

The Bridge



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

What a week! Our mission team met some amazing folks in Charleston, West Virginia. We were able to help 6 families, network with our brothers and sisters in Christ, and provide a level of volunteering Eric said he is just simply not used to. Eric was our contact with Rebuilding Charleston, and has expressed on multiple occasions that he cannot appreciate us enough for what our team accomplished this year!

Monday morning we posed for photos and got the rundown of who Rebuilding Charleston is and what they do. They get private funding and federal grants to help people in need. There is an application process and wait period for people to get work done on their homes. This is usually at least a 2-year process. Eric was amazing to work with as he had jobs and materials ready for us to fly into on day 1. While there we fixed a 4-year-old electrical problem, installed ceiling fans, gutters, trailer skirting, painted, built a small deck, repaired and installed several floors, and even a kitchen sink! CUMC has some amazing individuals with huge hearts willing to take on any task. Our folks did this with aplomb and grace while learning that manual labor is only part of the work we do on a mission trip. During devotions the first night we were reminded of the importance of connect-

ing with not just the home owners but other people on these trips: the neighbors, folks from the church, Rebuilding Charleston, and even the members of our mission team. Roger reminded us that sharing God's love can take many forms and why it's possible for anyone to participate in mission work when it comes to making meaningful connections with others.

We did take some time to do other things on this trip besides work. For a state capitol, Charleston has a lovely small town feel. The Kanawha River and outdoor market provided some beautiful scenery while the hospital a couple of blocks away with the active helipad reminded us we weren't in Carlisle anymore. Our team visited the open air market and took a tour of the state capitol building with its 23 karat gold leaf rotunda. Throughout the week there were several walks along the scenic Kanawha River and around Charleston. Per tradition we go out Sunday night as a team for pizza and then dinner out on Friday to celebrate a wonderful week. Sunday we were tempted by "fabulous" pizza and after an extended wait to be seated we were not disappointed! On Friday we found some Greek faire at Adelphia that was also delicious!

Eric thanked us multiple times before

we left and I have gotten messages since returning to PA continuing to share how impressed he was with our group. I share those sentiments, what an amazing week we had!!! A strength in construction is NOT a prerequisite to go on these trips as folks like Mr. Yufer, Mr. Washinger, (and in the past Mr. Charette) have given love, guidance, and instruction to a point where people are confident to try using a power tool for the first time! The work we get done on these trips allows us to bond as members of our congregation. No matter what time you attend worship Sundays; whether online or in person, the connections we make can have an impact that lasts a lifetime. For us and for the people we help, it is a powerful bond that keeps me and most other folks coming back. Our positive attitude and open hearts created another connection for future mission work as Eric has asked me how soon we can come back?

Mission accomplished!

~ Brian Rohm





CUMC KIDS MINISTRY

When I was growing up Sunday School was part of my weekly routine. In fact, I cannot remember a Sunday we didn't get up and go to Sunday School as a child. Miss Helen and Miss Marie were my first Sunday School teachers. I remember kind

smiles and warm hugs. I also remember a huge flip chart as we learned the Lord's prayer and sang songs. Miss Anita was next and my strongest memory in her class was that she took us out for breakfast one Sunday when we learned the Apostle's creed. We all had waffles with ice cream. I am pretty sure that is where Pancakes and PJs came from. Miss Aurora and Miss Harriet were my teachers in middle and high school. I remember they asked the tough questions and wanted me to really think about my faith and why I believed certain things.

When I think back to my Christian Education as a child, it was the adults who cared and took an interest in me that made the greatest impact. I learned that God loved me unconditionally because my Sunday School teachers showed me I was loved every week. I consider it a true blessing that I get to teach kids about Jesus and how much they are loved by God each week.

This summer the Kids Room is getting a bit of a makeover. We have been blessed with a generous gift and will be using the money to buy some new seating and some more tables to accommodate the growth in Kids Ministry. We will also be looking to expand Kids Worship on Sunday Mornings at the 9:45am service. Kids' Worship keeps

growing at that time and we have found ourselves in need of some more volunteers. We need volunteers to help greet families and help with check-in. We also need volunteers to help lead small groups. You would lead discussions and activities based on the lesson. If you are interested in volunteering in Kids Worship once a month, please sign up using the QR code.

