



First Bethel Church
King's Light newsletter

AUGUST

2025



METHODIST BUILDING BLOCKS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER THOUGHTS
FROM PASTOR DAVID

In this “Methodist Building Blocks” column, I have been sharing the “Legos...the building blocks” of United Methodist Conference structure. I have covered Charge Conference and Annual Conference so far. This month I am taking a “detour” in order to share with you an important Annual Conference element: clergy itinerancy.

Each denomination has a particular process of matching up clergy with congregations. In some denominations, the congregation seeks candidates for pastor themselves...without the denomination’s assistance. This process typically takes six months to one year or more. The congregation decides when a change is necessary.

In the United Methodist Church, we use an appointment-process, coordinated by an Annual Conference’s Bishop. If a church has a pastor vacancy, the Bishop recommends a certain pastor to the congregation, where the church’s Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) get the chance to interview the pastor before accepting the recommended pastor. The SPRC can reject the Bishop’s recommendation if they can provide specific rationale for their rejection.

Each pastor is appointed on a year-to-year basis. Each appointment making season (which typically runs January through June), every church-pastor arrangement in the Annual Conference is reviewed using Charge Conference reports, SPRC feedback and pastor-provided input. The bishop gives particular attention to all the churches that will have a pastor opening - largely created by pastor retirements. The Bishop, in consultation with the Superintendents, searches for the right

pastor, from within our Conference's clergy. If that match is approved by the pastor and the open congregation, then that pastor's pulpit will need to be filled. This happening at multiple churches is what begins each year's process of appointment changes.

Each church has seasons in its congregational life. For example, a growing church that needs to do a building campaign in order to fund & build an addition to the church needs a pastor that has spiritual gifts and leadership abilities that can effectively lead the congregation through the funding, building, and repayment process. Our UMC appointment-making system facilitates these dynamics, as each year the Bishop seeks to have the right pastors in the right congregations.

There are challenges associated with doing appointment-making this way. Pastor changes are hard for a church. It takes time for a trust level to be built - one that facilitates a positive clergy-congregation relationship that helps move the congregation forward in ministry. Transition in leadership is a challenge...for sure! But it can also be a good thing...especially when the church's ministry is congregationally owned and not merely one the pastor has developed on their own.

I am very glad our bishop has seen fit to re-appointment me to First Bethel! We are increasing the church's health and continuing to move ministry forward together!

It is my hope that you have increased understanding of this process - so when the next pastor change does occur, you are better informed as to why it can be a good and healthy thing. And it is my hope that this knowledge increases your conviction to pray for our bishop and the Conference superintendents as they work very hard in this process.

In the September King's Light, we'll get back to "the Legos," as I share about the District and Jurisdictional Conferences. Until then, may you all be blessed and at peace with our God! It is a pleasure serving you and this congregation!

Journeying together,

Pastor David



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUMMER SUNDAYS

9:30AM WORSHIP

**10:45AM COFFEE HOUR AND
FELLOWSHIP**

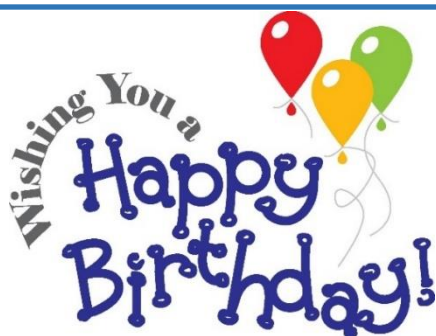
Communion is held the first Sunday of each month



Hot Buttons (& Cool Heads) Sermon and Worship Series

Does everything happen for a reason? What is the eternal status of one never hearing the Gospel of Jesus? Is the Bible perfect and without any error? These are all questions arising from theological debates that have been discussed with passion and sometimes hotly debated. From this, Pastor David has titled our new Sermon/worship series: “Hot Buttons”.

These debates and differences oftentimes create “hot heads” and divisions. The hope in exploring these issues is that we can have informed minds – leading to “cool heads” when discussing the issues. With each debate/hot button, opposing views will be framed and the United Methodist perspective will be shared. We can then attempt to synthesize the opposing views in a manner that respects each side of the debate.



Aug 1 Emma Slater

Aug 1 Kenneth Williams

Aug 3 Amy Scott

Aug 3 David Zahniser

Aug 4 Heather Finale

Aug 6 Shannon Evans

Aug 6 Brynn Rinehart

Aug 11 Greg Doman

Aug 11 Betsy Yetiskul

Aug 13 Connie Rush

Aug 16 Ryan Melber

Aug 16 Sidney Steinhagen

Aug 16 Dorrie Walter

Aug 18 Joan Dutcher

Aug 19 Linda Jack

Aug 19 Jeff Krause

Aug 21 Grace Passios

Aug 21 Julia Pauline

Aug 25 Carol Austin

Aug 25 Grayson Bowser

Aug 25 David Miller

Aug 26 Jaime Gray

Aug 26 Linda Kennedy

Aug 27 Howard Loper

Aug 31 Lisa McDermot



Check out this video highlight!

