



The Messenger

First United Methodist Church Newsletter
446 Camden Avenue, Moorestown, NJ 08057
856-235-0450

Rev. Richard Nichols, Pastor
Kathy Clawges, Director of Youth
Donna Banes, Interim Music Team Coordinator
Devika Gill, Director of First Light Learning Center

Rev. HeyYoung Horton, Associate Pastor
Karen Murray, Director of Christian Education
Doug Hamilton, Maintenance Coordinator

Join us for Worship - Saturday 5:30 pm, Sunday 8:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am
Visit us on the Web at: www.meetwithGod.com -or- Email us at: church@meetwithGod.com

JANUARY 2018

NEW MEMBERS CLASSES

You are invited to become a member of First United Methodist Church. You can join by profession of faith or by transfer from another congregation. Our next membership classes will be held for 4 Wednesday evenings, January 17, 24, 31 and February 7 at 7:00 pm in the Parlor. Please call the church office, 856-235-0450, or let one of the pastors know if you plan on attending.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OF SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Crafts for Good and My Abba's Hands will be hosting a Blankethon on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. We will be making fleece no-sew blankets and machine sewn flannel blankets. Everyone is welcome to come (young, old and in-between) and help. The blankets will be given to the homeless.

For the fleece blankets, please bring 2 yards of 60" wide fleece. No white, please, but colorful designs and solids are great. Also a pair of sharp fabric scissors and a ruler. Contact Cindy Cope at 609-790-7456 for more info.

For flannel blankets, bring 4 yards of 44-45" flannel, sewing machine, neutral colored thread and basic sewing supplies. More info, call Rae Caputo at 609-417-4444.

Blankets take about 1-1 1/2 hours to complete.

If you want, bring your own lunch. Light refreshments will be provided.



GROUNDS FOR GOOD Friday, January 5th

Warm up with hot coffee and cozy fellowship at Grounds for Good Coffee House on Friday, January 5. Local musician and Coffee House fan favorite Neal Stephens will perform contemporary Christian music. Crafter Stephanie Malkin will sell unique handmade winter wear, including arm warmers, scarves and hats made from upcycled sweaters. The evening will also feature free coffee and tea as well as hot chocolate, snacks and baked goods for purchase. Admission is always free, but proceeds and donations will benefit Options for Life. The doors to Fellowship Hall will open at 7:30, with music kicking off at 8. Hope to see you there!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. 1st	New Year's Day - church office closed
Jan. 5th	Grounds for Good - 8:00pm
Jan. 9th	The Serving Plate - 5:00pm
Jan. 12-14	Youth at Keswick
Jan. 12th	My Abba's Hands - 7:00 - 9:00pm
Jan. 13th	My Abba's Hands - 9:00am - 3:00pm
Jan. 14-21	Host IHN
Jan. 14th	Light Harbor at Avista - 2:30pm
Jan. 14th	Peggy Campolo speaking - 7:00pm
Jan. 15th	M.L. King Day - church office closed
Jan. 15th	Day of Service Blankethon - 10am-3pm
Jan. 17th	Internat'l Women's Friendship Grp-10am
Jan. 17th	New Members Class begins - 7:00pm
Jan. 20th	Adult Fellowship - Noon
Jan. 20th	Missions Volleyball Tournament-1pm
Jan. 20-21	Missions Weekend - all services
Jan. 21st	Men's Breakfast - 7:30pm
Jan. 27th	Scouts Pasta Fest
Jan. 30th	Crafts for Good - 7:00 - 8:30pm



FROM
PASTOR RICHARD

In the season after Epiphany, we reflect on the life of Jesus as he lived and served on the earth. We remember his baptism as he submitted to the baptism of John the Baptist and the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove. We remember his healing ministry as he touched persons and made them whole. We remember his teaching as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and brought messages of comfort and compassion.

The earthly life of Jesus gives us a picture of the human Jesus, one who experienced our times of grief and sorrow, one who understands our struggles and temptations, one who knew our joys and celebrations. When I consider the wonderful truth of the incarnation, I am encouraged and blessed by the assurance that God knows my personal situations and understands my needs.