Looking ahead to the summer in Preteen, we have some fun summer events planned. We are going on a day trip to Knoebels Amusement Park on June 5th from 9:15am-8pm. The cost is \$54. We will be having a Water Battle on July 19th from 5-7pm. Please come expecting to get wet. We will also be going mini-golfing on August 30th from 5-7pm. We will be meeting at the sports emporium. The cost of Mini golf is \$15.

On August 2nd we will be having Sundaes on Sunday. This is a chance for those little ones moving up into kids worship to come have ice cream with the kids worship leaders and to make some new friends. It is also a great chance to have some ice cream and play some games with your church family. We will be blessing backpacks on August 16th.



SCAN TO HELP WITH KIDS WORSHIP



SUMMER KIDS MIN

June 5 - Preteen Knoebels Trip, 9:15am-8pm

June 7-11 - VBS

June 12 - VBS Closing Picnic, 5:30pm

June 14 - Dads & Donuts, 9am

July 19 - Preteen Water Battle, 5-7pm

Aug 2 - Sundaes on Sunday, 3:30-5pm

Aug 16 - Blessing of the Backpacks during worship

Aug 30 - Preteen Minigolf, 5-7pm

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

Christina McDermott,
Kids Ministries Director
cmcdermott@carlislepaumc.org

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS is coming up! We are really excited for Rainforest Falls VBS June 7th-11th. Vacation Bible School will be from 5:30pm-8pm with an optional dinner at 5pm. We will have our closing program and picnic on June 12th at 5:30pm. We will sing, play games, explore nature in the imagination station, have snacks and learn our memory verses, and of course learn about who God is! And of course there are always surprises at VBS! There is still time to sign up on the church website. We also have a new small VBS class for preschoolers from 5:30pm-7:30pm. More details about that class can be found on the sign-up form. We hope your child will join us for this fun week of discovering the nature of God!



FAITH INTO ACTION

This summer, our student ministry is excited to put our faith into action through serving opportunities both inside and outside the church! Throughout the summer months, our students will be learning that serving others is one of the greatest ways we can Live Like Jesus.

One of the biggest opportunities this summer is our mission trip to Altoona with Team Effort Missions. Students and leaders will spend the week serving through construction projects, community outreach, and relationship building, while growing deeper in their faith and learning what it means to be the hands and feet of Christ.

Our high school students will once again play a huge role in Vacation Bible School this summer by helping lead stations, games, crafts, snacks, and skits each night. Their energy, leadership, and willingness to serve help make VBS such a special and memorable experience for the younger children in our church and community.

Students will also serve locally with Project SHARE through gleaning. Gleaning is the process of collecting leftover crops from local farms after harvest, so



the food can be distributed to families facing food insecurity, instead of going to waste. It's a meaningful way for students to serve their community while helping provide food for those in need. In addition, students will spend a day serving at Mission Central, where they will help pack flood buckets, organize warehouse donations, and prepare supplies that will be sent to communities recovering from disasters around the world. We are connecting to our denominational partners to see the good we can all do together.

This summer's theme verse is Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." As we encourage students to memorize scripture this summer, we also want them to live it out. Serving reminds us that God often uses ordinary people to bring hope, strength, encouragement, and practical help to others. We are excited to watch our students grow in compas-

sion, leadership, and faith as they serve this summer!



CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTERS

"In Normal Times, barring pandemics or natural disasters, in person "visitation" is one of the most important elements of care that can be offered through the church." Melissa Gepford

Believing this is true and wanting to increase the number of members and attenders that CUMC is connecting with, on Sunday May 10th, Pastor Jake and Pastor Quinton commissioned CUMC's first nine congregational care ministers (CCM). The CCMs are members who will be assisting the pastors with hospital, phone and home visits. As CUMC continues to grow, the congregational care ministers will provide ad-



ditional visits beyond what two pastors can. These care ministers will be additional to our team of Shepherds who visit our LAMS (Limited Access Members). Pastor Quinton and Andrea Katz at-

tended congregational care sessions when the CUMC staff attended the conference last fall at The Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. The Care Program's Director, Claire Clough, mentored Andrea and assisted with planning the CCM training and provided many videos made by The Church of the Resurrection staff, which was a true gift.

