

FOCUS



ON

FAITH

Volume 46, Number 3
2017



Sunday School—9:00 am

Worship—10:15 am

PASTOR: Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST: Dennis J. Duda

Faith United Church of Christ

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Thank you to the newsletter crew for their help in mailing the newsletters this month -

Arlene Beck, LaVerna Diehl, Joan Hassler, Evelyn Hovis, and Sue Walter

2017 Consistory

President: Wes Koser

Vice President: Deb Orach

Secretary: Michele Keeler

Elders:

Mim Allison

Deb Orach

Wes Koser

Jane Van Horn

Deacons:

Caroline Frantz

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Michele Keeler

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Kevin Long

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Kitchen Krew: *Jane Van Horn*

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Mission: *Caroline Frantz*

Youth: *Kevin Long*

Day Care: *Colleen Kandt*

FUN^draising: *Michele Keeler*

Fellowship: *John Barone*

*We are a people
who have come together
through a common faith,
a common love,
and a common covenant
with the triune God;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and together we endeavor
to be a community of
worship,
education,
mission,
fellowship,
and stewardship.*



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to you the day after the Super Bowl, the day after the remarkable, record breaking, and improbable - from 25 points behind - victory of my beloved New England Patriots! Now please, give me a break! The Patriots were my team since I was a young boy! Before the AFC was accepted into the NFL, before the Patriots had their own stadium and played in Fenway Park, and before they even came CLOSE to winning a championship! In spite of the "alleged" scandals over the years, please let me enjoy this!

By the time you read this nearly a month will have gone by but there are several things that I would like to share from my experience this year. As the first half ended, the Patriots were trailing by 25 points. The Falcons had clearly been the dominant team. I saw no chance for a Patriots victory and even became bored and distracted by other things that I had to do. Just ask Wes Koser. I sent him a few emails about our talent auction in the middle of the game! However while I had been hoping for a different result I was not despondent. I thought to myself "The Patriots have won four Super Bowls. Its okay if the Falcons win this one especially given how well they are playing." On top of that, Matt Ryan, the QB of the Falcons went to Boston College, Ethan's Alma Mater, so how could I not feel some allegiance to him and his team?

And so, in spite of circumstances that I would not have chosen, I felt at peace.

Patience watched with me. Patience NEVER watches sports with the exception of the Super Bowl. But she doesn't watch for

the game. She watches for the commercials! I suspect many of us look forward to the revealing of the most clever, creative and often times funniest commercials to grace the airwaves for the year. This year I noticed a common theme to many of the commercials.

True, they were “pushing their product” but they were emphasizing something that is sorely missing in our world today: unity and diversity. Air BnB, Coca Cola, and Google each aired commercials that emphasized the value of unity in the midst of diversity. The commercials did not directly encourage me to go out and buy their products (To be honest, I was already drinking a Coca-Cola Zero) but they gave me a sense of encouragement that I hadn’t been feeling for a long time. Anheuser-Busch went one step further. They dramatize the meeting of Mr. Busch and Mr. Anheuser after Busch’s harsh, unaccepting, and unwelcoming arrival in the U.S.A. I know that commercial was a dramatization but I also know that the experience that my Irish great grandparents received when they arrived in this country was far from gracious, very disseminating, and quite racist

As I read up about these commercials the Monday morning after they aired I found many comments criticizing them as attempts to demonize individualism. In my humble opinion those critics missed the point: unity in the midst of diversity is the loving embrace of individualism. Some critics also thought the commercials were too political. Perhaps there was a social commentary in them but any encouragement to tolerate any form of diversity and find means for unity seems like a sane message for any society at any time.

