

**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.*



# Open Door Tidings

*From the Pastor*



## ***Hear new insights into the writings of St. Paul***

Dear Friends,

I recently read a book by Karen Armstrong, St. Paul, The Apostle We Love to Hate. She writes that Paul has been blamed for ideas that he never preached and that some of his best insights about the spiritual life have been ignored by the churches. I find the insights Dr. Armstrong shares illuminating and would like to share them with you.

\*His passionate identification with the poor is unheeded by those Christians who preach the Prosperity Gospel.

\*His determination to eradicate the ethnic and cultural prejudices that divide us from one another.

\*His rejection of all forms of “boasting” based on a spurious sense of privilege and superiority.

\*His visceral distrust of self-indulgent spirituality that turns faith into an ego trip.

These observations, claims Armstrong, have not become part of the Christian mind-set.

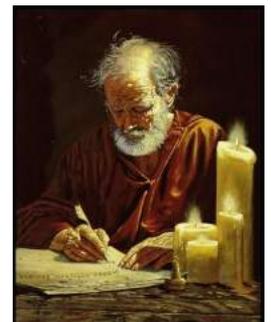
She closes her book with some powerful words: “Above all, we need to take seriously, Paul’s insight that no virtue was valid unless it was imbued with a love that was not a luxurious emotion in the heart but must be expressed daily and practically in self-emptying concern for others.”

Paul advocates a Christ-centered life lived out daily in the world. That is a compelling challenge for all of us. It is too easy to develop a chameleonic tendency. That is, we change our behavior and commentary to fit the occasion. There are times that observers would have no idea we are Christian people because we do not live the faith or as some would suggest, “we talk the talk but do not walk the walk.” Paul urges the follower of Jesus to be congruent. People are to see Christ living in and through us. We are the divine presence in a world that needs clarity, compassion and connection.

Think about these things!

Peace and Blessings,

Jim Hallam, Pastor

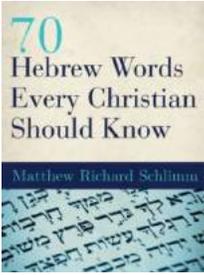


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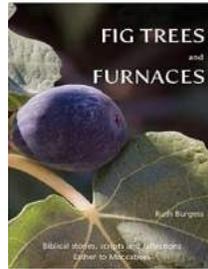
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## Adult Sunday School—9 a.m.

Tom Loane's SS Class



Double Feature



In 2019 our class will have two parts each week for variety.

### Part 1 - English isn't God's first language.

"Hallelujah, shalom, amen ... " these words roll off our tongues in Christian worship and conversation with little thought as to the richness and range of meanings in Hebrew. We will explore 70 words in Hebrew every Christian should know, taking a few words each week and seeing how they fit in scripture.

**Part 2 - Bible Stories for Adults** - As children we probably read numerous Bible stories such as Noah and the Ark. What we didn't read was a story of Noah's discovery of wine and the consequences of that discovery. We will continue looking at the story of Noah and other great stories in Genesis.

Join us Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. to share in this presentation and discussion. You can drop in at any time and still participate. Bring your Bible.

Tom Loane



## An "Open-Bible" Adult Sunday School Class— Carrying on Scottie's Class

In a culture starving for truth, the Word of God stands as a promise of enduring truth that transforms lives. Explore the Bible with us this week! It will be an hour well worth investing. As Ben Franklin said, "Time is the stuff of which life is made; don't waste it!"

We continue our study in the Gospel of John—now up to Chapter 13. All (any age!) are invited to join us to dig into the written Word and to learn more of the living Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. Come whenever you can!

The time: 9:00 to 9:55 a.m. The place: the church parlor. Bring your Bible; also we have extra Bibles in the class.

Bob Erb



### Scripture of the Month

For February the special *Scripture* is:

*"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

*Romans 8:36a, 38-39*

## There's still time to sign up for South District Tools of Ministry

South District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church  
**Tools for Ministry**

*Eastern University/Palmer Campus, 300 Eagle Road, St. David's, Pa.*

*March 2, 2019 \* 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. \* \$13.00 \* 27 Workshops to choose from  
(choose 2-one for each session—from the list below—just a sampling of the list)*

Community Churching  
ALICE—Active Shooter at Church  
Interfaith Cooperation and Collaboration  
Engaging Children in the Life of the Church  
Identify Resources for Ministry  
Advocating for Indigenous Women & Children

Managing Conflict in Congregations  
Changing Cultures  
How to have Meaningful Conversations about Race  
Church Communications in the Age of Social Media  
Emotional Intelligence  
Healing Relationships in a World of Conflict

