

First Church

604 Market St.
Williamsport, PA 17701

570-322-3572
office@firstchurch.cc

Check us out at
www.firstchurch.cc

Donate



SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00 am—Traditional
604 Market St.

9:30 am—Blended
604 Market St.

11:00 am—Contemporary
601 Market St.

11:00 am—Contemporary
1157 Market St.

(live streamed message)

4:30 pm—Celebrate Recovery
604 Market St.

WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

5:00 pm—601 Market St.

First Night meal, fellowship, music,
brief message, children's ministries,
fuse* (youth ministries), First
Friends (special needs group) &
adult small groups.

STAFF OPENING: CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP LEADER

First Church is seeking qualified candidates to serve as a full-time Contemporary Worship Leader with primary responsibility for most elements of the Christian Life Center Worship Service. A ministry description and job application are available in the church office and at www.firstchurch.cc/jobopenings. Deadline for application is 9/18 or until a successful candidate can be found.

Welcome to



First Church

United Methodist

Week of September 17, 2017

MEET THE PASTORS

New to First Church? Take a few minutes on September 17th to meet one or more of the pastors and let us help you get connected with First Church.

After 8:00 and 9:30 service, First Evangelical Center - Room 206

After 11:00 service, Christian Life Center - in the back of Stryker Hall

After 11:00 service, North Campus - in the lobby

FREEDOM SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 24

Responding to social concern is one of the ways that we seek to live out our vision of Transformation in Christ. Join us Sept 24 for Freedom Sunday, a day when churches around the world will acknowledge and respond to the injustice of slavery. Freedom Sunday is organized by International Justice Mission (IJM). IJM partners with local authorities to rescue victims of violence, bring criminals to justice, restore survivors and strengthen justice systems. Our morning worship services on September 24 will focus on the parable of the Good Samaritan as we ask the question "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29)

CELEBRATE RECOVERY 3RD ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Please join CR in celebrating our THIRD Anniversary on October 1st at 4:30 pm. We will begin with worship and three mini testimonies, followed by dinner and fellowship! We will not have small groups. EVERYONE is welcomed to attend, including children. We hope that you will join us and experience first hand the healing and peace Celebrate Recovery offers.

Transformation in Christ | Changing lives inside and out (Romans 12:1-2)

INVITE

DISCIPLE'S JOURNEY: STEP 2 STARTING SOON!

Now is the time to sign up (on the back of the Communication card) for our first-ever Disciple's Journey Step 2 experience! Disciple's Journey Step 2 is an opportunity which begins Tuesday, October 3 and will be held every other week from 7-9 pm until December.

WELCOME GRAND FRIENDS (60+)!

Grand Friends will meet on Tuesday, September 26th @ Hoss's Steak & Sea House. We will start at 12:15 p.m. This meeting will be a social event. If you know someone who would be interested in our group, please invite or bring them along. RSVP to Debbie Grove @ 570-323-7041, no later than September 24th.

MONTHLY CHRISTIAN BOOK GROUP

Join us on Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Donna Johnson (1701 Clarion Dr.) for the October Book – Son of Hamas by Mosab Yousef. No reservation needed. Come once, come every time!!!! Great discussion, good fellowship. "COME AND SEE".

STEPHEN MINISTRY MOMENT

Stephen Ministry is part of the Caring Ministries at First Church. Stephen Ministers are non-clergy people trained in Christian care giving who provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are struggling. *Do you have a compassionate heart to help the hurting? Are you ready to answer the call?* **Be Transformed AND be part of Christ's Transformation of another's life through the Christian care giving of Stephen Ministry.** Stephen Ministry will begin training a new class of ministers starting in January, 2018. If you feel that a ministry of caring for others is something God is calling you to, please contact a Stephen Leader for more information:

Allison Keppler: 484/574-3349;

alkeppler@gmail.com

Ellen Montis: 570/419-3655;

Ellenwalks@yahoo.com

Jill Robbins: 570/971-8833;

Jprobbins@comcast.net

Michelle Dixon: 570/772-1430;

mkd4760@yahoo.com.