Pastor Jake and Pastor Quinton will be making the referrals to the CCMs. If you have any questions about this new connect ministry, please email Pastor Quinton, qdebeer@carlislepaumc.org

~ **Andrea Katz**

REFLECTING ON MY TIME AT CUMC



I have been reflecting on my time at CUMC as the Welcome Director with great gratitude.

I have enjoyed the staff who have been the most fun, encouraging and loving people I have ever worked with and enjoyed team building events. I regret I will not get to defend my championship of the Superbowl paper football event. The competition is always fierce and fun.

I am grateful for CUMC's congregation members who have encouraged me in pursuing ministry. This past fall at church charge I was recommended for a local licensed pastor. It has been a life long call that could not be realized due to the fact I am a lesbian until now.

This was the time and the place it was to happen. CUMC living out

All Means All.

I am grateful for members who have embraced the welcoming vibe that CUMC is known for, I loved being able to ask a nervous first-time visitor who is alone "Would you like me to introduce you to someone who can sit with you during worship?" Many people say no but truly appreciate the offer. I know the people who have volunteered to sit with new folks will be warm and welcoming. The people who did accept that offer have become active members/attenders.

I am most grateful for the Welcome statement, that when a new attender or someone I meet at a community event asks if All means them too, I can wholeheartedly say yes. I have learned that people feel intense church hurt and that the CUMC Welcome statement has provided the spark for healing. I can speak to that first hand. I didn't realize until I became part of CUMC that I too was still experiencing church hurt. I believe I healed a little bit every time I heard and shared that. "Welcome to CUMC where all are Welcome and All Means All."

~ **Andrea Katz**

THE HOLY SPIRIT & EVERYDAY CHAOS

Some days faith feels very spiritual and deep... and other days it feels like, "Lord, please help me find my keys before I lose my witness."

The truth is, most of life happens in the middle of ordinary chaos—and somehow, God is right there in it.

He's there when you finally sit down with your coffee and it's still hot, and He's there when you're trying to stay patient in the checkout line and not say what you're really thinking.

We often picture faith as perfectly organized, but real faith shows up in messy kitchens, busy schedules, and group texts that get a little too honest.

The good news is that God doesn't require us to have everything together for Him to work in our lives. Scripture is full of people who were confused, tired, and dramatic—and God still used them anyway.

So if your week feels a little scattered, you're in good company. Faith is trusting God right in the middle of it all—and maybe having an extra cup of coffee while you do it.



STAYING CONNECTED

In today's world, ministry doesn't only happen within the walls of the church—it also happens in the ways we stay connected throughout the week. Social media and digital communication have become an important extension of our outreach, helping us share encouragement, worship, and community life beyond Sunday mornings.

Looking at our recent Instagram insights gives us a helpful snapshot of how people are engaging with our church online.

Over the past reporting period, our account received 2,350 views, 129 accounts reached, and 90 interactions. While these numbers reflect steady activity, they also show something important: most of our engagement is coming from people who already follow us. In fact, nearly 94% of our views come from followers, and only a small portion comes from new audiences.

This tells us two things at once. First, our current community is still paying attention. People are seeing posts, reacting, and staying connected. Second, there is significant opportunity to expand our reach and share the message of our church more widely.

We also see that posts are the primary way people engage, accounting for nearly all of our visibility and interaction. While this is encouraging, it also highlights an area for growth—especially through tools like Reels and Stories,

which can help us connect with new people in more dynamic and discoverable ways.

Another important takeaway is that engagement is mostly expressed through quick reactions rather than deeper interaction like comments or shares. This reminds us that while people are seeing our content, we have an opportunity to invite more conversation, reflection, and participation online.