They say that there are two things that you should never talk about: religion and politics. After many heated conversations with Yankee fans over the years I would add sports to that list! However

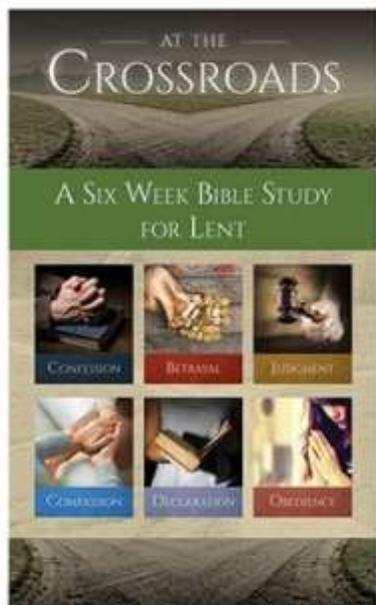
this Super Bowl was almost a religious experience for me and NOT because the Patriots actually pulled it off. I came away from the game with the message that preserving and honoring unity, diversity, and individualism is more important than victory and this is central to the Gospel message. The Gospel is inclusive of all races, ethnicities, cultures, socioeconomic groups, people of different sexual orientations, and fans of different sports teams!

In this crazy world that can be so frightening and discouraging at times we need to read between the lines. No matter what the “score board” reads at the end of the game or how many products are sold as a result of slick commercials, we are better off united than divided. United, we can celebrate all that life has to offer. Divided, we miss out on the blessings of community that God bestows.

Peace,



LENTEN DINNER & PROGRAM



This Lent we will be doing something new and join with some of our sister churches in the community. **Every Thursday night from March 9 – April 6 we will gather at one of the neighboring churches and enjoy a simple meal of soup and sandwiches followed by some worship and a study called *At the Crossroads*.**

continued.....

(Lenten Program continued...)

March 9 – Betrayal. When Judas Iscariot comes to the point where he must either listen to Jesus or listen to the devil, he chooses to betray Jesus. When we are tempted by Satan to betray our Lord, we must gain strength from our Savior to say “No” to the devil.

March 16 – Judgment. When Pontius Pilate is called upon by the crowds to make a judgment call about Jesus, his decision not to decide results in the death of Christ. We look to the cross of Christ to make definitive judgment calls in our lives.

March 23 – Compassion. When Jesus is taken into custody, He chooses to show compassion to a wounded participant in the arrest. We are called to show compassion, not anger, even to those in our midst whom we might consider our enemies.

March 30 – Declaration. When Peter is asked to declare whether or not he knows Jesus, he decides to deny His Savior. When questioned about our Lord, we are called to boldly declare our faith in Christ.

April 6 – Obedience. When Jesus nears the time when He must die for our sins, He asks His Father if the cup might pass from Him. But when the time comes, He obeys His Father’s will. When we are called upon to follow God’s will, we must obey.

Be sure to mark your calendars and include these times of weekly fellowship, worship, and study in your Lenten journey. Specific locations will be announced in the bulletin and the weekly email.



News About A.R.A.G.A.R.s (A Really Awesome Group Accepting Religion a.k.a. The Youth Group)

The A.R.A.G.A.R.s are BACK! Pastor Bruce invites you to a Bowling Party on March 5th at Revolutions! We will leave the church after worship for a pizza party followed by 2 hours of bowling.

IMPORTANT DETAILS

Cost: Free for Faith Church Youth
\$20 For Guests

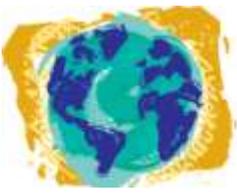
Chaperones I need some! Safe Church Policy states that I cannot do this alone! Please contact me if you are available.

Transportation: Same as above!

Siblings and Parents: Entire families are welcome

Unanswered Questions: Call the A.R.A.G.A.R.s hotline, 610.282.3939 and ask for the one and only Pastor Bruce

Don't doddle. Sign up today!



Joyful Noise Pledge Update

The Mission Team wishes to thank everyone for their generous donations each month for Joyful Noise. The Joyful Noise Offering is used to support three missions.

Just as a refresher, we sponsor 2 young boys through **Global Ministries**, Robert who lives in India and Yousef who lives in Jerusalem. A portion is also shared with children in Haiti to help promote literacy through **Beyond Borders**. We also have made a pledge to **Bethany Children's Home** in Womelsdorf, PA.

