



August 2021

A Monthly Update in the Life of our Church

Contact



From our pastor.... Searching for Meaning

For the month of August, we will be traveling in John's Gospel, hearing about Jesus as the Bread of Life. We've already had Feeding the 5000/Jesus Walking on Water (John 6:1-21). Next up are the following passages:

August 1 st	John 6:24-35	Jesus announces he is the Bread from Heaven
August 8 th	John 6:35, 41-51	Jesus encounters complaints about calling himself the Bread from Heaven
August 15 th	John 6:51-58	The controversy continues
August 22 nd	John 6:56-69	The Words of Eternal Life

In my study bible, these passages fall under the heading, *Jesus' Ministry Continues: Conflict and Opposition Grow*. For a long time, Christians have been taught that conflict is bad. We've taken Jesus' messages of peace to mean that we all must agree, all of the time. But this isn't what Jesus modeled for us. In the face of conflict, he didn't back down and follow the biggest crowd's lead. He caused more controversy and conflict.

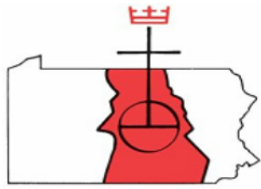
My Mom loved to play the Devil's Advocate. She enjoyed conflict so much that it fed her and filled her up. This isn't the kind of conflict Jesus models. Jesus' conflict is demonstrated by flipping tables to make a point about the damage being done by commercialism and Empire politics.

All summer last year, we saw protests that appeared to consist of destruction of property. For many of us, the message of the protest was lost amid the destruction of property. Yet we do not see Jesus' destruction in the Temple in the same way. Nor do we perceive his challenges to the status quo the same way we see slogans like Defund the Police. We notice the bigger picture because we have the whole story laid out for us. But for the people of that era, Jesus was a raging radical. Conflict followed wherever Jesus walked.

Conflict can destroy a church. So can saying 'yes' all the time. In the United Church of Christ, we affirm that "*In essentials unity, in non-essentials diversity, in all things charity*. The unity that we seek requires neither an uncritical acceptance of any point of view, nor rigid formulation of doctrine. It does require mutual understanding and agreement as to which aspects of the Christian faith and life are essential." (https://www.ucc.org/domestic-policy/ourfaithourvote_about/about-us_what-is-the-united-church-of/)

I pray that we can have conversations about what we find essential to our walk together as a community. Those essentials are the bedrock on which ministry can be done communally as a church. And in the non-essentials, let us approach each other with grace and charity, allowing each of us to follow the vocation God has laid out for us as individuals. By following these ideals, our Christian witness to the world will shine like a beacon on a hill and be as attractive as the chocolate our town was built upon.

Blessings,
Pastor Christina



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering the church to demonstrate and declare the courageous love of Christ!



Members and Friends of Penn Central Conference

Because perseverance is so difficult, even when supported by the grace of God, thence is the value of new beginnings. For new beginnings are the life of perseverance. – E.B. Pusey (1800-1882)

Doing new things can be scary; change can be hard. New beginnings may be uncomfortable, upsetting, and anxiety-provoking. New beginnings can *also* be exciting, eye-opening, and encouraging. You know the cliché: “when one door closes, another opens.” Focusing on outdoor ministries in Penn Central, let’s adapt it slightly: “when one camp closes, other camps open.” Sometimes going thru that new door -- or to that new camp -- is the only option. And so, we have...and here we are...in partnership with Camps Nawakwa and Kirchenwald, The Wittel Farm, and Camp Mount Luther...persevering in new beginnings.

At the same time though, persevering in the new does not mean deleting the past. Memories, experiences, and relationships are held and shared. Last month, as I was walking with my son on the path to his cabin for his first week of camp at Nawakwa, we heard someone yell over, "Hey, you're from Hartman Center!" We looked over and recognized this person as an SST from several years ago. Even in this new place, Jacob immediately recognized Zach and, even in his Nawakwa staff t-shirt, Zach recognized Jacob. We were welcomed and felt like we belonged.

The partnership between camp-as-we always-knew at Hartman Center and the camps-that-we-are-getting-to-know is one that allows for the comfort of what is familiar *and* the challenge of what is new. As we are guided by the past and supported by the grace of God, we are able to make our way in the wilderness and the streams (Isaiah 43:19). Based on that Isaiah passage, the theme for summer camp at Hartman Center in 2013 was *All Things New*. That theme could be adopted again this year as we consider the ministry programs in new places, with new people, and in new ways.

