

# FOCUS



# ON

# *FAITH*

Volume 49, Number 2  
2020



9:00 am —SUNDAY SCHOOL  
10:15 am—WORSHIP

LEAD PASTOR: Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST: Dennis J. Duda

## Faith United Church of Christ

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Center Valley, PA 18034

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Thank you to the newsletter crew for their help in mailing the newsletters each month -

*Ruth Cressman, LaVerna Diehl,  
Joan Hassler, Evelyn Hovis,  
and Sue Walter*

## OUR VISION STATEMENT

*United with Christ,  
we are committed  
to sharing the  
transformative love  
of God's  
grace and peace  
through service  
to our neighbors.*

### 2020 Consistory

#### Officers:

President: Kevin Long

Vice President: Becky Hite

Secretary: Mary Ellen Long

#### Elders:

Kevin Long

Jane Van Horn

Mike Ford

Jerry Trexler

#### Deacons:

Mary Ellen Long

Tom Berghold

Justin Koser

Becky Hite

Tracy Adams

Kim Ritter

Ken Koehnlein

Brenda Hovis

**Church Treasurer:** Deb Herstine

#### Liaisons:

Christian Ed: Mike Ford

Fellowship/Outreach: Kevin Long

Enduring /Mem. Gifts: Mary Ellen Long

Property: Ken Koehnlein

Staff Relations: Jane Van Horn

Worship: Kim Ritter

Budget/Finance: Jerry Trexler

Mission: Tracy Adams

Youth Group: Becky Hite

Day Care: Pastor Bruce

Fundraising: Brenda Hovis

Choir: Tom Berghold



## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

One morning about a month ago I woke up and my wedding ring wasn't on my finger! I panicked. I had no idea where it could have gone. I didn't remember taking it off for any reason but I checked my dresser, bedside table, even my desk in our family room. It was nowhere to be found. Then I went back to the bedroom and lifted the sheets and lo and behold there it was laying on the mattress. After feeling the extreme relief of finding the ring I remembered that before going to bed the night before I put some hand lotion on my hands as they were rather rough. I guess the hand lotion was so smooth and slick that my ring slid right off my finger.

*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.*

*Matthew 13:45 – 46*

My wedding ring has great value. It represents a decision that I made, a commitment that I made, a commitment that was made to me, and the extreme joy that has come with them. Had I never found the ring I could have replaced it but the new ring would never fully represent what the first one did. Thank goodness I found it. It reminded me of the passages in Matthew and I think I may understand it better than I had before. I found something of great, immeasurable value, and felt the same joy of that merchant.

In telling that story Jesus was trying to convey to those listening just how valuable the Kingdom of God is and how worthy it is for us to search for it - but consider this: The Kingdom of God is

not right in front of our noses! It is not clear to our vision or hearing. Listen to the story. We have to LOOK for it! We must search! Just as the merchant was searching for “fine pearls” it wasn’t until he found the best, the most exquisite, pearl did he know that his search was over.

There are many “shiny objects” that we will find on our path in life but only one is as valuable as the Kingdom of God and so I ask you; do you know what it looks or feels like? Would you recognize the Kingdom of God if it were right in front of you? Would you know a good pearl from a bad pearl? From a distance, would you recognize your wedding ring from another ring? The Kingdom of God with all of its glory may be right in front of us but we must be able to recognize it and the first part of recognizing something is to desire it and out of that desire will come our search.

And so, what is the most valuable thing to you? A ring? A pearl? A lock of your child’s hair when they got their first haircut? What would bring heartache to you if you lost it? That will define the value of something and the determination to find it. The Kingdom of God is even more valuable. Understand what it is. Desire to find it and go on your search. Grasp it when you find it and never let go. It is worth everything you have.

Peace,



**FEBRUARY 2, 2020**

10:15 AM

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Dear Friends,

Who stuffs a Christmas Stocking with homemade apple sauce, preserves, and chocolates, a beeswax Santa, so many gift cards to so many places (not to mention Starbucks), a pair of Santa Socks AND a Santa mug, a Starbucks Christmas Tree Ornament, hot chocolate, Peppermints, generous cash (BTW, I need to buy a new lap top. Guess how I will use that gift?), so many cards and holiday well-wishes, and a donation to the U.C.C. Christmas Fund in my name and the most unique stick of



lip balm I have EVER seen? That's right ... you did! 😊

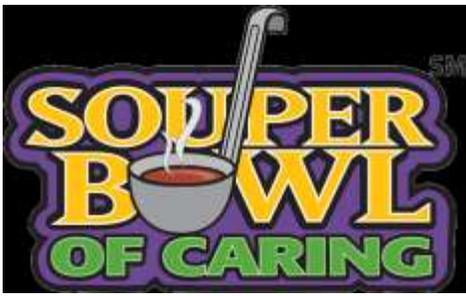
If I'm forgetting what you put into my stocking this year I do apologize. There was just so much it was hard to list everything and many times cards and gifts get separated inside the stocking but everything gets to where it should go!

