



FAITH

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.



10:15 a.m.—WORSHIP

Sunday School is held during a portion of church.

Watch us on [YouTube](#)

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

Faith United Church of Christ

5992 Route 378
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-282-3939
faithchurchcv@gmail.com
www.faithchurchucc.org

We are an Open & Affirming Congregation



No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.

*We are a people
who have come together
through a common faith,
a common love,
and a common covenant
with the triune God;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and together we endeavor
to be a community of
worship,
education,
mission,
fellowship,
and stewardship.*

2024 Consistory

President—Tom Hovis, Vice President—Bruce Torrence
Secretary- Joan Hassler

Elders

Kim Ritter	Melissa Shafer	Tom Hovis
Joan Hassler	Donna Schudel-Barone	Bruce Torrence

Church Treasurer: Deb Herstine

Liaisons:

Worship & Music—Joan Hassler
Christian Ed—Donna Schudel Barone
Fundraising—Tom Hovis
Budget & Finance—Bruce Torrence
Memorial & Enduring Gifts—Bruce Torrence
Property—Tom Hovis
Mission—Kim Ritter
Justice—Melissa Shafer



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

My Friends,

As many of you know recently my family took me on a trip to Iceland to celebrate my 65th birthday with the hopes of seeing the Northern Lights. Unfortunately, while the skies were crystal clear every night, we never witnessed the spectacular aurora borealis. However, I might have gotten a very faint glimpse of them. More on that at another time.

Despite not seeing the Northern Lights it was a wonderful trip. Iceland is beautiful yet very different from any other country and the story of its settling is interesting. For food the first settlers relied on the fishing industry. The land could not sustain crops, vegetables or fruit. Now these items can be imported to the island or grown in green houses. The early years of settlement were difficult and without vegetables or fruits many people died of various forms of malnutrition.

As we heard of all this hardship, my son Ethan said, “My gosh! Why didn’t the settlers just leave?” or at least something to that effect. My comment to him was “Well, I guess they had no idea what was making them sick.”

There are many times in life when things get tough, just like it did for the settlers of Iceland or those in other countries. Settlers did not know how to adjust to a strange and new climate, a new environment, or where to find sustainable food. Right here in our own country when Europeans settled here they did not know how to hunt, grow food, build shelter and find medicine. And yet despite these challenges they chose to persist. They did not turn around and go back or give up. They pressed on and eventually learned what they needed to

learn to survive.

A life of faith is not unlike this. Every step is new for us. Every day has new challenges before us and solutions or answers are rarely right before us. We must figure things out and that process can be a painful and demanding struggle. However, when the answers come miracles happen. If we give up the struggle, we never see the miracle.

As we approach the last few weeks of Lent, we are getting closer to the cross. Jesus is about to enter the most challenging moment of His earthly life. This is the moment where he almost gives up, almost turns back. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prays ***If there is a way for this cup to be taken from me, please take it.*** Jesus begged to be spared the pain of the cross, yet he went knowing that it was the only way to bring salvation to all humankind.

Boy, am I glad Jesus didn't turn back!

A life in faith is not easy. Much is demanded of us. Much is demanded of us as the work of peace, mercy, and justice is an ongoing challenge. We now partner with Jesus in the work he began, saving the world. Don't turn back. If you do the miracles won't come.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor [Name]", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Puzzle Answers: palm, crucified, branch, hosanna, feet, bread, Jesus, wine, temple; much fruit



Wandering Heart

Figuring out faith with Peter

The journey of faith for Peter—and for us—is not necessarily linear. Instead, our journeys often feel like wandering. Even though the journey is not predictable, we are always tethered to the heart of God—no matter how far we wander.

Please continue following along this Lenten Season!

(Printed Materials to take part in the program are available in the Narthex. Digital Materials are available in the weekly email.)

Palm Sunday
March 24, 2024

Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service
March 28, 2024
7:30 pm

Easter Sunday
March 31, 2024
10:15 am

Dear Rev. Stevenson,

As we begin 2024, I offer my sincere thanks for your support (\$720) of Bethany Children's Home and our 160 years of serving vulnerable youth. This past year brought both obstacles and achievements. In March, we opened the Emergency Shelter allowing us to supply immediate refuge when children require emergency placement. Our Residential, Intensive, Independent Living Transitional/Supervised Living, and Helping Hands programs continue finding success—thanks to partners like you.



