



1232 National Road
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-242-2455
christumcwheeling@gmail.com
May 2024, Issue 326

IN-PERSON WORSHIP

8:30 a.m. in the Chapel
11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

ONLINE SERVICE

christwheeling.org

Watch live Sundays @ 11 a.m.
or watch recorded services
posted after 12 pm on Sundays

Staff

Rev. Jake Steele
Pastor

Diann Nickerson
Family Life Coordinator
Director of Campus Ministries

Bill Stephens

Choir Director

Stephanie Gates

Children's Choir Director

Judith Allison

Organist

Carla Barris

Office Manager

Chelsea Young

Communications

Jamie Lafferty

Nursery Attendant

Ron Miller

Custodian

The Spire

Take a Seat

Christ Church Family,

With recent news coming out of General Conference and decisions made by our global body, we find ourselves in a transient time---a time that excites some and exasperates others. At once, there is celebration and trepidation, deep concern and great hope. It's not an alien experience in the history of the church, even if there are complexities that are new to us. As your pastor, I hold the amalgam of those emotions in tension. It's a crucible of sorts, and the manner in which we decide to navigate it will be a determining factor in how vital we *are* and how vital we'll *remain* as disciples of Jesus. Irrespective of our current emotional states, convictions or theological persuasions, I want to caution any inclinations we might have of reducing denominational decisions into categories of "winners" and "losers." Those dichotomies are not only destructive, but they're more indicative of the culture around us rather than the Christ within us, and when they're given legs by the stuff we spout (in person or via a post) we all lose ultimately.

In spaces like these, it's so easy to reflexively retreat into proverbial camps and sling verbal arrows at those who don't align with us or our ideological allies. But behold: A risen Christ who defeated hell, sin and the grave doesn't "rally his political base *to take a stand.*" Rather, time and time again, he sets a table and invites every one of us *to take a seat*--Matthew and Simon together. And when you don't assume your spot, the body suffers. So, the question begs, "*What'cha gonna do? Where do we go from here?*" (HINT: Stagnancy isn't a solution).

Friends, we've got work to do; there's a kingdom to build, a world to transform, a community to restore, discoveries to be made and new understandings to appreciate. We cannot arrive at such vistas in isolation. We achieve it through community.

To that end, we will build upon our initial gathering that took place two Sundays ago (4/28) and by the time you're reading this, we will have convened again on 5/5. What's happening there? Let me catch you up: We've cultivated a space, first, to gain a general understanding of General Conference—who we are, how we do it, and why it matters. Further, we're convening not to undermine, but to understand: Why is the theology of human sexuality so thorny and why have we been struggling with it for over 50 years? We're talking about it because we *need to*. Straw men on both sides of the issue are too easily assembled.

To adequately address both sides, I'm facilitating two distinct sessions: The first session (5/2) discussed details that point to why the church maintained its historical stance for as long as it did and the other upcoming session will outline some perspectives that give way to the position/disciplinary language as it currently stands. I've decided to structure our sessions this way, not as a means to coerce you to *believe differently*, but rather to *behave differently* toward those who may not think like you. I pray that you'll take your place at the table and join us for subsequent gatherings. Mother's Day (5/12) may be tricky, so be on the lookout for the next discussion date. For those who cannot participate in-person, a separate zoom invite will be sent. Let's go. I hope to see you there.

In Christ,

Pastor Jake



When we think of the work of the Holy Spirit, we *typically* associate it with something *atypical*—tongues of fire, fulfilled prophecies and healed people. Make no mistake, the movement of the Spirit manifests power in the world. However, if we're not careful, we can conveniently assume that the holy stuff of God is housed in the headlines or belongs on a Broadway marquee, miles away from ordinary us.