A special collection was taken for young people in the Ukrainian United Methodist church to go camping. Just like we go to church camp at Jumonville, Allegheny, and Wesley Woods, United Methodists in Ukraine grow in their faith by connecting with God and nature on the mountain top. They often join together to climb mountains, sometimes even Hoverla, the tallest mountain in Ukraine. Thank you for your donations!

OUTREACH



On Wednesday, July 16th, these ladies dedicated a day of service at the **UMCOR Mission Barn** in New Castle. The Mission Barn is one of the UMCOR Relief Supply



Network depots located across the USA. We dropped off 45 Feminine Hygiene Kits that our congregation had assembled, helped to pack Cleaning and Hygiene Kits, assembled sections of Handicap Ramps, and delivered Hygiene Kits to a local charity for distribution.

This is a great example of your Outreach Committee and your Connectional Apportionment (mission share) dollars in action!



Outreach is organizing a School Supply Drive for children residing at Parkford Apartments with a goal of collecting enough supplies to enable 50 children to select items they need to complete their backpacks. See the sign-up sheet in the Narthex for the remaining items that are needed, or make a monetary donation marked “Outreach-School Supplies”

Please have all donations in by Sunday, August 3rd.

25 YEARS OF APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT



On August 31, a planned celebration will be held during our 9:30 a.m. worship service to show appreciation to First Bethel's congregation for an unwavering dedication to mission and the consistent and substantive support of the remarkable ASP teams we have sent on ASP mission trips for 25 years.

Rev. Tom Hoeke will take part in the service. Interestingly, Tom initiated our ASP journey all those years ago. A reception immediately following the service will include a luncheon and a word from Chris (JC) Shroeder. Chris is Vice President of New Build and Disaster Recovery for ASP. All are invited. Please watch for details.



Help us to collect non-perishable food and personal care items to be given to our neighbors through **SHIM (South Hills Interfaith Movement)** in Bethel Park. Place your donations in the bins in the narthex, and we'll get them to SHIM.



If you have older prescription glasses that are taking up drawer space, please drop them in the box in the Narthex and we will pass them along to Christ United Methodist Church so they may be re-distributed to those in need of those prescriptions.



The Kids Meal Network feeding ministry at Parkford Apartments is up and running on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through August 8th. Almost 70 meals were served during the first month of the program. Contact Mary Courtney or Pastor David if you'd like to volunteer!



Daily Bread

Daily Bread is a feeding ministry where we prepare, deliver and serve a hot meal to our homeless and/or food insecure neighbors on the North Side of Pittsburgh.

First Bethel is one of several churches that fulfills this need, and we currently do six Sundays a year. Sally Irick reports that over 180 meals were served recently, when we usually plan for 120 meals at a cost of approximately \$450.

The need is likely to grow, and food prices continue to increase. To support the Daily Bread ministry, volunteer to help or support it with donations to "Daily Bread" on your offering envelope or Vanco form (use Designated Other).



Three **TNC** mission teams visited Nyadire in May and June, renewing relationships and accomplishing many projects.

Kevin Riley, leader of the Engineers Without Borders program, hosted a team of students from the EWB chapter at Carnegie Mellon University, which reviewed the electric supply for Nyadire Hospital. Mary Beth Zollars' team interacted with Home of Hope children, visited Home of Hope Outreach schools, and worked on projects at the mission. Deborah Swineford, leader of our Hearing Innovation program, hosted a team that conducted a Bible School program and took the children on a field trip.

Watch for information on scholarships soon!

Save the Date!

The Rotary Chicken BBQ Dinner is coming soon! This event supports The Nyadire Connection (TNC) which First Bethel's primary global outreach ministry.



SATURDAY, OCT. 11TH
Bethel Park High School
Drive Thru Only
11AM – 7PM

Purchase tickets from Phil Himmler for you and your family, or you can donate tickets to SHIM (South Hills Interfaith Movement). **“WE ARE PROVIDED FOR – SO THAT WE CAN PROVIDE FOR!”**



Our fall weekend adult **ASP** trip is planned for **Thursday, October 2nd through Sunday, October 5th** to Jonesville Virginia and the cost is \$150/person. The ASP-owned Jonesville Center is a lodge-like facility with bunk beds, nice bathrooms and showers, and a porch with mountain views. We will travel 7 hours in rented mini vans to arrive in Jonesville for dinner on Thursday. We'll work on ASP projects in the area on Friday and Saturday, and return Sunday. Contact Gloria Stephan if you're interested in joining us. For more information, see www.asphome.org Volunteer Opportunities / Adult Trips.