Bethany Children's Home mission remains essential: "To provide a safe, nurturing place of protection and supportive care to aid our residents in their self-understanding, growth, and healing toward a brighter future."

Thank you for believing in the mission of Bethany Children's Home and supporting the healing of our community's most vulnerable Children. We could not provide this vital care without donors like you walking alongside us.

*Sincerely,
Calyn Brewer
Senior Director of Innovation*

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Lehigh Conference of Churches, thank you for your \$500 contribution for the year of 2023 to support our neighbors in need.

A new year and a new era. The Lehigh Conference of Churches celebrates 70 wonderful years of ministry serving our neighbors in need. We are so thankful for your years of support no matter how long it's

been. We would love to hear how long you have been in partnership with us and your experience. Your generous contributions and hours of your personal time in volunteering have helped feed, clothe, housed and change lives one neighbor at a time. The Lehigh County Conference of Churches has brought together area congregations like yours in responding to the needs of “the least among us” while building ecumenical and interfaith partnerships and fostering unity within the body of Christ. Your partnership allowed us to touch the lives of individuals and families—more than 14,000 people throughout the Lehigh Valley.

We are looking forward to our continued partnership and deepening our relationship in this ministry work.

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Genie Watson*

Dear Friends,

The Southern Lehigh Area Samaritan Fund thanks you for your generous donation(s) throughout 2023. Because of your generosity and support, we continue to be able to help our neighbors in the community who have fallen on difficult times.

Again, thank you for taking part in the mission of the Samaritan Fund.

*Blessings,
Sandy David
Treasurer*

Date of Gift:

As of 12/30/2023

Amount of Gift:

\$1,334.55

Easter Flowers

The Worship Committee is taking orders for Tulips and Lilies to decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday.

Fill out the order form below and return, with payment, in the offering plate or mail to the church office @ 5992 Route 378, Center Valley, PA 18034. Order deadline is March 10th.

Number of Plants	Cost per Plant	Total
_____ Easter Lily	\$10.00	_____
_____ 5 Bloom Tulip	\$10.00	_____

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Your Name: (Presented by)

Thank you for helping to beautify our sanctuary for Easter. You may take your flowers with you after the Easter Sunday Worship Service.



Mark Your Calendars
Spring Bingo and Basket Raffle
is Coming Soon!
If you win, YOU Choose!

Yes, that's right!

You'll select the Purse or Tote of your choice from a great selection of:

ThirtyOne Vera Bradley Lug Many More

The **2 Special Games** will be Gift Card Baskets valued at **\$100 each!**

- WHEN:** Sunday, April 28, 2024
TIME: Doors open at Noon. Play Begins at 1 PM
WHO: YOU and all of your friends, relatives and neighbors
WATCH: For how you can help in the April Focus Newsletter.
And a list of all the wonderful prizes.
TICKETS: Will go on sale Tuesday, March 26.

This is the Mission Team's biggest fundraiser that will help support missions such as Haiti Family Sponsorship, Phoebe Home, Pathways, The Allentown Rescue Mission and many more. We really need your support in order to continue Faith's mission work.

Church World Services
Update on Blanket Sunday Offering

Thank you for your generous offerings for **CWS Blankets**. We've surpassed our goal of \$1,000! So far Faith donations are **\$1269!!!** Please remember to make your donations if you have not done so yet. It is never too late to donate towards blankets.



Other Dates to Remember:

Sunday, March 10: Mission Sunday
Tuesday, March 26: Bingo Tickets Go on Sale
Sunday, April 28: Spring Bingo Fundraiser



Betty Lou's Pantry

~~Super~~ Cereal Bowl of Caring Event

Thank you so much for your
extravagant generosity!

Mission challenged the congregation to
supply the Pantry with 150 boxes of cereal.

301 large boxes and **54 individual** boxes of Cereal were donated!
That is enough cereal for 2 distributions or about 100 families.

One more important message about BLP:

Mark your Calendars for **July 13** and **27, 2024**.

That is our next month to help distribute
food to the families at BLP.

Let Chuck or Karen know if you would like to help.

We need 10 volunteers.



FOUND IN PEWS

Bracelet inscribed with

Psalm 23:3

Soup & Chili Cook-Off Fun

Thanks to everyone who participated in our annual cook-off! Ten crockpots of delicious soups and chili were available for our hungry guests. Following the eating came the voting came. The lucky winners were:

First Place: Sue Roberts
Second Place: Owen Hovis
Third Place: Debbie Herstine



Another fun event available was a Take-A-Guess with 3 jars filled with candy. Everyone had a chance to guess how many yummy candies were in each jar.

