

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.

CYCLE OF PRAYER:

February 11-17:

Jami, Betsy, Wyatt, & Hunter Nolan; Frank, Cindy, & Alexander Norris; Eric, Stephanie, Sophie, Jackson, & Carson Orndorff; Lou & Sue Palazzo; Bryan, Belinda, Zachery, & Kortnei Parsons; Jay & Peggy Pauling; Darryl & Shana Payne; Bill & Cindy Peck; Christie Peck; Larue & Ruth Pepperman; Linda Peterman; Mike Petro; Fran Pfaff; Doug Pitt; Lamar, Sherry, Miranda, Julia, & Dylan Ploppert; Ken Poorman; Edwin, Maria, & Aizaer Portalatin; JoJo & Sue Potts; Bill & Rita Pysher; Darren Pysher; Stephanie & Lyric Quartman; Adam & Amanda Quinton; Matt, Anna, Megan, Elizabeth, & Nina Radspinner; Josh, Shauna, Jackson, & Gracelyn Raker; Rob & Laurie Raker; Kyle, Laura, Maxwell, & Lyla Rankin; Ryan, Zavier, & Rymir Ransom; Mark, Jill, Michael, & Rebekah Reamsnyder; Michael, Christina, Gavin, & Calissa Reed; Joe Reifsnyder; and Steve & Montrae Reigle.

PRAY

Welcome to



First Church

United Methodist

Week of February 11, 2018

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Feb. 14 at 6:00 p.m. in Sanctuary, First Evangelical Center

Every year we prepare for Easter during the 40 days of Lent and begin this journey with an all-church worship service on Ash Wednesday. This year, we will again offer worship in the Taize style. The message will be in the form of music and prayer, rather than a sermon. We will also offer the opportunity to come forward to receive ashes on your forehead. Please join us for this special worship service. Worship bags will be available for children. Nursery care will be available for children under 3 years.

COMMUNION OFFERED— 2nd TUESDAY

Communion will be offered in the First Evangelical Center Sanctuary on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 12:00 p.m. until 12:30 p.m. Be sure to join us on Tuesday, February 13th!

A DISCIPLE'S JOURNEY—STEP 1

We invite you to connect with God and others here at First Church through *A Disciple's Journey—Step 1*. If you are not yet connected as a member in full discipleship at First Church, this 4 week group will guide you as you begin your next step in your journey of discipleship. *A Disciple's Journey—Step 1* is for you if you wonder what connecting in faith in Jesus Christ is about or if you wish to connect in full discipleship at First Church as a new disciple/member. Pastor D.G. Giordano leads Step 1. Your next opportunity to take this step will be on Wednesdays beginning *February 21* from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in room 206 of the First Evangelical Center. Children's Ministry takes place at the same time as part of First Night so your children can also grow in their discipleship (Christian Life Center, First Floor). Please contact the church office to register or for more information, or sign up on the communication card.

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

INVITE

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Thank you to everyone who has been returning or bringing in current small group materials! Both of the small group resource "Locker" receiving baskets (located in the church office and the FEC coat room) were full this week with fantastic resources to pass along to others. Please continue to return any materials purchased by First Church or those you wish to donate for others to use as your small group closes out a session.

GOD'S HEART FOR MARRIAGE

If you or your small group want to learn how to see marriage through the eyes of God, consider these materials that are available in the small group Resource Locker:

- **Focus on Marriage DVD:** a 5-hour simulcast event with insights and inspiration from Beth Moore, Gary Smalley, Dr. John Trent, and more, with worship music by Jeremy Camp.
- **Making Marriage Work DVDs:** Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott show the need for spiritual intimacy and its deep meaning to marriage covering topics such as Myths, Pressure, Conflict, and Faith. A leader's and participant's guide is available for a 6-week discovery into how God is revealed in a marriage partnership by learning some specific and practical tools for tending to the soul of marriage.

Contact Erin Mowrey at the church office for access to the Resource Locker, located in the lower level of the First Evangelical Center.

