

# The Freier Flyer

Quakertown United Methodist Church

November 2020

## *Love First: Living With a Hospitable Heart*

*“Beauty is not in our perfection. It is in our recognition of our imperfection. It is in us believing who God says we are and not what the world says we should be.”*



“What would Jesus do?” The answer was always LOVE first.

God wants us to have a heart for hospitality - to be a person that chooses to make space for others and even more, to welcome them with love, even and especially when it's inconvenient. Hospitality is less about having the perfect setting to make people feel at home, but rather about becoming a safe place for others - to be a person with their heart set on helping others understand how much God loves them.

I came across the term “holy interruptions”. It stuck with me because we have interruptions all the time. Sometimes we look at them as an annoyance or a distraction from the important things, but many of times they are actually an opportunity to do the most important things - to be who God calls us to be - light-bearers and messengers of His love.

In 2020, your door may not swing open quite as often, and your dining table isn't quite as full every evening, but try to hold your heart open - cling to the principles God wants us to practice:

Love first.

Become a safe place for others.

Make a conscious choice to approach people with a heart and mind set on letting them know Someone out there loves them.

Become so expectant of a holy interruption that you make margin for it. God will help you prioritize what is most important.

Remember that your time, talent and treasure aren't yours to keep. You have been blessed to become a blessing.

These, and so many more, are pieces that make up a hospitable heart. We aren't going to live it out perfectly. But if it helps, just remember that with every phone call, every texted prayer, every time we pull our neighbor's trashcan out of the street back to their house, every backyard or driveway conversation from evening until it's dark, every Saturday morning video chat, and every other moment we make a choice to love first, we're actually saying, “I love you,” back to a Father whose very presence has whispered the same to our hearts since time began.

*Excerpts taken from article by Taylor Bogle  
Dayspring Living your Faith*



## *The Pastor's Palette*

### **“Look for the Manna”**

Then all the Israelites left Elim. They reached the western Sinai desert, between Elim and Mount Sinai, on the 15th day of the second month after leaving Egypt.

Then the whole community of Israelites began complaining again. They complained to Moses and Aaron in the desert. They said, “It would have been better if the Lord had just killed us in the land of Egypt. At least there we had plenty to eat. We had all the food we needed. But now you have brought us out here into this desert to make us all die from hunger.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will cause food to fall from the sky. This food will be for you to eat. Every day the people should go out and gather the food they need that day. I will do this to see if they will do what I tell them. Every day the people will gather only enough food for one day. But on Friday, when the people prepare their food, they will see that they have enough food for two days.”

So Moses and Aaron said to the Israelites, “Tonight you will see the power of the Lord. You will know that he is the one who brought you out of Egypt. You have been complaining about the Lord, and he heard you. So tomorrow morning you will see the Glory of the Lord. You have been complaining and complaining about us. Maybe now we can have a little rest.”

Who doesn't remember this passage! We laugh about the grumbling Israelites. But now we find ourselves smack in the middle of a pandemic that has cleared our usually full churches and sent us “wandering” aimlessly in a kind of wilderness place, wondering when this is ever going to end and when we can go back to “Egypt!”

True, in Egypt things weren't perfect. But we want to go back to what we were used to! We want to be in the church building, holding worship the way we were used to having it. We want our singers and our fellowship and our meals and our friends and our world as we knew it. Something has happened, and now nothing is ever going to be the same!

This is the voice of grief. The Israelites knew they were slaves to the life they had before. They knew things needed to change. But when change actually happened, they longed for what they knew. This is a very human response.

And what happens when people grieve? They get ornery. They get angry. They get nostalgic. They get sad. They complain. They will do anything to feel better. To feel the way they used to. This is life in the “wilderness.” And for the Israelites, it went on for 40 years! 40 years it took until they were ready to accept their new life and enter into the promised land. Even then, it took the new generation to do it.

Sound familiar? It should.

The pandemic has shaken us to the core in so many ways. And we are trying to get a grip on our bearings. Whether or not it was a good thing (not), the church was our trusty source of stability, a place where nothing ever changed. And in a world of change, that felt good. Now, church has changed. Our rug has been removed. And we are afraid.