The invitation to participate in opportunities at the Lutheran camps and facilities has been extended to every member of Penn Central. Many have found interest in programs already: retreats; the Growing Project; open houses; worship; workdays; and the Earth Day celebration. And right now, in this summer season, there are staff, volunteers, and campers from PCC at all of the sites. Where do *your* interests, abilities, and ideas fit into outdoor ministry? I hope you find an enthusiasm (or at least a willingness) to explore the possibilities.

Yes! Outdoor ministry and camp programs are taking us to new places and opening up new options! How are these new beginnings giving us the chance to persevere? What experiences can be had? What ways can the partnership with our Lutheran friends be strengthened? What ideas can individuals, churches, and Conference groups explore to make use of these facilities? I encourage you to welcome what is before us so that wonderful new beginnings continue to come and so that what is becoming will continue to grow. I pray you find comfort in knowing that going to summer camp, on a retreat, and to other programs in God’s creation -- even in new places -- *still* offers something unique, something special, and something inspiring.

Anne Rankin
Facilitator for Outdoor Ministries

Boris Johnson's Self-Identification Raises Issue of What It Means to Be a Christian

The Wired Word for the Week of
July 25, 2021

In the News

On May 29, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson wed Carrie Symonds, his longtime girlfriend, and the mother of his baby, in a Catholic ceremony at Westminster Cathedral. Johnson has changed his religious identity more than once throughout his life, leading some to wonder whether he considers himself a Christian. The prime minister's experience prompted us to revisit the question of what makes a person a Christian.

As a child, Johnson was baptized in the Catholic church, but he was confirmed an Anglican as a youth at Eton College. He married his first and second wives in civil ceremonies before tying the knot with Symonds. Their son was baptized into the Catholic tradition last October.

The Johnsons are parishioners of the cathedral, although one senior Tory politician claimed that the prime minister "does not have a religious bone in his body," while another called him "a pagan." But last month, when a reporter told Johnson that Labor Party leader Sir Keir Starmer had professed not to believe in God, the prime minister quoted Psalm 14: "The foolish man has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" Previously, a friend of the prime minister indicated that he suspected Johnson believes in a "pre-Christian morality system with

a multitude of gods and no clear set of rules."

When journalist Tom McTague of *The Times* asked Johnson about that, he responded: "Christianity is a superb ethical system and I would count myself as a kind of very, very bad Christian."

On the one hand, Johnson has said that "Christianity makes a lot of sense" to him, but he also makes no claim to be a "serious, practicing Christian."

Thirteen years ago, Johnson said: "I suppose my own faith, you know, it's a bit like trying to get Virgin Radio when you're driving through the Chilterns [a hilly area northwest of London]. It sort of comes and goes. I mean sometimes the signal is strong, and then sometimes I'm afraid it just vanishes. And then it comes back again."

Johnson's religious vacillation may stem in part from his complicated family faith heritage. His Turkish Muslim great-grandfather, Ali Kemal, had memorized the entire Quran as a young boy. He was murdered in 1922 by a mob that supported revolutionary leader Mustafa Atatürk, because Kemal had collaborated with British occupiers of Constantinople at the end of World War I.

When Johnson was a student, he won a Bible knowledge prize. He has called the King James Version of the Bible the "single most beautiful and influential work of English literature."

This Easter, Johnson told his people: "If there's one thing Britain's Christians have shown us this year [of the pandemic], it's that Jesus Christ is 'the way, and the truth, and the life' -- not just today but every day. His teachings,

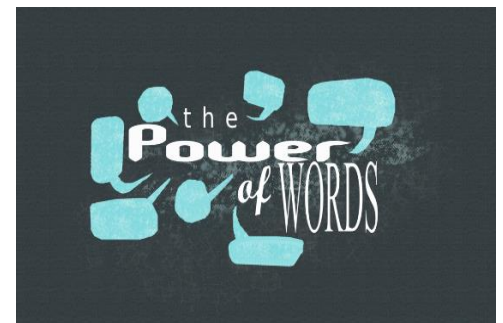
and the message of his death and resurrection, permeate through every aspect of daily life." He commended "millions of Good Samaritans, each of them showing what loving thy neighbor as thyself really looks like in 21st-century Britain."

Whether Johnson is sincere in his pronouncements about faith or is "shamelessly co-opting the state religion" and "wrap[ping] himself in the cloak of Christianity," as one critic alleged, we are not qualified to say. Perhaps the more important question for us is whether our own identification as Christian can be validated by evidence in our own lives.

