

The Bridge

SEPT '26 | OCT '26 | NOV '26
CARLISLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FORWARD

MOVING AHEAD. TOGETHER.

CELEBRATE WITH US!

We are excited about the fun weeks of celebration that are coming in September and October, as we rejoice in the total payment of our \$15M debt from building our Spring Garden Campus. Mark your calendars and plan to be present.

Beginning Sept 13, a 5-week sermon series will focus on how God continues to move CUMC FORWARD, as we follow His leading. Throughout those weeks, we will be invited to join as a church family in several prayer experiences. During the Sunday morning times between worship services, everyone will have an opportunity to take part in creating large banners with *"What this church means to me"* and *"Now that we are debt-free, I believe God will..."*. Start thinking now about what you want to contribute to these banners.

On Sunday, Oct 4, 5-7pm, we will have a Family Worship Night, with a focus on what we are thankful for, with families participating together. Much of the leadership in this service will come from our Student and Kids Ministries, with our young people participating a great deal. The evening will begin at 5pm with a light dinner of pizza and a salad bar.

Then on Oct 11, we begin our big celebration day with our dynamic Bishop,

Bishop Burgos Nunez, preaching in our morning services. We will hold 2 worship services that morning, a contemporary service at 9am, and a traditional service at 11am. Between these services there will be a time of lovely refreshments and connection with each other. And finally, from 5-7pm on Oct 11, we will have a full dinner with an outdoor pig roast (weather permitting). The evening will include a scavenger hunt for everyone, a photo booth, and a lot of festivity and celebration. We will end the evening with each person having an opportunity to 'burn our debt', along with some other surprises.

We can accommodate a max of 250 people for the dinner, so reservations must be made in advance, along with payment of a \$10 donation per person over 6 years old. Don't wait too long, because reservations will be cut off once we reach 250. Reservations and payment will be online beginning Sept 13. We hope you are able to join us for as many of these times of celebration as possible. This is an exciting time for our church. We plan to thank God in a big way!

~ Jeff & Sue Barnes,
Capital Campaign Co-Chairs

Note from Pastor Jake: Our fall newsletter includes several reflections from leaders in the congregation about what it means to them that CUMC is debt free and sharing about our plans to keep the celebration going! Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. I hope these reflections help you to reflect on all that God has done and dream about what is next!

CUMC IS LAYING THE FOUNDATION WITH PRAYER

On Sunday September 13 CUMC will launch the 333 Prayer Initiative. It's our way of preparing for our huge celebration in October of the end of the debt on our facility. The Initiative has two ways for you to participate:



1. Pick up a three minute sand timer (like the ones that come in board games) and 333 Prayer Initiative card. We are asking

everyone to pray daily for 3 minutes, for 3 things, for 30 days. The three things are what we are calling the JOY prayer:

- Prayer for Jesus to show you how to live like him.
- Pray for Opportunities to bless others.
- Pray for Your church and the mission of CUMC.

2. Pick up a copy (or download a .pdf copy at carlislepaumc.org/forward-celebration) of Week 1 of Celebration Meditations September 13-20. These brief meditations have been written by members of our church specifically for this time of prayer preparation. You will be blessed by each of these thoughtful and inspiring meditations.

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FALL KIDS MIN

- Sept 13** - Preteen Color Battle
- Sept 20** - 1st Grade Prayer event, 3-4pm
- Preteen, 5-7pm
- Sept 27** - Preteen at the Loudon Farm, 5-7pm
- Oct 4** - Family Worship Night, 5-7pm
- Oct 11** - Church-Wide Celebration Dinner, 5-7pm
- Oct 18** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- Oct 25** - Preteen Halloween Bash, 5-7pm
- Oct 31** - Trunk or Treat, 3-5pm
- Nov 1** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- Nov 6** - Preteen Late Nighter, 5-10:30pm
- Nov 8** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- Nov 15** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- Nov 22** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- Nov 29** - No Preteen

If you would be interested in helping in Kids Ministry, please talk to Christina.

Christina McDermott,
Kids Ministries Director
cmcdermott@carlislepaumc.org

KIDS MINISTRY AT CUMC

One of the highlights of my job has become seeing how much our children truly love vacation bible school. In June we spent a week in Rainforest Falls exploring the nature of God. The children learned Bible stories all week in exciting ways like drawing or acting out the story. They learned about God creating the world, how David celebrated all God knew in the book of Psalms, how David hid from Saul, how Jesus died and came back to life to show God's love and how God gave John a vision of Heaven. They did different experiments in our Imagination Station that looked like a tree house and even had a turtle visit. They also learned fun ways to remember their memory verses at our sticky scripture station. They also learned how to look up their memory verses in their own book of Psalms that they got to take home at the end of the week. There were fun moments of learning new songs, seeing Andrea do experiments, eating snacks, learning about our Bible buddies and sharing God moments each day. The kids also raised \$826 for the Salvation Army to help those in need. It was such an awesome week!

Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated to, prayed for and financially contributed to Vacation Bible School.



Looking ahead to the fall there is a lot of exciting stuff happening. Here are some dates to know. In Preteen we will kick off our year with our color battle on September 13th. We will be playing games with colored powder. We will get messy. We will be heading to the Loudon's farm again this year on September 27th for hayrides and a bonfire. Pick up and drop off will be at the farm this year. We will celebrate Halloween in Preteen with our annual Halloween Bash on Oct. 25th so feel free to wear a costume. On Nov 6th the Preteens will be having a late-nighter at the church from 5-10:30pm and we will be taking time to give thanks on Nov.22nd. There will not be Preteen on Nov. 29th.

We have some fun family events planned for the fall. On Sept 20th we will have our prayer event for our first graders and their grownups. First graders will learn some fun ways to pray with their grown-ups and will learn the Lord's prayer. On Oct 31st we will have our Trunk or Treat at the church from 3-5pm. Join us for a fun free evening of games, crafts, food and our trail of trunks. If you would like to help with the trunk or treat or have a trunk please let Christina know. We also have some fun events happening to celebrate the church paying off the mortgage. There will be a family worship night on Oct 4th. This will include dinner, music and prayer stations with activities for kids of all ages. This is a great opportunity for you and your kids to talk about gratitude. On Oct 11th we will have a celebration dinner at the church that you will not want to miss. Come join the party as we celebrate all the awesome things God is going in and through our Church.



WHY WE GIVE STUDENTS OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

We believe faith is more than something we talk about, it is something we live out. That's why serving is such an important part of Student Ministry. Throughout the year, our students have opportunities to put their faith into action through summer mission trips, serving at Vacation Bible School, packing school kits at Mission Central, helping in the nursery or with the tech team on Sunday mornings, and serving in our church and community. This fall, we're also excited to offer a Family Mission Trip to Philadelphia, giving students and their families the opportunity to serve together. These aren't simply activities to fill the

calendar. They are opportunities for students to discover that following Jesus means loving people, noticing needs, and being willing to help. Scripture reminds us in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace." We want our students to discover their gifts and realize they don't have to wait until they're adults to use them. I know this personally. When I was younger, God used opportunities to serve as a way of showing me the call He had placed on my life. Some of those experiences helped me discover gifts I didn't know I had and

opened my eyes to ways God could use me.

My hope is that we're creating those same moments for our students. When they serve, they aren't just checking something off a calendar - they may be discovering who God created them to be and how He is calling them to live.

Because our goal isn't simply for students to say, "That was a great service project." We want them to leave saying, "This is what it looks like to live like Jesus." Thank you for supporting Student Ministry!

~ **Erin Fleet,**
Student Ministries Director



Erin Fleet, Student Ministries Director | efleet@carlislepaumc.org

CUMC IS DEBT-FREE!

Ten years ago, the members of CUMC voted to support three 3-year Capital Campaigns back-to-back-to-back, to pay off the debt of \$15M we spent to purchase our 25 acres, design and build our church building, and complete our entire campus of parking lots, pavilion, ball field, amphitheater, etc. That long-ago vote also included the clarification that at the end of these 9 years, we projected there would still remain \$750,000 to be paid. This commitment was not taken lightly, knowing it would

involve great sacrifice, but the church family stepped out in faith.

On Sunday, July 26, we celebrated the miracle that 2 months short of those 9 years, this church has paid off the entire \$15M loan, with absolutely no balance remaining. GOD DID IT! Through the dedication, faithfulness, and sacrifice of 484 different households or individuals over 9 years, CUMC is now debt-free.

We have dreamed for years about all the ministry we can accomplish as a church once we no longer have to wor-

ry about paying off this debt. That time is now upon us. We pray God will clearly show us where He is taking us next and what He is calling us to do. THANK YOU to everyone who has participated in any of the three Capital Campaigns, as your sacrificial giving and generosity have brought us to this time. We are looking forward to journeying with you into the next season, as God continues to move CUMC FORWARD into His plans.

~ **Sue & Jeff Barnes**
Capital Campaign 3 Co-Chairs



SERVE: PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE AT CUMC

A vision that began through prayer, conversation, and careful planning is preparing to take root at Carlisle United Methodist Church.