Why This Matters for Church Communications

These insights are more than just numbers—they reflect how people are experiencing connection with our church outside of Sunday worship.

Church communications are not simply about announcements or updates. They are about ministry presence throughout the week:

A word of encouragement on a difficult day

A reminder of God's love in the middle of daily life

An invitation for someone new to find community

A way for members to stay spiritually connected between Sundays

In many ways, digital communication has become a front door to the church. For some, it is the first impression. For others, it is what keeps them connected when they cannot be physically present.

That's why consistency matters. That's

why clarity matters. And that's why continuing to grow in how we share content online is an important part of our overall ministry.

Moving Forward

As we look ahead, our goal is not simply to increase numbers, but to deepen connection. That may mean:

Sharing more engaging and shareable content

Exploring short-form video like Reels
Encouraging comments and conversation

Reaching beyond our current followers to invite new people into our community

Most importantly, it means continuing to use every communication tool available to point people toward Christ and toward community.

Even small posts can have a big impact. A simple message, scripture, or moment from church life may be exactly what someone needs to see that day.

As we continue to grow in this area, we do so with gratitude—for those who already engage, for those who are newly connecting, and for the opportunity to extend ministry beyond our physical gatherings.

Interested and want to help?
Contact Rhonda Dyson,
rdyson@carlislepaumc.org

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ORDAINED DEACONS IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Order of Deacon

CONNECTING THE CHURCH & THE WORLD



This year, The United Methodist Church celebrates an important milestone: 30 years since the establishment of the permanent Order of Deacon in 1996. While deacons have always existed in the life of the Church in various forms, the 1996 General Conference formally recognized the deacon as a distinct and permanent ordained ministry alongside the Order of Elder.

For many United Methodists, the role of a deacon is still not fully understood. Some assume a deacon is simply “training to become an elder,” while others think deacons only focus on outreach or service projects. But the calling of a deacon is much richer, broader, and deeply rooted in both Scripture and the mission of the Church.

At Carlisle United Methodist Church, we have the joy of living alongside and experiencing this ministry together.

What Is a Deacon?

The word deacon comes from the Greek word diakonos, meaning “servant” or “one who ministers.” In the New Testament, deacons were called to connect the needs of the world with the life of the Church. In many ways, deacons stand at the intersection of Church and community, helping congregations live out the love of Christ beyond the walls of the sanctuary.

The UMC describes deacons as persons called “to Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice.” Deacons are ordained clergy, just like elders, but with a different emphasis and calling.

While elders are called primarily to ministries of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service, often leading congregations and overseeing the sacramental and administrative life of the Church, dea-

cons are called to bridge the Church and the world, equipping the people of God for ministry in everyday life.

A simple way to think about it is this:

- Elders gather, shepherd, and lead the Church.

- Deacons connect, equip, and send the Church into the world.

Neither ministry is “higher” or “lower.” They are complementary gifts that work best together.

One of the most common misunderstandings is that deacons are “less than” elders. That is simply not true. Deacons are fully ordained clergy in The United Methodist Church. They are members of the clergy session of Annual Conference, take vows of ordination, and are appointed to ministry by the bishop.

Another misunderstanding is that deacons cannot preach, teach, or lead worship. In fact, many deacons regularly preach, teach, lead ministries, and serve in pastoral leadership roles. Deacons often serve in congregations, hospitals, nonprofits, schools, chaplaincy settings, community ministries, and mission fields.

There is also a growing awareness in the Church around the sacramental role of deacons. While elders remain the ordinary presiders at Holy Communion and Baptism, deacons may administer sacraments where contextually appropriate. This reflects the Church’s recognition that ministry today often happens in diverse places beyond traditional church walls.

In many congregations, including CUMC, deacons and elders serve together in beautiful partnership. The Church is healthiest when these gifts are shared collaboratively rather than competitively.

