

STONE CHURCH NEWS

September 2020



“From the Pastor’s Desk”

When we were dating, I organized a date for Ben and me at a Six Flags Amusement Park. I invited friends to come along, got the discounted tickets - it was going to be an amazing day! We all got in line for the first roller coaster of the day, we joked and laughed as we waited 45 minutes for the ride. When the time came for us to load in, I made my confession: Since I am scared of heights, roller coasters terrify me. I asked Ben to walk through with me so I didn’t have to ride. After he recovered from being dumbfounded (I had arranged for an entire day of doing a thing that I was terrified to do), Ben said, “No.” He was not willing to turn back from the adventure - I could come along or not, but he was riding the coasters.

The last six months have felt like a roller coaster to me. One that I did not have a choice on whether or not to ride. I have often felt anxious and out of control. I have gotten easily overwhelmed. And sometimes felt like screaming. Of course, it has not been all bad. I have laughed and felt exhilarated too. But I am not quite the same as I was before.

As we looked to the Bible for passages that might speak to this experience, we chose the stories of Exodus to guide our worship and our study over the next month. Moses comes to a people who are enslaved and losing hope and he tells them that God has heard their cries for help and will deliver them. But they will have to choose to come along. Deliverance - breaking free from what enslaves them is simply the first step. God has more in store for them on this journey. And they will often feel anxious and out of control, overwhelmed, and like they could scream.

As we follow the Israelites through the book of Exodus, they continue to be pressed forward. The journey is hard, dangerous, challenging. Life changes at every step of the journey - and at times they long for things to be “like they used to be” because change is hard, the unknown is scary and even freedom can be difficult. But the reality is, “the way things used to be” was slavery - their lives weren’t whole. We are living in a time where there is rapid change - BLM, an upcoming election, consequences of COVID-19, the list goes on. We can’t go back to the way things were - so how do we want to shape and choose what lies ahead. Hopefully each week, our worship can invite us to reflect on systems that we don’t want to go back to “normal” - systems in society, in our individual lives, in our church community. How can we move forward into something new rather than just reinstate what used to be? How can we join God on an adventure that is about more than just deliverance?

I chose to ride that roller coaster with Ben. And after the initial drop, I found myself laughing and having fun. I am still scared of heights - and roller coasters. And I am still overwhelmed by 2020. But maybe I can slowly start to see the joy and hope God might bring out of it - the laughter and exhilaration may just transform me, yet.



there I Am in the midst

Stone Church Fellowship Group Sign-ups!

Stone Church is launching a 10-week program for small group fellowship and reflection. This Zoom-based program will serve to help keep us connected as a congregation and deepen our sense of community during this time when we cannot physically be together. The gatherings will center around themed devotionals and related faith and Christian life exploratory questions. Groups will include eight persons or less to facilitate a space that allows for speaking and listening from the heart and fosters the deepening of our knowing and understanding of each other. Groups will meet weekly or biweekly, over the 10-week period, depending on the desires of the particular group.

To sign up for the group that best fits your schedule, click on (or copy) the link below, or just contact Pastor Ben to get signed up. We hope you'll be able to participate!

Sojourners

Adults of all ages are invited to join Sojourners this fall for a study of the book *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism*, by Jemar Tisby. It's "an acclaimed, timely narrative of how people of faith have historically--up to the present day--worked against racial justice. And a call for urgent action by all Christians today in response." **The Sojourners class meets via Zoom at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday!** Contact Virginia Biber, Sojourners Coordinator to join us for this timely study!



Mid-Week Bible Study

WEDNESDAY nights @ 7pm*

(*except on the 2nd week, when we will meet on Tuesday the 8th, instead!)

Join us as we take a deeper dive into the scripture.

See the **Friday Flash** for details on how to join us on Zoom via computer or phone. And, if you're unable to make it, but still want to listen in, contact the office to have an audio recording sent to you!