With the support of Project SHARE, Penn State Health, and a generous private donor, CUMC is developing a new food-growing initiative on the church property. An underused portion of land will become a productive and welcoming space where fresh food can be grown, relationships can deepen, and people of all ages can learn and serve together.

Over the past several months, representatives from the participating organizations have worked to clarify the vision, assess the property, develop plans, and determine responsibilities. We are now moving from the planning stage into site preparation, with Phase One expected to begin during the fall.

The first phase will include clearing and preparing the site, installing fencing, and constructing approximately twenty raised growing beds. Planting schedules have not yet been finalized, but the work completed this fall will establish the foundation needed for future growing seasons.

At the heart of this initiative is a desire to respond to food insecurity with dignity. Laurie Crawford, Program Manager for Community Gardens and Food Access at Penn State Health, notes that Carlisle is considered a food desert, with limited access to affordable, fresh, and healthy food. She sees gardens like this as a way not only to connect neighbors

tionships, and create opportunities to learn about gardening and nutrition.

Tai Jeror, Executive Director of Project SHARE of Carlisle, describes the need in similar terms. Hunger is not only about whether people have enough to eat; it is also about whether families can regularly access healthy, fresh produce. As Tai explains, this initiative will help increase the availability of nutritious food while also strengthening "the connection between our community and the food that nourishes it."

The produce grown on the property will support the work of Project SHARE and help provide fresh vegetables to neighbors throughout the greater Carlisle area. Project SHARE brings experience in addressing hunger and connecting families with food resources. Penn State Health contributes knowledge related to health, nutrition, education, and community well-being. Carlisle UMC offers land, volunteers, hospitality, and a congregation committed to serving its neighbors.

Each organization brings different strengths, but all are working toward the same purpose. Tai describes it as a partnership in which CUMC provides the vision and space, Penn State contributes agricultural knowledge and education, and Project SHARE helps ensure that the harvest reaches families who can benefit from it most. Together, these contributions create something more meaningful than any one organization could build alone.

Laurie is especially encouraged by the generosity behind the project. She points to the support of CUMC mem-

bers, the commitment of church leadership, and the collaboration with Project SHARE as reasons for hope. In her words, the garden will become "a place for volunteers to work and learn," while also providing educational opportunities and strengthening the work of the local food pantry.

The initiative also reflects our United Methodist commitment to care for creation. Scripture reminds us that the earth belongs to God and that we are called to tend and keep what God has entrusted to us. The land surrounding our church is not simply property to be maintained. It is a gift that can be used for the flourishing of our neighbors and the wider creation.

Good stewardship asks us to consider how the resources entrusted to the church can serve God's purposes. By turning an underused section of the property into a place that produces food, teaches practical skills, and strengthens relationships, we are caring for the land while allowing it to care for others.

Caring for creation and caring for our neighbors cannot be separated. Healthy soil, nutritious food, clean water, and responsible use of land all contribute to healthy communities. Through this project, stewardship becomes more than an idea. It becomes something we practice with our hands as we prepare the ground, plant seeds, tend growing plants, share the harvest, and work alongside one another.

Laura Durant, a CUMC member and volunteer, names the need simply: many
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SERVE: CELEBRATING CUMC POP-UPS

Once a month, on a Sunday morning, tables appear around Carlisle United Methodist Church filled with cards, bags, markers, spices, school supplies, and other assorted materials. People stop for a few minutes before worship, between services, or on their way home. They write a note, fill a bag, tie a tag, or assemble a care pack. We call them POP UPS.

They are simple opportunities to SERVE that do not require a long meeting, a full Saturday, or a specialized skill. You do not need to sign up weeks in advance. You simply stop, offer a few minutes, and help complete a small act of kindness.

Yet those few minutes often travel much farther than we realize.

This year, our Refugee Ministry invited us to create cards for Eid that could be shared with our Muslim neighbors. Each card became a small sign of friendship and respect, a reminder that being a good neighbor begins by recognizing and celebrating one another.

Through our Homeless 2 Home Ministry and our partnership with LifeWorks, we assembled packs containing utensils and helpful information for families moving out of homelessness. A fork, spoon, and knife may seem like ordinary items, but when someone is beginning again, even ordinary things can communicate dignity, welcome, and hope.

Mission Central volunteers provided materials for us to assemble care packs for people affected by disasters. We may never meet the individuals who receive them or fully understand the circumstances they are facing, but the

packs remind them that they have not been forgotten. Somewhere, a stranger took the time to care.

We also wrote words of encouragement to the children of Meilleir School, our international mission partner in Haiti. The posters we created were delivered to the school just last week. Words written at a table in Carlisle traveled hundreds of miles and now hang in a school in Haiti, carrying messages of love, courage, prayer, and hope.

