and spread Christ's gift of love and salvation to all. As a child, I recall a song we sang. The chorus was "Lord lay some soul upon my heart and love that soul through me. And may I nobly do my part to win that soul for thee". With Christ's help, I pray that each of us will reach out to win the youth of Monongahela for our Lord and Savior that Christ's ministry will continue to grow in Monongahela and throughout the world.

In Jesus' most precious name,

Amen

Elder Wanda McMahon

A daily prayer

Since God will be my end
Let him be my beginning,
So that I may now fully live
Instead of falling, straying, sinning.

Angelus Silesius

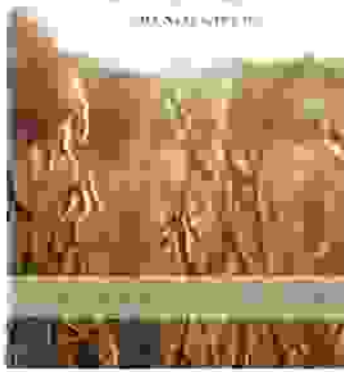


I urge that
SUPPLICATIONS,
PRAYERS,
INTERCESSIONS,
and THANKSGIVINGS
be made for everyone ...

1 Timothy 2:1, NASV

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LABOR DAY LAUGHS

Take a break and enjoy this work-related humor:

- My first job was in an orange juice factory. I got canned because I couldn't concentrate.
- When I couldn't hack it as a lumberjack, I got the ax.
- I wasn't suited to being a tailor.
- Working in the muffler factory was too exhausting.
- I was a banker....until I lost interest.
- I realized there's no future in being a historian.
- Any way I sliced it, I couldn't cut the mustard at the deli.
- My job at the coffee shop was always the same old grind.
- When I worked as a plumber, the tasks were too draining.
- I was hired at a gym but wasn't fit for the job.
- Finally, I got a job at a bakery, I kneaded dough!



DATES TO REMEMBER

SEPTEMBER

4 Labor Day

11 Board Meeting

14 Praise & Worship

27 Elders Meeting

28 Praise & Worship

OCTOBER

1 World Communion Sunday

8 Clergy Appreciation Sunday

9 Team Ministry Meeting

12 Praise & Worship

25 Elders Meeting

26 Praise & Worship

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OCTOBER IS CLERGY APPRECIATION MONTH

In honor of Clergy Appreciation Month, use these alphabetical reminders of how to treat our pastor:

Accept them as people.

Build them up. Say "thank you."

Communicate with them.

Defend them when someone tries to run them down.

Entertain them. They like to have fun too.

Family. Allow them to have a family life.

Genuine. Be honest with them. Be yourself around them.

Honor them. Don't put them on a pedestal, but respect them.

Income. Pay them enough so money isn't a concern.

Judge not! Avoid being critical.

Kind. Treat pastors as you want to be treated.

Love. See 1 Corinthians 13.

Maintain. Their families has the same needs as other families.

Nurture. Help them grow in grace.

Offer to help. The list of things you can do is endless.

Pray for them. Lift up their names to God daily.

Quelch not. Encourage instead!

Rejoice in and with them.

Surprise them—in little and big ways.

Trust them. Believe in them.

Understand them. Put yourself in their place.

Vacation. They need time away.

Welcome them into your home. Don't wait for an invitation.

eXpend yourself, not them

Yoke. Help them bear their burdens with grace and dignity.

Zap all gossip!



Clergy Appreciation Sunday is October 8, 2023. Thank you, Pastor Janet, for your spiritual leadership and compassion as you continue your work for our Lord.



BACK TO THE HEART OF WORSHIP

We are creatures of habit. If we don't find ways to remind ourselves why we do what we do, we're prone to just go through the motions, if not adopt some new underlying motivation altogether. Which can be especially dangerous in worship.

For singer and worship-leader Matt Redman, this lesson came in a remarkable experience that was both personal and corporate. In the late 1990s, the preaching pastor at Redman's church in Watford, England sensed that their worship gatherings were going flat spiritually, that the congregation was going through the motions, and worship wasn't flowing from the heart like true Christian worship must.

"There was a dynamic missing," says Redman, so the pastor did a pretty brave thing. He decided to get rid of the sound system and band for a season, and we gathered together with just our voices. His point was that we'd lost our way in worship, and the way to get back to the heart would be to strip everything away."

During this season, the pastor challenged the congregation to be participants in worship, not consumers. To come ready to engage with God for themselves, from the heart, not just watch with their eyes. He wanted them to come as worshipers, not as concert-goers. With the band and the sound system gone, it made for an unforgettable time in the life of the church as they sang *a cappella* only—and for an unforgettable lesson about worship.

"Before long," says Redman, "we reintroduced the musicians and sound system, as we'd gained a new perspective that worship is all about Jesus, and he commands a response in the depths of our souls no matter what the circumstance and setting. 'The Heart of Worship' simply describes what occurred."

The essence of worship is not the many good externals, but heart and head. Spirit and truth. Our spirit stirred by the Holy Spirit, in worship over true things about God, his Son, and his gospel.

The heart of worship is our heart, delighting in Jesus and expressing praise to him for all the true things that Scriptures teach us about who he is and what he has accomplished for us. It is, then, "all about" Jesus, not us. It involves us, but we're at the periphery. He's at the center. He's the focus. It's his commands we consider first, not our preferences. Redman's song is about refocusing, and re-centering, and reminding ourselves why we worship—and who we worship.

Jesus is greatly honored when we bring ourselves, with the Holy Spirit's help, back to the heart of worship. (David Mathis. Excerpted from DesiringGod.com)

I'm coming back to the heart of worship and it's all about You, It's all about You, Jesus.

I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made it when it's all about You, it's all about You, Jesus.

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1 COR. 13: 1-3
W. Wilson
LIFE'S DOING GOOD

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Hot Meal Mondays

Each week we feed and develop friendships with those who are in need of nourishment and spiritual food. Here are some of those who attend each week.



Jonathan



Kathleen & Joyce preparing meals
for take-out

Dining in or take-out is available



Joyce, Audrey and Kay



Ron