Thank you for all of your kind and thoughtful gifts. It is truly an honor to serve you as your pastor and celebrate another Christmas with you.

Joy!

*Pastor Bruce*

**Puzzle Answer:** You are my friends if you do what I command.  
This is my command: "Love each other." John 15:14, 17 NIV



## FEBRUARY IS SOUPER BOWL OF CARING MONTH

In 1990 the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a youth group in South Carolina. The prayer was simply this: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat”.

Since then, more than \$110 million has been raised and donated to organizations that provide shelter to the homeless and food for the hungry. Right here in the Southern Lehigh area, Betty Lou’s Pantry provides food for over 100 families and 300 individuals, many of whom are children.

I am sure that many of you will be gathering with friends and family to watch the Super Bowl. There will more than likely be an abundance of snacks and beverages. As we gather for this event let us not forget our neighbors in need and help to provide a family with a hot bowl of soup on a cold winter’s night.

The Mission Team would like to challenge all of you to support the **Souper Bowl of Caring** by bringing several of these food items *EVERY Sunday in February*:

**HEARTY SOUPS \* CHILI**  
**BEEF STEW \* RAVIOLI**

**Our goal is to donate 150 items to Betty Lou’s Pantry**

**THEN: You're Invited to A Soup Lunch after Worship on Feb 16th!** Faith members are invited to bring a crockpot full of their favorite homemade soup for lunch. Then those attending will select the "Favorite Faith Soup." Everyone who attends will be able to vote on their favorite soup. Winner of "Favorite Faith Soup" must be present to win. This is how it works this year...A container will be set next to each soup. Everyone receives a quarter when they enter. Your quarter is placed in your favorite soup's container. If you really want your favorite soup to win, then you may place extra money in that container. All money will be given to the **SLA Samaritan Fund** mission.

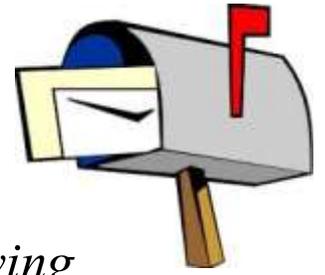
**SPECIAL NOTE:** If you cannot make soup, please don't stay away. There will be plenty for everyone. Please feel free to bring some crackers or a plate of cookies or just yourself. Come to enjoy the fellowship with your friends at Faith.

## **Church World Services Blanket Sunday**



February is the month to try to keep warm! It's also the month when we take our annual **Blanket Offering on Sunday, February 29**. Each warm blanket costs only \$10 and our annual goal is to purchase at least 100 blankets. CWS uses these blankets around the world, including the US, during emergencies. Each blanket provides victims of natural and man-made disasters with warmth and shelter. We have met our goal for several years. Let us continue with this generosity.

*Dear Pastor Bruce, Dennis, Choir, and many church friends,*



*Thank you so much for the prayers, cards, and concern for my husband Rod & I over this last harrowing month (mid November)! Rod is recuperating well, if slowly. Your prayers and concern were a treasured gift sustaining me at tough moments.*

*Mary Ellen Long*

*To Faith Church,*

*I want to say Thank You for the care package. It is much appreciated. I hope to one day be able to drive and get back to going to church.*

*Sincerely,  
Bebe Moyer*

*Hi Bruce,*

*There is still place we'd rather be on Christmas Eve than joining you at Faith. Alas, we suffered it out in Steamboat Springs, CO with Brock and his family.*

*We are well while trying to avoid falling on all our snow and ice.*

*Stu & Jan*

*I want to thank Rev. Bruce Stevenson for his visit, communion and the gift bag filled with all types of goodies. Thanks to everybody who donated and put the bag together.*

