



The Steeple

September 2020

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends

Greetings in the name of Jesus! As we approach the end of August, we are nearing the season that parents love and children dread. It is “Back to School Time.” Of course, like much of life these days, it is different from the past. Some school districts are offering parents a choice whether to send their kids back to school or to keep them home and attend virtually. Other areas are offering a hybrid with a couple days a week being in the classroom and the other being remote learning. No matter what method of education, learning will take place just as it is supposed to do.

Traditionally, September is the month when the church resumes the program year after a break for summer. It feels like “Back to School Time.” Throughout this newsletter you will read of small groups, committees and bible studies beginning their activities. There will be differences from the past. Some of the groups will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall rather than the library, the Wesley room or youth rooms. Participants will wear face coverings and social distancing will be practiced. Ministry will take place even in different ways!

The most exciting resumption of activity will be when “in person” worship begins again on August 30th. We will be using the same policies that we used a few months ago and those are detailed in a separate article in this newsletter.

When you return, you will notice some changes in our building’s appearance. It now has only one steeple, which has a new, beautiful appearance. The steeple on the former sanctuary has been removed. It was discovered to be in worse condition than expected. We were blessed to be able to avoid any additional problems caused by delaying this action. In addition, the building’s exterior trim has been painted. It looks great and is ready for us to use again!

“Back to School Time” means seeing old friends and meeting new ones. As our Staff Parish Relations Committee met this summer to discuss the direction of our children’s ministry, we found ourselves in an interesting predicament. We could not offer programs in the same way we did a year ago. We met with some of the parents of young children and decided that virtual ministry is what is needed at this time. The suggestion was made to invite Rachel Whipple to continue as our interim children’s ministry director working remotely while the Covid-19 restrictions remain. We are welcoming our old friend back to our ministry team!

On September 1, we will meet some new friends. Pastor Matt Scott will begin his ministry with us as our new Associate Pastor. He and his wife, Alyssa, will be living in the Lee Road parsonage. I hope you will join me in welcoming them into the Bakerstown family.

It is a challenging and exciting time to be in ministry together. It is time to get back to school, to learn, to worship and to be together even in different ways!

Blessings,
Pastor Keith

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP! ON SUNDAYS AT 8:30AM AND 11:00AM

Back to “In Person” Worship

Your Church Council has decided to resume “In Person” worship on Sunday, August 30th at 8:30 and 11. This decision was based on the reduction of new Covid-19 cases in our county. We will continue to follow the safety procedures that were in place when we were together in June. We will be wearing masks and social distancing. Our pews are still marked to provide a minimum of six feet distance between worshippers. Remember there are plenty of seats in the balcony! We ask that you follow those designations as closely as possible.

As we did in June, there will be no printed materials to share or distribute. Bulletins will be mailed or emailed prior to the Sunday service and everything will be projected on the screen. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide a nursery or a cry room until further notice. We will not be passing the offering plates. They will be placed at the rear of the sanctuary.

We will not be singing together but music will continue to be part of worship. We will be opening our windows to allow fresh air to circulate when it is cool enough to do so and only use the air conditioning as needed.

We will also be cleaning “the touch surfaces” in between services. Thank you to those who have volunteered. We can always use more help. Please contact the church office if you are interested. We are excited about worshipping together!

Sunday Worship: If you aren't ready to attend in person worship, or if you are not feeling, we are live streaming our worship service on our You Tube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiZhOxTrZRdFDFNzXa99gyg> You can find also the Sunday Service posted on our website wwwbak-erstownumc.org on Monday morning.



Pastor Matthew Scott

Matthew Scott was born and raised in Ebensburg, where he graduated from Cambria Heights High School in 2011. He then went to Basic Training followed by the Army School of Music, where he completed his training in December of 2011. He still serves in the PA National Guard band where he just hit his 9-year anniversary. Matt then graduated from Slippery Rock University with a degree in music. While attending college, he was called to serve God by leading worship and mission teams through the local church. He is about a year away from graduation from United Theological Seminary and is anxious to begin working full-time in the church, serving to connect the church and world together.

Matt married his high school sweetheart Alyssa in 2017. They enjoy spending time together and with their three dogs. Matt likes to be outdoors and connects to God through nature. He likes to kayak, canoe, fish and hunt. He also enjoys playing and teaching guitar.