KIDS CHOIR SINGING

Sunday, September 17th at 9:30 a.m. All children 3 years old through 5th grade will join in the sanctuary for worship with their families. During the first hymn kids in choir will join on the steps of the sanctuary to sing. Following the kids choir singing, all children are invited to the steps for a kids message. Following the kids message, we will gather all kids and ministry volunteers to bring the kids to the CLC for Sunday school. Parents can pick up kids in Sunday school following the service. *kids sing Oct 15, Nov 19 and Dec 17.

TEACH

CHILDREN

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various reserves to balance our budget have not yet had to be touched this year. After paying on the Christian Life Center debt for over 15 years, we expect the debt to be paid off completely now in less than a year! The process of the financial turn around in the last year can only be explained by the provision and grace of God!

From a ministry perspective it is even more powerful. After establishing a permanent youth/FUSE space a few years ago we have seen weekly gatherings grow from under 20 kids to a Fall Kickoff last week with nearly 90 kids present! In the last two years we have gone from the Acts Network not existing, to having seven operating community or worshipping groups connected with the Acts Network. Through our college ministry we have watched numerous young adults launch careers into a variety of ministries that will benefit God's Church. First Nursery continues to grow, this year working with more children than it ever has! And we are thrilled that one of our largest groups in recent years is in the process of seeking full discipleship in Christ through membership at First Church!

I share this with you First Church to say: This is what GOD is doing among us as you have sought to walk in Faith. When we are weak, then in Christ we are strong. Thank you! Thank you for your prayers and faithfulness!

Now it is important that we continue to walk in faith. While our tendency is to quit pushing forward in order to be more comfortable, the reality is the moment we become comfortable is the moment we begin to have less faith and connection with Christ. Thus we continue to prayerfully discern our next steps that require walking in faith. One of those steps at a church level always includes searching at the right time for the next necessary staff position at First Church. At the moment we believe that position to be a full-time Christian Life Center praise and worship team leader. As we seek to fill this position I would ask for your support and prayers... that this would be one more way that we walk in faith while fostering ever more Transformation In Christ, Changing Lives Inside and Out.

We believe the seeking of a position such as this is one more way to honor God by relying on God's provision rather than our own strength. In the past we have seen God honor such decisions in tremendous ways. We trust God will do the same in the days ahead as we seek to genuinely walk in faith with Christ.

Thank you... thank you... thank you First Church!

What a joy to journey with you!

In Christ,
Pastor Matt

SECOND MILE GIVING

The Second Mile Giving for September & October is **Helping Hands at First Church**. This fund is to provide emergency assistance to those experiencing economic crisis or difficulty. Please make checks payable to "First Church" with "Helping Hand" in the memo line.

MISSION ITEMS NEEDED

Local Food Pantry — canned fruits, Kool-Aid, Oodles of Noodles.

Shepherd of the Streets — diapers, wipes, bar soap. Donations for these missions may be left in the baskets at the following locations: Christian Life Center - the Market Street entrance; First Evangelical Center - the Ross Street entrance; North Campus - Lounge.

WINTER JACKETS & COATS NEEDED

Once again we will be collecting winter jackets and coats to share with our friends who attend First Night. If you have any used winter jackets or coats that you no longer wear or need, please bring them to the church office (during church office hours). We have a particular need for boys' and men's jackets but we will gratefully accept any that are donated. Any questions, please call Aaron Russell at 570-506-1356 or Nancy Somers at 570-419-3039.

HURRICANE RESPONSE

Our church and district conference are responding to aid the victims of the recent hurricanes by assembling Cleaning and Hygiene kits, and collecting monetary support. A list of kit items will be on display at the table in each building Sunday. Donations can be brought to the church office or back here next Sunday. Please make checks payable to "First UMC" with UMCOR in the memo. Volunteers are also urgently needed to help our committee and to obtain business, workplace and organization donations as well. Please contact Steve Tallman if you can help 215-327-8255 or stevet100@verizon.net. Our district works with UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) who will coordinate the overall collective effort.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Samaritan's purse has distributed 135 million Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes since 1993. They hope to reach 12 million children this year with the gospel of Jesus Christ in shoeboxes filled with our expression of God's love. Have you taken one or two boxes yet? Our tables have boxes ready for you. Have a terrific experience packing a box of love, hope and joy. Collection of boxes will conclude November 5th.

