

**Please note that our online newsletter is modified from our print edition. If you would like to receive our unmodified newsletter, please contact the church office at 717-944-6181 or [eumch.org/contact-us](http://eumch.org/contact-us)**



# *The Messenger*

*Evangelical United Methodist Church*  
157 East Water Street, Middletown, PA 17057  
717.944.6181 [www.eumch.org](http://www.eumch.org)

## From the Pastor's Pen



*"Moralizing I observed, then, that 'all that glitters is not gold.' Mr. Ballou said I could go further than that, and lay it up among my treasures of knowledge, that nothing that glitters is gold. So I learned then, once for all, that gold in its native state is but dull, unornamental stuff, and that only lowborn metals excite the admiration of the ignorant with an ostentatious glitter. However, like the rest of the world, I still go on underrating men of gold and glorifying men of mica. Commonplace human nature cannot rise above that."*

From *Roughing It* by Mark Twain

We live in a world that loves glitter. Our eyes often focus on the most beautiful. Our ears love the words of the most eloquent, passionate, and/or powerful speakers. Our desires can become infatuated with the extremes of wealth, power, and prestige. Yet, what glitters in the eyes of the world is often of questionable value when examined through the lens of the Gospel.

Jesus' ministry sought the persons on the margins rejected and neglected by the good religious folk of the day (let alone the rest of society). One of the biggest complaints against Jesus was the company he kept. Jesus often spent his time with the people considered lowly (or worse) by the rest of society. Jesus' model for living into the kingdom is of a child, not the most educated or credentialed adult (Matthew 18:4).

In the church, we often follow the example of the world and value extremes. The most gifted pastor. The largest church. Whatever metrics we are using for success, the outlier on the successful end is what we praise. What I have grown to appreciate as a pastor, though, is the ordinary and mundane. People who live out their faith in humble and consistent ways. Folks who seek to love God and love their neighbor day in and day out. It is often overlooked and rarely praised, yet to me, this is the way we are called to live out our faith.

In August, we start a sermon series entitled "Ordinary Saints." In the sermon series, we'll explore that God calls ordinary people like us. Jesus' invitation is to love both God and neighbor. The ways this love makes a difference in our lives and the world are when we keep acting in love repeatedly by the power and prodding of the Holy Spirit. While Christians obsess about some apocalyptic end, God's goal, God's aim, by God's grace, we can live into now. Please join us in August as we find gold in what might seem mundane to the world. Please consider joining us this August as seek what God values most.

# SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**July 2** (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Staying True

Sermon Series: Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 1

**July 9** (6<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Standing Firm

Sermon Series: Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 3

**July 16** (7<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Selection

Sermon Series: Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 5

**July 23** (8<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Selecting God

Sermon Series: Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 6

**July 30** (9<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Cessation

Sermon Series: Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 7

**August 6** (10<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Called

Sermon Series: Ordinary Saints

Scripture: Matthew 4: 18-23; 14: 22-32

**August 13** (11<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: The Main Thing

Sermon Series: Ordinary Saints

Scripture: Matthew 22: 34-40

**August 20** (12<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Keep doing

Sermon Series: Ordinary Saints

Scripture: Philippians 4

**August 27** (13<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Among Us

Sermon Series: Ordinary Saints

Scripture: Luke 17: 20-21

**September 3** (14<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Being worthy of God's Call

Sermon Series: Power out of Weakness

Scripture: Exodus 4: 1-17

**September 10** (15<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: True Strength

Sermon Series: Power out of Weakness

Scripture: Judges 16: 23-31

**September 17** (16<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Sown in Weakness

Sermon Series: Power out of Weakness

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 15: 31-58

**September 24** (17<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost)

Focus: Perfected in Weakness

Sermon Series: Power out of Weakness

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:30-12: 1-10

**Christianity and World Religions**  
**Pastor's Sunday School Class September/October**

9 AM on Zoom or in Room 3 in the basement of the educational wing

This September/October, Pastor Andrew's Sunday School class will explore the question-what does it mean to be a Christian when an ever-growing number of our neighbors have different religious beliefs? We will study Adam Hamilton's book *Christianity and World Religions, revised edition*. In the book, we will explore Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Pastor Andrew will supplement Adam's book with the framing device that Stephen Prothero uses in his book *God Is Not One: the eight rival religions that run the world-and why their differences matter*.