The story is told about Huber, the famous Swiss naturalist, who was standing one day with his mother watching a colony of ants. He was only a boy at the time, but he became deeply concerned, for as he walked closer, he noticed the little creatures were becoming quite alarmed. He said to his mother, "They're afraid of me, Mother, aren't they?" "Yes," she replied, "but they wouldn't be afraid if they knew how much you love them." Then he said, "But how can I tell them that I love them unless I become an ant."

God's love was demonstrated to us in the person of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who became like we are, yet without sin. Christ became the example for us of living a life of love, holiness, and service. As we take our journey of faith in this new year, let us seek the leading and guidance of our Lord that we may learn to walk "in his steps."

* * * * *

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

First United Methodist Church is a community of faith committed to sharing the love of Jesus Christ with a hurting world through words and actions.



MUSIC NOTES

Happy New Year!!

It's hard to believe there is another year in the books and we have welcomed in 2018. I always look to the New Year as a fresh start, a time to look forward, a time to start something new. There is a hymn in our hymnal that is fitting for the start of a New Year.

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

*This is a day of new beginnings,
time to remember and move on,
time to believe what love is bringing,
laying to rest the pain that's gone.*

*For by the life and death of Jesus,
God's mighty Spirit, now as then,
can make for us a world of difference,
as faith and hope are born again.*

*Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,
step from the past and leave behind
our disappointment, guilt, and grieving,
seeking new paths, and sure to find.*

*Christ is alive, and goes before us
to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.*

What a wonderful reminder as we start a new year that God's love is always with us; that he can and will make a difference in our lives; he can and will make all things new!

Donna Banes
Interim Music Team Coordinator

* * * * *

**BEGIN THE NEW YEAR
WITH PRAYER & FASTING**



The Prayer Team will offer an every-week Sunday Evening Prayer Vigil & Fast, 6:00-6:45pm in the Prayer Room. A prayerful start to 2018. For questions call Nadine Mack, 856-266-7589.



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

“But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.” Luke 12:31 (NIV)

Welcome to 2018! With the start of the New Year many are quick to 'start' something new. Unfortunately though, with the start of a new year, many are reminded of the 'things' that they had hoped to accomplish in 2017 and did not. When we reflect on what we hoped to accomplish in the previous year we can get very down. One resolution or goal that goes by the wayside early in the New Year are resolutions to address diet and exercise. Businesses like Planet Fitness and Retro Fitness have the most increase in enrollment in January and by March over 60% (*Darren Beattie, Fitness Coach*) of the newly enrolled members have stopped showing up. The desire to make changes to our physical bodies is genuine however as people say, “life just got in the way...”

It is true, daily life does get in the way especially when we want to make changes or better ourselves whether it be mentally, physically, emotionally or spiritually. That is part of the devil's scheme, to make life so chaotic that we are only nominally committed to anything including caring for ourselves. But God has a better plan. God desires for us to be fully committed to seeking His kingdom and His way. He promises that when we do that he will provide for us all that we need. (Luke 12:22-33) It is true that we have a responsibility to care for our bodies, to protect our minds and to keep our emotions in check. We also are given the responsibility to care for ourselves spiritually. In order to do that we should never give up seeking God and living the kingdom life that he offers. After all he promises that when we “seek his kingdom...all will be given to you.” What more could we ask for? Enjoy 2018 and happy seeking!

Peace,
Karen Murray, DCE
856-222-1120 / education@meetwithGod.com

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INFORMATION:

Sunday School is offered for all ages during our 9:30 & 11:00 Worship hours. All are welcome!

Thursday Afternoon Youth Group to resume on January 11th. This program is offered to all children ages 5 years old through 6th grade. Young Followers (5

years old through 1st grade) meet for dinner at 4:30 in Fellowship Hall while the CHUM (grades 2&3) and CTB (grades 4th-6th) meet for choir. At 5:15 the Young Followers go to choir and the CHUM and CTB's come to Fellowship Hall for dinner. At 5:45 all three groups go to their classrooms for Fun & Fellowship. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, please contact Karen Murray at the above number.