Men's Breakfast via Zoom

September 19 — 8:05 AM



Prepare your favorite breakfast and join the gathering virtually by Zoom. Enjoy fellowship, jokes, stories and a light reflection. Join the regular attendees, who look forward to seeing the gallery of faces and hearing the latest joke. If you are interested in attending, send your email address to Rick Laabs and he will send you a Zoom invitation. If you have questions, call Rick.

Stone Church Leadership Team Meeting

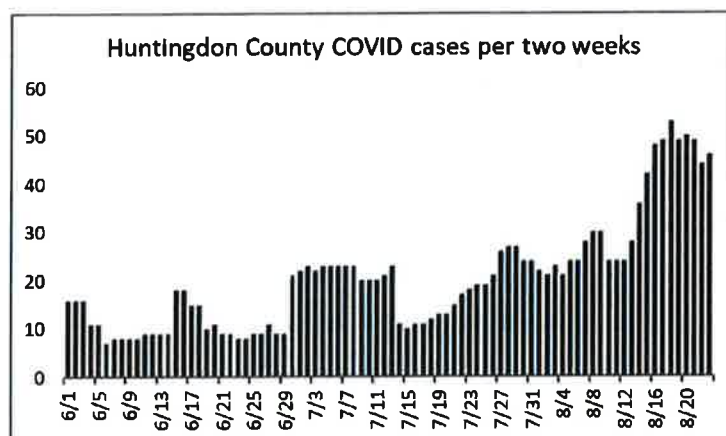
“Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.”



Our Leadership Team meeting in August began with a reflection by Andy Murray. “Election time”, he described, “always reminds me of Pentecost”. He continued by explaining that the difference was that Pentecost was when people speaking different languages understood each other, and election season is when people speaking the same language don’t seem to understand each other.

As a society, we seem to have this same difficulty understanding each other when talking about the coronavirus. The same behavior can be seen as risky or safe. The same public health guidelines can be construed as good for the community or a violation of personal rights. Within all the uncertainty and misunderstanding, it can be exceptionally stressful to make decisions. Should you send your child to school or daycare to help preserve their (and your) mental health while risking the family’s physical health? Teachers and others must balance safety and effectiveness. We make decisions about when to go out, if we should travel, and if it is safe to visit friends and family.

I personally find these decisions both stressful and exhausting. And it is one of the many reasons we have chosen to keep church completely on-line while other institutions open. Your COVID Response Team (Sharon Yohn, Daisy Decker, pastors Ben and Cindy, Marty Keeney, Brooke Meadows, Luke Roth) has been carefully watching the cases in Huntingdon County. We monitor the number of new cases over a two week period as a way to estimate active cases in the county. We keep waiting for the number to decrease below ten cases, but instead, the number of cases has been increasing.



Personally, after a week of teaching at Juniata, with days of wearing a mask, using hand sanitizer or washing my hands at every opportunity, and worrying about bringing the disease home to my child, I am grateful to attend church in the safety of my home. At the same time, I want to acknowledge that this isn’t the case for all of our church family. Some of you are longing for the community that just isn’t the same on Zoom. Many are tired of isolation.

As we continue to endure this pandemic, it is easy to become complacent. To forget that the consequence of this disease for many has been death. Many others suffer from long-term health impacts. The stakes are high with each decision we make, and unfortunately, the magnitude of the risk is not always clear.

Our Stone Church community will continue to provide opportunities to find community without needing to worry about risk. Sunday services will continue to bring us together from all around the country. Weekly Bible studies and the upcoming small groups bring opportunities to connect with familiar faces and build deeper relationships.

As Andy ended his reflection, he had us all pray together, unmuted, on Zoom. As we spoke the Lord’s Prayer, we could hear the voices of each of us, highlighted at different times by Zoom. It was a bit strange, quite chaotic, and deeply moving. And it brought me hope that we can continue to find new ways to be together even as we are physically distant.

FROM YOUR WITNESS TEAM.....

Stone Church has been contacted by Marist College to ask if our members would be willing to participate in a study on Christian attitudes regarding LGBTQ+ issues. Members of our Leadership Team have reviewed the survey and looked at the qualifications of the study's leaders and have found both to be in order. The study is intended to "uncover the complexity of [the] . . . effects of religion and spirituality" among those Christians supportive of LGBTQ+ issues.