But as with the Israelites, we need to remember that God is still there. That Egypt wasn't the be all and end all of the story...and that great things are still to come...because the true stability is God. And God goes with you everywhere you are, even in the wilderness.

Sometimes, when we are hungry for what was it's very hard to find the manna amidst the sand. But there IS manna. Everyday, God is giving us hope through the gestures of people, through the new innovative thinking of people, through signs of love amidst the tumultuous culture we live in, through signs of life amidst the resounding and publicized deaths from a disease we don't trust or understand, and for some, refuse to even believe.

It's easier to be an ostrich than an eagle.

But the truth is, the Israelites can only choose to move forward. They cannot go back to Egypt. And as much as they long for life as they once knew it, that life for them has ended. They need to look for the manna to get through the wilderness and know that the promise land is coming. They must have faith in God that this time will end, and a new time will come that will be better than ever before.

Faith is sometimes an elusive deep-rooted trust in a God we cannot see.

It's hard to feel rootless. But you are only rootless if your heart was more in Egypt than in God. For God is your true stability. That's the voice of Moses.

We must stop looking back and start looking forward. For the past will never come back. At least not the way we knew it. And that's very hard to accept.

We can either wait around for 40 years waiting for the past to return. Or we can pick up our backpacks and go forward and discover new life emerging from the desert.

Think of it this way. Suppose you are married to someone who breaks the commitment and bond of the relationship by cheating on you with someone else. You are mourning the loss of the relationship as you knew it. You are angry and sad. You want your life back. You want things back the way they were. You want the "thing" to never have happened, the thing that disturbed your status quo. Now here's the thing. Suppose you and your spouse forgive, and you get back together. You will still never have the same relationship you had. It will never be the same. And thank goodness. Because you are now not the same people. You've grown and changed. He or she's grown and changed. Your relationship has grown and changed, so that you can get back together in a new way. You can never go back to what you were or what you had, but you've forged a new relationship going forward.

This is the way of the church too. This "thing" called COVID came into our lives and disrupted church as we knew it. It forced us to worship in new ways and in unfamiliar ways.

Some of us are angry right now. Some of us are sad. Some of us are saying right now, well, I'm just going to wait it out, and then things will go back to the way they were.

Except, they won't.

Some of us are trying hard to create the same experience as we had.

Except, you can't.

Some of us find it hard to find the manna in the middle of what looks like a lot of grey. And Egypt looks so awfully good right now, if only we could get back there! But we can't. We all know in our hearts that church will never be the same again. But that doesn't have to be bad news. In fact, it can be very good news. For churches were getting stagnant, immovable, and they were declining.

COVID has disrupted old patterns, old ways of thinking, old habits, and everything we knew. But Christians always knew someday we would need to leave our old behind if we ever had a chance of the church living on into a new future. God is sending you manna right now, if only you will look for it. And God is promising that if you move forward into new places and new thinking, a promised land is coming.

It's okay to grieve. It's natural to mourn what you've lost and what was familiar. But listen to the story of Moses. Now it's time to look for the manna, the signs of God's promise all around you. For what we do know from history is this: God will always have a church. The question is, will you be part of it?

What will church look like as we move forward? We don't entirely know. But we can create it together. And it can be the best and most meaningful adventure that you have ever taken!

God is here. God has never left. But as Jesus told his disciples many years ago, you can't keep God in a box, or in a tabernacle, or even in your conception of church. God is so much bigger than that.

Look for the manna!

The Rev. Dr. Lori Wagner  
loribethwagner@gmail.com

Anyone needing to meet with Pastor Lori can either email (loribethwagner@gmail.com) or call (360.298.8327) to make an appointment. She can meet with you outside or in Miller Hall at an appointed time.

## Worship Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. Early-Bird Narthex Worship
- 9:00 a.m. Parking Lot Worship
- 10:00 a.m. Men's and Women's Adult Sunday School Classes
- 11:00 a.m. Livestream and In-Person Sanctuary Worship

Due to rising cases of COVID-19, The Village at Lifequest has cancelled in-person activities, including worship, for the present time.