Participants should pick up a copy of Adam Hamilton's *Christianity and World Religions, revised edition*. If you would like the church to order a copy of the book for you, please contact the church office ([office@eumch.org](mailto:office@eumch.org) or 717-944-6181). The cost of the book is \$13. If the cost of the book will be a problem, please talk to Pastor Andrew. If you would like to order through the church, please let us know by **Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>**.

**Schedule**

September 10-Introduction and Chapter 1 The Wise Men

September 17-Chapter 2 Hinduism

September 24-Chapter 3 Buddhism

October 1-Chapter 4 Judaism

October 8-Chapter 5 Islam

October 15-Chapter 6 Christianity

## Abraham and Sarah

### Pastor's Bible Study

Monday nights at 7 PM on Zoom or in Room 3 in the basement of the educational wing

Abraham and Sarah are major figures in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. God's promise to Abraham and Sarah (and God's faithfulness to that promise) sets in motion the rest of the Bible. They leave their home in Ur to see a land that God had promised them. As a barren couple God promised that their descendants would number the stars. Their story has high points of great faith and valleys where they question God.

Join Pastor Andrew's Bible study this September/October to learn more about Abraham and Sarah. The class will explore how their journey of faith relates to our journeys of faith. Each class will start at 7 PM in Room 3 and also will be on Zoom. See the schedule below.

### Schedule

September 11-Genesis 11:27-12:30

September 26-Genesis 13-14

October 2-Genesis 15-16

October 9-Genesis 17:1-18:15

October 16-Genesis 18:16-19:38

October 23-Genesis 20-21

October 30-Genesis 22:1-19, 25

### **CLUSTER PICNIC AT GEYERS**

Join the churches of the Highspire/Middletown cluster for a potluck picnic. Bring your favorite food item to share. The Picnic will be at Geysers United Methodist Church rain or shine on **Sunday, August 20th at 5:30 PM.**



# Community DINNER

Thanks to all volunteers who helped with our Community Dinners this spring. We're taking a break over the summer but will return in fall with the following schedule:

September 16 Roast turkey

October 14 Octoberfest - schnitzel (breaded pork), spaetzle (egg noodles),  
Rotkohl (sweet & sour red cabbage)

November 18 Pork and sauerkraut

**NOTE: We changed the time - it's now 4:30-6:00 p.m., still on a Saturday.**

Profits from the Community dinners are distributed as follow:

\$100.00 to the Church for supplies and utilities for each dinner,

The remainder is divided evenly (25%) to the following funds,

The Church for Capital Improvement

The Church General Fund

The Sunshine Fund

The Community Dinner Fund

The Dinner Committee Members voted to give another \$1,000 to the HVAC Project on 7/8/23.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a small envelope. Please prayerfully consider what you can contribute towards reducing our debt and repaying those members who generously enabled us to complete our HVAC project. Thank you.





**Vacation Bible School** was held from Sunday June 18, 2023, to Thursday June 22. Seven children and their families attended. The children began the week with physical exercise with Kevin Little and learning that we show God's love when we serve others. The Bible verse was 1 Timothy 4:8. Monday was the Chicken Parmesan fundraiser meal. We served 116 guests, and 1010.00 dollars was raised for the Humane Society of Harrisburg. Tuesday we were visited by Kathy and Melanie and their therapy dogs, and we learned God cares for all creatures. On Wednesday Earl brought his jump ropes and we jumped rope taking care of our bodies in order to help others. "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." Philippians 4:13. On the last evening we had a tour of the Humane Society and gave our donation. Throughout the week we enjoyed hand cranked ice cream, hot dogs topped with macaroni and cheese and pizza. On Sunday, June 25 the children led the church service and thanked the congregation with smash burgers, hot dogs, and strawberry shortcake.

**Meals on Wheels for August**

July 31st-August 4th.

June Martin and Eleanor Jane Sankey

August 7th- 11th.

Kathy and Ken Frisbie

August 14- 18.

Wesley UMC

August 21-25.

Ken and Sherry Klahr

August 28-September 1

Erich and Kim Schlicher



# Evangelical United Methodist Church

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

## *The Messenger*

Loving God, watch over our children as they begin their new school year. Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning.

Guide and protect all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy. Give wisdom, patience, and joy to teachers as they serve their students.

In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen.

### **A BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRAYER**

September 15, 2023 is the deadline for article submission to our next newsletter.

Middletown Area  
School District  
  
returns to school on  
  
August 28, 2023  
  
Please keep our  
students and teachers  
  
in your prayers

July/ August/ September 2023