



New Beginnings United Methodist Church
1559 State Route 56 East
Apollo, PA 15613

Sent with a prayer to:



15613-973834



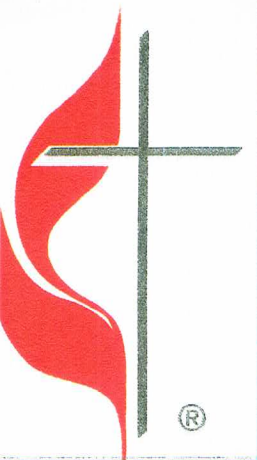
Christmas Eve Services

New Beginnings UMC
6:00 P.M. Parking Lot Church
Everyone is asked to bring their own
luminary to display on their car
for our candlelight service.

Vandergrift UMC
11:00 P.M. Inside service
Battery operated candlelight service
Limited seating will be available.

A Kiski Charge Pre-Recorded Christmas Eve Service
will be posted online for people to join us virtually.





“Love God, Love Neighbor, Serve the World”

Wesley Disciple
Oct/Nov/Dec 2020

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK . . .



Sacred Space

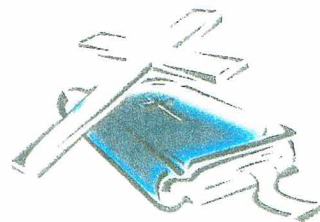
Recently I have been a part of several conversations amongst other clergy where “sacred space” was discussed. Some of these conversations were specifically in regards to worship experiences and the other was literally about finding a geographic/physical location that was sacred to those of us participating in the conversation.

Many of us consider sacred space (especially for worship) to be the church sanctuary. The place most of us have gone to all of our lives on Sunday mornings to pray, sing, hear the Word of God proclaimed, and to fellowship with our sisters and brothers in Christ. I personally also find “sacred space” when I walk along a flowing stream or sit beside a waterfall. Different things connect us in different ways to the time and place we find sacred.

And yet this year, “sacred space” has been transformed for so many people throughout the world. For several months, the only option we had for “sacred space” was our living rooms or offices as we “zoomed” church. In June, the parking lot at New Beginnings became “sacred space” for some of us. And how wondrous it has been to worship outside under the sun in the beauty of God’s creation. Some people have returned to the “traditional sacred space” of the sanctuary at Vandergrift when we moved back into the building in July.

If you are either unable or unwilling to return to worship in person (whether it be inside or outside) and choose to join us virtually, I would urge you to create a “sacred space” (if you have not already done so) in whatever place you use to be a part of the worship time we offer. Light a candle, have your Bible and your hymnal (if you have one) with you so you can turn to it at the appropriate time in the service, hang a cross upon the wall or stand it up on the table, or have a plant or flower arrangement in honor of God’s beautiful creation in the space. All these items can add to the atmosphere of your worship experience.

And if you are joining us virtually, I would encourage you not to just “watch” worship but participate fully each Sunday. Our world continues to evolve and change and I urge each of you to continue to be patient and faithful in your support and participation in the life of the church.



With much love and many blessings,
Pastor Sara

Words to Ponder:

READ PSALM 4:1-8

In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

PSALM 4:8 (NIV)

One Saturday night as my wife and I were babysitting our grandsons, I learned a valuable lesson from God.

After I had read a few books to them, it was time for the younger one to go to sleep. He lay peacefully in his crib, so I stealthily crept from the room. As we sat downstairs readying the 3-year-old for bed, I heard the little one cry out in distress. As I entered the room, I found him panting and sobbing; but when he saw me, he calmed down. As I sat with him in a rocking chair, attempting to comfort him, I realized how God, through this child, was comforting me.

At times, we may be like my little grandson. When life doesn't go our way, we can become scared or feel we're at the end of our rope.


Our Father God knows how to give perfect love to comfort us in our hopelessness and fear. When we are at our lowest, God wants to surround us with comfort and peace, and whisper those words of Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God!" (NIV).

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Can God comfort me in any situation?

PRAYER

God of comfort and peace, help us to trust that you have us in your arms now and forevermore. Amen

"Never will I leave you.
Never will I forsake you."
Hebrews 13:5
—talk about a
promise. — 

Task Force Update

Task Force Members:

Geri Ibrahim, Jack & Shirley Schwab, Royanne
Brayshaw, John & Carole Copeland, Char Headlee

Mary Ellen Ankeny, Mark Mottura, Robin Davis,
Dale Frederick, Tina Mottura, Joan Rinaldi, Keith
Riffer

Pastor Sara



Thank you to everyone who has been a part of the task force. Leadership from both churches participated in our meetings that are held via ZOOM. It has been very helpful to have a wide range of experience and opinions as we have met. There is much to balance as we try to satisfy both the state requirements and the protocols and guidelines as established by our Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi and the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. And to be completely honest, we have not always agreed but we are trying to find the best way forward through this ongoing situation.

At our September meeting, we agreed that the first Sunday of November we would resume in-person worship **in the sanctuary** at New Beginnings. Because the actual space at New Beginnings is rather small and we still must socially distance, we will be requiring people to make a reservation each week to attend worship. Please email or call the church to reserve your spot: 724-478-4525 or nbumcapollo@gmail.com

Face masks must be worn. If you do not have one, one will be provided for you.