WINTER MISSION ADVENTURE - Our annual “*Winter Mission Adventure*” will begin on January 21st. Stay tuned to see how you can participate in making this annual event a success.

Confirmation Class begins January 29th at 5:30 - All youth in grades 7th through 9th are invited to participate in the Class. If you are interested please contact Karen Murray at 856-222-1120 to enroll.

FP4H - Our First Place for Health program will resume on January 11th. If you would like to be part of this wonderful group of adults as we work on developing our Spiritual, Physical, Emotional and Mental health please contact Karen Murray at 856-222-1120. This class meets on Thursday mornings from 9am to 11am in the Heritage Room.

Prayer & Pilates - Continues to meet regularly on Mondays & Wednesdays at 5:30 in the Heritage Room. This is great way to meet new friends & stay in shape!

Bible Studies Available:

Monday Morning Women's Group - 9:30am in the Heritage Room

Tuesday Afternoon Adult Group - 2:00pm in the Parlor

Thursday Morning Women's Group - 7:30am-9:00am, Maritsa's Restaurant in Maple Shade, NJ

Saturday Morning Bible Study - 7:30am-9am in the Parlor

Sunday Morning Adult Class - 9:30am in the Heritage Room (Linda Young, Contact Person)

Sunday Morning Adult Class - 11:00am in the Heritage Room (Gerald Jackson, Contact Person)

**Other Bible Studies and Small Groups are available throughout the year. Please check the Bulletin Board in the Narthex for updated groups.

LAY LEADER LINES

I had the privilege of being a part of a Brownie Scout project day back in November. The children worked in groups to create and solve several engineering problems. This seemed like quite a challenge as the children started their projects, but once the topics were explained, the girls were on their way. One of their creations was a “helping hands” grabber, which was made to help solve the problem of reaching something for someone who is differently-abled (this was how it was explained to me).

The part of the day that made the biggest impression on me, however, was the idea of making a new friend. The girls were asked not to sit with anyone they knew, but to make a new friend for the day. What a lesson for all of us to learn! The projects came together, and watching the girls work with strangers, who gradually became friends, was the best part of the day. I was so happy to watch new friendships develop as the day continued. Of course, I was blessed to be with our granddaughter Amanda, and was excited to see the exchange of phone numbers when it was time to go home. I led a group of girls I did not know, and I also developed new friendships!

Scripture encourages us to learn from our friends. Proverbs 17:17 says “*Friends always show their love. What are brothers for if not to share troubles?*” Proverbs 18:24 tells us that “*There are “friends” who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.*” I hope we all have at least one friend that we can rely on, and who can also rely on us, as in Ecclesiastes 4:9 “*Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.*”

I love to watch young children playing in a park, running and holding hands, thinking about the lessons that they can teach us.

Winnie the Pooh has some good encouragement for us too. “*If ever there is a tomorrow when we're not together, there is something you must always remember. You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think, but the most important thing is, even if we're apart, I'll always be with you!*” Dr. Seuss's character Horton, in “*Horton Hatches the Egg*”, is asked by his friend, Mayzie the bird, to sit on her egg as a favor for her when she goes

away on a short little vacation. Horton promised; *‘I meant what I said and I said what I meant. An elephant's faithful one-hundred percent!’*”

Listening to so many people wish so many other people a “Happy New Year”, as we begin each year, I have been thinking that making a new friend might be a wonderful thing to do this coming year. With all of the violence and sadness in our world, I think it might make God smile as well, as we all try to make a new friend this year! Inviting a friend to one of our worship services, and introducing our friend(s) to other church family members, might help to create new friendships!

God bless you all in our new year, with your old, and new, friendships!

