



First Bethel Church  
King's Light newsletter

SEPTEMBER



2025

# FROM THE HEART

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR DAVID



“Speak, for your servant is listening,” the young Samuel spoke when he heard a voice calling to him while in the care of the priest Eli. But it wasn’t the first time God called out to Samuel. The first two times, Samuel thought it was Eli calling out to him. Knowing he had not called to Samuel, Eli discerned that Samuel may be hearing the voice of God. He told Samuel, “If he calls you, say, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” The Lord shared many things after Samuel offered himself to God and the unknown author of First Samuel says “The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground.” The Lord did great things through Samuel.

Norma Woodward was my “Eli.” God began calling my name as my leadership at my home church increased. I began to contemplate a vocational shift but had many questions - even questioning if I was hearing God correctly. One particular Sunday, after leading worship in place of our vacationing pastor, Norma was waiting for me at the rear of the sanctuary. She pulled me aside to say, “you should consider becoming a pastor vocationally.” Needless to say, that is what I did - taking my first church in 2007.

My breath was taken away when I recently learned of Norma’s tragic death. Losing loved ones is always very hard. Losing those who have been vital to your Christian formation is more difficult. It makes me feel like those Israelites whose world was turned upside when God directed them to return to their home after years of Babylonian exile. All of their traditional elements of comfort and peace had been reduced to rubble and were no

longer present. Home was no longer “home” in the sense they once knew.

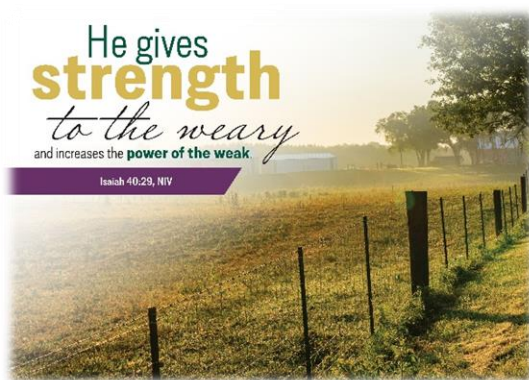
Knowing and seeing the fear in their hearts, God spoke messages of hope, promise and encouragement to them through the prophet Isaiah. One of those messages is found in the 40th chapter of Isaiah: *He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.* (Isaiah 40:29-31)

The day after I learned of Norma’s death, I learned from her son that she planned out her funeral service in 2015. Those plans indicated her desire that I officiate the funeral service. Those funeral notes also included the scriptures she wanted read. The first one was Isaiah 40...the one I reference above. Using that scripture, I was able to share about our God that anchors us in life’s storms.

Grieving and then pressing into a new normal are very hard processes. It is made easier by a God who uses his people to comfort one another and speak the messages God wants held in our hearts. Many times, Norma was used to be that vessel. I can’t wait to see her again...when we are present with the God who now holds Norma in his embrace.

Journeying together,

**Pastor David**



# SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## STARTING SEPTEMBER 14, 2025



### 9:30AM WORSHIP

*WITH CHILDREN'S MESSAGE &*

*WORSHIP ENRICHMENT*

*COMMUNION IS HELD THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH*

### 10:30AM COFFEE HOUR AND FELLOWSHIP

### 10:45AM SUNDAY SCHOOL

### 10:45AM WIRED WORD ADULT DISCUSSION

Children are always welcome to stay in the sanctuary with their families. We have **"Busy Bags"** filled with engaging items available at the back of the church. Children aged three through third grade can join Miss Charlene for **Worship Enrichment** after the Children's Message.

For those who prefer, there is a furnished **Nursery** area upstairs, with volunteer staff on the first Sunday of each month.

If you need more information, feel free to ask an Usher, a Greeter, or anyone wearing an **"Ask Me"** nametag before, during or after the service.



**The Wired Word** adult discussion group will return on Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Join Mike Stephan each Sunday at 10:45AM in the Oxford Room for interactive discussion of faith and current events. The topic changes weekly, so attend when you can!

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**Red Letter Living Bible Study** with Rev. Joel Garrett will return on Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> and will run through October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the Oxford Room.

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**First Bethel Ringers** will resume practices every Sunday at 11AM beginning September 14<sup>th</sup>.. Please contact Christina Ewing if you are interested in joining our bell choir!

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First Bethel UMC's Charge Conference will be held on October 26<sup>th</sup>

immediately following the Sunday Service.

All members and church leaders are encouraged to attend.



Sep 1 Ella Harmon

Sep 6 Robert Pugh II

Sep 8 Regan Gray

Sep 9 Christine Morris

Sep 10 Joan Loper

Sep 10 Todd Slater

Sep 10 Donna Stewart

Sep 12 Ida Palmer

Sep 14 John Albright

Sep 18 Owen Newman

Sep 20 Carol Brevard

Sep 20 Jeff Bright

Sep 21 Mary Courtney

Sep 26 John Zipfel

Sep 27 Mary Lou Molnar

Sep 27 Elle Warywoda

Sep 30 Mary Ann Davis



First Bethel United Methodist Church,

Thank you all for such a great week of service. Your hard work has helped many homes become safer, warmer and drier! You are an essential part of our mission, and we hope to see you again soon!