Thanks to all who helped set up and those who stayed after lunch to help clean-up. As they say...many hands make light work. That was certainly true with this event. We had so much fun we'll be sure to continue with this activity again next year!



SOUP/CHILI COOK OFF



Resurrection rumblings

In *Easter Earthquake*, James A. Harnish explores the “earthshaking promise” of Jesus’ resurrection. Easter Sunday “shatters the power of fear,” he writes. “Because Christ is risen, we no longer allow fear to dominate, control or manipulate us. We don’t remain imprisoned in the tombs of our past failures or buried under the weight of present anxiety. In the risen Christ, old things pass away and everything becomes new.”

Easter, Harnish adds, is proof that God hasn’t forsaken us and is present among us. “The Resurrection contradicts the assumption that Christ resides on an ethereal cloud in a distant heaven. Rather, we find him on the dusty road that leads to the real stuff of our ordinary world.”

Jesus’ followers can find him everywhere, Harnish concludes. “The risen Christ will meet us along the confused, chaotic, fearful paths of our lives and speak the same words the women hear at the tomb, ‘Do not be afraid.’”



Because Jesus Said So

One intriguing person in the Passion account is the thief on the cross whom Jesus promised a same-day entrance to paradise (see Luke 23:43). Pastor and radio host Alistair Begg says he can’t wait to meet that man and ask how everything unfolded. “You were cussing [Jesus] out with your friend,” Begg says. “You’ve never been in a Bible study. You’ve never been baptized. You didn’t know a thing about church membership, and yet you made it!”

In a sermon, Begg pictures an imaginary angel at the pearly gates, growing frustrated during the sinful thief’s entrance interview. After receiving no clear answers from the thief about doctrines such as justification, the angel finally asks, “On what basis are you here?” The thief simply replies, “The man on the middle cross said I can come.”

MARCH VOLUNTEERS
Head Usher : Kim Ritter
Financial Secretary: Tony DiSanto

Date	Ushers	Lay Reader	Flowers
3/03	Donna SchudelBarone Faye Tirpak	Donna Schedule Barone	Hovis Family
3/10	Cindy Talaber Catherine Stevenson	Cindy Talaber	Kim Ritter
3/17	Rose Mirth Deb Herstine	Rose Mirth	Talboos
3/24	Patience Stevenson Donna Schoenberger	Patience Stevenson	tbd
3/31	Tim & Sara Hovis	Barb Maursky	Easter Flowers

FAITH FINANCIALS



January	Month	YTD
Receipts	\$15,418.39	\$15,418.39
Disbursements	\$20,896.35	\$20,896.25
	(\$5,477.96)	(\$5,477.96)

*\$4,600 was put back into savings to cover Day Care Deposit

Cash Balances:	QNB Checking	\$10,576
	QNB Savings	<u>\$13,967</u>
		\$21,007



Our donations for the last three Sundays of January and the first two Sundays of February included 190 items, 301 large boxes of cereal and 54 individual boxes of cereal.

THANK YOU for your generous support of Betty Lou's Pantry and the CEREAL BOWL OF SHARING!!

**ITEMS DESPERATELY NEEDED:
(WE'RE ALMOST OUT OF THEM!!)**

**BAKED BEANS CANNED RAVIOLI
CEREAL HAMBURGER/TUNA HELPER**

Items stocked at the Pantry include:

Pork & Beans	Chili
Spaghetti Sauce	Canned Pasta
Peanut Butter	Canned Tomatoes & Canned Sauce
Kidney Beans	Chunky Soups
Canned Fruit	Macaroni & Cheese
Beef Stew	Canned Chicken and Salmon
Dry Pasta & Spaghetti	Meat Helpers (Beef, Chicken, Tuna)
Pasta Side Dishes (Rice-A-Roni, Knorr's Rice)	

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](tel:610-282-2838) and leave a message, or email bettylouspantry18036@gmail.com —*Mike Ford*

Our feeble prayers, our Father's response

In *He Still Moves Stones*, Max Lucado recalls the story of Derek Redmond, a 1992 Olympic competitor in the 400-meter race. Halfway through Redmond's semifinal run, a torn hamstring sent him tumbling to the ground. His dad, Jim, immediately ran onto the track. He met up with Derek, who, though crying, had managed to stand and was hopping forward.