SEND

Sermon Outline

Grace It Does A Body Good—Living Truth
Ephesians 4:14-25

- I. A supernatural heart has its relationship to the _____ changed
- II. Jesus followers do not just speak truth, they _____ truth in all they do
- III. How do we _____ truth with those who already have their own version of truth?
- IV. When it comes to truth we observe:
 - A) The _____ with truth
 - B) The _____ of truth
- V. The problem the world has today with truth is the _____ we have to the truth
- VI. Hardness of _____ leads to ignorance. Ignorance does not lead to hard hearts
- VII. Embrace the moment when information about Jesus “ _____ there” became personal “ _____ here.”

Life Reflection:

How would I describe my relationship with the truth of Jesus Christ? Do I understand this truth more in an informational way? Or in an embodied personal way? How secure am I in the truth found in Jesus Christ? How do I share that truth in the world? Do I remain silent? Do I try to force others to my way of thinking? Do I seek to love people as intensely as I can with the grace and truth and beauty of Jesus? Pray: Lord help me actively, constantly, and with everyone to share and speak your truth in love.

Scripture Reflection:

¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ

Pastor's Page

Walking in Faith

First Church,

One of the fundamental truths of Scripture is that “when we are weak in ourselves, then we are in a position to be strong in Christ.” That is to say, when we have reached the end of our strength we are then open to God in a way we would otherwise not have been. And this results in God’s glory rather than our own.

Thus God used a stuttering Moses to deliver God’s people from Egypt.

God used the youngest, most over-looked brother in a family to become Israel’s greatest king in King David.

God raised up a group of uneducated, “ordinary” disciples to walk with Jesus for three years to become the primary leadership group of the 12 disciples to help launch the church.

God does this so that there is no doubt that it is God doing the great things rather than us. But in the process, God does ask us to have faith. To make decisions based on trust in Christ over trust in ourselves.

It is in this light I would like to thank you First Church. I have watched you take steps of faith in recent times that I believe God is using to do great things for God’s Kingdom. We always have to wrestle with being fiscally responsible while also “never becoming comfortable” in our own strength.

A little over a year ago we believed that God was continuing to call us forward in ministry even as finances were incredibly tight. On paper it did not work. On paper it even looked like significant ministries or personnel should be cut in order to balance the plan for funding ministry because of the short fall we were facing.

And yet the conviction we felt was that God was calling us forward IN FAITH to not only continue ministry but to build more ministry opportunities. From a human perspective it did not make sense. But again, we know that in our weakness God is made strong.

A year later I want to thank you for your faith that God is using to do incredible things!

From a financial perspective it is truly incredible. As of September 1 of this year our weekly giving is actually OVER what has been budgeted for this year. As of September 1 of this year funds that had been budgeted from

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We're on the Web!
www.firstchurch.cc and



NC = NORTH CAMPUS (1157 Market St.)

MAIN CAMPUS

CLC = Christian Life Center (601 Market St.)

FEC = First Evangelical Center (604 Market St.)

CYCLE OF PRAYER:

September 17—23:

Donna Gee; Hal & Joyce Gee; Sal & Millie Giampapa; Andrew Giordano; Guy & D.G. Giordano; Maria Giordano; Terry & Susan Girdon; Michael. Sonja. Dylan & Tyler Glucksman; Keith Godfrey; Jim Golembeski; Sherry & Sara Golembeski; Ashley & Juliana Gonzalez; James & Johanna Goodspeed; Jay & Linda Gordner; Rich & Barbara Green; Jan, Lori, Andrea & Ryan Griffin; John & Debbie Grove; Gary, Dawn & Aaron Guerrisky; Carol Gundrum; John Hall; Scott & Tushanna Hamilton; Donna Hancock; Chet & Barb Harbach; Jeff & Barbie Harbaugh; Mike Harbaugh; Marilyn Harer; Roberta Harris; Cassie Harrison; Sam & Norma Harrison; David, Heidi & Carolyn Hartsock; Gene, Tracy, Cody & Rachel Haupt; Sara Haupt; Ed, Diane, Daniel & Joseph Havrilla; Lillian Hein.

Weekly Worship Attendance
for week ending September 10, 2017
TOTAL 832