

STONE CHURCH NEWS

September 2021

From the Pastor's Desk



We will begin a new worship series in September aimed at helping us bravely and authentically connect with one another. Even though there have been many blessings within this community during the pandemic - it has also opened up spaces between us. And as we find new and safer ways to be with one another, we want to continue to nurture the relationships that bind us. The series is called: *I've Been Meaning to Ask...A Series for Curiosity, Courage, & Connection*. We hope you will engage its questions and reflections both in worship and in a fellowship group!

Read more from the creators of the series, A Sanctified Art:

The guiding principles of this series

... *where are you from?*

We believe everyone is beloved, shaped from the dust of the earth and the breath of God. Everyone has a story to tell. Our stories are messy and beautiful, painful and hopeful—being written and rewritten over time. We commit to disrupting our assumptions and staying curious.

... *where does it hurt?*

We believe everyone carries hurt and has the capacity to acknowledge the pain of others. We believe God draws close to us in every moment of suffering. We commit to vulnerability and compassion.

... *what do you need?*

We believe everyone has needs, but each of us needs different things at different times. We believe God calls us to care for one another—in seasons of joy, transition, and hardship. We commit to listening and being present.

... *where do we go from here?*

We believe courageous conversations have the power to change and transform us. We believe God bridges connections in unexpected ways. We commit to continuing the conversation.

While the challenges of becoming beloved community to one another are endless, these questions are simple. We quickly recognized that all courageous conversations begin with simple questions and the curiosity to truly listen. We landed on our leading question, "I've been meaning to ask..." because it conveys intentionality, warmth, curiosity, and consideration. In essence, this question also implies the following statements: "I've been thinking about you and I've been wanting to check in... You've been on my mind... I haven't known how to have this conversation, but I'm getting started with a question." The ellipses symbolize the main objective of this series: to cultivate courageous conversations—and to keep having them, even if we need to pause.

Our weekly sub-themes provide a trajectory for going deeper. As you can see, these questions aren't surface level; they invite us to share our pain and seek ways to care for one another.

May this series help us to behold each other as images of the divine. May it help us strengthen our capacity for empathy and compassion. May it remind us of the power of asking unassuming questions. May it show us that courage is rooted in the heart. Through vulnerability and authenticity, may our courageous conversations lead us to glimpse hope, joy, and beauty—and to become the community God created us to be.

The Way Home
By Rev. Sarah Are

Do you think,
when they got to the end of the
Edmund Pettus bridge
they asked,
“Where do we go from here?”
Do you think,
when the church voted for all
people to preach and lead
that they asked,
“Where do we go from here?”
Do you think,
when your parents had their first fight
with you sleeping peacefully in the next room,
that they asked in hushed voices,
“Where do we go from here?”

Do you think that maybe people
have been asking this question
for as long as we’ve been asking questions?
I don’t know for sure,
but I do know that I want to ask hard questions with you.
So here it goes—
“Where are you from?
Where does it hurt?
What do you need?
And where do we go from here?”
I pray,
I trust,
I believe—
if we keep asking,
we just might find our way home.



Fellowship Small Groups - Coming Soon!

A new 4-week series of Fellowship Small Groups begins *the week of September 12th*. These groups are connected to our Worship Series, and focus on really getting to know other members of our church family. Whether you're brand new to Stone Church or have been part of this congregation for years, we hope you'll sign up to begin deepening those relationships! Check the Friday Flash, scan the QR code to the right, or just call into the office to sign up! See the graphics below for a sneak peek into the kind of conversations we will be having.



Some of the best conversations start with good questions—questions we’ve been meaning to ask, questions that keep us curious, and questions that lead us deeper into courage and connection. These conversation cards are designed to help you tell your story, share your pain, care for one another, and dream about a new way forward. In your conversations, we hope you’ll bring your full self. We hope you’ll share courageously and vulnerably. We hope you’ll listen and hold space. Mostly, we hope you will find connection and keep the conversation going.

Establish norms...

Before you dive into conversation, establish norms to articulate your covenant to one another.