"You don't have to do this," Jim said. But Derek insisted. "Well, then, we're going to finish this together," said Jim, who supported his son as he hobbled to the finish line. The crowd cheered and wept as Derek, with Dad's assistance, finished the race.

Lucado writes: "What made the father do it? ... Was it the strength of his child? No, it was the pain of his child. ... God does the same. Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the One who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference."



CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

BUTTERFLY —

The butterfly symbolizes resurrection, Easter and the new life we have in Christ Jesus. As a caterpillar disappears into a chrysalis, so Jesus' lifeless body was hidden in a tomb. The emergence of the butterfly, rising into the sky in its beautiful new body, reminds us of Christ's resurrection — and ours.



MARCH BIBLE READINGS

March 1

Gen. 43:1–15
1 Cor. 7:1–9
Mark 4:35–41

March 2

Gen. 43:16–34
1 Cor. 7:10–24
Mark 5:1–20

March 3

Gen. 44:1–17
Rom. 8:1–10
John 5:25–29

March 4

Gen. 44:18–34
1 Cor. 7:25–31
Mark 5:21–43

March 5

Gen. 45:1–15
1 Cor. 7:32–40
Mark 6:1–13

March 6

Gen. 45:16–28
1 Cor. 8:1–13
Mark 6:13–29

March 7

Gen. 46:1–7, 28–34
1 Cor. 9:1–15
Mark 6:30–46

March 8

Gen. 47:1–26
1 Cor. 9:16–27
Mark 6:47–56

March 9

Gen. 47:27–48:7
1 Cor. 10:1–13
Mark 7:1–23

March 10

Gen. 48:8–22
Rom. 8:11–25
John 6:27–40

March 11

Gen. 49:1–28
1 Cor. 10:14–11:1
Mark 7:24–37

March 12

Gen. 49:29–50:14
1 Cor. 11:2–34
Mark 8:1–10

March 13

Gen. 50:15–26
1 Cor. 12:1–11
Mark 8:11–26

March 14

Exod. 1:6–22
1 Cor. 12:12–26
Mark 8:27–9:1

March 15

Exod. 2:1–22
1 Cor. 12:27–13:3
Mark 9:2–13

March 16

Exod. 2:23–3:15
1 Cor. 13:1–13
Mark 9:14–29

March 17

Exod. 3:16–4:12
Rom. 12:1–21
John 8:46–59

March 18

Exod. 4:10–20 (21–26)
27–31
1 Cor. 14:1–19
Mark 9:30–41

March 19

Exod. 5:1–6:1
1 Cor. 14:20–33a, 39–40
Mark 9:42–50

March 20

Exod. 7:8–24
2 Cor. 2:14–3:6
Mark 10:1–16

March 21

Exod. 7:25–8:19
2 Cor. 3:7–18
Mark 10:17–31

March 22

Exod. 9:13–35
2 Cor. 4:1–12
Mark 10:32–45

March 23

Exod. 10:21–11:8
2 Cor. 4:13–18
Mark 10:46–52

March 24

Zech. 9:9–12