If you would like to participate you will find the study here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qESaDJmCUS6BtVve8poPxmIhqnC720ThytmM4ZAPoc/edit?usp=sharing>

The study has received institutional review board approval (Marist College #S19-031) and is being directed by:

Thomas Killian, PhD, NCC
Assistant Professor of Psychology/Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Marist College

Study questions/concerns? You may direct them to Dr. Killian.



Camp Blue Diamond Worship Saturday, September 19 from 4-5pm

*Join us for a socially distant,
but in-person worship at Camp Blue Diamond!*



We look forward to seeing each other face to face - as safely as possible! We will worship together in the beauty of God's creation. We won't be able to socialize before and after like usual, or eat together, or swim. But **we will** share in community and gratitude together. Masks are required for all. And we hope you'll throw in an extra lawn chair just in case that's more comfy for you. Hope to truly see you soon! Call the church office with questions.



Grocery Gift Cards— Every card helps our church!

Buy your groceries at Weis or Giant using a grocery gift card purchased through Stone Church and Stone Church gets a donation of 5% back from the grocery store! Grocery gift cards are available through the church office in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100.



Food Pantry Sunday—September 20

Since we aren't meeting to collect your food item and cash donations, we are instead accepting donations to purchase grocery cards to mail to the Huntingdon Food Pantry and, on third Sundays, send cash donations for **Farmer's Market Bonus Bucks**. Simply mail your checks to the church office or go to the donation page on our website and indicate in the note line where the funds are to be used.

News From CAMP

Virtual Heritage Fair

Sadly, Heritage Fair will not take place at Camp Blue Diamond this September. After a lengthy discussion concerning the health risks related to large gatherings and the state's limit on crowds of over 250, the Heritage Fair Planning Committee concluded that it was best to make alternative plans for 2020.



Between now and October 15, Camp Blue Diamond and the Middle PA District are sponsoring a [Virtual Heritage Fair](#). Churches and individuals are being encouraged to raise funds by participating in the Dunk the Dunkard [Water Bucket Challenge](#), a [Hike/Run/Walk-a-thon](#), selling their Heritage Fair specialties to their neighbors, or any other creative way they can.

Churches can advertise what they are doing through a Heritage Fair Classified Ad on Camp's Facebook page, website or newsletter. To place an ad, visit the [Heritage Fair Classified webpage](#) and email your information. If your congregation is known for its Heritage Favorite (beef & noodles, fudge, apple cider, apple butter, apple butter pies, gob cake, ox roast, BBQ chicken, ham & bean soup, hot sausages, homemade pies), please consider preparing these delicacies and selling them from your church parking lot! We'll help you advertise in the classifieds.



Dunk-the-Dunkard Water Bucket Challenge – The dunking tank is not a possibility this year, but imagine the fun of choosing someone in your congregation to dunk and raising money to make it happen. Or perhaps have a contest between several people to see who raises the most and gets dunked.

Hike/Walk/Run-a-Thon – Maybe someone (or a group) in your congregation would like to do a Hike/Walk/Run-a-Thon, feel free to use the sponsor sign-up sheet available.

For more information and to figure out what your church can do, check out the Virtual Heritage Fair site at <https://campbluediamond.org/virtual-heritage-fair>.

Rising Sun and Lakeside Cabins

Looking to get away? Consider renting a cabin by the lake at CBD. Lakeside and Rising Sun are Camp's "Beach Houses in the Woods". Both cabins have 3 bedrooms, a living/dining room, full kitchen, 2 bathrooms, loft, central AC and heat. They come highly recommended by the Meadows Family. For more information, visit <https://campbluediamond.org/cabins>.

Upcoming Events

Virtual Heritage Fair
Quilt & Craft Camp

Now through October 15
October 16-18

Have questions?

Contact your Camp Representative, David Meadows.

Guatemala Update

Our Guatemalan partners at the Asturias Academy send their greetings and



gratitude for our financial support during this difficult time. Jorge Chojolán reports that the country is trying to reopen the economy despite the still relatively high incidence of COVID-19, but the government has decided that schools and universities will not resume classes in person this school year, which ends in October.