At CUMC, I have been deeply grateful to serve among you as a provisional deacon. Much of my ministry here reflects the heart of the diaconate: connecting our congregation with the needs of the

community and helping us “Live Like Jesus” beyond Sunday morning.

Whether through SERVE, GROW & CONNECT Pillars, our serve partnerships, community engagement initiatives, mission trips, congregational care, Little Lights Learning Center, or creating spaces where faith meets real life, the ministry of a deacon seeks to remind the Church that worship always flows outward into compassion, justice, mercy, and mission.

One of the great gifts of ministry at CUMC has been serving alongside our elder, Pastor Jake, and pastoral staff in collaborative ministry. Together, we preach, care, lead worship, administer sacraments, disciple, and equip the congregation for ministry. This partnership reflects something deeply Wesleyan: the belief that ministry is shared and connective.

As our world changes, the Church increasingly needs leaders who can help build bridges between faith and everyday life. Deacons often help congregations engage their communities, listen to hurting neighbors, form partnerships, and reimagine how the Church participates in God’s mission in the world.

In a time when many people are searching for authentic connection, compassion, and purpose, the ministry of the deacon reminds us that the Church does not exist for itself alone. We are sent people.

As The United Methodist Church celebrates 30 years of ordained deacons, we give thanks for all those who have faithfully served in this calling and for the ways God continues to use deacons and elders together to strengthen the witness of the Church.

May we continue to be a congregation that Loves Boldly, Serves Joyfully and Leads Courageously, Living Like Jesus in this community and beyond.

~ Pastor Quinton



CUMC WILDFLOWER MEADOW

Our wildflower meadow may not look like a magazine cover yet... but something beautiful is happening... This first year is all about strong roots, fighting off weeds, and giving native plants time to settle in. Most of the green you're seeing now are fast-growing annuals, while the real stars of the show are taking their time underground.

The bright red flowers that recently appeared are red poppies. The contractor scattered tiny poppy seeds last fall, and now they're putting on a beautiful spring show! Poppies spread naturally by seed, so we hope to see even more in the years ahead. And that sea of yellow flowers? That's wood sorrel. These plants appeared naturally in the meadow and have hap-

pily made themselves at home. There's a saying about native meadows: "First year they sleep, second year they creep, third year they leap." So while we'll start seeing more blooms next year, Summer 2028 is when this meadow is expected to truly come alive with color, butterflies, bees, and native beauty everywhere!

GIVING WISELY: HOW THOUGHTFUL PLANNING CAN MULTIPLY YOUR GENEROSITY

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." – 2 Corinthians 9:7

Most of us think of giving as a simple transaction – writing a check, dropping an envelope in the offering plate, clicking "donate" online. And those gifts matter enormously. But for many in our congregation, particularly those who have spent decades building savings, retirement accounts, or investment portfolios, there are often smarter ways to give – approaches that can significantly increase the impact of what you share while reducing your tax burden in the process.

Being a wise steward of what God has entrusted to us means not only how much we give, but how we give. The following approaches are worth discussing with your financial advisor or estate attorney, especially as you think about your long-term generosity.

Give From Your IRA Before Your Wallet (QCDs)

If you are 70½ or older, one of the most powerful giving tools available to you is the **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)**. This allows you to transfer funds directly from your IRA to a qualified charity – up to \$105,000 per year (indexed for inflation) – without the distribution counting as taxable income. Why does that matter? Because most IRA withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income. By giving directly to the church or another nonprofit through a QCD, you satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) without that money ever appearing on your tax return. For many retirees, this results in lower Medicare premiums, reduced taxation of Social Security benefits, and a cleaner tax picture overall.

This is one of the most overlooked opportunities in charitable giving, and it requires only a simple instruction to your IRA custodian. If you are in this season of life, please ask your financial

advisor whether a QCD might make sense for you.

Donate Appreciated Stock Instead of Cash

If you own stocks, mutual funds, or other investments that have grown in value, donating those assets directly – rather than selling them first – can be a remarkably effective strategy.