Kathy Appleton
Lay Leader



MISSIONS/FAITH PROMISE
WEEKEND

Reminder - the 2018 Missions/Faith Promise Weekend will be January 19-21, instead of in the Spring! Our featured missionaries will be BJ & Andrea Williamson, who serve with One Mission Society in Ecuador. BJ & Andrea will present the message at all four services that weekend.

The weekend will also feature the return of the combined Youth & Adult Volleyball Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 20th, beginning at about 1:00 in Fellowship Hall, followed by pizza and music!

Because of the change of schedule, this year you will be asked to confirm your Faith Promise for Missions commitment from last year. *Remember, this is not a pledge. This is your promise to give what you feel you can. Your promise to give if you can. Your promise to have FAITH that God will provide for you so that you can give back to those in need.*

Watch upcoming weekend worship bulletins for more information, or talk to Judi Angelow, Missions Chair, if you have questions.

UPCOMING TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Pilgrimage to Taizé via Paris, FRANCE
- Spiritual Retreat and Fellowship

Date: June 17- June 27, 2018
Cost: \$1700

Taizé is an ecumenical community founded during WWII by Brother Roger, a native of Switzerland who came to France to help those whose lives were devastated by the conflict raging across Europe. He settled in Taizé and began sheltering Jews and others fleeing from the Nazis.

In 1944, a small group of brothers joined this ecumenical religious community. The village has grown since, now Taizé in France has become one of the great pilgrimage centers in Europe. Over 100,000 people visit Taizé each year for spiritual retreat.

First United Methodist Church is forming a group to travel to Taizé in June of 2018. The group will stay a week at Taizé community and also spend a couple of days in Paris for sightseeing and fellowship.

If you would like to have more information please contact Pastor HeyYoung at (856) 304-6729 or heyyoung@meetwithGod.com.

Registration due date is January 30, 2018



A "MITTEN TREE"
THANK YOU



Many thanks to all of you who contributed mittens, gloves, hats & scarves to our Mitten Tree. (And a special thank you to those of you who lovingly knit all year long so that you can donate so many items!) Thanks to your very generous donations, we were able to deliver 382 mitten tree items to Emergency Services of Burlington County. What you have given from your caring hearts has made Christmas brighter and the winter warmer for many struggling families in our communities.

Trip to
Oberammergau Passion Play, Germany
- and Best of the Holy Land

Date: September 7-19, 2020
Cost: starting at \$4,598

About the Oberammergau Passion Play

Since 1634, the most famous Passion Play in the world has taken place in Oberammergau, Germany. The tradition, maintained and experienced almost without interruption for over 380 years, of putting on the play about the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ every ten years, will be continued for the 42nd time in 2020. It is regarded as the most important Passion Play in the world. The village at the edge of the Bavarian Alps expects approximately 500,000 visitors for the passion play, over half of which will be international guests. A special law is in effect to ensure that all actors of the world's largest amateur dramatic performance come from the village. All participants, from actors playing the big speaking parts such as Jesus, Mary or Judas, through members of the choir, orchestra members, firemen and ushers, must have been born in Oberammergau or lived there for at least 20 years. Over 2,000 Oberammergau villagers will participate in the 2020 Passion Play.

This trip includes 6 days in the Holy Land and 5 days in Germany. If you would like to have more information about the trip, please contact Pastor HeyYoung at (856) 304-6729 or heyyoung@meetwithGod.com.

ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTION

If you would like to use your mobile device to make an electronic donation to FUMC Moorestown, just scan this QR code and you'll be connected to our mobile giving page!





FAITH NOTES
How God Is at Work in Our Lives

This month - Dave Wilson

What I can tell you about my experience is not from my recollection of that time (*June 2014*) or the days soon after. I can only say what people told me happened.

That Sunday morning my wife Sue was getting ready for church and I said, "I have so many things to get done around the house, I think I'll do some yard work before I get bogged down in the work week." We had been to a Christian concert at Great Adventure the night before with our son Kyle, which helped me rationalize not going to church that day.

My first plan was to cut the grass. I didn't know my plan was not necessarily God's plan that day. Proverbs 16:9 says, "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps."