TECH MINISTRY SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

We are seeking volunteers to serve in a variety of ways at First Church. Specifically, volunteers are needed to run media slides at the 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. services held at the First Evangelical Center. There are several other areas that tech help is needed such as capturing images of special happenings, creating slides for Sunday morning worship, and creating videos for ministries! *No prior technology experience is needed.* If you are interested, have questions, or desire further information, please contact Katie Stepnowski at kstepnowski@firstchurch.cc.



VISION DAY
Saturday, Feb. 24
8:30-1:30 at CLC
It's time to sign up!
Sign up now on the
Communication

Card or at www.firstchurch.cc. Please join us for Vision Day! At Vision Day this year, we are going to focus on the ONE THING that Jesus told every one of us that we *must* do to be a faithful follower. Come find out what it is! We are excited to welcome J.R. Briggs, a coach, consultant, teacher, and writer who has invested in kingdom leaders in over 23 states. J.R.'s passion is two-fold: to grow fruit on other people's trees and to collaborate with others to create good kingdom mischief. There is no cost for this event. Register now!

WELCOME GRAND FRIENDS (60+)!

Grand Friends will meet on Tuesday, February 27th at Hoss's Steak & Sea House. We will start at 12:00 p.m. This will be a social event. If you know someone who would be interested in our group, please invite or bring them along. RSVP to Carol Cassidy at 570-323-5596 no later than February 26th.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

There will be a United Methodist Women meeting on Wednesday, February 21st at North Campus at 1:30 p.m. All are welcome!

UPCOMING EVENTS

ABIDING MEMORIAL

In memory of Mary Bowersox by:

Mike & Carol Cassidy, Steve & Candrus Tallman, Suzanne Lukas, and Joseph & Sandra Boris

In memory of Joshua Garner by: Roan, Inc.

In memory of Ray Eck by:

Raul & Judy Bower, Emily Biichle, Howard & Nancy Biichle, The Williamsport Home, John & Debbie Grove, Mike & Carol Cassidy, and Ray & Sharon Clemens.

Heisley-McCarty Fund

In memory of Joshua Garner by Raymond Kehrer.

In memory of Mary Bowersox by Raymond Kehrer.

In memory of Ray Eck by Raymond Kehrer.

TEACH

Continued from Pastor's Page...

Now, as much as there is to celebrate, I need to ask for your willingness to continue to walk in faith and to ask ourselves, "What's next?" Because here is our reality: *What has carried us to this point, will NOT be what carries us into the future.* The reality is that we are perfectly designed to achieve what we are *currently* achieving. But if we want to see 1000 or 1500 people reached for Christ each week in worship, or 200 folks joining in full discipleship/membership, or 10 Acts Network groups becoming worshipping communities, or 100 youth confirmed each year, or 20 college students in our ministry internships, or help thousands of folks freed from slavery or hunger each year, then it will require us to continue to shift and adapt how we do things.

We will need people increasingly sold out for Christ... folks increasingly willing to experiment (knowing not everything we try will always work—we must learn to "fail forward")... increased generosity... increased nimbleness... new structures... more passion... more faith... a missionary mindset... and an increased realization that we are here for those not yet here.

Easier said than done I realize. But my hope is that as we are seeking to move in this direction, you are already seeing how God is moving and you are inspired to keep following wherever Christ may lead for the glory of Christ alone!

I could not be more excited about our days ahead. My own passion is white hot for our vision of "Transformation in Christ, Changing Lives Inside and Out..." and for the opportunity to live out this vision with you.

May God's faithfulness in the past spur us on to faithfulness in the future.

In Christ,
Pastor Matt



All students in grades 6-12 are invited for the GAME NIGHT OUTREACH tonight, February 11th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the fuse*box student ministry center at the First Church FEC. Come enjoy the pizza, snacks, board games, video games, dodgeball, friends, and fun! Bring your favorite "church-friendly" games!

CHILDREN/YOUTH

SECOND MILE GIVING

The Second Mile giving for January & February is Shepherd of the Streets. The Shepherd of the Streets Ministry is often the first responder for persons in financial need. The Shepherd provides financial assistance for prescription and other medical needs. In addition to financial assistance, the Shepherd provides pastoral care and other support services. www.uclc.org/content/shepherd-streets

MISSION ITEMS NEEDED

Local Food Pantry — saltine crackers, chunky soups, chicken noodle soup, and fruit snacks.