*Stanley Turel*

*Faith Church,*

*I really appreciated your Christmas gift of so many useful goodies. The tissues and pens and toiletry goods are greatly appreciated.*

*I also want to thank Pastor Stevenson for visiting me and giving me communion. I always look forward to your visits!*

*Thank you for all of the Christmas cards and for remembering me.*

*With Jesus love,*

*Miriam Beck*

*Members and Friends of Faith,*

*Many thanks for filling my Christmas sock again this year. My 3 year old granddaughter said I must have been extra good to get a big sock like that!*

*I so enjoy keeping the church clean for you. God bless all of you.*

*Your Sexton,*

*Dorothy*

*Dear Friends,*

*Thank you to all for the great gifts that filled my Christmas Stocking! Your kind generosity and support mean the world to me. Hoping your New Year is healthy and happy!*

*Sandy*

**Updated Directory Info:**

**Delores Castetter**

1000 Fourth St., Apt 308  
Whitehall, PA 18052

**Charles Castetter**

3114 Taylor Dr.  
Center Valley, PA 18034

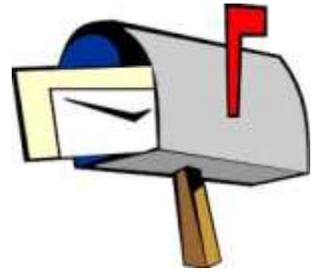
**Tracy Adams**

267-738-1645

**Ellen Stettler** 697 First St., Apt 8, Palmerton, PA 18071

Karen,

*We received the generous donation from Faith Church for the Pitt Hopkins Research Foundation in honor of Rylie. We can't thank you enough for continuing to believe in our mission to find a cure and a treatment for Pitt Hopkins Syndrome.*



*We are beginning to see the fruits of our labor. Rylie has been chosen as a participant in the first ever clinical trial for Pitt Hopkins. It will begin sometime in February and has the potential to alleviate all of the gastrointestinal issues that cause her pain and discomfort on a daily basis. Please pray for us that we have safe travels to Arizona and that the treatment will work for her.*

*Please share with the members of Faith church our sincere appreciation.*

*With love,  
Jack and Heather Maginn*

**The Travel Mugs  
have arrived!**

**See Becky Hite on Sunday  
to pick yours up.**

**Forgot to order yours? We have  
some extras—just \$ 10 each!  
Get yours before they're gone!!**





Faith Church UCC, Center Valley

January 19 at 1:11 PM · 🌐

The coffee station is coming along! Don't you just love the bright yellow and the addition of the extra pew! Perfect spot to gather in conversation with your fellow congregation members.

Ps. We have tea and hot chocolate too. 😊



Caroline Frantz and 9 others

3 Comments



# THOSE WHO WILL SERVE IN FEBRUARY

	Feb. 2	Feb. 9	Feb. 16	Feb. 23
<b>Head Usher: Kevin Long   Financial Secretary: Bob Shelly Nursery: Diane Talaber</b>				
<b>Greeter</b>	Scouts	Doris Horwath	Barb Scattergood	Carolyn Frantz
<b>Ushers</b>	Scouts	Karen Long Ruth Smith Mike Ford Wes Koser	Bruce & Michele Keeler Ken & Kim Ritter	Scott & Louise Christman Jerry & Linda Lennon
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Scouts	Karen Long	Karen Talboo	Scott Christman
<b>Acolytes</b>	Scouts	Avery Koser	Weiland Hite	Owen Hovis Damyn Allison
<b>Flowers</b>	A Friend	Breisch	Talboo	Hovis

**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
*worship*

***February 26, 2020 , 7:30 pm***

*Greeter: Sue Walter*

*Ushers: George Rau & Donna Schoenberger*

*Lay Reader: Donna Schoenberger*



## FROM THE TREASURER— DECEMBER FINANCIALS

	<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Receipts	\$30,561.67	\$250,954.64
Disbursements	\$26,707.54	\$260,289.98
	\$3,854.13	(\$9,335.34)

	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Weekly Offering</b>	<b>over/under \$3500 goal</b>
12/1	52	\$ 2,688	(\$812)
12/8	160	\$ 3,333	(\$167)
12/15	96	\$ 4,124	\$624.25
12/22	90	\$ 1,897	(\$1,603)
12/24	182	\$ 2,637	
12/24	73	\$ 422	
12/29	41	\$ 2,166	(\$1,334)
Letter		\$ 2,066	
Tithe.ly		\$ 940	
year end		\$ 1,640	
	694	\$ 21,913	

### Special Offerings

Christmas Fund—\$503

OCWM—\$80

Betty Lou's Pantry—\$75

OGHS—\$33 (from Mission)

Strengthen the Church—\$190 (from Mission)



**From the Secretary:**

The **deadline** for **March Newsletter** articles and information is **February 10th**. Please email to [faitchurchcv@gmail.com](mailto:faitchurchcv@gmail.com) or place them in the Secretary's mailbox in the conference room or on her desk.