Sometime after half the lawn was mowed, I fell unconscious and went into cardiac arrest. It was a hot day. My 24 year old neighbor from across the street had just walked out of his house after getting a drink. He noticed my lawnmower had stopped and I was on my back in the side yard. He thought I might be resting in the shade, but to be safe, he decided to check it out. He walked across the street and saw that it was an emergency situation. He called 911, the operator asked if he knew CPR, my neighbor said he had a little knowledge through part of a high school health class he took 6 years prior. While my neighbor Jared started CPR the 911 operator notified emergency responders. Soon police, fire, paramedic and EMTs arrived and tried to restore my heart with defibrillator paddles and additional CPR.

During this time, my wife Sue returned home from church. We are blessed to have so many good neighbors, these neighbors saw Sue coming, came to her aid guiding her away from the spot where emergency personnel were working to save my life. One neighbor, who hosts our neighborhood Bible study, prayed with the neighbors gathered around Sue. I was paddled 4 times before paramedics got a faint heartbeat and I was taken to Virtua Hospital. Still unconscious, I was put in an induced hypothermia coma and on a ventilator. This was done to slow all body function down and try to avoid brain damage and other organ failure. The doctors told Sue they didn't know how long I was without

oxygen. Doctors also explained I would probably have to learn how to walk, talk, and eat after they attempt to bring me out of the coma. A few days later they started to slowly revive me. I became conscious and somewhat verbal but very limited in my capacity to think properly. I didn't recognize that I was in a hospital. I thought we were on a family vacation and only I had a bed in this hotel. I pulled out some connected medical devices not knowing I was doing additional damage to myself. Sue tried to engage me in normal conversation, told me that our youngest son Kevin had recently graduated from college in North Jersey, got a job, and moved into an apartment up there. Sue told me we had helped Kevin move just weeks before. I could not understand this because I saw Kevin in the hospital room and my brain was telling me he was only 6 years old. I became sad and felt I had missed him growing up and now he had moved out. Over the next couple days other things like this would happen to me where my brain was trying to connect things. Sue told me I recognized our other son Kyle, but a day later, I thought he was a childhood friend of mine. Eventually, I did get most my cognitive skills and memory back. Doctors were amazed how quickly I was eating and walking.

I also want to share with you that when I awoke from the coma, Sue said that I described such amazing peace and contentment where I was. And that I was trying so hard to stay in that peaceful and comforting place. Later, when I became more aware, I actually felt guilty for wanting to stay in that peaceful place. I realized what my family must have gone through and how much they wanted me back.

I'm so grateful to all of you in the church. For your prayers, cards, meals, the prayer quilt, and also to Pastor Richard and Pastor HeyYoung for their encouraging visits these past couple years when I had a few set backs, and was hospitalized again. It is such a powerful thing when you know people are praying for you.

I'm doing pretty well currently and I've made going to church with Sue a priority even if the lawn needs to be cut. I realize how important it is for me to be in the word and fellowship with believers in Christ. Paul writes in Romans 1:12, "That is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith."

Faith Notes, continued

Along the same theme, Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

In closing, I just want to say I try to live each day with a grateful heart knowing every day is a blessing from God because we don't know when our last will be. If my neighbor Jared didn't act when he saw me, Sue would have come home to a deceased husband. In fact, I learned later just how statistically rare it is that someone survives ventricle fibrillation cardiac arrest.

Jared and all the first responders were honored at a town council meeting. It was truly a wonderful experience for me, I got to meet and thank those that were integral in saving my life and getting me to the hospital.

I hope my story encourages you as much as you all have encouraged me through it.

Thank you,
Dave Wilson

LIGHT HARBOR MINISTRY UPDATE

Thanks to our church family, Salvation Army, Thursday night youth groups (Young Followers, CHUM and Trailblazers), and the many elves working hard to decorate, pack, transport, and hand out the Christmas bags we were able to bring some joy to every resident at Avista Healthcare in Cherry Hill this past Christmas.

