

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



We have free will; God has no master plan

Dear Friends,

I was in discussion recently with one of our members about whether or not God causes everything to happen. Those who believe that God causes—not permits—all things to occur suggest that 9/11 was a God event as was the tsunami that killed 250,000 people. Those who affirm a master plan suggest that medical issues such as cancer, heart attacks, and renal failure are the result of God’s decision to test the faith of the afflicted person. Really, is God like a puppeteer playing with creation? Does God cause bad things to happen to good people?

To suggest that everything happens according to a master plan negates the human capacity to make choices. One implication of being created in the image of God is that we are free to make decisions for better or worse. The father of a teacher at the Chester Community Charter School has lung cancer and other significant health issues. At the age of sixty his days are limited. When asked whether or not her father was a smoker, she responded affirmatively. He is a chronic smoker and a drinker. Has he not caused his situation in life? Can you blame this on God?

According to the biblical account, Luke 12:16-21, Jesus tells a parable about a man who chooses to use a good crop to build bigger barns. Enjoy life he said to himself. You deserve it. Take life easy. Relax, eat and drink and celebrate the moment. That night he dies. Was not this man responsible for his decision? He thought nothing about those who were hurting and lived in poverty. His thought process was clearly narcissistic.

Consider this truth. We all make choices about our living. God does not make them for us. The indwelling spirit nudges us toward a more sensitive, committed, compassionate life-style but does not compel us to listen and respond. We can ignore what we know will fulfill our essence. We are responsible agents. God is always with us encouraging, challenging and strengthening us. But, God does not live our lives. We do!

Think about self-responsibility this Lenten season. You are in charge. Do not blame God for mistakes made either as individuals or as a community. We are free and responsible.

Peace and Blessings,

Jim Hallam, Pastor



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Adult Sunday School—9 a.m.

123

Letters of John

The 3 Letters of John

“How plain, how full, and how deep a compendium of genuine Christianity!”

Remember when Jesus was baptized, what was the next thing that happened? The Spirit came down like a dove. God said he was very pleased with his Son and then what? Jesus entered into the temptation in the wilderness. What was the reason for this?

Jesus went through dark times in those 40 days. But he was completely connected to God during that time, for help, for guidance, for God’s Light. Because of that time in the wilderness, he understood our dark times. The point—stay connected to the Light—for all the times of your life.

As we study 1 John, connection to “the Light” is just one topic we’ll be talking about in our faith walk. Join us as we “dig” into some other topics from the Word to help make our lives more meaningful. We meet Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the Education Building. Bring your Bibles.

March Lectionary



March 4 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22

March 11 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21

March 18 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33

March 25 – Palm/Passion Sunday

Mark 11:1-11 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Passion Scriptures

Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 14:1–15:47 or
Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

Scottie’s Sunday School Class

What did Jesus mean when he said he would make us “fishers of men.” This story about the fishing starts when Jesus is walking along the beach of the Sea of Galilee. He sees Peter, Andrew, James and John, and ask them to follow him and he’ll make them “fishers of men.” So the fishing “thing” is a metaphor? Most likely. Let’s explore.

Fish swim along happily (maybe), eating, doing fish things. A hook comes along and drags them out into the air—air that has no ceiling. By the way, the sea is a symbol for chaos, as Bible scholars tell us. So the fish come out of chaos into the air that has no end. So when, out of love, we invite people to connect with God and help them out of lives filled with chaos, they enter the “God-place” that has no end—God’s kingdom—the here and now.

Other ways to share God’s love may come up in discussion in class on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the church parlor. We’ll be using Dallas Willard’s book and DVDs by Andy Stanley to open discussion. We’ll be happy for you to join us.

Scottie DeMartinis



Easter Breakfast planned

A Sign-up Sheet for food and drink donations for the Easter Breakfast (after the Sunrise Service) is now on display in the Education Building. If you plan to attend and would like to contribute something to the Breakfast, please note it on the sheet hanging just outside the kitchen. All donations are greatly appreciated.



Annual King Breakfast scheduled for April 7

If you are interested in attending a community Martin Luther King breakfast on April 7, please see Fern Heit for tickets. This event is a celebration of the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

It includes breakfast, musical performances by children and adults, a well-known speaker and more. The event is sponsored by the Social Concerns Committee of Phoenixville. Cost is \$12 per ticket.

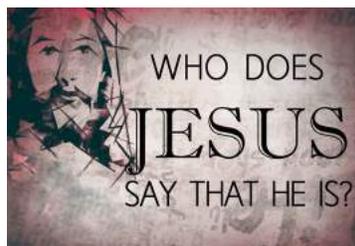
Fern Heit



Prayer Scripture of the Month

For March the *Prayer Scripture* is:

“Answer me when I call, O God of my right! You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.”
Psalm 4:1



Community Lenten Service Schedule

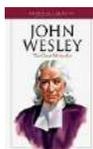
**Wednesday Evening
 Community Lent Worship**
 All Services begin at 7:30 pm

Jesus: Resurrection and Life
March 14 at Centennial Lutheran Church
 1330 Hares Hill Road, Kimberton
 Rev. Nathan Coleman of Bethel Baptist, preacher

Jesus: Way, Truth and Life
March 21 at First Presbyterian Church
 145 Main Street, Phoenixville
 Rev. Dan McDowell of Grace Crossing Community Church, preacher

JOHN WESLEY

—QUOTE OF THE MONTH



“This repentance, this faith, this peace, joy, love, this change from glory to glory, is what the wisdom of the world has voted to be madness, mere enthusiasm, utter distraction.”