Here is why: when you sell appreciated stock, you owe capital gains tax on the growth. But when you donate that stock directly to a charitable organization, you generally avoid that capital gains tax entirely and receive a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the asset. The church receives more, the IRS receives less, and your portfolio has room to grow with fresh capital.

Consider a Donor-Advised Fund

A **Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)** is a charitable account that functions like (continued on Page 8)

ADULT GROW SUMMER SHORTS

This summer, CUMC is offering a variety of short-term adult studies and small groups designed to help you grow in faith, deepen your understanding of Scripture, and connect with others in meaningful community. Topics include Bible study, prayer practices, leadership development, spiritual growth, and caring for mental and emotional health.

These classes are designed with summer schedules in mind, offering flexible options including short series, evening gatherings, in-person and online participation, and one-time work-

shops. Whether you are looking for encouragement, deeper study, or a new way to engage your faith, there is something for every stage of the journey.

We believe growth happens best in community, and these opportunities are a great way to stay connected and continue your spiritual walk throughout the summer months.

All class descriptions and details can be found at carlislepaumc.org/adults. We invite you to explore what's available and join us as we learn, grow, and walk together in faith this summer.

(Giving...continued from Page 7)

a personal giving account.

You make a contribution (cash, stock, or other assets), receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants from the fund to churches and nonprofits over time.

This can be particularly useful when your income is unusually high in a given year – perhaps from a business sale, an inheritance, or a large bonus – and you want to lock in the deduction now while giving thoughtfully over many years. DAFs are also excellent vehicles for accepting appreciated assets, real estate, or complex investments that a church might not be equipped to receive directly.

Many families find that establishing a DAF creates a wonderful rhythm of intentional, prayerful giving – involving spouses, children, and even grandchildren in decisions about how the family's charitable resources are distributed.

Leave a Legacy Through Your Estate Plan

A bequest – a gift from your estate – is the most common form of planned giving. It costs nothing during your lifetime and can have a profound impact for years after you are gone. A simple addition to your will or trust can direct a percentage of your estate, a specific dollar amount, or the remainder after family bequests, to the church or a min-

istry you love.

Equally powerful is naming the church as a **beneficiary of a retirement account or life insurance policy**. Because retirement accounts like IRAs and 401(k)s pass taxable income to heirs, leaving these funds to a tax-exempt charity – while leaving other assets to family – can dramatically reduce the tax burden on your estate. Your family inherits assets that are less heavily taxed, while the church receives every dollar you designated, free of income tax.

Charitable Remainder Trusts: Give, Receive Income, and Leave a Legacy

For those with larger assets, a **Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)** can accomplish several goals at once. You transfer appreciated assets into the trust, receive a partial charitable deduction, draw income from the trust during your lifetime (or for a set term), and upon your death, the remaining assets pass to the church or other named charities. CRTs are particularly attractive for individuals holding highly appreciated assets – a business, farmland, or investment property – who need income but want to eventually benefit a cause they care about. These are complex instruments requiring an attorney to establish, but for the right person, they represent an extraordinary convergence of financial planning and generosity.

A Word of Encouragement

None of this is about finding loopholes or treating giving as a tax exercise. It is about being a good steward – using wisdom to ensure that the resources God has given you do the most possible good. Every dollar saved in unnecessary taxes is a dollar that can serve our church and all that it supports throughout our community.

If any of these ideas make sense to you, speaking with a qualified financial planner or estate attorney who understands charitable giving is a great place to start. If you would like help connecting with someone, or if you are interested in learning more about how your giving can support the long-term ministry of our church, please reach out to the church office. We would love to walk alongside you in this.

Your generosity – however it flows – is a witness to what you believe about what lasts.

Note: This article is for general informational purposes and is not intended as tax or legal advice. Please consult your financial advisor or estate attorney regarding your personal situation.

~ Kate Sallie



333 S Spring Garden Street
Carlisle, PA
717.249.1512 • carlislepaumc.org

Rev. Jake Waybright
Lead Pastor

jwaybright@carlislepaumc.org

Quinton De Beer
Associate Pastor

qdebeer@carlislepaumc.org