### COVID-19 Updates

Check your email or USPS mail to keep abreast of COVID-19 updates. If numbers continue to rise, face-to-face in-person meetings may change. Thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation during these unprecedented times.

# Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

Dear Quakertown UMC Friends & Family,

The Bishop has just posted new guidelines for our conference accepting Governor Wolf's recommendations for our churches. For us, this allows us to expand our allowable in-person worship number from 25 to between 50 and 60 at our 11 AM service. The Bishop's guidelines can be found here <https://www.epaumc.org/news-information/2020/11/re-opening-best-practices-for-churches-now-during-covid/>

That said, with COVID-19 numbers rising at an alarming rate, I encourage you to judge wisely. Anyone 65 or older can continue to attend either the 9 AM Parking Lot Service or the 11 AM Livestream, both of which are safe options. Note that those attending 11 AM should continue to sit in a scattered manner. No one should sit in a pew directly behind others and masks must be worn at all times.

Should you feel ill, please do not attend worship. If anyone tests positive for COVID-19, notify the Pastor immediately and quarantine until you are considered safe. If an outbreak occurs, we will shut down live worship for the season.

To date, only about seven (7) people have been attending 11 AM worship, so the new guidelines will not change much for our congregation. However for anyone interested in our acceptable maximum capacity, the new guidelines give the church the freedom of in-person worship without fearing the 25 capacity ceiling. This will also allow more latitude for the 7 PM Thanksgiving Eve and 7 PM Christmas Eve services.

I commend those who have been following our guidelines with a humble, joyful, and peaceful spirit. You have been cooperative and no one has refused to wear a mask or has placed anyone in danger. Thank you for your care of each other.

Let us continue that love and care through this winter season. Numbers are rising quickly and Bucks County cases are on the upswing. Continue to use your best judgment. If what is allowable for the church is not in your best interest, choose a worship option that is right for you.

For those concerned about potential greater numbers in the sanctuary, I suggest you consider attending 9 AM Parking Lot worship, which will continue throughout the holiday season. So crank up your car heaters and give this beautiful, very Methodist outdoor worship experience a try. This service will be canceled on Sundays of heavy rain or snow. For those who are comfortable Livestreaming at home, I hope you will continue to enjoy that service.

Let us venture forward together. But the keyword is together, praising God who has kept our worship and people safe, along with many others.

Blessings and peace,  
Pastor Lori

Note: Church Council will meet on ZOOM, Monday, November 9, 7:00 p.m. to discuss and approve the worship schedule as we move forward. For the link to attend the Council meeting, email the Church Secretary at [barb@qumc.com](mailto:barb@qumc.com).



## From Missions Commission

As it became obvious COVID-19 was here to stay and stay and stay, the Missions Committee faced quite the predicament. How could we possibly continue our Missions outreach when we no longer had the opportunity to fundraise? Missions discussed simply shutting down during the duration of the Coronavirus, but then decided to instead put our faith and hope in our church family. We set up donation drop-offs at the church pavilion and requested food, school supplies, and baby necessities. We breathed a sigh of relief when many of you were generous enough to swing by with donations. Thank you.

In addition, Missions would like to give an ENORMOUS thank you to the Friendship Circle, who recently gifted Missions \$2,000, and to an anonymous donor, who gave Missions another \$400. And, thank you to other church members who have given Missions monetary donations. Missions has used this money in a variety of ways. We have donated to Jerusalem House of Allentown, as well as the Red Bird Mission, two organizations we have worked with in the past. In addition, we will be using \$200 of our funds at Christmas for our Bucks County Opportunity Council "Adopt-A-Family." Missions will also contact Quakertown Community Outreach to request another family to assist during the Christmas holiday.

Missions is blessed having been able to continue our work during this COVID-trying time. Please understand we could not have done any of this without the help of all of you. Thank you for your gifts.