But the reality is, the holy stuff of God doesn't dwell in a celebrity spotlight inasmuch as it dances in a street lamp...and before the street lamp how about the porch light of anyone who'll dare open the door! Could it be that the next big thing, *the next great miracle of God* is really just tied to *the next right move of ours*? What if that's the case? What if it's *always* been the case? What's it mean for us? More than we'd ever imagine!

Series Schedule:

April 28th, Week 1: "The Next Right Step" Acts 12: 1-17

May 5th, Week 2: "The Next Right Stop" Acts 9: 1-19

May 12th, Week 3: "The Next Right Stone" Acts 6: 7-15; 7: 1-2; Acts 7: 57-8:1

May 19th, Week 4: "The Next Right Stay" Acts 2: 1-13



Dear Friends:

After years of intensive and prayerful debate, the General Conference delegates from all over the world voted to remove language that prohibited United Methodist clergy from performing weddings for same-gender couples. This change allows churches and clergy to operate according to their conscience, without consequence.

There are some important things about this decision that I want you to know. First, pastors have always decided who they will marry. This is based on several factors including the couples' preparation for the marriage covenant. This has not changed. Pastors will continue to decide who they will marry. No one will force a pastor to officiate a marriage ceremony for any couple. Second, churches will continue to determine what weddings are held in their church buildings. This is the decision of the local church's Board of Trustees. Further, the desires of all clergy and congregations in this matter are to be honored and not judged by others. Specifically, the change will include new language in ¶ 419.12 Book of Discipline that states:

13. The superintendent shall not penalize any clergy for performing, or refraining from performing, a same-sex marriage service.

14. The superintendent shall neither require any local church to hold or prohibit a local church from holding a same-sex marriage service on property owned by a local church.

We know that different people have different opinions on these matters and the diversity of perspectives needs to be respected.

The delegates of the General Conference also voted to remove prohibitions that prevented a Board of Ordained Ministry from recommending a gay or lesbian person for ordination. Gay persons may enter the process to become candidates for ministry, and if approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry, can now be licensed, commissioned, and ordained. Please be assured that the Bishop and Cabinet will continue to work with churches and clergy to ensure we have the best match possible when making appointments. We want everyone to have a VITAL ministry, not a ministry defined by conflict. We have always worked to place all pastors in appointments where they will be accepted and will be able to work in partnership with the laity to further the mission of Jesus Christ. Our commitment to the local church and the mission of Christ has not changed. Your district superintendent will continue to be your primary contact on appointment related issues. These recent decisions at the General Conference, reinforce the primacy of God's love in our lives and the world, and add complexity to our life together as United Methodists.

I realize this General Conference decision may bring about various emotions and reactions within our congregations and the broader denomination. There will no doubt be some who are disheartened and pained by this decision as well as some who welcome it. As we collaborate and work together, I feel sure that we can navigate the complexity and respect one another.

The removal of the language around human sexuality returns us to the Book of Discipline that we have had from the founding of the church in 1784 until 1972 when the General Conference first added the restrictive measures into the Book of Discipline.

As United Methodists in West Virginia, we remain committed to upholding our Wesleyan values of love, grace, and inclusivity. While we may not all agree on every issue, we are called to continue embodying the love of Christ in our interactions with one another. I invite you to strive to maintain a spirit of unity. Our unity is in Christ and therefore, it is more important than ever to engage in respectful dialogue, compassionate listening, and prayerful practice with one another.

The church is the only institution that exists for those who are not yet a part of it. It exists so others can come to know Christ. It exists to make disciples. Our communion table is open, and so are our hearts. We have important work to do -- together. Without fear, and with the joy of the Lord, let's get to the work Jesus calls us to do. Let us be people who share the transforming power of Christ with the world.

In His Service,

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball

Children's Church "Hands up, Hands on, Hands out"

Children ranging from 4 years through the 3rd grade are invited to attend this program which will follow "Children's Moments" during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, Stephanie Gates, "Ms. Steph", will offer music at this time to those children in Kindergarten through the 5th grade.