Several teachers and a number of students and their family members have contracted the coronavirus, but fortunately, there have been no fatalities. Some parents have returned to work and have been able to resume paying their students' tuition, which has alleviated some of the financial pressure on the school as they continue to pay teacher salaries.

The Asturias Academy has been able to provide online instruction to about half their students, the fortunate ones who have internet access, through the Google Classroom platform. They have devised a system to be able to deliver course materials and assignments to the homes of the rest of the students and are now providing instruction to about 90% of the school's students, but sadly, the remaining 10% have decided to "lose the year," as they say in Spanish. These are the most at-risk students, and Jorge is encouraging them to reenroll for next year, assuming that in-person classes can resume in January. The school has also received funding from an NGO to be able to offer food baskets to the families who are currently suffering the greatest need because of loss of employment.

Any financial support you can provide the Asturias Academy during this challenging time would be greatly appreciated and will be used to advance their educational and humanitarian activities during this global health crisis. Tax-deductible contributions can be made through the church. Please be sure to designate *the Asturias Academy* if you are writing a check or making an online donation on the church's website, and contact Henry Thurston-Griswold any questions.





Gene's Jottings

"WORKING FOR THE BOSS"



September is Labor Day month and, boy, am I laboring!

Many years ago my wife was asked by a Stone Church officer to write a monthly column for the Messenger. Alberta called it the "Messenger Musings." Soon she asked me to help her with it. As we were newlyweds, of course I agreed. (We just celebrated our 11th wedding anniversary August 16.)

Big mistake! Soon I was writing the column myself. I had been a reporter for the Daily News and newspapers in upstate New York, and Alberta knew this. Now, Alberta is too ill, unable to do too much, and her memory is failing, as is mine. Both of us are unable to drive – me because my left leg hasn't worked for two years. I am still trying to find help with the nerve though, and am going to another specialist in October. But, I gave up my car lease and rely on CART and good friends for transportation to medical appointments.

I would like to be able to walk again. But I can't say that I expect that to happen. Sometimes I have a question about what gets me through. Sometimes I don't get through very well. I suppose it's the people that get me through. Dewey and Ethel Chilcote used to live next door to me. (I remember Ethel teaching Sunday School on the flannelgraph.) They were like second parents to me.

A classmate with my brother in Mount Union's high school was Joseph C. Barrett, certified lay pastor of the Hillcrest and Salem United Methodist churches. Joe has been a very attentive friend to Alberta and me over the last two years, looking in on us continually, "Call me if you need me," he says. Joe spends many hours on a daily basis helping friends and people who call upon him. In many cases, he's spending his own money. I must believe God favors people who work as hard as Joe Barrett does for his fellow men and women.

Bruce and Marty and Andy and others, from Stone Church, have taken me to appointments - even out to Pittsburgh. Others have sent get well cards and checked on me. I certainly do appreciate the folks of this church for their care. I have been blessed by the opportunity to know and be a part of this church. And am grateful for all those who find different ways to help in the community as they work for the Boss.

— Eugene Goshorn —

We Remember.....



Jim Ake
April 7, 1937 – July 29, 2020



James A Ake, known to many as Jim, died on July 29 after a valiant struggle with ALS. Jim was born in Altoona, son of John and Mary (Carper) Ake and was raised in Roaring Spring. In 1958 Jim married Carrie Raugh, who died on March 8, 2000. Jim is survived by 4 sons, James, David, Steve and John; 8 grandchildren; his sister Elaine Frazier and husband Pat, and a sister-in-law Mila Raugh.

Jim was president of his high school class of 1955 and a proud 1959 graduate of Juniata College with a Master of Science degree. Jim taught math and was head baseball coach at the Tyrone School District, and later worked for HRB Singer in State College, Bell Labs, GRC and the Morristown Daily Record all in New Jersey, and lastly retired from Swigart Associates in Huntingdon.