For Project SHARE, we assembled spice packs to add some flavor and variety to meals prepared by their clients. Food ministry is not only about providing enough to eat. It is also about recognizing the joy, culture, comfort, and creativity connected to food. A little seasoning can make an ordinary meal feel more like home.

Supportive Partnership for Youth, or SPY, provided school supplies so we could prepare bags for children attending their summer program. We also created backpack tags for Carlisle4Kids, each one carrying a Bible verse reminding children in our community that they are loved and valued. Long after the Sunday morning POP UP had ended, those words continued traveling with children on their backpacks.

None of these projects required hours from any one person. Most took only a few minutes. But when many people each give a few minutes, those minutes become something much larger.

A card becomes a welcome.

A utensil pack becomes a fresh start.

A care kit becomes comfort after disaster.

A poster becomes encouragement across an ocean.

A spice pack becomes dignity at the dinner table.

A backpack tag becomes a daily reminder to a child: You matter. You are loved. You are not alone.

This is why SERVE is so important to us at CUMC. Serving is not simply another church program or activity on the calendar. It is part of what it means for us to live like Jesus. Jesus noticed people, responded to their needs, crossed boundaries, welcomed strangers, fed the hungry, and reminded those who had been overlooked that they were seen by God.

Our POP UPS give all of us a chance to practice that kind of life.

So, the next time you see a POP UP table on a Sunday morning, stop for a moment. Pick up a marker, fill a bag, write a note, or attach a tag.

It may take only a few minutes.

But those few minutes may mean more than you will ever know.

~ Pastor Quinton De Beer



FINDING A RHYTHM WE CAN LIVE IN.

REFLECTION FROM PASTOR QUINTON

This summer, while Pastor Jake was away on renewal leave, I found myself thinking about rhythm.

Not musical rhythm, although anyone who has heard me clap along to a song may agree that I should probably spend more time thinking about that

too. I have been thinking about the rhythm of life, the pace at which we move, the expectations we carry, and the way we make space, or fail to make space, for the people and things that matter most.

As a pastor, I have the privilege of listening to people from many different walks of life. I hear stories of joy and celebration: a new baby, a new job, a relationship restored, a medical report that brings relief. I also hear stories of sorrow: grief, exhaustion, disappointment, loneliness, family conflict, and the quiet fear that life is becoming too much.

These conversations are sacred. They have reminded me that beneath all our differences, many of us are asking a similar question:

How do I live a life that is full without becoming a life that is overwhelming?

We often speak about “balance,” although I am not sure life is ever perfectly balanced. Sometimes work needs more of us. Sometimes our family needs more of us. Sometimes our bodies force us to stop, whether stopping was on our schedule or not. Perhaps a healthy life is not about keeping everything perfectly balanced. Perhaps it is about discovering a rhythm that allows us to remain



present to God, to others, and to ourselves.

Our culture often celebrates exhaustion as if it were a badge of honor. We ask one another, “How are you?” and the socially acceptable answer seems to be, “Busy.”

Busy has become more than a description. It has become an identity. We fill our calendars, rush from one responsibility to the next, and occasionally complain that there are not enough hours in the day, as though God made a slight mathematical error when creating time.

Yet Jesus never seems hurried.

Jesus had places to go, people to heal, sermons to preach, disciples to teach, and religious leaders to frustrate. Still, he noticed people. He stopped for the person calling from the roadside. He welcomed children when the disciples wanted to move things along. He ate meals. He withdrew to pray. He slept in a boat during a storm, which may be one of the most impressive examples of resting under pressure in Scripture. Jesus lived with purpose, but he did not live in panic.

A healthy spiritual life is not simply another task added to an already crowded schedule. It is not one more box to check: work, groceries, exercise, family, prayer, laundry, Jesus.

Spirituality is not mainly about what we can get out of a relationship with Jesus. It is about what we discover by being in relationship with Jesus.

We discover that we are loved, that our worth is not measured by how much we accomplish.

We discover that rest is not laziness, that saying “no” can some-

times be an act of faithfulness.

We discover that we do not have to carry every burden alone.

We also discover that Jesus is not always interested in making our lives more efficient. Sometimes Jesus interrupts us. Sometimes he slows us down. Sometimes he leads us toward the very person, conversation, or place we were hoping to avoid.

A life with Jesus is not necessarily a simpler life, but it can become a more grounded life.

Healthy rhythms create room for healthy relationships. When we are constantly rushed, we may be physically present but emotionally somewhere else. We listen while preparing our response. We sit at the table while checking our phones. We say, “I’m fine,” because telling the truth would take too long.

But love requires attention.