More on this story can be found at these links:

[Boris Johnson: I Would Count Myself as a Very, Very Bad Christian.](#) *Premier Christian News*
[Boris Johnson: 'Christianity Is a Superb Ethical System ... I Would Count Myself a Very Bad Christian.'](#) *Christian Post*
[How to Be a Christian 7.11.21 - Rev. Paul Rock \(Video 31:34\).](#) *Second Presbyterian Church*

The Wired Word is a subscription service used by Redeemer for our Wired Word/Soup for the Soul group discussions.



From the Treasurer...

2021 Mid-Year Financial Report



Financial Summary for January 1 to June 30, 2021

Expenses: \$62, 788 (55.1% of Budgeted expenses)

Income: \$58, 636 (51.5% of Budgeted income)

There was a deficit of \$4,152 for the first six months of the year. This was covered by surplus from 2020.

Checking Account Balance on June 30, 2020: \$5,351.68

Money Market Balance on June 30, 2020: \$1,091.31

Comments:

The deficit can be attributed to snow removal cost which was \$3,936. Snow removal is an unpredictable, but a necessary cost with Meals on Wheels and the various support groups that use the church throughout the week in addition to Redeemer's own use. Without snow removal Redeemer's income is closely matching the expenses. All of Redeemer's invoices and obligations are current which can be attributed to:

- a) Continued support from Redeemer members
- b) Continued support from the outside groups, especially from Life Gospel which only started to use the church facilities in mid-June

There are few items for the remaining half of 2021 and beyond that should be highlighted:

- a) Started an outsourced Payroll Service in July.
- b) Some minor transition costs with Pastor Christina and adjustments in Compensation package
- c) Starting a transition to an online Fund Base Accounting Software which will also be used for membership and contributions.
- d) The Hummelstown Arts Fest returns in 2021! Please be ready to scoop!
- e) The biggest unknown is Covid-19 and what will need to change or occur due to it. Would like to eliminate this, but alas it lingers.
- f) Continued emphasis for the need to plan for future financial stresses that may occur and maintaining future financial stability.

This is a summary of the financial picture. Please ask me any questions for information of clarity of Redeemer's financials.

Jonathan Bell, Treasurer



Pastor Christina's Favorite

HONEY DIJON VINAIGRETTE SALAD DRESSING/MARINADE

Only 5 ingredients for a tangy and sweet dressing that's perfect for one or two people. Technically it serves 6, but who puts only 2 tablespoons of dressing on a big summer salad? Also great for marinating a small quantity of chicken breasts. Pastor Christina loves this even though she hates mustard.

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- pinch of salt (or more to taste)

Put everything into a small mason jar, shake well. Can be stored for a week in the refrigerator; just set it out before using (to let the oil melt) and then shake to reincorporate.

Adapted from thrivinghomeblog.com

Worship Attendance July 2021

July 2021	07/04/21	19
	07/11/21	23
Average	07/18/21	21
21	07/25/21	21

This month's issue of CONTACT is sponsored by Audrey Baker in loving memory of her husband Bill. August was Bill's birthday month and the month they were married. Thank you, Audrey, for honoring Bill and allowing us to do the same!

Leadership Team Update

August 2021 Report

By Kira Merkert, Chair



The Leadership Team met on July 15, 2021, for its regular monthly meeting. We were happy to welcome Pastor Christina Fianza and her dog, Buzz, for their first Leadership Team Meeting. After our opening activities, Jonathan Bell presented the Treasurer's report and an update on our new payroll process. The payroll has been successfully outsourced, which will free up some of the Treasurer's responsibility. Jonathan also presented the first draft of the 2022 budget. We voted at a prior meeting to present the budget earlier in the fall to the congregation for input before the final Leadership Team vote, so this first draft was a positive step toward that effort. We will continue to fine-tune the budget at the next Leadership Team meeting.

We discussed ideas for upgrading Redeemer's building security, as a continuation of discussions with the Derry Township police department that were begun in 2019. Based on the number of people who use the building and the usage schedule, we believe it would be a good idea to form an ad hoc group who can look more closely at building usage and security needs throughout the building and formulate a building security plan in stages that would give us the biggest security impact for our investment. We would like this group to also get input from LGCCC, the partner groups who use our building, and our office administrator, Jorja. We believe that expenses for these enhancements could be funded

through a combination of budgeting for the expenses in addition to fundraising. This will be an ongoing discussion.

We continued the discussion about the property division between the church and the previous parsonage next door. Township deed records were found, and some informal conversations have taken place to learn more information. We will continue with this research to make sure we understand the property ownership.