We need \$135 monthly to meet our commitments. For 13 months the average donations are \$98. Leaving us \$37 short each month for a total of \$481 over the 13 month period. These are the donations for the past 13 months:

January '16	\$ 85.31	August	\$ 92.05
February	\$ 30.00	September	\$105.73
March	\$ 93.54	October	\$ 92.01
April	\$ 86.24	November	\$132.27
May	\$ 83.56	December	\$144.05
June	\$102.40	January '17	<u>\$116.84</u>
July	\$110.56	TOTAL:	\$1,274.56

Haiti: Hurricane Matthew Update

On October 4, 2016 Haiti was struck by yet another natural disaster, a **Category 5 Hurricane**. Many homes were completely destroyed leaving families homeless. After this disaster, **Beyond Borders** contacted Faith Church to see if we would be interested in helping to re-build a new home for one of the families. They were requesting a **donation of \$1800** to re-build their home, school and other facilities. Once again your generosity to your neighbors in need is greatly appreciated. A check in this amount has been sent to Beyond Borders and is on its way to helping restore the lives of one family in Haiti. It is our hope that we will see pictures of the family and their new home. Thank you for supporting these efforts!

Mission (and Pie) Sunday: March 26



The Mission Team will be leading worship on this special day and we will be celebrating the “**Angel Mission Projects**” as well as past and the sharing of future missions. Those who will be participating in this fun activity will be sharing their experiences during worship. There is still time if you would like to create your own mission please see Chuck or

Karen Talboo for your \$20 seed money. Information flyers can be found in the Narthex.

After worship, lunch will be served in Fellowship Hall along with another fun tradition at Faith...**PIE SUNDAY!** We'll provide lunch and we ask you, our wonderful bakers, to please bring along one of your favorite pies to share with everyone.

Betty Lou's Pantry Laundry Detergent Collection

During the months of February and March the Pantry is requesting donations of **laundry detergent**. Please bring in any size bottle of detergent and it will be delivered to the Pantry for the families. We are frequently asked if we have any detergent. It is an expensive item that is not always able to be purchased on a tight budget.

Another item that families request is personal hygiene items such as **shampoo, soap, deodorants**, etc. If you see a bargain or have some extras to spare please share those with your neighbors in need.

Thanks!

Answer: When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me.
Psalm 86:7, NIV

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE IN MARCH

Head Usher—Colleen Kandt • Financial Secretary— Tony DiSanto
Nursery—Catherine Stevenson • Hall Contact—Tim Hovis

	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Reader	Acolytes	Flowers
3/1 Ash Wed. Ash	Evelyn Hovis	Tom & Brenda Hovis Chuck & Karen Talboo	n/a	Noah Ritter Avery Koser	n/a
3/5	Henry & Sue Roberts	George Rau Donna Schoenberger Talboos	Chuck Talboo	Noah Jellison Noah Ritter	Available
3/12			Mim Allison	Weiland Hite Noah Jellison	Ritters
3/19			John Barone	Avery Koser Weiland Hite	Talboos
3/26	Mission Team	Mission Team	Mission Team	Noah Ritter Avery Koser	Horwath

If you can help fill in some of the blanks,
please speak with Mim Allison after worship
or call the church office at 610.282.3939.



FROM THE TREASURER

JANUARY FINANCIALS

January		YTD
Receipts	\$19,132.65	\$19,132.65
Disbursements	\$21,272.20	\$21,272.20
	(\$2,139.55)	(\$2,139.55)

	Weekly Attend.	Weekly Offering	over/under \$3500 goal
1/1	31	\$ 1,220	\$ (2,280)
1/8	93	\$ 4,506	\$ 1,006
1/15	84	\$ 1,943	\$ (1,557)
1/22	72	\$ 2,816	\$ (684)
1/29	79	\$ 2,318	\$ (1,182)
Total	359	\$ 12,804	\$ (4,697)



Within Our Church Family

Long time Faith member **Zoltan Nemeth** passed away on February 18th at the age of 92. Please keep Zoltan's family in your thoughts and prayers.



From the Secretary:

The **deadline** for **April Newsletter** articles and information is **March 10th**. Please email to faithchurchcv@gmail.com place them in the Secretary's mailbox in the conference room.



Time to sign up for 2017 Altar Flowers! The cost is \$34.

Dates Available— March 5, May 14 (Mother's Day), June 25, July 16. Call the office for August—December open dates.



Thanks for your continued support! of Betty Lou's Pantry. For the last three Sundays of January and the first two Sundays of February, our regular donations included \$50 and 229 items.

Many thanks for your generosity and your continuing support of Betty Lou's Pantry! Currently, over 100 families are being assisted. All of the recipients are very grateful for your generosity.

MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

LIQUID LAUNDREY DETERGENT • CANNED PASTA • CANNED TUNA • BAKED BEANS • CHUNKY SOUPS • BOXED POTATOES • BOXED PASTA (NO SPAGHETTI) •

Items stocked at the Pantry include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pork & Beans | Chili |
| Canned Fish (salmon) & Meat | Canned Pasta |
| Peanut Butter | Canned Tomatoes & Canned Sauce |
| Kidney & Black Beans | Meat Helpers |
| Canned fruit | Macaroni & Cheese |
| Rice or Noodle Roni | Canned Vegetables |
| Beef Stew | Dry Pasta & Spaghetti |
| Spaghetti Sauce | Canned Tuna |

Monetary Donations are a particularly effective way to help the Pantry. A donation of \$10 will buy over 60 lbs of food through Second Harvest. If you are in need or know of someone in the area who is, please call **610-282-2838** and leave a message, or email bettylouspantry18036@gmail.com —Mike Ford

Easter Flowers



The Worship Committee will be in the Memorial Room taking orders beginning March 5th for flowers to decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday.



Fill out the order form below and return it, with payment, to a member of the committee. ***Order deadline is March 19th.***

Please order!

Number of Plants	Cost Per Plant	Total
_____ Easter Lily	\$10.00	_____
_____ 4 Bloom Tulip	\$10.00	_____

Bulletin Listing

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Your Name:

Thank you for helping to beautify our sanctuary for Easter. You may take your flowers with you after either Easter Sunday Worship Service.



Please Join Us!
**Mission Team's
Annual Bingo Fundraiser
Sunday, April 23, 2017**

**Vera Bradley Bags & Longaberger Baskets
With a Fun Chinese Auction**

Faith UCC • 5992 Route 378 • Center Valley

1:00 p.m. (Doors Open at Noon)

20 games for \$20

5 specials for \$10

Tickets go on sale March 26, 2017

**Tickets are sold by reserved seating only
and sell fast so *get yours early!!***

Call: Karen Talboo 610-282-1552

Faith Church Office 610-282-3939

Email: cktalboo@gmail.com

Please make all checks payable to Faith UCC Mission

Mail to:

Karen Talboo

6472 Walnut Drive

Coopersburg, PA 18036



From Great to Good

Jim Collins' 2001 book *Good to Great* featured companies that had "made the leap" to greatness. Years later, many of them are no longer great; some aren't even around.

Should Christians seek greatness? After all, our attempts to be great — wealthy, powerful, successful, famous — often become the "enemies" of our doing the good God commands.

God's Word flips on its head the saying "good is the enemy of great." The meek, Jesus teaches, will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). "Whoever would be great among you," he says, "must be your servant" (Mark 10:43, ESV). One of Jesus' most famous parables is called the Good Samaritan, not the Great Samaritan. And goodness, not greatness, is a fruit of the Spirit.

Christians and churches are called not to greatness but to doing good for the sake of the world. Let's shift our focus "from great to good."

—Based on "From Great to Good,"
Homiletics, January-February 2017



From a church newsletter:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No Youth March 27

Youth group will resume in April

Why chase away the young people?