Good mental health, strong relationships, and a living faith all require space, space to notice what is happening within us, space to hear another person, space to grieve, space to laugh, and space to recognize God’s quiet presence.

Perhaps the invitation this fall is not to find the perfect balance. Perhaps it

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RENEWAL LEAVE AND RENEWED LIFT RHYTHMS

REFLECTION FROM PASTOR JAKE



I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity for a renewal leave this past summer. It was a time of reconnecting with God, with myself, and with loved ones. I return with a deeper peace, a greater trust in God, a renewed sense of my call, and greater physical and relational health.

Part of the gift of my renewal leave was time to think about my own personal rhythms of life that I can carry from my renewal leave as I re-enter my role in ministry. I have been experimenting with the best way to keep my life centered on God and pursue growth and

transformation through rhythms of solitude, prayer, rest, physical health and sabbath-keeping. I have also been more intentional about how to make time to connect with others in my personal relationships.

A few of the specifics of this for me are a new prayer space in my home that I call my 'Fortress of Solitude', some new prayer journaling practices, regular walks, bedtimes and more intentional thought to my daily work and rest schedule. Overall my hope is to sustain a renewed rhythm that keeps me more deeply connected to God, myself, and others.

Traditionally, Christians have talked about this kind of work on healthy

rhythms a 'rule of life'. At CUMC we call it our 'Rhythms of Life.' The truth is that from time to time we all need to take time to think about new rhythms that will help us love others, love God, and become the people God created us to be. Thank you CUMC for the gift of this renewal leave. And maybe in your own life there are ways for you to consider what is giving you life and what rhythms and habits might help you find the life that God intends. Pastor Quinton also reflects on 'Finding a Rhythm You Can Live in' in his reflection in the newsletter.

~ **Pastor Jake Waybright,**
Lead Pastor

LET THE DREAMERS DREAM!



When I learned the news that we could pay off the loan, it was a week filled with emotions that seemed to come out of nowhere—and at different times throughout the week.

I thought about the unification, the votes, the building, and the long journey that brought us here—a journey filled with vision, prayer, faith, hope, and, at times, doubt.

It was a week of remembering our past. I remembered the vote to unify, the vote to build a new church, the members who were not pleased and chose a new church home, those who have joined us, and those faithful members who asked, "Lord, what do you want to do through me?" but are no longer with us today.

The Sunday when the loan payoff was announced during worship was filled with celebration, tears, and excitement in the Gathering. It reminded me that we are not all at the same place on our journey. As I took a breath and relived the journey that brought us to this moment, some of our more

mature members were saying, "I never thought I would live to see the building built and the loan paid off," some with tears in their eyes.

Others were already asking, "What new ministry can we do?" and "Do you think we can...?"

I want us to remember that this journey has been different for all of us. That doesn't make any of our thoughts right or wrong, it makes us different.

Some of us are remembering the journey that brought us here. Others are happy and grateful just where we are. And others are already dreaming and asking, "Lord, what do you want to do through me next?"

Listening to the joy in the Gathering that Sunday reminded me that if three congregations had not dreamed of something different not so long ago, we would not be here today, in this place and at this time.

So, let the dreamers dream.

Let them dream just as others dreamed years ago. Let us continue to listen, pray, and seek God's direction. And in time, it will be revealed to us, "Lord, what do you want to do through me next?"

~ **Kathy Charette,**
Leadership Council

EXPLORE CUMC

Have you ever wondered about the history of CUMC? Wanted to know what your unique spiritual gifts are? Or just wanted to spend some real quality time with Pastor Jake, Pastor Quinton, or Karli? Now's your chance! Explore Class is designed to help you consider the decision of membership at CUMC by examining our pillars; Grow, Serve, Connect and Worship. Why membership? Membership is a way to deepen your relationship with God, grow in faith, and affirm your decision publically to be a part of a community that supports you socially and spiritually. Come join us every Sunday October 18 through November 15 at 9:30-11am. Childcare is available.



DEBT-FREE: AND JUST GETTING STARTED

REFLECTION FROM THE GIVE TEAM

Let this sink in for a moment: we have fully paid for our building.

Three capital campaigns. Years of sacrificial, faithful giving. And now, the mortgage on our building is gone. If you were part of any of those campaigns—whether through a large pledge or a small one, whether you gave for one season or all three, whether you acted as a volunteer or campaign leader—thank you. All you gave toward this goal, monetary or otherwise, built more than a building. It built a debt-free home for this congregation to worship, grow, connect and serve for generations to come.