**Interested in sponsoring 2020 ALTAR FLOWERS? The following dates are open: May 3 & 31, July 12, 19, 26, August 2, 9, October 4, 11, November 29. Please call the church office to reserve your date. The cost is \$35.**



Many thanks for your support of Betty Lou's Pantry! For the last two Sundays of November and the first two Sundays of December our regular donations included 200 items. This total includes 30 bottles of detergent that were donated in December.

**MOST CURRENTLY NEEDED ITEMS:**

**MEAT HELPERS • CANNED RAVIOLI • BOXED POTATOES**

**Items stocked at the Pantry include:**

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Pork & Beans      | Chili                   |
| Canned Pasta      | Peanut Butter           |
| Canned Tomatoes   | Canned Sauce            |
| Kidney Beans      | Chunky Soups            |
| Canned fruit      | Macaroni & Cheese       |
| Canned Vegetables | Canned Chicken & Salmon |
| Beef Stew         | Dry Pasta & Spaghetti   |
| Spaghetti Sauce   |                         |

Monetary Donations are a particularly effective way to help the Pantry. A donation of \$10 will buy over 60 lbs of food through Second Harvest. If you are in need or know of someone in the area who is, please call **610-282-2838** and leave a message, or email [bettylouspantry18036@gmail.com](mailto:bettylouspantry18036@gmail.com)

—Mike Ford

## M & M Change Collection Fundraiser for the Triple G's

Stop by the coffee station and pick up a tube of M & M Minis to help the Triple G's raise some funds!

All you need to do is:

1. Enjoy your chocolaty treat
2. Fill the empty container with loose change
3. Bring the filled container back to the coffee station next time you are at church!



Thank you for your continued support!

### ***“Be an Angel” Mission is Returning!***

The Mission Team will once again be offering **Seed Money of \$25** that can be used to create your own mission project. The offer will be available for the first 20 families or individuals who express an interest in participating.



Please prayerfully consider how you or your entire family can become **Angels** together. We would love to have 20 wonderful mission projects!

**Angel Mission Sunday will be held on March 15.**

**It will be combined with  
Make-Your-Own-Salad and PIE Sunday**

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## Fellowship Hall Rental

For many years we were fortunate to have the Coopersburg Karate Academy rent the fellowship hall on Saturdays. Last year they terminated their contract and we had no other tenant take their place. A result of losing the Karate Academy was the loss of about \$5,000 in rental income which had a significant impact on our finances.

In 2020 we will be actively marketing the fellowship hall to the community in an effort to regain that lost rental income. We researched the pricing structure of several area hall rentals and established a fee structure that we believe to be very competitive. Church members and non-profit organizations will receive discounted rates.

Hall rental	\$60 / hour
Kitchen (full use)	\$100 flat fee
Alcohol on premises	\$100 flat fee
Deposit required	\$300

*If kitchen is needed only for use of sink for clean-up purposes (no use of appliances, electric for crock pots, roasters, etc.) there is no fee.*

Non-profit organizations receive 10% off published rates.  
Church members receive 25% off published rates.

Almost everything will work again  
if you unplug it for a few minutes,  
including you.  
— Anne Lamott

## 2020 Annual Faith Church Talent Auction



**Our Annual On-Line Talent Auction will begin in mid February and run through mid March!** Watch the weekly email and Sunday bulletins for exact dates. You can help to make this one of our top fundraisers of the year!! If you can provide an item or talent to auction off, please email the details to Wes Koser at **koser1@yahoo.com**. Items may be added throughout the auction so if you realize you have something to offer

mid-month—please let Wes know!

Share the website with your friends and neighbors!

[www.32auctions.com/fucc2020](http://www.32auctions.com/fucc2020)

Items up for bid could include delectable homemade foods, entire meals delivered to your door, household services like HVAC maintenance, gardening, sports certificates, travel bargains, computer technical assistance, specialty services, hand crafted items and more all donated by church members. All items or services are intended for local pick up and not to be extended outside of the Lehigh Valley, PA.