Blessings,

Aidan, Amy, Graham, and Maddie  
ASP Kanawha County Staff

# OUTREACH



The **Kids Meal Network** ministry at Parkford Apartments started off a little chaotic with food delivery issues the first couple of weeks, but Church Union, First Bethel volunteers and KSK staff all



adapted and adjusted, and we were able to successfully serve over **173 hot lunches** to children this summer.

Thanks to everyone that helped with this endeavor, especially Mary and Ken Courtney and Sally Irick who went over and above multiple times to help to keep the program running smoothly.



Outreach organized 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. The response was overwhelming!

We partnered with Melting Pot Ministries and St. Vincent de Paul and two churches from their parishes, plus Xfinity was there with beverages. There were **74** fully stocked bookbags at the end of the event with supplies left over.

In addition to the school supply drive, we had food, a crafts tent, a pickup soccer game for the kids with some of our older youth participating, and background music provided by our very own pastor, DJ Dave! We were also able to give away books, games and toys to add to the carnival atmosphere.

# ALWAYS GIVE A LITTLE EXTRA

by the Chicken aka Phil Himmler

So! Cluck Cluck Cluck Cluck  
cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck  
cluck cluck cluck etc.

You surely can translate after all of these many years! Yes, the Bethel Park/Upper St. Clair Breakfast Rotary Club is preparing for its annual CHICKEN BBQ.

The Nyadire Connection (TNC) has the hope of receiving another Rotary \$5,000 check in the Spring of 2026. That will happen if I can report an astronomical amount of tickets sold. Our church, FB, has always been the ringleader for buying the \$15 tickets either for our own pleasure or for donating our tickets to SHIM. The event takes place on **Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at the Bethel Park High School DRIVE-THRU only from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm.** The meal includes one half a chicken, baked beans, coleslaw, and dessert with NO TIP asked or required! What a deal.



Back to the title: I recently visited a local place for lunch. The beverage cup had “Always Give A Little Extra” written in bold letters. “**BINGO**”, I thought.

Last year you were presented with The “Go One More Challenge” and a lot in our FB Family, did that and more in buying tickets.

Please remember that when you buy a ticket(s), you are helping young people in Nyadire, Zimbabwe receive higher education.





I am including two photos of Tsungi who graduated college this past August. I met her as a little orphaned child in 2006 (my first trip) and saw her grow up during my additional 4 trips to Zimbabwe. Tsungi was handsomely supported by the Sister Rut Scholarship Program because TNC raised funds. As you know, this BBQ on October 11<sup>th</sup> contributes to our

Sister Rut Scholarship Fund by enabling TNC to receive the Rotary's highest \$5,000 grant. I am asking all of us to consider what "Always Give a Little Extra" means as we approach the October 11<sup>th</sup> Chicken BBQ.

One last thing: **WE ARE PROVIDED FOR SO THAT WE CAN PROVIDE FOR.**

Oooooooooops - the Chicken goofed. There is another last thing: I left for Nyadire, Zimbabwe on 8/17 and will return on 9/2. I plan to meet up with Tsungi and many of the orphans from the Home of Hope whom I met in 2006, nearly 20 years ago. The kids really grew and matured during my 9 year gap in not flying there. I can honestly say – even though I am writing this prior to my departure - that being there once again made my heart dance with joy. Perhaps the Chicken Dance this year will be exceptional somehow, someday.

Love and shalom to you.  
Phil Himmler aka the Chicken



Renewals for The Nyadire Connection **Home of Hope Outreach student sponsorships** are due no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>. Annual sponsorship is \$125. Forms are in the Narthex, or contact Stephanie Alstadt or Phil Himmler. .

## 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. 11<sup>TH</sup>**  
**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) Tatenda – with grateful hearts.

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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.

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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 youth Group is hosting an **Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

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## REGISTER NOW!



**Our fall weekend adult ASP trip is planned for Thursday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> through Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>** 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 rental 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](http://www.asphome.org) Volunteer Opportunities / Adult Trips.

Please support our **Pie and Baked Goods** fundraiser for our Appalachia Service Project mission trip fund. All items are from the Pie Place in Bethel Park, and we've added Pumpkin Pie to your options this time. Pre-orders are due by September 7<sup>th</sup> for pickup on Friday or Saturday September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

There will be a limited number of extra pies, pepperoni rolls and cinnamon rolls for sale at the Men's Garage Sale, but it's best to pre-order to guarantee you don't miss out!