DIGGing Deeper Looking To The Future

The DIGGing Deeper Sunday morning study group is starting a study of the book of Revelation beginning **Sunday, September 6** and continuing for 12 weeks. We will be using the in depth study guide "Revelation, The Christian's Ultimate Victory" by John MacArthur, author of the widely used "MacArthur Study Bible." MacArthur makes a verse by verse and often word or phrase by word or phrase examination of the writings of the Apostle John as revealed to him by Jesus. And MacArthur follows up with questions of understanding and application. Revelation contains so much imagery and symbolism that a 12 week study cannot examine all of it in detail. However, you will finish this study with a much better understanding of the Revelation of Jesus and what the future holds for Christians. You are invited to join us whether we are meeting via Zoom or in person and whether we are meeting at 10:00 Sunday morning or some other yet to be determined time. For more information contact Don Allaman by email at djallaman@gmail.com or by phone at 724-816-6266.

GriefShare Outreach Ministry 2020 Fall Schedule

NEW weekly meetings begin **September 9th** and continue through December 9th, Wednesday evenings from 7:00pm till 8:30pm in Fellowship Hall (**note new location!). Masks and safe distancing will be required.

If you or someone you know is experiencing the loss of a loved one, we encourage you to please accept this as your personal invitation to join with us. GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences so that you don't have to go through the grieving process alone. Our GriefShare program is co-led by Rev. Bill Dambach, Marcia Shipley, Marge Kirkpatrick and Janet Pagniello. GriefShare is a drop-in anytime group and open to anyone in the church or community. All are welcome.

The Book of Acts Bible Study—Tuesday Evening 7:00-8:30 pm | or Wednesday Morning 9:00 -10:30 am | Fellowship Hall-- Starting September 8th and 9th

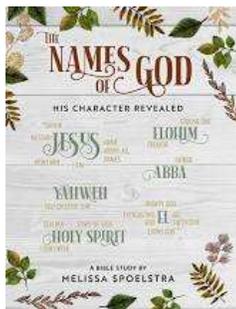
The Acts study will be led by John Brumberg and be a verse by verse look at this book of the Bible.

Any questions call the church office at 724-443-3184. **We are asking everyone to please wear a mask and we will be social distancing.**

The same class is taught on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning.

Zoom Bible Study

Pastor Keith will offer a Bible Study via Zoom for those interested in learning but not comfortable attending an event inside the church building. It will be held on Monday evenings at 7 PM beginning September 14th. We will be discussing the Gospel of Matthew. If you are interested in attending, you must send an e-mail to kdunn@bakerstownumc.org to receive the link to the Zoom meeting.



NEW! Women's 6-week Bible Study beginning Thursday morning September 10th at 9:00am in Fellowship Hall (Please note new location): The Names of God by Melissa Spoelstra.**

Sometimes God feels so far away and it can be hard to make sense of the injustice and suffering in the world. Other times His instructions in Scripture seem confusing to us and we have so many questions about Him and for Him. How can we know God better?

One of the ways God makes Himself known to us is through His names in the Bible. Our names help identify and distinguish us. God's names go a step further: *they reveal God to us*. Studying God's names helps us grow in our understanding of His character, gives us a more complete view of Him, and grow closer to Him. In *The Names of God* Bible study, Melissa Spoelstra leads women on an exploration of the many names of our God—from El and Elohim to Yahweh and its many combinations to names such as Abba, Jesus, and Holy Spirit.

As we study the names of God, our ideas about God will become more grounded in what His names tell us, and thus more personal, allowing a greater trust in Him to share the details of our lives. Whether having walked with God for many years or just starting out in a relationship with Him, by the end of this study we will not only know more about God but will know Him better—because through the discovery of God's names, we will discover Him! Along the way, we will also learn about the lives of women from history, like Susanna Wesley, Harriet Tubman, Catherine Marshall, Amy Carmichael and others who trusted in and leaned on these names of God and what they meant. ****Please contact the Church Office or Cathy Dambach to register so that we can prepare and sanitize the room safely and order workbooks. Workbooks are \$13.00 (not necessary, but strongly encouraged). Masks and safe distancing will be required. Hope to see you there!**

A Stitch and a Prayer Saturday, September 19th |10am to 2pm| Old Fellowship Hall Sewing, knitting and crocheting blankets and prayer shawls for Linus Project, baptisms and ill in our church. Need help sorting, sewing, ironing, pinning, cutting.....all hands welcome. Bring a lunch!!!!

If you sew, crochet, or knit your talent can be used in making quilts for Project Linus, shawls for shut-ins or even lap robes for people in nursing homes. If you are not able to join us when we meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10-2, please contact Louise Himes, Mary Pouchot or Marge Kirkpatrick if you have questions regarding how you can help.

Operation Christmas Child: A project of Samaritan's Purse

During recent conversations with Samaritan's Purse headquartered in the Carolinas I was informed that this Children's Ministry will proceed this year as usual.

OCC helps children aged 2-12 who are suffering due to disease, war, famine or natural disasters where they live. Our donations show these children as well as their families, friends and neighbors the joy of the love of God.