Now, due to the cold weather and the increase of Coronavirus, Missions is going into hibernation for the winter months. We will see you all in the spring. Again, thank you.

For more information on Missions outreach programs, contact Carol Pertuit (610-346-6713 or [carolpertuit@verizon.net](mailto:carolpertuit@verizon.net)).

The All Saint's Day Covenant Service was held, Sunday, November 1. Those remembered were Joan Bailey, Doris Willauer, Dorothy Williams, Thelma Bagg, Jean Savage, Nancy Moore, Harry Stotsenburg, Barbara Trumbauer, John Eck, and Cynthia Molnar.



**ALL SAINTS' DAY**

### November Meeting Calendar

Monday, November 9	7:00 p.m.	Church Council
Tuesday, November 10	7:00 p.m.	Finance
Wednesday, November 11	6:00 p.m.	Charge Conference
Tuesday, November 17	7:00 p.m.	Trustees
Monday, November 23	7:00 p.m.	Pastor's Online Think Tank



Children and Youth Sunday School classes will be online, as will the adult Friday morning group. The Women's and Men's Sunday School classes will meet in Miller Hall or the outdoor pavilion on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Youth Group will ramp up their fall schedule for both middle and high school students.

For more information on any Christian Education opportunities, please contact the respective contact person listed below:

Children's Sunday School:

Christine Rush (rushcm@npenn.org or 215.264.4815)

Youth Sunday School and Youth Group:

Pastor Kathryn Swan (kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610.348.2632)

Women's Sunday School:

Laura Lillie (lalillie@verizon.net or 215.529.1059)

Men's Sunday School:

Ed Wilson (edwinwilson@comcast.net or 215.799.4086)

## **WAIT! There's More...**

### **QUMC Kids Club**

Kids Club is offered for kids in grades one through five. If you have questions or would be willing to help with events, please contact Babs Kerns (babs.kerns@gmail.com).

### **Online Bible Study and Devotional**

Janet Finch and Gail Schadler offer this weekly small group which started in March with an online Parables study developed by Gail and has blossomed into a three-time-a-week study and prayer devotional for 20 people, some of whom are former members now living out of state. Gail sends the study out on Wednesdays via email with a request for comments, questions, and prayer requests. Those who are able attend a ZOOM meeting on Friday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 AM to discuss the study. Janet then sends out a devotional and prayer on Mondays.

If you would like to join this online study and prayer group, email Gail Schadler (glschadler@gmail.com) or Janet Finch (jmfumw@aol.com).

### **Winter Bible Study**

Pastor Lori will offer an online Bible Study during the winter months of 2021. More information to follow, including dates and times.



## **A LOOK at the BUDGET**

	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>
September 2020	\$17,662.58	\$20,404.80
Year to Date	\$199,907.57	\$196,868.72

**Status of Budget Development for 2021:** All of the various budget requests have been submitted and are being considered as the budget process continues. This is a very important time for the many leaders in our church as difficult decisions will need to be made in order to prepare the proposed budget for the Church Council. Please continue to pray for our church!

**Stewardship Campaign:** The Stewardship Campaign for the 2021 QUMC fiscal year has begun. Members have received a 2021 Commitment Card and have been asked to prayerfully consider how they will support God's work through our church. Please return your 2021 Commitment Card as soon as possible as this information is needed to complete the 2021 QUMC Budget. Thank you.

**Options for Worship:** Now that there are more opportunities to worship "in person", please take advantage of one that fits into your personal safety and faith.

Don't forget to continue to give generously as our budget is straining and giving is down. You may mail in your offerings, give online, or bring them along when you attend worship.