This is a moment for celebration. Solomon, dedicating the temple he'd built, praised God for allowing His people to see the finished work of their hands (1 Kings 8:56). We get to feel that same joy today. The work is done. It's paid for. It's ours—or, more accurately, it's the Lord's, entrusted to us.

So what now?

Here's something worth understanding clearly: paying off the mortgage doesn't automatically free up new money for ministry. The capital campaign giving and the general offering fund have always been separate streams—your regular offerings kept powering the day-to-day life and

mission of this church the entire time, while campaign gifts went specifically toward the building. The church never dipped into general funds to pay down the debt. That means the debt is gone, but there isn't a hidden reserve of extra cash suddenly available for ministry. That has to keep being funded the way it always has—through the ongoing generosity of this congregation.

This moment of joy and celebration presents a great invitation for all of us to consider: if you were giving toward the capital campaign, would you prayerfully consider continuing that same level of giving—just redirected to the General Fund, the General Ministry Endowment Fund, the Spring Garden Campus Fund, or some other designated ministry area?

Think about what that could mean. The same sacrificial spirit that built our building could now fuel everything CUMC does in service of its mission to **help people experience a life-giving journey with Jesus, in community and for our community**: children's and student ministry, care for the homebound, support for members going through hard seasons, outreach into our community, missions around the world. Paul told

the Corinthians that God is "able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). We've just spent years proving what this church can accomplish together. Imagine channeling that same energy into ministry itself.

This isn't about needing more from you than you've already given. You've given remarkably, and if your season of extraordinary giving is complete, that's a gift finished well and for which we are truly grateful. But for those who are able and feel led to keep going, this is a chance to see what the "fruits of our labor" really looks like—not just a building with no debt, but a Church overflowing with resources to love and serve.

We didn't do all this hard work just to arrive at a paid-off building. We did it so that building could become a launching pad for even greater ministry, service and investment in our Church, our community and beyond. The mortgage is behind us. What's ahead is entirely up to what we, together, choose to give.

~ Kate Sallie,
Member of the Give Team

IF CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS HAD A SURVIVAL GUIDE



If I were to write a survival guide for my job as a church Communications Director, the first thing I would tell you is this: There is no such thing as a “quick” announcement.

It usually starts innocently enough. Someone will stop me in the hallway and say, “Hey, can you just put this on Facebook?” “Sure!” I say. Then I start asking questions. What’s the date? What time? Where is it? Who is it for? Do people need to register? Is there a cost? What should they bring? Do we have a photo? Is there a website link?

And suddenly, the “quick Facebook post” has become a full communications campaign.

I have learned that information comes to me in many forms. Emails. Texts. Sticky notes. Screenshots. A photo with absolutely no explanation. And my personal favorite: “I thought you probably already knew about this.” I usually did not.

I have also learned that the phrase “everyone knows about it” is almost never true. “Everyone” usually means approximately seven people.

And no matter how many times I announce something: Facebook, Instagram,

the website, the weekly email, the newsletter, Sunday slides, bulletin announcements, someone will inevitably walk up to me and say: “Oh! I didn’t know we were doing that!” I smile. I nod. And then I go post it again.

I’ve also discovered that “Can you make a quick graphic?” is a dangerous question. Because apparently, “quick” means choosing a photo, finding the right font, making sure the words are readable, checking the dimensions, making sure it looks good on a phone, adjusting the spacing, changing the photo, changing the font, changing the photo back, and then staring at it for another 15 minutes wondering if the title is three pixels too far to the left.

And then comes the sentence every Communications Director learns to fear: “Can we make it pop?” I still don’t know exactly what that means. But I try.

Of course, the funny thing about my job is that the things I spend my time creating: emails, graphics, social media posts, newsletters, website updates, aren’t really the important part.

They’re just the tools.

Behind every announcement is something much bigger.

A Bible study isn’t just a Bible study. It might be the place someone makes their first friend at church.

A volunteer opportunity isn’t just another item on the calendar. It might be the moment someone discovers a way to use their gifts.

A Sunday morning post isn’t just a reminder about worship. It might be the little nudge someone needed on a morning when they weren’t sure they belonged

anywhere.

And a picture from an event isn’t just a picture. It’s a story.

It’s evidence of people showing up, serving, laughing, worshiping, learning, caring for one another and living out what we say we believe.

That’s why, despite all the emails, edits, deadlines, last-minute requests, missing information, blurry photos and occasional font-related crises, I really do love what I get to do.

I get to help tell the story of CUMC.

I get to help people know what’s happening. I get to help people feel invited.

And, hopefully, I get to help people discover that there is a place for them here.

So yes, I will continue to ask, “Do we have a good photo?”

I will continue to remind people that I need the date, time, location and registration information.

I will continue to make graphics that someone will tell me they never saw.