Join us for our ASP 25th anniversary celebration on Sunday, August 31st at 9:30AM, followed by a luncheon in Founders Hall. Special guests include Pastor Tom Hoeke who organized our first trip back in 2001, and Chris (JC) Schroeder, VP of New Build and Disaster Recovery for ASP.

My ASP Journey 2025

By Alexandra Cecala

The last time I spoke about ASP, I talked about what we, the team, did for the homeowners. This year, I'm gonna talk about what the homeowners did for us. Not only did they welcome us into their home with open arms, offering us anything we needed, but they



touched our hearts through the simple emotions they showed us. You don't realize how much of an impact you have on these homeowners until you take a step back. Think about it: We spend one short week of our lives in their home. This week, we did flooring, baseboards, and trim. Each day, we spent 7 hours in the home for these 5 days. $7 \text{ hours} \times 5 \text{ days} = 35 \text{ hours}$ in that home in total. If the homeowners own their house for about 20 years past this project, if you do the math, in 20 years, that is about 175,200 hours in their house. We will never see that project again after those 35 hours. That homeowner will see that floor, give or take, for a high number of 200,000 hours. Now, before I give you a full-fledged word problem, I need to circle back to my point. While we might groan and complain about getting up early, or getting another PB+J sandwich for lunch, we can take a step back and see how the small amount of work we do can change the homeowner's life bigtime.

The homeowners have unlocked new levels of gratitude in me. How many people in the congregation have air conditioning and heat? About 17% of the people in the county we served live below the poverty line. This translates to hundreds of thousands of people in the region with a lack of proper living conditions, including heat and air conditioning. How many people in the

congregation go grocery shopping? Over 3.4 million people in Appalachia experience food insecurity. How many people in the congregation have jobs or are retired from their job? While the employment rate is increasing since previous years, there is about 4.3% of work-age adults that are jobless. With just these three statistics, you realize how fortunate you are. We have jobs, we have food, we have proper and functioning homes.

My homeowner mentioned they had been without a functioning toilet for half a month because of flooding. How many people in the congregation have a functioning toilet? Or functional lights? Or a bed that's big enough for you, and not two sizes too small? Unfortunately, my homeowners struggle with those problems in their day-to-day lives. Now, I'm not trying to speak even longer and outshine Pastor David (haha!), but I want you to reflect on the perspective my homeowners have given me. Hopefully you gain gratitude from this story, realizing how blessed you and I really are.



YOUTH MINISTRY



The youth Group is hosting an **Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 7th from 3PM – 5PM.**



KSK Families and Church Families are all welcome!

There will be Ice Cream, Games, and Coloring Activities.

Contact Meredith Steinhagen for more details.



Youth Group – Kayak Trip
Saturday, August 2nd at Noon

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS



Please bring your backpacks, briefcases, laptop bags, etc. to the 9:30 AM worship service on **Sunday, August 10.**

We will be offering a blessing for these items as well as for students, teachers, and school support staff in preparation for the upcoming school year.

GARAGE SALE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH

8AM – 2PM

We will begin accepting your donated items on August 17th

Please call the Church Office to coordinate a drop off or pick up time. We cannot accept clothing, large electronics, or broken items.

Contact Jim Walter, Ken Williams or Dave Miller for further information.



The Men's Group is organizing a trip to see "**The Road to Damascus**" at the Ohio Star Theater in Sugar Creek, Ohio on Wednesday, August 20th at 1PM. **There are two extra tickets available at \$49 each.** Please see Dave Miller if you're interested.

CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS

LIBRARY NEWS – Heroines



Our Library's LARGE-print books now include:

THE GOLDEN DOVES

Josie of the United States and Arlette of France were teenage spies for the French resistance in World War II. They were admired for stealing secrets from the enemy but the Gestapo caught them and sent them to a concentration camp where thousands of prisoners were killed. After the war, the young women reunite and set out on dangerous missions to find Arlette's missing son and Nazi fugitives, including one known as the "Angel of Death." Author *Martha Hall Kelly* said she was inspired by a 93-year-old Auschwitz survivor to produce this work of historical fiction. We also have "*Lilac Girls*," another Kelly novel about WWII heroines.

THE GOD OF THE WOODS

A girl and boy disappear from a summer camp owned by their wealthy family. Fourteen years separate the two mysteries and investigators confront a web of lies and secrets within the family. The author is *Liz Moore*.