MARCH BIBLE READINGS

March 1

Jonah 3:1–4:11
Hebrews 12:1–14
Luke 18:9–14

March 2

Deuteronomy 7:6–11
Titus 1:1–16
John 1:29–34

March 3

Deuteronomy 7:12–16
Titus 2:1–15
John 1:35–42

March 4

Deuteronomy 7:17–26
Titus 3:1–15
John 1:43–51

March 5

Jeremiah 9:23–24
Corinthians 1:18–31
Mark 2:18–22

March 6

Deuteronomy 8:1–20
Hebrews 2:11–18
John 2:1–12

March 7

Deuteronomy 9:1–12
Hebrews 3:1–11
John 2:13–22

March 8

Deuteronomy 9:13–21
Hebrews 3:12–19
John 2:23–3:15

March 9

Deuteronomy 9:23–10:5
Hebrews 4:1–10
John 3:16–21

March 10

Deuteronomy 10:12–22
Hebrews 4:11–16
John 3:22–36

March 11

Deuteronomy 11:18–28
Hebrews 5:1–10
John 4:1–26

March 12

Jeremiah 1:1–10
1 Corinthians 3:11–23
Mark 3:31–4:9

March 13

Jeremiah 1:11–19
Romans 1:1–15
John 4:27–42

March 14

Jeremiah 2:1–13, 29–32
Romans 1:16–25
John 4:43–54

March 15

Jeremiah 3:6–18
Romans 1:26–2:11
John 5:1–18

March 16

Jeremiah 4:9–10, 19–28
Romans 2:12–24
John 5:19–29

March 17

Jeremiah 5:1–9
Romans 2:25–3:18
John 5:30–47

March 18

Jeremiah 5:20–31
Romans 3:19–31
John 7:1–13

March 19

Jeremiah 6:9–15
1 Corinthians 6:12–20
Mark 5:1–20

March 20

Jeremiah 7:1–15
Romans 4:1–12
John 7:14–36

March 21

Jeremiah 7:21–34

Romans 4:13–25

John 7:37–52

March 22

Jeremiah 8:4–7, 18–9:6

Romans 5:1–11

John 8:12–20

March 23

Jeremiah 10:11–24

Romans 5:12–21

John 8:21–32

March 24

Jeremiah 11:1–8, 14–17

Romans 6:1–11

John 8:33–47

March 25

Jeremiah 13:1–11

Romans 6:12–23

John 8:47–59

March 26

Jeremiah 14:1–22

Galatians 4:21–5:1

Mark 8:11–21

March 27

Jeremiah 16:1–21

Romans 7:1–12

John 6:1–15

March 28

Jeremiah 17:19–27

Romans 7:13–25

John 6:16–27

March 29

Jeremiah 18:1–11

Romans 8:1–11

John 6:27–40

March 30

Jeremiah 22:13–23

Romans 8:12–27

John 6:41–51

March 31

Jeremiah 23:1–8

Romans 8:28–39

John 6:52–59



PRAYER HANDS

Make these hands as a helpful prayer guide.



What you need:

- 7 pieces of construction paper (different colors)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Colored pens
- Stickers

What you do:

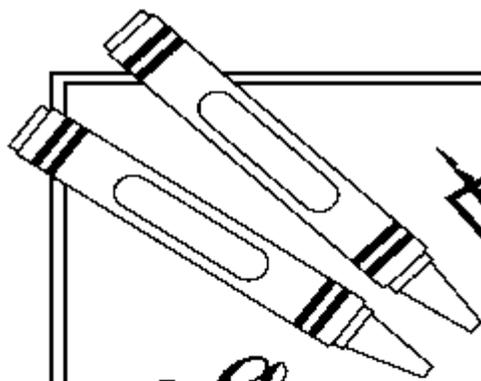
1. Trace your hand (the same one) on each piece of paper.
2. Cut out and stack the hands. Staple together atop the pinky.
3. On the top hand (the front cover), write "Prayer Hands." Decorate with stickers.
4. On the second hand, write "Praise God." On the third, write "Ask for forgiveness." On the fourth, write "Thank God." On the fifth, write "Pray for others." On the sixth, write "Pray for me."
5. Use your book to remember what to pray for every day.

March

01 Russ Cressman	20 James Tilley
02 Carolee Glickman	23 Lisa Koch
02 Gabrielle Koehnlein	24 Katie Y
03 Tony DiSanto	28 Barbara Strimple
03 Matthew Long	30 Tom Herstine
04 Glenn Scholl	31 Patricia Babos
05 Gail Nagy	
07 Dan Schaffer	
07 Weiland Hite	
07 Isabel Hovis	
08 Charlotte Gasda	
11 Tom Davis	
12 Joan Demkee	
12 Jennifer Amato	
12 Tim Hovis	
13 Roy L. Slekovac	
15 Dalton Biery	



Please call the church office with any omissions or corrections.



PUZZLE

The psalmist's prayer

The Psalms are full of wonderful verses about God's care and protection.

Directions: Find each missing letter in the alphabets below.

Use the resulting words to complete Psalm 86:7, NIV.

A B C E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____

A B D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z _____

A B C D F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q S T U V W X Y Z _____

When I am in _____, I _____ to you,

because you _____ me. Psalm 86:7, NIV