Because communication isn’t really about Facebook, email, websites, graphics or newsletters.

It’s about people.

It’s about making sure no one misses an opportunity to connect, serve, worship, or grow.

And if I can help make that happen, even if it means adjusting a graphic for the 47th time, then I’m pretty happy to be the person behind the screen.

Now, if you’ll excuse me...

I have a “quick” announcement to make.

**~ Rhonda Dyson
Communications Director**

(Rhythm...continued from page 6)

is to ask a few honest questions.

What is giving life to me?

What is draining life from me?

Where am I moving too quickly to notice God?

What do I need to release?

What rhythm would help me become more loving, more present, and more fully alive?

These are not questions we answer once. They are questions we live.

And perhaps that is the gift of walking with Jesus. We are not handed a rigid schedule. We are invited into a relationship, a relationship in which we learn when to work, when to rest, when to speak, when to listen, when to hold on, and when to let go.

The goal is not a perfectly balanced life.

The goal is a life that has enough room for grace.

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me, watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Matthew 11:28-30

~ Pastor Quinton De Beer

WELCOMING THE WELCOMER

I am so excited to join the staff at CUMC. In a former life I worked in corporate retail pricing – think the price you see on shelves at the local hardware or grocery store – surprisingly there’s a lot that goes into choosing that price and getting it on the shelf. This was a world of warm meals, hot coffee, and grown-up conversations. For the past three years I have been a stay-at-home mom (plus part time YMCA instructor, part time Welcome Wagon greeter, part time nursery worker, part time surrogate, part time hobbyist). This is a world full of cold coffee, meals that consist of PB&J crusts and smashed goldfish, and stickiness (seriously everything is sticky). I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to live in the sticky world and be there for all the moments with my children. As we enter a new world with school drop offs, ballet rehearsals, and drum practice, I felt God nudging me to find what was next for me. Through all of life’s changes CUMC has been a consistent in our lives. It’s the first church Hilton and I attended together, where our oldest was baptized, where we watched on-line during COVID (even miles away),



and where we came back to after living in North Carolina for three years. What stuck with us at CUMC was that every time we had the opportunity to attend – we were welcomed. Welcomed in a

way that felt like someone truly cared we were there, someone cared to know our names, someone cared to help us pursue a relationship with Jesus. When we moved back to PA in 2024, we were attending Holly Days and were shocked that we were remembered by name and invited back to church. What an amazing opportunity I have been given to continue that legacy, to extend that feeling of belonging to our current congregation and visitors alike. I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to extend our belief that All Means All to the Carlisle community. So, if we haven’t met yet, or if we have and I’ve not remembered your name – please know I am working diligently to know you, and cheer you on as you pursue Jesus, the same way that support and love have been extended to my family. We have an amazing congregation who are all so welcoming, and that makes my “job” easy. Thank you to each of you for extending that welcoming spirit to every visitor that we have the privilege to meet.

~ Karli Wood,
Welcoming Coordinator

CONNECT: PRIME TIME FOR SENIORS

As CUMC was in its initial stages, a lot of time and energy was devoted to developing programs for our children and students. At some point a senior member brought her concern to the Leadership Council, “Other than church and Sunday School classes, what activities does CUMC have for seniors?”

North of 60 was formulated as a response to her question and designed for our senior membership. During its early existence, North of 60 planned many day trips and often used both vans to transport the participants – each trip out of town almost always included having lunch together. Over the years, some of the

participants passed on to sainthood, some experienced health challenges which limited their availability and some simply lost interest.

CONNECT would like to revive this ministry and begin to offer quarterly activities this fall. To make this happen, first we will need a leader to step forward. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to revive this important ministry which helps members to CONNECT with one another beyond our campus on Sundays. Contact Kerm Leitner (kermleitner@comcast.net) if you are interested in this leadership position or have questions.

~ Kerm Leitner,
Leadership Council Pillar Leader



PILGRIMAGE OF PAIN AND HOPE

AUGUST 7-9, 2026, SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE, RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT

Carlisle UMC was one of the host sites for a 3 day pilgrimage of Pain and Hope sponsored by the Susquehanna Conference Commission on Beloved Community. 40 people from across our Annual Conference (7 from CUMC) listened to stories of pain, hope and resilience in Carlisle and Harriburg. Several members of the congregation and Pastor Quinton were part of the organizing team. The group traveled intentionally

as pilgrims with a deep level of listening, intentionality, humility and openness. In Carlisle this included stories from the Carlisle Indian School and Native American experience, along with the history of the segregated African American Lincoln Cemetery and a visit to Bethel AME among other stops highlighting difficult histories and resilient people working for justice and beloved community.