We are seeking volunteers to help with this program. A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex for you to place your name.

New Covenant Unit

The New Covenant Unit will meet on Monday, May 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the Family Room for their regular monthly meeting.

Laura Albertini-Weigel, Director of the Wind Program at the YWCA will be the guest speaker.

May Collections for the HOC

We will be collecting deodorant and boxed cereal for the House of the Carpenter for the month of May.

If you would like to donate but don't have time or can't get out to shop, Shelby can do the shopping for you. Please catch up with her during worship or contact her at 304-242-6127.

Thank you to everyone that donated items in April.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone that donated diapers to the Gabriel Project in the month of April. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Dedication/Consecration Booklets

Dedication/consecration booklets and other items regarding the church will be displayed in the Narthex through the month of May. Please feel free to take anything you like.



Summer Sunday School Schedules

Sunday School classes for our youth and children will break after the last Sunday in May for a few months and restart on September 8, 2024. Adult Sunday School classes will decide for themselves when a break in sessions is needed.

2024 Graduates

Taylor Ashlyn Broadwater

Taylor will graduate from Wheeling Park High School on May 19, 2024. She will attend West Virginia University, where she has been accepted into the Honors College and the Physical Therapy Early Assurance program to major in Exercise Physiology.

Josephine "Josie" Jarrett

Josie is a member of the CUMC Choir and graduated from West Liberty University on May 4, 2024, with a degree in Music Education with a Choral Emphasis. She plans to move to Beckley, West Virginia, become involved with Theatre West Virginia and West Virginia Collective, and teach in the Raleigh County School District.

This summer, Josie will be involved with Theatre West Virginia, performing in *Hatfields and the McCoy's*, *Honey in the Rock*, and *Footloose the Musical*.

Wesley Daniel Palmer

Wesley, the grandson of John and Bobbi Nally, will graduate from The Linsly School on May 26, 2024. In the Fall, he will attend West Virginia University in the Honors Program, majoring in Engineering.

Natalie Paige Reed

Natalie, the granddaughter of Winnie Hurd, was baptized at CUMC and attended VBS throughout her childhood. She has helped Ms. Steph lead VBS openings and closings for several years. Natalie will be attending Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, and majoring in Nursing.

Payton Storch

Payton will graduate from The Linsly School on May 26, 2024. She will attend West Virginia University after graduation, majoring in Dental Hygiene.

Nicklaus Patrick Trischler

Nicklaus will graduate from Wheeling Park High School on May 19, 2024. He plans to attend West Virginia University and major in Exercise Physiology, and he hopes to attend Dental School.

Focus on Faith and the Family



In November of 2023 I went to a Level Up Conference in Pittsburgh and learned about a new way of doing church for families – Messy Church. It’s an idea that all ages can come together to “do church” in a way that looks different from traditional church or Sunday School. It’s a way to introduce people to Jesus and explore stories of the Bible. We learn together through games, crafts, music, and messy activities and we share a meal together (after all, we ARE Methodist!). It’s hands-on church, exploration, and worship!

We gather around tables: to learn, to share, to be engaged and creative, and to share a meal. Gathering around tables is foundational – Jesus often asked his followers to share a meal. Fellowship helps create relationships that build and strengthen us as a people of God, showing love and kindness to everyone we encounter. That’s what Messy Church is all about and I’m hopeful you will be a part of this new adventure. We have formed a team to help us get the program off the ground. If this is something you’d like to help with, please see Wendy Barbeau, Stephanie Gates, Marci Marshall, Cheryl Sprague, Tammy Tomazoli, or myself and we will be delighted to get you on board with our newest ministry.

Messy Church will meet on the second Wednesday of each month beginning in June. We will begin with our meal at 6 PM in the fellowship hall and continue with games and activities, have a time of worship together, and end the evening around 7:30 PM. In the next few weeks we will be recruiting team members, discussing ways to invite the community, and advertising the program. We ask for your support and prayers as we move forward in the Good News to the Wheeling area.