**Continued Appeal Regarding Bequest Opportunities:** Bequests from individuals are an important part of the funding of our church's missions. If or when you plan a charitable bequest to help support the mission of the Quakertown United Methodist Church, you can direct your bequest in the following ways:

1. **Unrestricted bequest:** This is a gift for our general purposes, to be used at the discretion of our Trustees and Finance Committees. A gift like this - without conditions attached - is frequently the most useful, as it allows us to determine the wisest and most pressing need for the funds at the time of receipt.
2. **Restricted bequest:** This type of gift allows you to specify how the funds are to be used. Perhaps you have a special purpose or project in mind. If so, it's best to consult us when you make your will to be certain that your intent can be carried out.
3. **Honorary or Memorial bequest:** This is a gift given "in honor of" or "in memory of" someone. We are pleased to honor your request and have many ways to grant appropriate recognition.
4. **Endowed bequest:** This bequest allows you to restrict the principal of your gift, requiring us to hold the funds permanently and use only the investment income they generate. Creating an endowment in this manner means that your gift can continue giving indefinitely.

Feel free to contact Pastor Lori or a member of the Trustees Committee or Finance Committee to learn more about helping our church through a bequest.

**You Are Needed!** There are many opportunities for members of our congregation to serve not only our God, but the QUMC church as well. Please contact Pastor Lori and find out how you may fit into the plans of our church.



Annual Charge Conference will be held Wednesday, November 11, 6:00 p.m. on ZOOM.

If you have any questions, contact Pastor Lori (loribethwagner@gmail.com or 360.298.8327).

November is United Methodist Women World Thank Offering, a time reminding us to be thankful for God's abundant provision for His creation and to share that gratitude with others in need. Even though our unit is not active this year, we are still encouraging you to drop off, or send in, your Thank Offering (no coins please!) to QUMC. We ask that you designate these offerings as "World Thank Offering" so that they can be directed to National UMW to support national and international mission projects to meet the physical and social needs of women, children and youth.

Special Mission Recognition will be celebrated and awarded to Janet Finch, the heart and hands of United Methodist Women at Quakertown United Methodist Church, on Sunday, November 22 during worship. A gift for ministries with women, children and youth has been given to the United Methodist Women National Office in Janet's name to honor her for having dedicated her time and effort to service for UMW and its missions. Janet joined UMW when she was a teenager in the 1960's and was President of QUMC's unit from 1995 to 2019. She has also served in several capacities at the District Level of UMW, including Vice President and President. Janet will be presented with the Special Recognition Pin as a reminder of how much her leadership and labor in developing and making possible the programs, fundraisers, and celebrations is appreciated over the past 25 years. Congratulations and thank you to Janet Finch for her commitment and dedication to United Methodist Women and the United Methodist Church.

Thanksgiving Eve Worship, Wednesday, November 25, 7:00 p.m., both in-person\* and online.

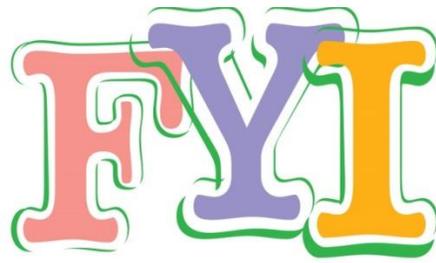
Advent Services, Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. during Advent, both in-person\* and online. There will be no singing in these half-hour quiet and meditative services.

Christmas Eve Worship will be held as follows on Thursday, December 24:

- 2:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Parking Lot Worship
- 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship & Message in the Narthex (in-person\*)
- 7:00 p.m. A Service of Lessons & Carols in the Sanctuary (in-person\* and online)
- 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship & Message in the Narthex (in-person\*)
- 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship & Message in the Narthex (in-person\*)

Thank you for your participation in the recent survey asking what you would like to see on Christmas Eve this year. We had a good response with the largest number of respondents desirous of five services as noted above.

\*Masks & social distancing required. See page 5 of this newsletter for guidelines relative to COVID-19.



• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

### **Worship Bulletins**

Anyone wishing to have a copy of the bulletin and hymns each week, please contact [barb@qumc.com](mailto:barb@qumc.com) to get on the email or USPS mail list to receive these materials each week.

### **Pastor's Time Off**

Pastor Lori will be on study leave attending the annual Society for Biblical Studies/American Academy of Religion Conference, held online this year, Monday, November 30 through Thursday, December 10. In case of emergency, do not hesitate to contact the Pastor during this time.