Toys, school supplies, small tools, small toys, clothing, accessories, paper back books (that will fit in a shoe box), and personal care items make great gifts. As these are feely given and received many lives are changed.

So, as we are once again able to be out shopping, let's think of these children. Now that the church is now open, you can bring your gifts and place them in the designated OCC box in the Narthex.

Blessings, Verna Feather

Prayer Corner....

From the Prayer Corner - Prayers During Uncertain Times

As we head into September 2020, our world is still in turmoil and it seems we've been on hold for way too long. Our busy and fast-lane lives have hit a brick wall. There are so many questions and concerns about what is safe and what is not safe (can we return to inside worship services safely or not?) About wearing masks and social distancing. About students and teachers going back to school this Fall, about whether sports should take place on any level, or about whether we can safely return to our workplaces or do we need to continue to work from home. Mission outreaches and many ministries of the church are on hold. Confusion and doubt threaten our peace. There are so many uncertainties.

But we serve the God of the Universe, the Author of the constantly evolving story of our world, the Painter of the seasons, the Living God! And He IS working in all of this. Reminding ourselves of His strength and His might helps us redirect our focus when times are uncertain. Prayer and faith in God are our strength. Trusting His plan and His sovereignty can help us to navigate our concerns for our situation. He is our Rock, and our Shelter, and our Peace. There is still much to do – much to be accomplished – many preparations for the future – and most of this can all be done with prayer! Even while many other things in our lives are on hold, prayer doesn't cease. So let's not just complain and criticize and fear and fuss and worry about all these things – LET'S PRAY ABOUT THEM!!

A quick reminder that the Western Pennsylvania Conference calls all of us to an intentional, daily time of prayer right now. In the midst of the chaos of the world, we need to stand in the power of prayer. We are encouraged to read Psalm 27 and invited to pray daily at 7:00pm for 7 minutes for protection and victory over the Covid-19 virus, as well as for all the other problems and uncertainties of our city, our country and our world.

"I remain confident of this:

*I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.*

Wait for the LORD;

be strong and take heart

and wait for the LORD. Psalm 27: 13 – 14:

Thank you for continuing in prayer!!

(Portions taken from the WPAUMC website and UndoubtedGrace.com)



During this time of quarantine the mission team has been at work to show the love of Christ to our neighbors both far and near. We have continued our support for our sister church in Carrillos, Costa Rica. They are experiencing hard times due to Covid-19 just as we are, and we were able to provide them with the funds that we ordinarily would have sent at the end of the year.

Our monthly meals at the Roots of Faith ministry in Sharpsburg were put on hold for a time, but our faithful crew was able to prepare and distribute take-out meals for the community at the beginning of August. We plan to continue in this manner until we are able to be together again. As this newsletter goes to print, the mission team is preparing our first Drive Thru Dinner for clients of The Lighthouse. The Lighthouse staff reported that the need in our area is very great and they are correct. To date we have over 100 meals requested! The mission team is so excited to be able to serve our neighbors in these ways and would love to continue both of these outreach ministries. Without additional funding, however, we will soon run out of cash. Because of quarantine guidelines, we have had to do without our biggest fundraiser, the Junque Sale, and our other means of revenue. Any donations designated for the mission team would be greatly appreciated! As always, we are so thankful for your faithful and generous support.

September Birthday's & Anniversaries

09/01 Doug Kyle
 09/01 Gail Strain
 09/02 Kay Cramer
 09/02 Barb Testa
 09/02 Liam McGrath
 09/04 Erin McGrath
 09/04 Logan Rommes
 09/08 Jody Mankamyer
 09/11 Emma Ladesic
 09/12 Michael Fischetti
 09/13 Brad Naeser
 09/14 Willie Haselrig
 09/14 Jennifer Kyle
 09/15 Phillip Kenzie
 09/16 Wally Swarmer
 09/16 Amy Jewitt
 09/17 Helen Deer
 09/21 Leaugeay Staub

09/21 Beth Joyce
 09/22 Catie Edinger
 09/25 Eden Jewitt
 09/26 Anne Stevens
 09/27 Ashley Mankamyer
 09/28 Aaron Stevens
 09/29 Terri Murray
 09/30 Cynthia Young

 09/02/2000 Keith & Jennifer Vulhop
 09/06/2013 James & Katie Scalise
 09/07/ 1985 Howard & Lisa Cope
 09/08/2002 Tom & Debbie Davison
 09/20/1986 Gregg & Sharon Platt

Day School Chalkboard

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Day School will have a reduced number of classes. This upcoming school year we will only have our morning and afternoon 4 day pre-k classes and our full day Kindergarten. We have divided each class into smaller classes allowing us to socially distance the children's desks to 6 feet apart. We are excited about creating "pods" with unique seating for each Kindergarten. The pre-k classes and Kindergarten classes will enjoy a lot of outside learning and playing time. It will be a very different year, but we are just glad to be able to open and spend quality time with the children we know and love.