One of my favorite things about being a United Methodist is the **Blessed Connection** and it came through once again! The children at Christ United Methodist Church, along with women in the church came together to decorate final exam goodie bags and donate baked goods and snacks for students. We distributed the goodie bags to WLU and Wheeling University students here at Christ and those WLU students who sing in the choir at Vance Presbyterian. It was a true intergenerational, ecumenical project!

WL WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

CAMPUS MINISTRY



The spring semester is coming to a close and graduation will soon be upon us, but we ended the semester continuing to learn and be in service. Campus Ministry partnered with the sorority, Lambda Psi Sigma, and packed personal hygiene kits for UMCOR. During our time of packing, we talked about the young women's own experiences in dealing with menstrual issues and how these kits will be helpful to women around the world. The group supplied 20 kits that can be used at the New Vision Depot.

In the fall semester Campus Ministry traveled to McDowell County to learn about social justice issues and the history surrounding our Southern WV Coalfields. The experience had an impact on the students so when the documentary, *King Coal*, was premiered this spring they requested to travel to Charleston to see it in theaters and have more discussion about the situation. We watched the film in the Floralee Hark Coen Cinema along with about 20 others and had a discussion afterwards with Rev. Brad Davis. We continued our fellowship and conversation at a local eatery after visiting Taylor's Bookstore!



Graduation for WLU is May 4th and we ask for prayers as we say goodbye to our three seniors: Logan Riegenbach, Caitlin Reynolds, and Will Thompson. These fine young people are the first graduates I've had the honor of serving with in Campus Ministry. I will miss them but look forward to staying connected and following them on their next journey.

After graduation I will be taking a group of six students on a mission trip to North Carolina where we will be working with the NC Food Bank and a local YWCA program that provides swimming lessons for all the second graders in the county. We ask for traveling mercies as we make our way south on May 13th and return on May 17th.

This academic year has posed difficult challenges, but God has a plan way before we do and the partnership with WLU Campus Ministry and Christ UMC is a wonderful way to celebrate and engage in each other's ministries. I am honored to service at both locations and look forward to future partnerships and opportunities.

Peace and grace – Diann Nickerson
Director of Campus Ministries and Family Life Coordinator

May Birthdays & Anniversaries

Karrie Hutchins May 3
 Melanie Ogu May 3
 Monique* Taylor May 3
 Rachael Allen May 6
 Holly McCutcheon May 6
 Jill Thorngate May 6
 Christine Collins May 7
 Briella Taylor May 7
 Lexie* Kosanovic May 8
 Brenda Queen May 8
 Crystal Gersting May 9
 Jane Friebertshauser May 10
 Mildred Posey May 10
 Debra Galbreath May 11
 Sydni* Kondrach May 11
 Leslie Koonce May 11
 Yolanda Voegelin May 11
 Harold* Bowman May 12
 Mary Brown May 12
 Josephine Dyer May 12
 Conor* Griffith May 12
 Amanda West May 12
 Russell Hutchins May 13
 Laura Roberts May 13
 Zaira* Jones May 14
 Bill Stephens May 14
 Dennis Hon May 15
 Jillian* Hornyak May 15
 Joseph M. Lloyd May 15
 Lori* Bitzer May 17
 Alexander Collins May 17
 Scipio Myers May 17
 William Voegelin May 17
 Timothy Bandi, I May 19
 Cecelia Jebbia May 19
 Justin LaRue May 19
 Henry Lew May 19
 Linda Seiferth May 19
 Kenneth Vannoy May 19
 Tricia Palmer May 20
 Michael* Schwind May 20
 Cheryl Sprague May 21
 Bethany* Steele May 21
 Charles* Heyman May 22
 Brock* Jones May 26
 Matthew Nally May 26

Amber Collins May 29
 Crystal Collins May 29
 Drew E. Griffin May 29
 Timothy* Allen May 30
 Randy Wharton May 31