1 Tim. 6:12–16 or
Zech. 12:9–11;
13:1, 7–9
Luke 19:41–48

March 25

Lam. 1:1–2, 6–12
2 Cor. 1:1–7
Mark 11:12–25

March 26

Lam. 1:17–22
2 Cor. 1:8–22
Mark 11:27–33

March 27

Lam. 2:1–9
2 Cor. 1:23–2:11
Mark 12:1–11

March 28

Lam. 2:10–18
1 Cor. 10:14–17;
11:27–32
Mark 14:12–25

March 29


Lam. 3:1–9, 19–33
1 Pet. 1:10–20
John 13:36–38 or
John 19:38–42

March 30

Lam. 3:37–58
Heb. 4:1–16
Rom. 8:1–11

March 31

Exod. 12:1–14
John 1:1–18 or Isa.
51:9–11



Grape EXPECTATIONS

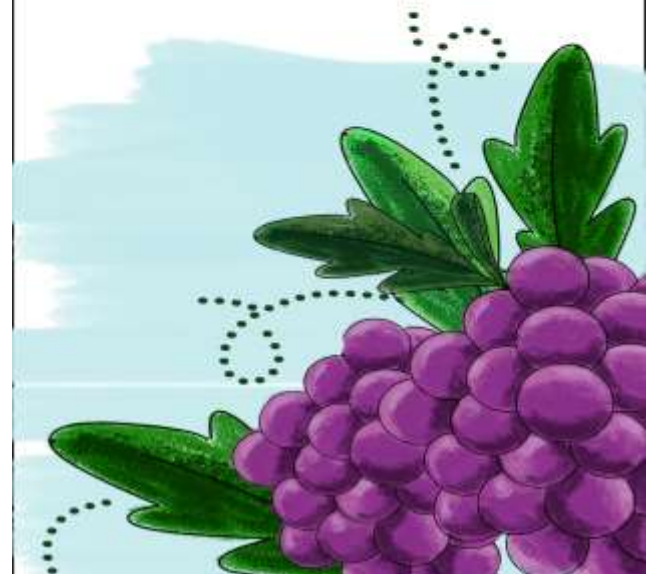
Try this chilly new take on a healthy snack.

What you need:

- 30 grapes, washed and dried
- ½ cup vanilla yogurt
- 4 graham crackers, crushed
- Toothpicks
- Parchment paper

What you do:

1. On a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, arrange grapes in a single layer. Freeze for two hours.
2. Insert a toothpick into each grape.
3. Dip each grape into the yogurt, coating half of it.
4. Roll each dipped grape in the crushed crackers. Place back on the parchment.
5. Freeze for two more hours. Enjoy!



March Birthdays

02 Carolee Glickman

14 Ryan York

02 Gabrielle Koehnlein

15 Dalton Biery

03 Tony DiSanto

16 Joan Jones

03 Matthew Long

23 Lisa Koch

04 Glenn Scholl

24 Katie Y

07 Weiland Hite

28 Barbara Strimple

07 Isabel Hovis

30 Tom Herstine

08 Charlotte Gasda

31 Patricia Babos

12 Joan Demkee

12 Jennifer Amato

12 Tim Hovis



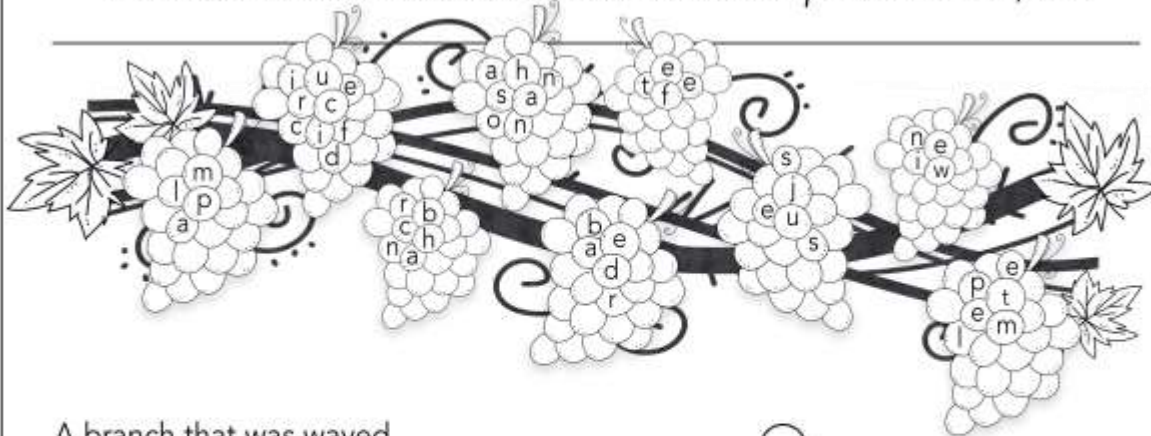
Please contact the church office with corrections or omissions to the list.



A LASTING LESSON

Before dying on the cross, Jesus teaches the disciples an important lesson.

Directions: Use the clues to unscramble the letters in each grape cluster. Then write the circled letters in order below to complete John 15:5, NIV.



A branch that was waved

---○

How Jesus was put to death

---○-----

A stick attached to the vine

---○---

People shouted this to Jesus

○-----

Jesus washed these



○-----

This was broken and eaten

○-----

The Messiah

---○---



A drink from grapes

○-----

Jesus drove the money changers from here

○-----

"I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear _____;
 apart from me you can do nothing." *John 15:5, NIV*