Some of our church family selected names from our red stocking to purchase a special Christmas gift for a resident with little or no family. Once again, I am happy to say every resident received a special gift. Thank you for your generosity.

I wish to thank all the volunteers involved with the Sing Alongs and monthly church services at Mt. Laurel Center and Avista Healthcare in 2017. As we start the New Year, I pray that we may continue to serve the residents at Avista Healthcare by showing God's love and grace.

Linda Wanagas



ADULT FELLOWSHIP

Historian Kate Butler will once again come to Adult Fellowship on Saturday, January 20th, with the story and live re-enactment of Typhoid Mary. Her presentation is called "Dinner is Served!"

Kate writes and performs her re-enactments of "Notorious Women of History," including the infamous Typhoid Mary. Come out for a fun and educational afternoon. Don't worry, Kate is not cooking lunch.

Join us for a covered dish luncheon at noon in Fellowship Hall followed by the presentation. Please bring enough food portions for ten people. For reservations please call the Smith at 609-914-4698 or Sue Adams' cell, 856-220-8520 by Jan. 10th.

- 12:00 noon Meeting & Greeting
- 12:25 Devotions
- 12:45 Our Covered Dish Luncheon

Bring a friend and don't forget your place-settings and your appetite. Hope to see you there. Put it on your calendar right now!!



NOTES FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Stewardship Update

In addition to \$980,003 reported for our 2018 budget, we also will have expenditures for our mortgage reduction of \$89,673 and \$10,000 for capital projects, making a total budget of \$1,079,676. We deeply appreciate your faithful support in helping us meet our financial needs as we work to carry out the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ here at FUMC.

Electronic Giving Reminder

If you use electronic giving and have changed the amount of your pledge for 2018, please remember to log in to your Vanco account and update your giving details. If you're not sure how to do that, contact Karen Halligan in the church office, 856-235-0450 or church@meetwithGod.com. Thank you!

PEGGY CAMPOLO: AN ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSION
A Presentation about LGBTQ Christians in the Faith Community

January 14, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.
First United Methodist Church, Moorestown, NJ

For over 20 years, Peggy Campolo has been an outspoken advocate for the full inclusion of those who are not heterosexual in the church. Her ministry has taken her to venues around the world as she encourages Christians to welcome people of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) community into a loving, caring, equal relationship within the church and their larger community.

Mrs. Campolo will bring her inspiring message of acceptance in a special presentation at First United Methodist Church at 7:00 pm. on Sunday, January 14, 2018. Hosted by the Reconciling Team of FUMC, the event will take place in the church's chapel; nursery care will be provided.

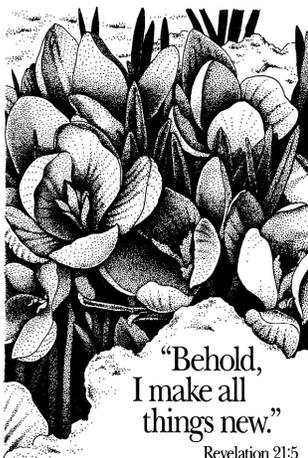
Mrs. Campolo will explain how she became an advocate for this issue, share experiences of the harm caused by the church's treatment of people who are LGBTQ, and present motivating stories about LGBTQ Christians she has known. Her presentation will be followed by a brief Q&A period and reception.

Since 1994, Mrs. Campolo has been a strong proponent for openly welcoming and fully including LGBTQ people within the church. She has taken her message from her own community in Pennsylvania to church congregations across the country and has conducted presentations at numerous universities and conferences. She has participated in protests with Soulforce, served on the Council of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, and supports PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and Evangelicals Concerned. She belongs to Central Baptist Church, Wayne, Pennsylvania which is duly aligned with American Baptist Churches USA and The Alliance of Baptists.

Mrs. Campolo's own story of how coming to know Christ led her to stand up for those who happen not to be straight is a chapter in *Homosexuality and Christian Faith - Questions of Conscience for the Churches*, edited by Walter Wink (1999). Her essay on justice for nontraditional families appears in *The Justice Project*, edited by Brian McLaren (2009).