If you knew Jim, his love of sports was obvious. He always knew the scores of various games and especially had the Juniata football score on Sunday mornings! Jim was a pitcher in college and had a passion for golf too.

Jim had a wonderful ability to sing, and shared his gift at many events, and enjoyed singing in the Stone Church of the Brethren chancel choir. Daisy recalls that Jeff had sung in a church choir since he was in high school. But when we began attending Stone Church in 2006 he just didn't feel led to join our choir. However, some years later, on a Thursday evening, he did walk into the Stone Church choir loft and was almost immediately met by Jim's bass voice asserting "that's your seat, the last one, against the wall, with the wide moulding that you must 'shape-shift' around when you stand up to sing. That's the new guy's chair and besides, I don't want to have to sit there. Oh, and by the way, WELCOME!"

We are certain that it's probably not the most unusual start of a friendship, but it is a friendship that we both cherish these years later. Jim will be remembered around the pews of Stone Church for his many years as Treasurer, choir member and various roles in the Christmas pageants.

We miss Jim. We miss his unique sense of humor. We miss him telling us to not linger after worship so we're not late meeting him at the Chinese restaurant. We miss his quiet witness. But Jim will be especially missed for just being Jim – a caring man, so faithful to Church of the Brethren beliefs and a great model to follow.

Rest in the arms of our Savior a bit, then get out and play some heavenly golf. And, don't forget to let Him win! Peace, Brother Jim.

Submitted by Jeff and Daisy Decker

September Birthdays

3—Wayne Hearn	11—Rachael Beck	19—Henry Thurston-Griswold
3—Holden McBrayer	13—Pam Hileman	20—Aiden Borgardt
5—Cheryl McClain	14—Brandon Beck	22—Bill Peters
7—Harriet Kaylor	14—Rena Bumgardner	24—Grace Cook-Huffman
8—Kris Launtz	14—Barbara Detwiler	25—Joan Engle
8—William Musser	14—Ezra Lattimer	25—Greta Hall
9—Jessica Buterbaugh	14—Cyrus Lattimer	25—Austin Plane
10—Barbara Purdy	15—Randy Yoder	26—Doug Soliday
10—Betty Quarry	16—Rowan Dickey	30—Tom Ness

September Anniversaries

1—Melissa & Bert McBrayer	20—Anne Swigart & John Shetron
4—Wilfred & Lona Norris *65	21—Mary Garvey & Jeremy Santos
5—Kathleen & Joe Biddle	23—Wayne & Jeanne Hearn
6—Ben & Cindy Lattimer	25—Cindy & Geoff Clarke
8—Greg & Beth Smolcic-Larson	25—Charlie & Robin Paterson
15—Sharon & Chuck Yohn	29—Pamela & Jeff Adams
17—Bill & Marjorie Berrier	



Elaine Frazier and family wish to thank everyone for your calls, prayers, and cards as they grieved the death of her brother, Jim Ake.

"With us in spirit..."

Below are members of our church family who, though they are not often able to join us in worship, remain with us in spirit. Remember them in your prayers, and with cards and visits! Please contact the church office (814-643-3390 or stonechurch@verizon.net) to add others you know.

DeLois Fluke
11325 Raystown Rd.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Jean Prendergast
Arista Care, Room 173
1229 Warm Springs Ave
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Thelma Wallace
5754 Wallace Dr.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Gene & Alberta Goshorn
14155 Hill Valley Rd.
Mt. Union PA 17066

Lydia Price
c/o Charla and Greg Chiapelli
597 Sechler Rd.
Somerset, Pa 15501

John Keiper
PO Box 121
Bedford, PA 15522
jdkjak@gmail.com

Westminster Woods
John Bowser
Sue & Bill Martin (@the Oaks)
Denny Rock



Stone Church of the Brethren
1623 Moore Street
Huntingdon, PA 16652
www.huntingdonstonechurch.org
814-643-3390 • stonechurch@verizon.net

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STONE CHURCH NEWS

September 2020



- * Welcome back Juniata Students!
- * Virtual Worship continues!
(See the Friday Flash or contact the church office for the link!)
- * Weekly Small Groups & Bible Study!