We have a few openings in our pre-k classes. Spread the word if you know someone looking for a preschool program. Our Kindergarten is full with 16 children divided into two classes with 8 children in each. Please keep us in your prayers as we open our doors during a pandemic.

Bakerstown United Methodist Church has always been so supportive of our Day School program. We are so thankful for the guidance, help and support from Pastor Keith. He has been very instrumental in planning and preparing behind the scenes and in the front lines. In addition, we are so thankful for Lora who is always ready to pitch in and help us figure out how to make things happen. They have both prayed for us, laughed with us, cried with us and helped move chairs, tables, etc. We are so blessed and thankful to be a ministry of Bakerstown United Methodist Church.

Ignite's Hot Topics

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

We have been facing a couple challenges with our youth group here. The most glaring one is the transfer of our former youth pastor, Luke Whipple. Be assured that the adult leaders have maintained their involvement in Ignite, and have been very busy in Luke's absence to keep the youth group strong and vibrant. Although we do not have a youth minister, presently, all of our leaders will continue to hold sessions on Sunday evenings from 6pm-8pm **beginning September 13**. Keith Vulhop has agreed to serve as the interim youth leader for our congregation, and will therefore be the principal contact for our youth. He may be contacted via cell-phone: 724-712-6118.

Also please note that IGNITE has a new email contact: Bakerstownumcyouth@gmail.com Keith can be reached either way.

We understand that Covid 19 is a challenge for everyone in our congregation, and is of a serious concern for children of all ages. We at Ignite will be following several safety protocols during all youth activities. Masks and social distancing will be required for all of our youth, parents and leaders. Sessions will be held outside, unless inclement weather forces us inside. If held indoors, we will have our sessions in the New Fellowship hall, where we can control entry and exit into the building better and have an easier time sanitizing afterwards.

We will be monitoring attendance for all youth who are present. Unfortunately, I would like to ask that friend guests be held to a minimum in order to more easily track those in attendance. We would also like to ask that each child bring their own bibles. Electronic versions are perfectly acceptable. We also ask that everyone please be flexible during these times. We may have to make last minute changes or even cancellations due to the pandemic. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Keith.

Ignite is available to all youth in grades 6-12 and will meet Sunday nights 6pm-8pm.

Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving

Bakerstown United Methodist Church wants to remind you that we offer electronic giving as a convenience for individual congregation members and provides much-needed donation consistency for our congregation.

Direct Debit Giving is used to automatically transfer funds from your checking or savings account to the church's bank account. This service is offered for a once a month donation for withdrawal on the first business day of the month.

Online Giving lets you go to www.bakerstownumc.org at any time to set up an automatic donation plan, change your donation plan, make a one-time donation or view your online donation history. As you contemplate the future contributions, please consider electronic giving. Authorization forms and additional information are available from the church office or by contacting Kay Cramer, financial secretary at 724-443-2847.

Bakerstown United Methodist Church
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*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
 for the transformation of the world.*

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Lora Stafura
 Office Administrator
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Starting September 6th, if you would like to purchase Giant Eagle grocery cards, we will have them available by **PRE-SALE ONLY!**

You must call or email the church office with the amount you need and I will place them in a bag with your name on them and you can pick them up on Sunday morning and pay then.

I will also sell them during the week, when I am in the office. I can set up contactless pick up if you like.

June & July Financial Report



FINANCE REPORT

	June 2020	July 2020	YTD July 2020	YTD July 2019
Donations	\$38,145.04	\$23,985.00	\$291,345.33	\$266,638.68
Expenses:	\$32,163.09	\$27,495.17	\$279,266.50	\$251,558.41

Hello Church Family...who would have thought we would still be doing online church into the month of August?? Thank you for your support of your church during this time. Whether you have done your donation online, or thru your bank, or mailed to the church or to me at my house it is appreciated. We have paid all of our bills. The new sound system is in, and the new roof is looking beautiful. Thank you for supporting those two projects. We did not fund anything to our Major Projects Fund or the Future Endeavor Fund. If you have any questions, please give me a call. Kay Cramer, Financial Secretary 724-443-2847

Shop N Save Perks rewards of \$161.69 was received in June 2020. These funds were used to purchase food for the Neighborhood Table served in July and some for the August meal. We are now preparing for 150 take out meals in Sharpsburg. The need is still there in that neighborhood. Thank you for shopping at Shop N Save and supporting your church in this manner.