"Our hope is that through this pilgrimage we will be inspired to live out the beloved community more fully...that this experience leads us to be an active voice for justice, healing and love in the world!"

Rev Kristopher Sledge and Pastor Robin Fillmore, Co-Chairpersons, Beloved Community Commission



Trout Gallery Exhibit, Dickinson College - "Branch: Trees in American Art" Stories of Pain and Hope through artists eyes.



Representatives of and advocates for Indigenous People of Pennsylvania



Enjoying delicious tastes of several cultures



Worshipping at The Journey, Harrisburg



Exploring Old Public Graveyard, Carlisle



CUMC members Joanne Reynolds, Jenn Brink, Cheryl Hale, Jandi McAdams, and Quinton DeBeer



Twanda Hunter-Stallworth and Wanda Hunter sharing about Lincoln Cemetery



Heavy lifting at Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church, Carlisle



Laying a wreath at the Lincoln Cemetery, Carlisle

OUR SOCIAL CREED: WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The United Methodist Church's Social Creed expresses our commitment to social justice and faithful Christian living. First written by the Methodist Federation for Social Action, it was adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church at its 1908 General Conference in Baltimore during a time of harsh working conditions, widespread child labor, and growing concern for workers' rights.

As Methodist denominations merged over the years, the Social Creed became part of the heritage of today's United Methodist Church. For more than a century, it has reflected the church's commitment to addressing issues such as fair wages, safe working conditions, poverty, and human dignity.

Many of the concerns that inspired the original Social Creed remain with us today. Economic inequality, affordable housing, access to health care, care for God's creation, and the pursuit of peace continue to challenge our communities

and our faith.

Although the Social Creed has been updated over the years to include concerns such as creation care and world peace, its foundation remains the same: a biblical call to love God and our neighbor, rooted especially in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-11). In 1972, the church expanded these commitments through the adoption of the Social Principles, which provide more detailed guidance for faithful living.

The Social Creed affirms our belief in God the Creator, Jesus Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit. It calls us to:

- Care for God's creation.
- Strengthen families and communities.
- Uphold the dignity and rights of every person.
- Support just work, fair wages, and economic justice.
- Seek peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world.
- Live out the gospel with hope in God's

ultimate reign.

The full text of the Social Creed can be found in The Book of Discipline (2020/2024 edition, ¶164, pp. 146-147), along with a companion litany for use in worship.

The Book of Discipline encourages congregations to use the Social Creed regularly in worship and to keep the Social Principles before the church as a guide for Christian discipleship. In a future newsletter, we will take a closer look at the Social Principles and how they help us live our faith every day.

At CUMC we commit to living like Jesus which brings to life our Social Creed's call to action as inspired by the Sermon on the Mount.

~ **Jay Layman,**
Member of Believers in Action



(Prayer...continued from Page 1)

Especially for Families!

A daily devotional and activity guide will be available each week of the prayer initiative for our students, kids and their families. Erin Fleet and Christina McDermott have prepared this guide as a way for families to participate in this event. You are church VIP's and we need you!

~ **Pastor Jim VanZandt,**
Forward Celebration Team

(Planting...continued from Page 4)

people cannot afford fresh vegetables. Her hope is that the garden will allow more neighbors to experience "the wonderful taste and joy of eating fresh vegetables straight from a garden, for free."

Laura is also excited to see faith-based organizations working with other community groups "to show love in a tangible way." Volunteers will be able to register through the Project SHARE website and contribute to the physical work of preparing and maintaining the space, as well as helping to harvest the vegetables. Their work will help meet a practical need while quietly reminding people that others care about their well-being.

The hope is that this will become much more than a place where food is grown. It can become a place where relationships are formed, isolation is reduced, practical skills are shared, and volunteers discover the joy of serving together.

Tai hopes the garden will become a place "where relationships are built, where people learn from one another, and where service brings

our community together." For families served through Project SHARE, the immediate benefit will be increased access to fresh produce. The longer-term hope is for a healthier, more connected community.

For CUMC, this initiative is an expression of our calling to live like Jesus by sharing what we have, feeding those who are hungry, caring for creation, and treating every person with dignity. It is faith made visible through soil, seeds, service, and partnership.

There will be many ways to participate as the work progresses. Volunteers will be needed to prepare the property, construct the beds, maintain the growing areas, harvest produce, and assist with educational opportunities.

As we move into this next stage, we give thanks for the donor, partners, planners, and volunteers helping to bring this vision to life. The land is being prepared, relationships are growing, and seeds of nourishment, stewardship, and hope are already being planted.

~ **Pastor Quinton De Beer**

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