PIE AND BAKED GOODS SALE FROM  
THE PIE PLACE IN BETHEL PARK  
**ORDER DEADLINE SEPT. 7<sup>TH</sup> 2025**



Pickup Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 4PM-7PM  
or Saturday September 13<sup>th</sup> 9AM-1PM

at First Bethel UMC 5901 Library Road Bethel Park, PA 15102

YOUR NAME:

PHONE:

#	Item	Cost	Total
	<b>APPLE PIE</b> 9" Deep Dish Fresh Fruit – Pre-Baked	\$22	
	<b>DUTCH APPLE PIE</b> 9" Deep Dish Fresh Fruit – Pre-Baked	\$22	
	<b>WILD CHERRY PIE</b> 9" Deep Dish Fresh Fruit – Pre-Baked	\$22	
	<b>*NEW* PUMPKIN PIE</b> 9" Deep Dish Fresh Fruit – Pre-Baked	\$22	
	<b>CINNAMON ROLLS</b> 4 Homemade 4-inch rolls iced	\$12	
	<b>PEPPERONI ROLLS</b> 6 Homemade rolls w/provolone cheese	\$12	
	<b>\$20 GIFT CARD</b> to The Pie Place 1775 N. Highland Road, Bethel Park	\$20	
	<b>TOTAL</b>		



Cash or Check to First Bethel UMC  
Envelope marked "Pie Sale"  
Or pay online after ordering here =>  
Scroll to "Pie and Baked Goods Sale"



**ONLINE ORDER FORM**

**PAYMENT**

All proceeds benefit our **Appalachia Service Project** mission trip fund

# YOUTH MINISTRY

An afternoon of kayaking was just what everyone needed to cool off on Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The weather was perfect, and we're sending a special shout out to our brave chaperones, Jeff & Donna Leonhardt!



# **CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS**

**A memorable checkout!** Sue Tillack recently hit a big number in our Library. A book chosen by avid reader Sue was the 17,000<sup>th</sup> checkout since our Grand Opening in September of 1972. Hooray!



We're here to help on Sunday mornings and feel free to browse anytime you're in the building. Simply sign the card in the back of a book you choose and drop it into the small wooden "Honor Box" on our desk. Recent Library additions include:

## **SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

This is the 2025-2028 update.

## **BOOK OF DISCIPLINE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 2020-2024**

In the foreword, the Council of Bishops says this book is for all "who seek to understand what it means to be a United Methodist." And that it "affirms that the (UMC) is an inclusive society without regard to ethnic origin, economic status, gender, age or abilities." It begins with a brief (13-page) history of the UMC.

## **THE FIRST LADIES**

Historical fiction about Eleanor Roosevelt and her friendship with an activist whose parents were slaves. A review says it's a story of two formidable women whose "singular friendship helped form the foundation for the modern civil rights movement." The co-author is Pittsburgh native Marie Benedict.

## **A MARRIAGE AT SEA**

This is a true story. After a whale sinks their boat in the Pacific, a young British couple with a rubber life raft and a dwindling amount of food and water struggle to survive. Their ordeal lasts 118 days. The author is journalist Sophie Elmhirst.

**Your Library Staff**



# BOOK CLUB

Our Book Club explores a variety of literature to expand our understanding and perspectives. Plus, some selections are just for pure enjoyment!

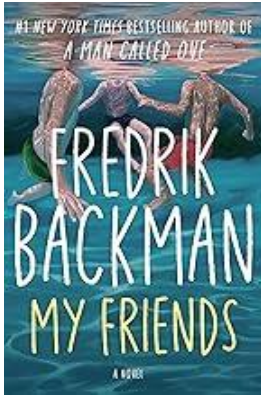


Book Club Selections

Your recommendations and participation are always welcome. Meetings are held once a month at 7PM (usually the third Friday) at Panera Bread.

The next meeting will be **Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup> 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.

# **GARAGE SALE**

## **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>**

### **8AM – 2PM**

**We're accepting your donated items now!**

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

Setup starts at 6PM on Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>

Contact Jim Walter, Ken Williams or Dave Miller for further information or if you want to help.





## 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  
Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:30AM**

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## MARTHA CIRCLE



The next Martha Circle meeting is at 1PM on **Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>** 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.

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## 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](mailto: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.

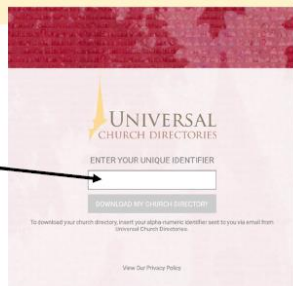
Step 1: Download the Universal Church Directory App from the app store.



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

Unique Identifier Code:

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# **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](mailto:FBUMC@Verizon.net)



**Kings School Kids**

**412-835-6141**

[KSK10@Verizon.net](mailto:KSK10@Verizon.net)

**Pastor:** Rev. David Ewing

Mobile: 412-818-0889

[PastorDavid@FirstBethelumc.org](mailto:PastorDavid@FirstBethelumc.org)

**Office Manager:** Lisa Stefanowicz

[OfficeManager@FirstBethelumc.org](mailto: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 **20<sup>th</sup>** 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](mailto:FBUMC@Verizon.net)

**FIRST BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

5901 LIBRARY ROAD

BETHEL PARK, PA 15102-3398

[www.firstbethelumc.org](http://www.firstbethelumc.org)

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