We will still be live streaming the worship service so if you have the capability to worship virtually we would encourage you to do so. This will allow folks who do not have the technology for virtual worship to continue to be a part of our worshipping community. We will be having people from both New Beginnings and First (Vandergrift) participate in leading the service along with Pastor Sara since we are streaming to and for both congregations.



We have been so blessed since we started parking lot church that we have had almost entirely great weather. Thank you to everyone who helped make that happen. Dale Frederick, Jack & Shirley Schwab, John Copeland, Mark Mottura, and Patti Albert (along with various worship leaders and bathroom monitors) have been a true blessing. Their flexibility and willingness to adapt to new situations has been wonderful.

WIM

The Fall Rummage Sale was a success. We really enjoyed having the sale outside under the pavilion. Over \$1300.00 was made for Missions. At the WIM meeting it was decided to donate \$300 to the Apollo Food Bank and \$300 to Rise Against Hunger. We will be packing a Holiday bagged lunch to be distributed to the residents at the Apollo Hi Rise on Nov 19. We are planning to make Christmas baskets to be delivered to the shut-ins. If you are not involved in this small group consider doing so. We not only do missions but have a great time doing so.

Daylight Saving Time ends. Remember to fall back an hour. **CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS!**



SUNDAY SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

Adult Sunday School has been put on hold until we can get back to somewhat normal worship times. When we do get back we will be studying the book of Acts.

Children's Sunday School is not meeting at this time. The Conference has made the recommendation that children's activities be limited to outdoors. Royanne and Char sure miss you all and can't wait till we can meet again.

Dinner Schedule

Please support our monthly dinners by helping, donating, or buying and eating. See Char Headlee if you have any questions or would like to help.

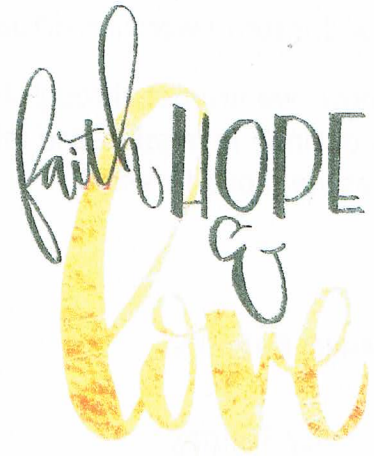
All dinners are take out only. Please drive up under the portico to receive your meal.
Time: 4-6 pm or until sold out

October 17 – Chicken and Biscuit

November- NO DINNER

COVID 19 & Church Finances

First, I would like to thank all the members and friends of the Kiski Charge (New Beginnings and First UMC, Vandergrift) for their continued prayers, presence, and financial support. As we have heard it said many times this year: we are living in unprecedented times. Who would have ever imagined our church buildings being closed for months at a time? And while the building may have been closed, the church itself was alive and well.



We have adapted worship, Bible study, Messy Church, book study, and meetings to virtual formats and/or outside events. We have all been operating on a huge learning curve. Thank you for your patience, your encouragement, and your diligence in stepping forward when needed.

Some of you have inquired about the church finances especially considering that what we know as church attendance has changed as well as giving patterns. But through your faithfulness and some “outside” help, we are holding our own through the pandemic.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020. It is the third relief package enacted by Congress in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, and the most extensive of the three pieces, providing \$2.2 trillion in relief funds to state governments, business, non-profits and individuals.

Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”): This piece of the CARES Act provides a safety net for small businesses with less than 500 employees, creating an incentive to keep those employees working. It will effectively work like a federal grant program, such that the Employer (churches in our case) will NOT ever have to repay the loans, so long as the funds are fully utilized to pay qualified payroll and non-payroll expenses.

Key provisions of the Paycheck Protection Program: Covers payroll costs, healthcare premiums and benefits, employee salaries, mortgage interest (but not prepayments or principal payments), rent payments, utilities and other interest payments; Covers up to 24 weeks for these qualified expenses; and pays the Employer the lesser of 2.5 times the average monthly payroll or \$10 million.

Both New Beginnings and First UMC applied for and were approved for the PPP program. New Beginnings was awarded a larger amount because that church is the paying agent for the pastor’s salary. That was a benefit to both churches. All the money awarded to both churches has been fully used according to the guidelines established by the federal government. Soon, we will be applying for the forgiveness portion of the program.

I would encourage you to continue to be *faithful in your financial support to the church*. I am so pleased to report that giving at both churches is ahead of where we were last year at this time (in spite of the pandemic). Way to go! **THANK YOU!** If you are unable to join us for in-person worship and instead worship virtually, please remember to send in your gifts.

As you know, we are not through this yet. We continue to adapt and look for new and unexpected ways to continue in mission and ministry. Please watch for email, Facebook, and snail mail updates as we move forward.

UP-COMING EVENTS:

Oct 25 – Laity Sunday

Oct 31 – Trunk or Treat from 1 to 3 (see flyer)

Nov 1 – All Saints Day

Dec 1, 8, 15, 22 – Advent Devotional from 5:30 pm (see flyer)

Dec 12 – Live Nativity from 4-6 pm (see flyer)

Dec 24 – Christmas Eve Service in Parking lot @ 6:00 pm

Dec 31 – Watch Night Service @ 7:00 pm via Zoom