As the governor has lifted the mask restriction in Pennsylvania, the Leadership Team decided to completely open both sides of the sanctuary. Masks are optional, and we trust that each person can decide their own comfort level with social distancing in the pews. We are no longer taking temperatures or requiring masks for singing. We will begin to allow food in the building again. We have more specific guidance about this, which Jorja will communicate to the groups who use our building. We will continue with the extra building cleanings and ask each group to continue cleaning their area after each group meeting. We are grateful to our building partners for their support in keeping our building clean.

Pastor Christina presented her Pastor's Report. She has established her office hours as Mon/Tues/Thurs 9:30am – 2pm and Thurs evenings by appointment as needed. These hours are subject

to change as needed, so it is a good idea to contact Pastor Christina or Jorja Barton ahead of time if you are planning to stop by, to make sure Pastor Christina isn't out for visitation or an appointment. Please respect that Pastor Christina plans to be off on Wednesdays. Pastor Christina appreciates the congregation continuing to wear nametags so she can start to learn our names. She would like to begin working with Jorja soon to begin coordinating visitation with shut-ins, and she looks forward to including laypeople in this process. It was also requested that the bulletin include the following week's scripture so folks can look a week ahead. Pastor Christina will work with Jorja on that effort.

We reviewed Jorja's office report. Please note that there will be a signup sheet in the sanctuary for folks to volunteer as Lectors and Greeters/Ushers. We also began preliminary discussion of obtaining 501C3 status and updating Redeemer's Mission Statement. These items will be continued at a future meeting.

Our next Leadership Team meeting will be held on Thursday, August 12, 2021, at 7pm. As always, please reach out to the Leadership Team if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Kira Merkert
Leadership Team Chair

August Special Celebrations

Birthdays... Have a happy one!

- Heather Mastrangelo
- Lauren Baker
- Pam Mongold
- Pat Hottenstein
- Paula Sube
- Phyllis Weikel

Anniversaries... Congratulations!

- Mr. & Mrs. Bill Wenrich

"Be true to yourself.

Make each day your masterpiece.

Help others.

Drink deeply from good books.

Make friendship a fine art.

Build a shelter against a rainy day.

Pray for guidance and give thanks for your blessings every day." —

John Wooden



Prayers of Healing and Comfort for

Pastor Christina as she heals from a slight injury, suffered when playing kickball!

Mike Wojdylak for continued healing following his successful cardiac surgery.

Jan Stong thanks everyone for thoughts and prayers for **her brother** who recently underwent surgery. His procedure went well, and she asks for prayers for his continued healing.

Margie Crocker's sister-in-law, **Linda Crocker**, who needs a kidney transplant. Though not a match, Margie is investigating the national kidney donation program to see whether she might be a potential donor.

Randy Rupert, friend of the Baker's, whose throat cancer has returned.

Prayers of Support and Strength for

The Victims and Families of the terrible flooding in Europe.

Kemmy Himmelberger who remains under Hospice Care at Country Meadows Nursing Home. Kemmy welcomes cards at Country Meadows, 451 Sand Hill Rd, Hershey, PA 17033.

Lois Wood continuing to settle in at Kindred Place Harrisburg. Lois welcomes cards sent at 4700 Oakhurst Blvd, Room 328, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

Prayers of Gratitude and Support for

Healthcare workers and scientists for developing vaccines and their distribution throughout the world. May we continue to support them as they continue to battle the Delta Variant.

Prayers of Education, Understanding and Encouragement for those who remain reluctant to be vaccinated. Help us to continue to make wise choices, not only for ourselves, but for the common good of all.

Wanted: WORSHIP HELPERS

As we return to a more normal worship service, it's time to solicit volunteers to serve as greeters/ushers, and lectors. Please see the sign-up sheet, or call the church office, for open dates. **Thanks for volunteering!**

August Lectors

August 1: Bev Patton
August 8: Jan Stong
August 15: OPEN
August 22: Nancy Kapp
August 29: OPEN