For questions or more information, contact Doug Sell, 856-866-9494 or Doug@DSellCPA.com.

* * * * *



Deaths:

Rev. Richard Thawley
on December 14, 2017



January Youth News

First United Methodist Church
Jr. & Sr. High Newsletter
kclawges@gmail.com
856-912-1148

YOUTH GROUP for all Jr. & Sr. High students. We meet every Sunday night 7-8:30pm in the youth rooms, downstairs below Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY meets every Wednesday night from 6:30--8:00pm in the Sr. High room and is for all Jr. & Sr. High School students. We will continue with "Love Languages" on January 10, 2018. For questions please contact Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER YOUTH LEADERS Do you like to spend time with teenagers? Do you find them interesting and fun to hang out with? Have you ever considered volunteering in Youth Ministry? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, you just may be who we need. I'm looking for leaders for both Sunday nights and/or Wednesday night Bible Study. Please contact me for more information; Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.

MID-WINTER ADVANCE YOUTH RETREAT

January 12 - January 14

6pm - 1pm

LOCATION: America's Keswick, 601 County Rd 530, Whiting NJ 08759

This is our annual mid-winter retreat for all Jr. & Sr. High School students. This is a wonderful retreat for students to advance in their faith journey through worship, small groups and fellowship together. The total cost is \$135, which includes the t-shirt. If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible. Forms will be available at Youth Group, Bible Study, or email. Forms and a \$50 deposit are due by December 17th with the final payment of \$85 due January 7, 2018. This also makes a great Christmas gift for your student! Please go to the website to learn more about the retreat; www.midwinteradvance2018.com. or contact Kathy Clawges 856-912-1148 or kclawges@gmail.com.



Continued on next page

Youth Newsletter, *continued*

**SHARING CORNER:
Love Languages "Acts of Service" Youth Bible Study Dec 6, 2017**

Philippians 2:3-5 *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*

Serving others is more than keeping up with your to-do list. To be a servant means we genuinely need to care about people. It's keeping our eyes, hearts, and schedules open for divine appointments. Jesus was not stressed by time, what others thought of Him, or a list of tasks to accomplish each day. Jesus was led by the Spirit of God and followed His promptings to serve, love, and help others. No task was ever beneath Jesus, and no person was ever unworthy.

Galatians 5:15 *"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."*

Serving others and genuine love go hand in hand. But what exactly does that look like? How do we genuinely love even the unlovable? How do we let go of our to-do list? How do we position ourselves to act humbly?

Here are four good places to start:

o **Is your heart struggling to love others? Ask Jesus for a heart change.**

Be open to Him working, stretching, and changing your heart. This may bring out some things you need to address and work on, but it will be worth it! He can change your heart, soften the edges, and teach you to love others with kindness and compassion.

o **Take a look at your schedule. Are you doing too much?**

Are you keeping things on your list because of appearances? Allow Him to free up your time. Ask Him to show you each day what needs to be done and what can be set aside.

o **Begin placing others first in your day to day.**

Think about the needs of others and how you can place them before your own. Do you see a struggling mom at the store? Let her get in line before you. Does your neighbor need help with his lawn? Take care of it for him.

o **Listen to God, and do what He says.**

Follow God's prompting and leading when going about your day. If you feel like you should stop and serve, do it. Pray. Ask God, then listen and do what He says.

Jesus sets an example for us to follow. After washing His disciples' feet - an act of love, humility, and service - He encourages us to follow His lead and serve one another.

John 13:5-17 "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you," Jesus says.

Jesus, the Son of God, the Most High King, Lord of Lords, never placed himself in a position above others. He led by serving, and He loved by serving. He washed feet. He fed thousands. He walked to visit and heal the sick and dead. He stopped to touch and heal a sick woman. He spent time with those no one else cared to spend time with. Jesus lived a life of humility.

Jesus showed us that serving others and humility go hand in hand.

Is your heart struggling to love others?"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you," Jesus says.