James* & Jean Howley
 May 12

Chuck & Linda Cornell
 May 19

Roger & Jill Thorngate
 May 19

Dennis & Colleen Lee
 May 20

Timothy* & Shannon Gessler
 May 21

Scott* & Amy Morris
 May 21

Bob & Nikki Reid
 May 21

Craig & Judith* Collins
 May 22

Joe* & Deborah Hatton
 May 23

Wayne & Helen Wells
 May 27

Jennifer & Aubrey Taylor
 May 28

Joe* & Kathleen Palmer
 May 29

CARE FACILITIES

•**Good Shepherd**
 Jack Kerr 320
 Mildred Posey

•**Peterson**
 Jane Friebertshauser 520

•**Sienna Skilled Nursing & Rehab (Wintersville)**
 Donald Bowman

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please take a minute to re-view the list, and let the church office know if there are any names to be removed from the list.

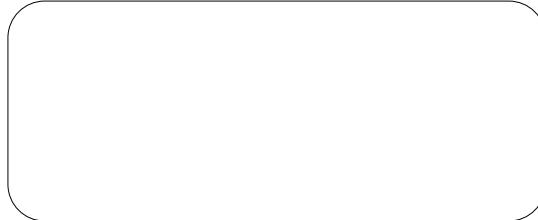
Justin; Randy Jones; Clem & Nancy Schutler; Kim & Buddy Bowman; Roxie Derheimer; Charlie Palmer; Susan Sampson; Parker Fox; Katie Histing; Kevin Barton; Cynthia Hileman; Frank Gilbert & Family; Richard Gilliam; Logan; Amanda Sampson; Barbara Buckwack; Anna Marie Kloss; Harry; James Gyer; Brittany Yoho; Bob & Debbie Becker; Lee; Suzanne; Ruth Wade; Ronald Sampson; Jeff Winslow; Addison Stephans; John Lendon; Travis Ellis; Bill; Sony and Gary; Josh Chaplin; Melissa; Breanne; Karen & Jim Bruhn; Sandy Thames; Leslie Heldreth; Glenn Balla; John Witzberger; Freda Blake, Sherry Curry; Barb Wotojwicz; Family of Anya Robertson; Joan McClelland; Joanne Taylor; Randy Austin & Family; Miller Family; Jason Broadwater; Betty Dent; Bob McDonald; Paul & Kim Weber; Carol Pattim; Pat Staton; Jim Bowman; Donald Bowman; Rosemary Leicet; Terry; Linda & Jack Kerr; Kenny Nickerson; Dawn Walker Schemp; Jessie; Cathy Pavlock; Zach Henry; Harold Tharp; Randy Straub; Scott Morris; Michael Selick; Sara Madison; Sherwood Dobbs; Lauren Robinson; Harriett McCardle; Ted Allen; Gary Hought; Betty Hissom; Brad King; Jim Jones; Jenn; Gail; Jeff; Sara Staley; Cody McAvoy; Kristen Smith; Betty Love; Jonathan Chance; Elizabeth Carson; Connie Macek; Bill Harr; Mr. P.; Linda Moffit.



Christ United Methodist Church
 1232 National Road
 Wheeling, WV 26003

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Out the Pike Vacation Bible School

Sunday, July 14 - Thursday, July 18, 2024
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Age groups:
3 & 4 year olds, 5 year olds, 6 & 7 year olds, 8 & 9 year olds, and 10 & 11 year olds

The Out the Pike Vacation Bible School is a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together. We are proud to collaborate with Christ United Methodist Church, First Christian Church of Christ, St. Michael's Church, and Vance Presbyterian Church. This joint effort is a testament to our shared commitment to spreading the word of God.

A sign-up sheet has been placed in the Narthex for members to indicate where they would like to help with this community outreach service. Join us in making this outreach a special event to spread what being a child of God is like.