August Greeter/Usher

August 1: OPEN
August 8: OPEN
August 15: OPEN
August 22: OPEN
August 29: OPEN



CHURCH OF THE
REDEEMER
HERSHEY PA

AUGUST 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:15am Worship 10th Sunday of Pentecost /Communion 11:30 am LGCC Worship 3:00pm KISS AA	2 12:00pm Noon AA 7:30pm OA	3 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	4 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	5 12:00pm Noon AA 12:00pm Focused Prayer	6 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	7 7:00am Saturday Sunrise AA 12:00pm KISS AA
8 9:15am Worship 11th Sunday of Pentecost 11:30 am LGCC Worship 3:00pm KISS AA	9 12:00pm Noon AA 7:30pm OA	10 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	11 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	12 12:00pm Noon AA 12:00pm Focused Prayer 7pm Leadership Team Meeting	13 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	14 7:00am Saturday Sunrise AA 12:00pm KISS AA
15 9:15am Worship 12th Sunday of Pentecost 11:30 am LGCC Worship 3:00pm KISS AA	16 12:00pm Noon AA 7pm Wired Word 7:30pm OA	17 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	18 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	19 12:00pm Noon AA 12:00pm Focused Prayer	20 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	21 7:00am Saturday Sunrise AA 12:00pm KISS AA
22 9:15am Worship 13th Sunday of Pentecost 11:30 am LGCC Worship 3:00pm KISS AA	23 12:00pm Noon AA 7:30pm OA	24 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	25 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	26 12:00pm Noon AA 12:00pm Focused Prayer	27 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	28 7:00am Saturday Sunrise AA 12:00pm KISS AA
29 10:30am am Worship 14th Sunday of Pentecost 11:30 am LGCC Worship 3:00pm KISS AA	30 12:00pm Noon AA 7:30pm OA	31 12:00pm Noon AA 6:30pm KISS AA	<p><i>August Days</i> By Lenore Hetrick</p> <p>The last of summer and the first of fall – Together they stand in August Days. The garden is bright with summer bloom, And yet there creeps up that autumn haze. You can look forward or look backwards To a lovely summer you would recall, But the changing of the season has come – The last of summer and the first of fall.</p>			

Community Resource Corner

Hershey Gardens...

A Wonderful Way to Spend an afternoon!



The Hershey Gardens opened in 1937 with Milton Hershey's request to "create a nice garden of roses." More than 80 years later, the small rose garden has blossomed into 23 acres of botanical beauty providing visitors with unique experiences and enriching opportunities. The gardens average more than 100,000 visitors annually.

Overlooking the town of Hershey, Hershey Gardens features a breathtaking assortment of flowers and shrubs, a stately collection of rare, signature trees, and a variety of programs designed to delight visitors of all ages.

Indulge your senses in the color and variety of brilliant seasonal displays and theme gardens including the indoor, tropical Butterfly Atrium and the hands-on Children's Garden.

Be sure to visit their website at www.hersheygardens.org for lots of great information including opportunities to volunteer year-round. If you become a member and join their walking club (free!), for every ten times you walk the garden pathways, you will get a free pass to share with someone else! What better way to spend time outside than to enjoy the profound beauty the garden has to offer.



SNEAKER DRIVE:

June 7 – Aug 4, 2021

SNEAKER DISTRIBUTION:

August 5 – August 7, 2021

NEEDS: 300+ pairs of NEW athletic sneakers for boys and girls and and/or monetary donations. Brand-name high-top and low-top sneakers are PREFERRED for quality and durability. **Please avoid discount mart brands.**

WHERE: Reebok Outlet, Hershey Outlets; Love INC Office, 245 E Derry Rd, Hershey

THANK YOU to REEBOK in the Tanger Outlets at Hershey for their on-going partnership with Love INC of Greater Hershey. **Get an additional 20% discount on sneaker drive donations at Reebok in the Tanger Outlets Hershey**

Stay tuned to see which stores will partner with Love INC and what promotions may be made available to sneaker donors.

VOLUNTEERS will be needed to help organize sneakers, schedule appointments, make reminder phone calls, and the list goes on in preparation for the distribution.

SNEAKER DISTRIBUTION

Thursday August 5 – Saturday August 7, 2021, **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.** VOLUNTEERS can give students a spring in their step when they help welcome families and fit fresh feet with new sneakers to return to school. Over 50 volunteers are needed in various capacities from greeting through fitting. *Students are welcome to volunteer in the Sneaker Closet.* Volunteers in all other roles must be at least 18 years old and out of high school OR do not attend any of the schools in our service area (Lower Dauphin, Derry Township, St. Joan of Arc) to preserve the dignity of the students receiving sneakers.

To sign-up to volunteer or to register to receive sneakers, visit Love INC website at [Lace Up with Love INC Sneaker Drive and Distribution | Love INC of Greater Hershey \(loveincgreaterhershey.org\)](http://www.loveincgreaterhershey.org)



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Hershey, PA 17033

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pastorchristina@redeemerchurchucc.org

Visit us on Facebook and our website at www.redeemerchurchucc.org