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From a worship bulletin:

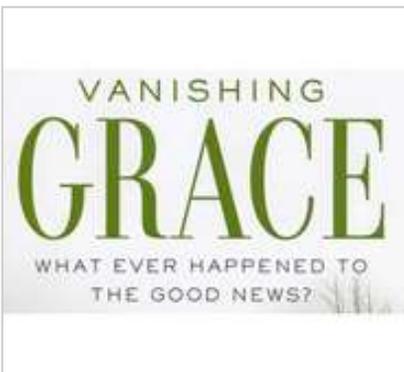
Our visitor center has an updated beverage menu. Stop by for some coffee or sweat tea. We look forward to meeting you!

This doesn't sound like a very *sweet* offer!

## A LOOK AHEAD AT LENT AT FAITH CHURCH

This year during Lent we will be returning to an old tradition of our Wednesday evening covered dish dinners followed by a program but here at Faith. The dinner will start at 6:00, program at 6:45, and we'll try and end at 7:30 so our choir members can get to practice!

This year's program is video/study series entitled *Vanishing Grace* by Philip Yancey.



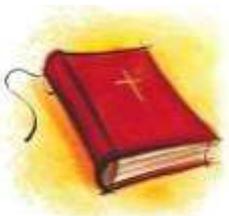
*"Why does the church stir up such negative feelings?" Philip Yancey has been asking this all his life as a journalist. His perennial question is more relevant now than ever: research shows that favorable opinions of Christianity have plummeted drastically - and opinions of Evangelicals have taken even deeper dives. Yet while opinions about Christianity are dropping, interest in spirituality is rising. Why the disconnect? Why are so many asking, "What's so good about the Good News?" In *Vanishing Grace*, Yancey shows the desperate need our world has for grace, and how Christians can truly make the gospel good news again.*

This is a five-week series. The Worship Committee invites you to make this time of fellowship and study a part of your Lenten Journey.

- March 4: *We've Got Problems*
- March 11: *What Can We Do About It?*
- March 18: *Who Are the Grace Dispensers*
- March 25: *Is it Really Good News?*
- April 1: *Holy Subversives*