Shepherd of the Streets — shampoo and deodorant. 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.

PLEASE DO NOT PLACE OPENED OR EXPIRED ITEMS IN THE BASKETS.

FAMILY PROMISE

Family Promise host week at North Campus is February 25 - March 4. Please contact Patty Fox at 570-971-2872 if you can help with meals, overnight stays, or can spend a few hours in the evening with the families. We also ask that you prayerfully consider becoming a co-coordinator to assist during host weeks. Thank you.

STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING UPDATE

In a two-part session, our Stephen Ministers are currently learning about **Assertiveness: Relating Gently and Firmly.** Assertiveness may not be a subject you'd think would be included in preparing people to serve as Christian Care Givers. Many people think of assertiveness as being about "getting my own way." However, assertiveness is in fact about relating to others gently and firmly. During these training sessions, the trainees will discuss and apply the principles they read about in [Speaking the Truth in Love: How to Be an Assertive Christian](#), which uses Jesus as the model for assertive behavior. **Please continue to keep our Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders in your prayers.**

SEND

Sermon Outline

Cultivating A Healthy Marriage
Ephesians 5:21-33

- I. Healthy marriages affect _____ ... married and unmarried alike.
- II. Recognize where the _____ to serve in marriage comes from:
Out of _____ for Christ.
- III. Live love as a _____ and not as a _____.
- IV. Make marriage the number one earthly _____ in your life.
- V. Let marriage _____ you, not just make you _____.

Life Reflection:

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is low and 10 is high) rank yourself on the following healthy habits:

- **My power to serve out of reverence for Christ is strong right now. _____
- ** Love is lived out more as a verb than a noun for me. _____
- **My marriage (or walk with God) is my # 1 earthly priority. _____
- ** My marriage (or walk with God) is more about being sanctified than being happy. _____

This week:

1. Talk about your responses with your spouse. Do you both agree on highest and lowest ranked scores? What can you do to change the lowest ones?
2. Spend some time praying about how you can do more to cultivate a healthy marriage in reverence to Christ.
3. Apply these same responses to your walk with Christ. How do you rank? What can you do for a closer Jesus walk?

Scripture Reflection: Ephesians 5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Pastor's Page

What's Next?

First Church,

The new year (of 2018) has gotten off to such a quick start that we have not had time to stop and really give thanks to God for last year (2017).

In short, God has blessed First Church abundantly... *abundantly* in the last year! Let us praise God for these realities!

In the months to come, I will be sharing more specifics from each of our primary ministry areas so that you can be aware of what God is doing in those areas and to also ask for your prayers for our staff serving in those areas.

But today I wanted to give you just a few high-lights from 2017 so that we might praise God for what God has done and prepare for what is ahead.

In 2017:

We welcomed 49 new folks into full discipleship through membership.

We launched the 4 Steps of "A Disciple's Journey" designed to help every disciple of First Church take their next deeper step in discipleship.

We officially partnered with IJM (International Justice Mission) in line with our emphasis on social concern as part of our vision of transformation in Christ.

We saw significant growth in our youth ministry.

We continue to see expansion of our Acts Network with new groups launched as well as the start of our first worshipping community in the Acts Network.

We welcomed some wonderful new staff including Katie Stepnowski (Director of Tech Ministry), Jake Bair (CLC Service and Worship Leader), and Erin Mowrey (Office Manager).

We officially approved our third college student in three years to pursue pastoral ministry.

We experienced for the first time in many years giving that left us in the black at the end of the year instead of the red.

We saw the CLC debt paid off in its entirety. (You will hear more about this in weeks to come.)

We ended the year worshipping about 842 folks per week (which is significantly larger than any other church in our Susquehanna United Methodist Conference).

I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to partner with God. But let us make no mistake about it... these good things are a result of *God's grace*. To God be the glory!

Continued...