Due to the scheduling of the Pastor's time off and the Church Secretary's vacation (scheduled December 14 through January 1), bulletins for the month of December and early January will be prepared this month.

### **Holiday Concert Cancelled**

Last year, QUMC hosted a holiday concert with a performance by Craig Thatcher and Nyke Van Wyk. The concert was a great success and we were able to fill the sanctuary, bringing many visitors to the church. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the concern for public health and safety, and restrictions on venue activities, we had to cancel the 2020 concert with Craig and Nyke scheduled for November. Hopefully things will improve and we can reschedule in the spring.

### **QUMC Educational Endowment Fund Grants**

It is with great pleasure that the Endowment Committee of QUMC will distribute grants to eligible post-high school students on Sunday, November 29, 2020.

### **Want to become a member?**

Contact Pastor Lori at [loribethwagner@gmail.com](mailto:loribethwagner@gmail.com) for more information. Please note membership transfers do not require classes. We hope you'll join us!

### **Paper Recycling**

Receptacles can be found in the southwest corner of the church parking lot. Acceptable materials to recycle include newspapers, magazines, catalogs, books, office paper, school paper, wrapping paper, and junk mail. Missions will receive a check to be used for missions programs of the church.

### **Aluminum Can Recycling**

Bag and bring your cans to the two white trash cans at the church pavilion. They do not need to be crushed but they are easier to handle if they are. All brands of aluminum cans are welcome. Proceeds from can recycling helps to defray costs of the annual Chicken Barbeque.



### Special Music:

Anyone willing to provide special music for the Christmas season should contact Bethany Neely now so she can place you in holiday services. You may want to consider taping something; our Technology Team and/or Bethan can help you learn how. Providing music is a great way to share your gifts and lift people up in worship through the capabilities of our sound system. Contact Bethan (bethanneely7@gmail.com) to share your talent with QUMC during the upcoming holidays.

### Outreach Care Needs You!

- Are you good at encouraging someone a little down on their luck?
- Would you mind taking someone to an appointment or job interview?
- How about delivering food to a person in need?
- Would you enjoy helping someone find a place they call home?

Outreach Care helps provide resources to the homeless of Upper Bucks County so they can get back on their feet. We are looking for mentors and drivers, as well as others to help with fundraising, taking phone calls and helping with special events. Give as little or as much time as you can. If you like helping those of your own community, please give us a call at 215.804.5869 or contact Joanne Cramer at 610.442.6465.

#### **Psalms 95:1,2,6**

**O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.**

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.**

**O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**





# Family Matters

Congratulations to Caitlin (Yaun) and Ryan Yost who were married on Saturday, October 31 at Sweetwater Golf & Country Club

Happy Birthday to Ethel Setman (November 6) and Adele Winkler (November 26)

If you are 80 years old (or over) and would like your birthday included in the newsletter, please let the church office know.

## Notes of Thanks:

*“I would like to thank my church family for all that you did for me during the illness and passing of my sister, Nancy Moore. I appreciate all the prayers, the prayer shawl, cards, calls, and visits.*

*I would also like to thank my church family for all the prayers on behalf of my grandson, Aaron. His surgery was successful and he is coming along nicely. Thank you again for lifting Aaron up in prayer!*

*I miss my church family. I hope we will be safely together soon.”*

*Marie Frankenfield*

*“Thank you to my QUMC church family for showing your support in sending me a congratulations card in regards to my college graduation and starting grad school. It was very thoughtful and lets me know my church always has my back.”*

*Sincerely, Blake Miller*

*“We are thankful to God for all who have blessed our lives by showing us your face and teaching us your ways. We are blessed for your love and support that touched our hearts and souls.”*

*Margie and Cheryl Ann Stotsenburg*

## Monthly Newsletter Submissions

If you have items for the monthly newsletter you can email them to Teddi Miller at QUMCNewsletter@gmail.com or you can put them in the newsletter mailbox in the church office. To assure your items are published in the next monthly newsletter, please email Teddi or drop off the information in the church newsletter mailbox by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the publishing month. Thank you!