*. . . and many more . . . Check out [epaumc.org](http://epaumc.org) for the complete list*

## February Lectionary



**February 3 – Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany**  
 Jeremiah 1:4-10    Psalm 71:1-6  
 1 Corinthians 13:1-13    Luke 4:21-30

**February 10 – Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany**  
 Isaiah 6:1-8    Psalm 138  
 1 Corinthians 15:1-11    Luke 5:1-11

**February 17 – Sixth Sunday After the Epiphany**  
 Jeremiah 17:5-10    Psalm 1  
 1 Corinthians 15:12-20    Luke 6:17-26

**February 24 – Seventh Sunday After the Epiphany**  
 Genesis 45:3-11, 15    Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40  
 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50    Luke 6:27-38

## *SPRC Meeting on February 25th at 6:15 p.m.*



### *Tai Chi at Valley Forge UMC*

February Tai Chi Classes:

*February 9*  
*February 16*  
*February 23*



If you are interested in joining the class,  
 call Maggie Horosky at 610-343-1343.

### February Birthdays

Rick Coroniti            4  
 Susan Jennings        19



### February Anniversaries

None

### Worship Participation Schedule

	Refreshments	Liturgist	Greeter
2/10	Valentine Breakfast	D. Erb	J. & L. Bohl
2/17	P. Davis	R. Johnston	L. Moran
2/24	N. Loane	J. Torres	P. & J. Torres
3/3	J. M. Jones	L. Gular	A. Davis

**Note of Caution:**  
 The schedule may be changed due to members' scheduling issues. The most up-to-date version of the Schedule is the weekly Bulletin.

**Notice:** Congregation member **Linda Ludwig** has a business which provides *Senior Companion Care and Pet Sitting*. Linda is willing to help other members of the congregation with her knowledge and compassion. **Phone: 610-906-0774.**

## *Breathe in the Light, then give the Light away*

I recently attended a prayer retreat led by the pastor of a local church. At three different times during the morning sessions, the pastor taught us how to do “centering exercises.” The exercises involved deep breathing, and we were taught three different “wordings,” a wording for each of the three exercises.

During the first exercise, we were told that as we breathe in, we’re to be mindful of the Holy Spirit and when we breathe out, we’re to imagine all negativity, bad “self-talk,” and unhelpful feelings flowing out of our bodies.

During the second exercise, we were asked to imagine breathing in the Light of God, and when breathing out to let that Light of God fall on others—maybe someone we know who seems to be struggling with life and needs the Light.

On the third exercise, when we breathe in we are to say to ourselves the word “ABBA,” which is an Aramaic word for God. It’s root meaning connotes a more informal name for God. Some theologians believe it’s so informal that when we use it, we are addressing God as a comforting “daddy figure.”

When we breathe out in this exercise, we are to say to ourselves the word “Yeshua,” which is another Aramaic word, a word used for Jesus. ABBA, or the comforting father, when you breathe in, and Yeshua, or Jesus, when you breathe out.

While practicing these centering exercises, the second one became my favorite. There’s just something about the Light of God that is especially meaningful to me. This may be so because as I go about my busy days, I see and hear things happen around me that seem to be completely immersed in darkness. There are places I look and actions I see where there is absolutely no “light.” There are people who simply are unaware of the true nature of God—love that is unconditional, compassion, forgiveness, mercy, grace—did I mention love that is unconditional?

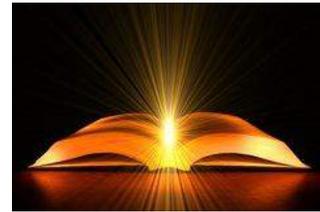
If we were to sum up all the characteristics of God, it might be as if He’s saying, “I am Light.” (In fact, Jesus does say that in the Gospel of John.) In His next sentence, He might say to us, “I need you to learn and absorb all you can about my true nature—my Light—so that you can give my Light to others. I need you to give my Light wherever you go, to whomever you know because of the darkness you experience in the world. If you do this, the darkness will disperse and my Light will shine through, and the world will get better.”

So let’s challenge ourselves, that every time we pray, we find our quiet place and take a few minutes before praying to breathe in deeply and imagine God’s Light moving into our souls, and when we breathe out imagine someone we know who needs that Light and let it shine. Then we pray for that person and imagine God’s Light shining on him or her.

Let’s linger in the quiet, and listen for God. And when we have a chance, share what we’ve learned through our prayers, especially if we’ve learned or felt something new about God’s true nature.

Prayer can be so exciting, so hopeful. Even when we don’t get the answers we like or want, there’s learning there if we keep breathing and keep listening.