From *The Way to the Kingdom*.
 Submitted by Bob Erb



Tai Chi at Valley Forge UMC

March Tai Chi Classes:

March 10
 March 17
 March 24



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



March Birthdays

Gail Frazer	10
Richard Johnston	13
Michelle Cooper	15
Maggie Cooke	17
Maya Cooke	17
Soren DeMartinis	18
Derek Martielli	22
Kerry Bushey Hallam	27

March Anniversaries

Patty & Glenn Davis	5
Jo Marie & Steve Hranilovich	14

Worship Participation Schedule			
	Refreshments	Liturgist	Greeter
3/11	L. Bohl	L. Gular	R. Bushey
3/18	L. Davis	G. Frazer	R. Coroniti
3/25	L. Moran	F. Heit	M. Torres
4/1	Easter Breakfast	D. Erb	S. Hranilovich

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.**

Valley Forge United Methodist Church
Administrative Board Meeting
Minutes
February 26, 2018

In Attendance: Glenn Davis, Adam Davis, Fern Heit, Maggie Horosky, John Torres, Pastor Jim Hallam, Robin Coroniti, Bob Erb, Laurie Vitale, JoMarie Jones, Jim Martielli, Rick McNeill

Rick opened the meeting with a reflection about Olympic ladies skating and how faith keeps us from being scared, and noted how well we get along at VFUMC.

Minutes of the January meeting were approved after an amendment. Minutes should show the Maundy Thursday Service this year will be shared with Phoenixville, not Ash Wednesday.

OLD BUSINESS: The audit will reportedly take place on March 5th.

FINANCE: For January, we had an excess of \$88.00 vs. the 2018 budget. As of February 16, 2018, the Trustees balance is \$486,129.00 of which \$437,896.00 is in the Vanguard accounts.

SPRC: Rick reported the first meeting of the year was this evening, and there was nothing new to report.

UMM: Glenn ordered the kitchen cabinets which should be in by March 21st. We will meet with Chris Simon to inspect the retaining wall and discuss solutions and costs. John Pancoast repaired the gutter system at no cost. Rail fencing will be completed in the Spring. Long term plans include Main parking lot resurfacing will cost about \$12,000.00, and new roofs about \$30,000.00. The retaining wall repair will be about \$10,000.00.

UMW: They will be having meetings soon, and Fern suggested someone volunteer to be an additional Certified Food Manager since classes are forming.

LEARNING: Laurie noted they have completed the confirmation classes, and will be meeting March 18th to discuss activities this Spring and Summer. This committee will also be handling Youth activities moving forward, and a survey will probably be taken to see what programs the congregation would like to see.

REACHING OUT (Missions): Robin has asked that we begin to think about our monetary gifts for 2018, the percentage to be given, and to where it might be distributed. Adam and Libby returned February 23rd, assisted in building nine houses in Haiti. SIF will be adding a clinic, and the Faith Academy will be adding 30 more students in the Fall. Additional funding is to be considered here.

NURTURING: No report.

PASTORAL: Our Maundy Thursday Service will be a combined service at Phoenixville this year. A new Church directory will be coming out the end of March. Pastor Jim gave an accounting of how the \$3,000.00 in funds were being put to use at the Chester Community charter school, and that \$1,852.00 remained in the account.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, March 26th, at 7 p.m.

Adam Davis will be handling the devotion.

Respectfully submitted,
GD

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Sanctuary Choir, 6:30 p.m.	2	3 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
	Jazzercise: Monday-Thursday at 6:15-7:15 p.m.; Saturday at 9-10 a.m. Bible Study—Pastor Jim Choir—Julia Rich Bell Choir—Nancy Loane					
4	5 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30 Communion	6	7 Bible Study 1:15 p.m. Pastor Jim	8 Sanctuary Choir, 6:30 p.m.	9	10 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
11	12 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30 <i>Haiti Presentation</i>	13	14 Bible Study 1:15 p.m. Pastor Jim	15 Sanctuary Choir, 6:30 p.m.	16	17 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
18	19 Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30	20	21 Bible Study 1:15 p.m. Pastor Jim	22 Sanctuary Choir, 6:30 p.m.	23	24 Tai Chi, 10:15 a.m.
25	26 Palm Sunday Sunday School, 9 a.m. Fellowship, 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m.	27	28	29 Maundy Thursday Service at First UMC, Phoenixville	30	31
	Administrative Board Meeting 7 p.m.					