## ***FEBRUARY BIBLE READINGS***

### **February 1**

Gen. 18:1–16  
Heb. 10:26–39  
John 6:16–27

### **February 2**

Gen. 18:16–33  
Gal. 5:13–25  
Mark 8:22–30

### **February 3**

Gen. 19:1–29  
Heb. 11:1–12  
John 6:27–40

### **February 4**

Gen. 21:1–21  
Heb. 11:13–22  
John 6:41–51

### **February 5**

Gen. 22:1–18  
Heb. 11:23–31  
John 6:52–59

### **February 6**

Gen. 23:1–20  
Heb. 11:32–12:2  
John 6:60–71

### **February 7**

Gen. 24:1–27  
Heb. 12:3–11  
John 7:1–13

### **February 8**

Gen. 24:28–38, 49–51  
Heb. 12:12–29  
John 7:14–36

### **February 9**

Gen. 24:50–67  
2 Tim. 2:14–21  
Mark 10:13–22

### **February 10**

Gen. 25:19–34  
Heb. 13:1–16  
John 7:37–52

### **February 11**

Gen. 26:1–6, 12–33  
Heb. 13:17–25  
John 7:53–8:11

### **February 12**

Gen. 27:1–29  
Rom. 12:1–8  
John 8:12–20

### **February 13**

Gen. 27:30–45  
Rom. 12:9–21  
John 8:21–32

### **February 14**

Gen. 27:46–28:4, 10–22  
Rom. 13:1–14  
John 8:33–47

### **February 15**

Gen. 29:1–20  
Rom. 14:1–23  
John 8:47–59

### **February 16**

Gen. 29:20–35  
1 Tim. 3:14–4:10  
Mark 10:23–31

### **February 17**

Gen. 30:1–24  
1 John 1:1–10  
John 9:1–17

### **February 18**

Gen. 31:1–24  
1 John 2:1–11  
John 9:18–41

### **February 19**

Gen. 31:25–50  
1 John 2:12–17  
John 10:1–18

### **February 20**

Gen. 32:3–21  
1 John 2:18–29  
John 10:19–30

### **February 21**

Gen. 32:22–33:17  
1 John 3:1–10  
John 10:31–42

**February 22**  
Gen. 35:1–20  
1 John 3:11–18  
John 11:1–16

**February 23**  
Mal. 4:1–6  
2 Cor. 3:7–18  
Luke 9:18–27

**February 24**  
Prov. 27:1–6, 10–12  
Phil. 2:1–13  
John 18:15–18, 25–27

**February 25**  
Prov. 30:1–4, 24–33  
Phil. 3:1–11  
John 18:28–38

**February 26**  
Amos 5:6–15  
Heb. 12:1–14  
Luke 18:9–14

**February 27**  
Hab. 3:1–18  
Phil. 3:12–21  
John 17:1–8

**February 28**  
Ezek. 18:1–4,  
25–32  
Phil. 4:1–9  
John 17:9–19

**February 29**  
Ezek. 39:21–29  
Phil. 4:10–20  
John 17:20–26



# Friendship Squares

This tasty treat doubles as a game to play with a buddy.



## What you need:

- Graham crackers
- Chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Zippered baggie
- Scissors
- Raspberries
- Blueberries

## What you do:

1. Gently break cracker sheets in half to form squares.
2. Heat chocolate chips in microwave for 30 seconds. Stir, then continue heating for 30 seconds at a time until melted.
3. Spoon melted chocolate into baggie and snip a small triangle from one bottom corner.
4. On each cracker, squeeze chocolate lines to form a Tic-Tac-Toe board. Let cool.
5. Using the fruit as X's and O's, play Tic-Tac-Toe with a friend. The winner gets to eat the treat!

# February

04 Darin Jellison  
Griffin Koch

05 Brett Dill  
Karlee Allison

06 Tracy Adams  
Robert Campbell

07 Ben Keeler

10 Ethan Stevenson

13 Grace Koch  
Susan Hardy

14 Jade Stoffey

15 Miriam Beck  
Joe Smith

Molly Grammer

17 Mark Christman  
Richard Shelly, Jr

18 Steve Fosbenner  
Eric Hite

19 Sandy Sosnowsky  
Jon Marie Miller

22 Nancy Gollie  
Dana Kernick

Monica Gunkle

Elisa Talboo

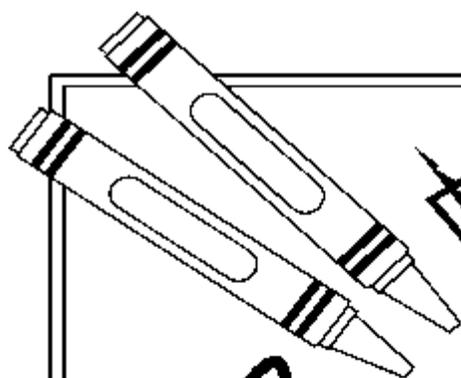
23 Brenda Hovis

24 Marian Barrick

28 Donald Koch, Jr



Please call the church office with any omissions or corrections.



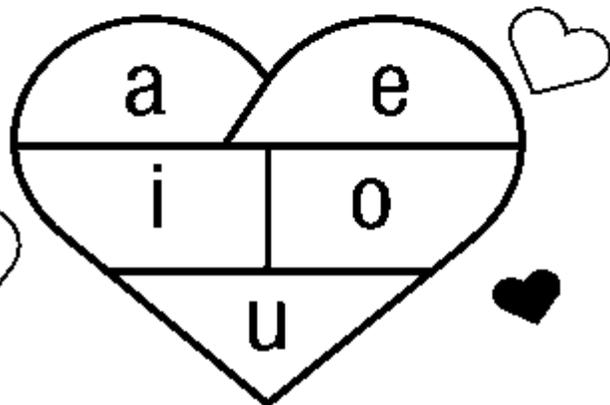
# PUZZLE

## A friend in Jesus

In the Bible, Jesus shares what it means to be a true friend.



*Directions: Use the heart key to fill in the missing vowels from John 15:14, 17, NIV.*



“Y\_ \_ \_ r\_ my fr\_ \_ nds \_ f  
y\_ \_ d\_ wh\_ t \_ c\_ mm\_ nd. . . .

Th\_ s \_ s my c\_ mm\_ nd:

L\_ v\_ \_ \_ ch\_ th\_ r.”

JOHN 15:14, 17, NIV