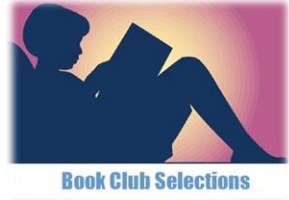
I WAS JUST A RADIOMAN

This is a collection of a serviceman's World War II memories -- from Pearl Harbor to dangerous missions across the Pacific. Just 132 pages. Numerous pictures.

Your Library Staff

BOOK CLUB

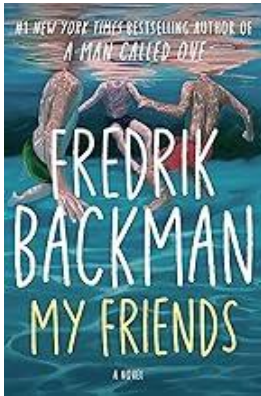
Our Book Club explores a variety of literature to expand our understanding and perspectives.



Records indicate that First Bethel's "new" Book Club was reformed in 1999 and has been going strong since!

Your recommendations and participation are welcome. Meetings are held once a month at 7PM at Panera Bread in South Park Shops, but there is no meeting in August. The next meeting will be **Friday, September 12th at 7PM.**

"My Friends" by Fredrik Backman



#1 New York Times bestselling author Fredrik Backman returns with an unforgettably funny, deeply moving tale of four teenagers whose friendship creates a bond so powerful that it changes a complete stranger's life twenty-five years later.

Most people don't even notice them—three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier in the corner of one of the most famous paintings in the world. Most people think it's just a depiction of the sea. But Louisa, an aspiring artist herself, knows otherwise, and she is determined to find out the story of these three enigmatic figures.

FBUMC MEN'S GROUP



The Men's Group meets at 8:30AM on the first Saturday of each month for fellowship and community activities. They also meet informally for breakfast on Wednesdays around 8AM at the Eat 'N Park in South Park Shops.

The next Men's Group meeting is August 2nd

MARTHA CIRCLE



Martha Circle is on summer break.

Their next meeting is at 1PM on **Wednesday, September 10th** in the Susanna Wesley room of the church. All ladies are welcome.

This is a time of fellowship, service and connecting with other women of our faith community. Contact Donna Hennen for more information.

First Bethel's Mission Statement

***“Nourish Every Body,
Stimulate Every Spirit,
Satisfy Every Soul,
for the Glory of God”***

STAY CONNECTED !



The **MyUCD** app not only contains contact information and family photos for our congregation, it also has contact information for our church and staff, **AND** links to **access weekly announcements, online giving, and the church calendar.**

Each personal household code can be used by the whole family. If you missed the email with your code, contact the Church Office at 412-835-0700 or via email FBUMC@Verizon.net. There is also a list of the access codes in the Narthex.

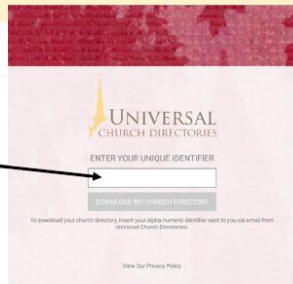
Remember to keep us updated if you have a new phone number, mailing address or email so we can keep our records updated.

Step 1: Download the Universal Church Directory App from the app store.



Step 2: Enter the Unique Identifier (See email for your identifier).

Unique Identifier Code:





First Bethel United Methodist Church

Bethel Park, Pennsylvania

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5901 Library Road

Bethel Park, PA 15102

<http://www.firstbethelumc.org>

Church Office

412-835-0700

FBUMC@Verizon.net



Kings School Kids

412-835-6141

KSK10@Verizon.net

Pastor: Rev. David Ewing

Mobile: 412-818-0889

PastorDavid@FirstBethelumc.org

Office Manager: Lisa Stefanowicz

OfficeManager@FirstBethelumc.org

Choir Director and Organist: Phil Himmler

Director of Maintenance: Jim Howells

KINGS SCHOOL KIDS

Director of KSK: Mary Beth Deckard

Assistant Director of KSK: Nicole Crisson

KSK Office Administrator: Charlene Phillips



<https://www.facebook.com/FirstBethelUMC/>

KINGS LIGHT DEADLINE: The 20th of each month is the deadline for submissions for the next issue of the King's Light. Please have your information submitted on time to avoid the disappointment of not having it appear in the next edition. Send via email to Gloria Stephan, editor or send to FBUMC@Verizon.net

FIRST BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5901 LIBRARY ROAD

BETHEL PARK, PA 15102-3398

www.firstbethelumc.org

August 2025

King's Light Newsletter