The motto of the United Church of Christ is “God Is Still Speaking.” That’s a very hopeful statement. God isn’t done with us or the world. He speaks through His Spirit, His Scriptures, other people, the books we read, our families, and much more. Let’s keep our minds open to what God might



### *Short Sayings*

The Gospel is good news of mercy to the undeserving. The symbol of the religion of Jesus is the cross, not the scales.

*John R. W. Stott (in Christian Mission in the Modern World)*

The weight of the biblical view of suffering is not on the origin of evil but on what God in Christ has done about evil.

*James Cone  
(in God of the Oppressed)*

When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don’t throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.

*Corrie Ten Boom (in A.Word.A.Day)*



**IT'S TIME FOR  
OUR ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
ON  
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 10**

**8:00 AM-12:00 PM**

**IN THE REEVES BUILDING.**

(You can eat before Sunday school or join us after church.)  
pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, juice, coffee/tea/milk, fruit and  
fellowship

**IT'S FREE!! JUST BRING YOUR APPETITE**



**Valley Forge United Methodist Church**  
**Administration Board Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**January 28, 2019**

**In Attendance:** Robin Coroniti, Glenn Davis, Fern Heit, John Torres, Adam Davis, Pastor Jim Hallam, Tom Davis, Noel Turner, Nancy Loane, Tom Loane, Maggie Horosky, Leslie Davis, Steve McClellan

Leslie opened the meeting with a devotion, and a reminder to us to show a selfless love towards others, and to seek nothing in return.

Minutes of the November meeting were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Adam talked with the engineer about the retaining wall, and some news should be forthcoming. Leslie will be trying to set up a new date for a youth bowling night.

**FINANCE:** Noel reported that, at the end of 2018, we ended with a deficit of \$5,786.00 vs. the 2018 budget. A revised budget for 2019 which shows a deficit of \$5,251.00 based on anticipated income was approved by the board.

Tom Davis reported, as of January 5, 2019, the Trustees balance is \$441,676.00 of which \$402,528.00 is in the Vanguard account.

**SPRC:** No report. There will be a meeting in February.

**UMW:** Fern noted that UMW have not been very active, but will try to have more events this year.

**UMM:** New lenses for light fixtures in the Reeve need to be installed. Nancy recommended that we consider new plantings in the spring for the area where the maple tree was removed at the front of the church. We will also consider stump grinding of the tree stump.

**EDUCATION:** No report.

**OUTREACH:** The Haiti mission trip will be on February 23rd to March 2nd. Libby, Adam, Fred, and Cameron from Messiah will be going. VFUMC has contributed \$4,800.00 towards the mission, and sends \$750.00 per quarter for school lunches via the Haiti Hut.

**FELLOWSHIP:** No report.

**PASTORAL:** Mission ConneXion will be working on a family room at the Phoenix Correction Center, as well as a new wall mural. This will be led by Wayne UMC, and we will probably be involved. February 3rd will be the Haiti mission commissioning. March 6th is Ash Wednesday, and April 18th is Maundy Thursday. Both services will be at Phoenixville UM church. On March 10th, we will have a speaker from Kenya, a former Compassion Child. Fellowship will be asked to organize a luncheon to follow this service. April 19th is Good Friday, and the church will be open from Noon to 3pm. April 21st is the Sunrise Service. Tom Ebersole will speak.

**NEW BUSINESS:** No new business.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, February 25, 2019 at 7pm. Nancy Loane will handle the devotion.

Respectfully submitted,  
GD

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# FEBRUARY, 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Jazzercise: Monday-Thursday at 6:15-7:15 p.m.; Saturday at 9-10 a.m. Wednesday & Friday: 9 a.m. Bible Study—Pastor Jim Choir—Julia Rich Bell Choir—Nancy Loane				1	2 Tai Chi 10:15 a.m.
3	4 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. <b>Worship, 10:30 a.m.</b> <b>Communion</b>	5	6 <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30 a.m. Pastor Jim Office	7 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.	8	9 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
10	11 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. <b>Worship, 10:30</b> <b>Valentine Breakfast</b> 8 a.m.—Noon	12	13 <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30 a.m. Pastor Jim Office	14 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.	15	16 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
17	18 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. <b>Worship, 10:30</b>	19	20 <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30 a.m. Pastor Jim Office	21 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.	22	23 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
24	25 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. <b>Worship, 10:30 a.m.</b>	26 <b>SPRC Meeting</b> 6:15 p.m. <b>Administrative</b> <b>Board Meeting</b> 7 p.m.	27 <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30 a.m. Pastor Jim Office	28 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, 6:15 p.m.		