- **Hold space—**
Welcome moments of silence and stillness to let words and thoughts sink in. Silence can be sacred.
- **Respect boundaries—**
What you share in your conversation is to be confidential, unless permission is granted to share it otherwise. Be mindful of your own personal boundaries—share only what you feel safe sharing.
- **Stay curious—**
Curiosity is a spiritual practice. If you don't fully understand someone's experience, get curious to learn more.

News From CAMP

Heritage Fair – September 18

The Middle PA District Heritage Fair will be back at Camp Blue Diamond this fall! Our annual festival will feature tons of food, loads of children's activities, an auction with the District Quilt, the Dunk the Dunker Tank, crafts, demonstrations and more! It's a family reunion for all your camp and church friends as we eat, visit, and have fun.

Heritage Fair starts with breakfast at 6:30 a.m. in the Lodge. Booths open at 8:30. The Auction is from 11:00 – 1:00 p.m. Booths, activities, and the fair typically end around 2:00 p.m.

Overnight lodging in the summer camp cabins, Lodge and the RV Campground is available. To reserve a lodge room, cabin or a campsite, contact Camp.

Volunteer parkers are needed. If you're willing to help, please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the church office or contact David Meadows (see below for contact info).



For more information about Heritage Fair, and a photographic look back at the fair over the last 20 years, visit www.campbluediamond.org/heritage-fair-1.

RV Campground & Cabins

CBD's family campground and the Lakeside and Rising Sun cabins are open. The campground has 44 RV sites, 2 tent sites, and a primitive cabin. Both Lakeside and Rising Sun have 3 bedrooms, a living/dining room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms, a loft, central AC and heat, and a TV/DVD. They are handicapped accessible. For more information, visit www.campbluediamond.org or call 814-667-2355.

Have questions?

Contact your Camp Representative, David Meadows.



Gene's Jottings

"A Valuable Lesson"

During my illness, my caretaker, Dee, of Cassville, spends Wednesday and Thursday evenings with me. She knows a lot more about the Bible than I do. She says the more she knows, the more there is to know and to understand.

Dee recently taught me a lot about Psalms, especially the 56th Psalm. I open my wife Alberta's Bible and find that Dee and Alberta had each underlined the SAME verses in their respective Bibles:

"Be merciful unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up...what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I have put my trust. I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

Dee told me, "When I came to your place the other night, Gene, they had just black-topped route 22 and there were no lines yet. With my vision, I was afraid of going home in the dark. I prayed about it and God gave me these verses from Psalm 56. When I got to that part of 22, I found that the lines had already been painted. God does answer prayers," Dee said.

I learned a valuable lesson.

"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

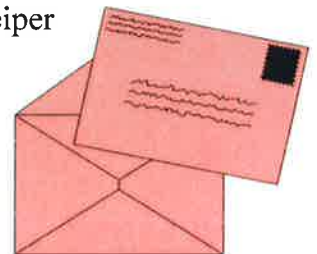
Thelma Wallace
5754 Wallace Dr.
Huntingdon, PA 16652

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

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

Westminster Woods

John Bowser
Sue Martin
Denny Rock
John Keiper



September Birthdays

3—Holden McBrayer *18	13—Pam Hileman	22—Valarie Lester
5—Cheryl McClain	14—Brandon Beck	22—Bill Peters
7—Harriet Kaylor *91	14—Ezra Lattimer *6	24—Grace Cook-Huffman *21
8—Kristy Launtz	14—Cyrus Lattimer *6	25—Joan Engle
8—Bill Musser	15—Randy Yoder	25—Greta Hall
9—Jessica Buterbaugh	16—Rowan Dickey *11	25—Austin Plane *15
10—Barb Purdy	19—Henry Thurston-Griswold	26—Doug Soliday
11—Rachael Beck *11	20—Aiden Borgardt	30—Tom Ness

September Anniversaries

1—Bert & Melissa McBrayer *20	21—Mary Garvey & Jeremy Santos *30
6—Ben & Cindy Lattimer	25—Geoff & Cindy Clarke *45
15—Chuck & Sharon Yohn *20	25—Charlie & Robin Paterson
20—Anne Swigart & John Shetron	29—Jeff & Pam Adams

Grocery Gift Cards— Every card helps our church! (We get 5% to use in our ministries!)

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! To get your grocery gift cards, simply contact Cheryl Ritchey or contact the church office! Cards are available in denominations of \$25, \$50, and \$100.



Men's Breakfast

September 18th — 8:00 AM

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 an invitation. Watch the Friday Flash for information on where and how we will be meeting (virtually or in-person). If you have questions, call Rick..

Prayer Shawls

The prayer shawl ministry provides comfort and love from the Stone Church congregation to those who experience challenging times. The shawls are tangible reminders of God's ever-present hope and peace freely given to us. Challenges may cloud our awareness of God's continual presence, but a shawl is a wonderful reminder. Placed around shoulders or across a lap, a prayer shawl provides a comforting touch. We are journeying through a most unusual year filled with social unrest, political stress, COVID and maybe stress that is unique to you. The prayer shawl ministry offers shawls to those who may be feeling additional stress, sadness, or loneliness this season. If you would like a shawl, please reach out to Pastor Cindy, Pastor Ben, or Donna Rhodes . We will arrange for a safe delivery to you.



Spotlight on Service

Christian Education Team: A Conversation with Chuck Yohn

Q. What do you find most fulfilling about serving through this team?

A. It is very life-giving for our team to contribute to nourishing the church body by providing the ground for faith building and exploration. Either through traditional Sunday School venues or small groups we are grateful for this congregation and the way it embraces and lifts up the work of this ministry team.

Q. What are you most excited about in the life of this team and for this team's future?

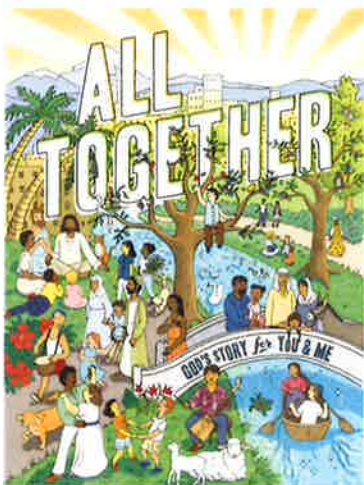
A. The Pandemic disrupted our traditional models of Christian Ed through Sunday morning classes. This was certainly a challenge, but has also been an opportunity to envision new ways to live into our faith building work. We are appreciative of the congregation's supportive response to our on-going small group series and especially of those persons that step up as teachers, leaders and facilitators for our programs. We are excited about the emerging synergies between Christian Education, Worship, Witness and other teams as we look holistically at our church life. We are looking forward to a new Children's series in the Fall taught by Becky Plane and Janis Jones! We are also excited (and a bit nervous) about our Disaster Bucket initiative this fall as a way to engage our youth in faith building.

Q. Where could you use some additional help?

A. We have a definite need for new energy and creativity in working with k- 8 as well as older youth, especially considering the limitations of our demographics and COVID considerations. If you feel called to this ministry, we would love to begin a conversation with you. If you have a passion for writing, we would also very much welcome a team member that would be interesting in creating regular newsletter submissions so that we can improve our communication with the congregation.

Q. If folks are interested in helping, whom should they contact and how?

A. Please contact any of the Christian Education Team members; Doris Comerford, Pam Grugan, Janis Jones, Amanda Helfrich, Chuck Yohn and Pastor Ben. Also feel free to email or call Chuck Yohn



Children's Class - Begins September 19th!

Becky Plane and Janis Jones will be leading a class for our children on Sunday mornings at 9:45am. The class is open to kids from Pre-K to 5th grade. Through stories and activities, kids will learn about God's story for all of us. (The adult Bible Study will look at the same stories each week, creating opportunities for intergenerational connections as well!)



Ton of Bricks Festival: A Great Day of Fun and Fellowship

We had a lovely time at the Mount Union Ton of Bricks Festival! We were able to share books, crafts, and fellowship with community members near and far. It was so exciting to share our vision to begin healing racism by learning alongside our local community.

Special thanks to the many people who gave their time and energy to help this event run smoothly.



Stone Church of the Brethren

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