



# The Beacon • May 2023

## Saint Peter's United Church of Christ

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### *Eastertide*

Spring is in full swing. The weather is warm (or warming), the flowers and trees are blooming, and the grass needs to be mowed once more. With Spring comes Easter, and although we already celebrated Easter Sunday, we will be in Eastertide or the Easter Season through most of May. Eastertide is a (50) fifty-day period from Easter to Pentecost. The first 40 days end with the feast of Ascension, which is on the Thursday of the sixth week of Resurrection, this year being May 18<sup>th</sup>. But many churches celebrate this on the following Sunday. This 40-day period is dedicated to the time that Jesus spent with his disciples following the resurrection, prior to his ascension. During this time Jesus appears and shows himself to his disciples and continues to prepare them for the task of carrying on his work and preaching the Gospel.

Jesus spent his whole ministry trying to teach and prepare the disciples to do the work of God. Yet, here we are after his death and resurrection and the disciples are doubtful, scared, take time to believe and need more teaching before Jesus goes to be with God. Even though that seems extreme, I think this is what it is like for us. We hear God's teachings and learn God's ways, yet somehow always need to be redirected from time to time. This reminds me of a video I saw of a sheep stuck in a drainage ditch. It happened when a boy was walking home from school in Grozny, Russia. The boy noticed a sheep stuck headfirst in a ditch, only the back legs sticking out, and most definitely in need of help. Rather than continue walking, the boy decided to stop and help the sheep.

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He grabbed hold of the animal's legs and pulled with all his strength. The sheep helped by kicking against the ditch's edge and, eventually, the sheep was pulled free. The sheep immediately bounced off, happily jumping for joy. However, after just a few bounces, he dove headfirst right back into the same ditch!

This story could be a metaphor about learning and doing God's will. The moment when God helps lift us out of trouble or redirects us on the path of God's love, somehow, we end up back where we started, not learning enough to withstand this world's tugs on us. Again and again God teaches us how to live our lives as Christians, and again and again we find ourselves falling back into the ditch of societal norms, worldly values, and the ways of the world.

Yet as we learned in our Easter Season, ours is a God of patience, love, and grace. Each time we fall back into the old routines and places that seemingly divide us and drive us farther from God's will, God shows up, walks with us, and continues to do so time and time again. And that is what this Easter Season provides for us, not just when Easter is celebrated, but in every "easter moment" when we recognize God helping us once again.

Let us continue to celebrate God's grace, love, and salvation in our lives as we remember that God is a God for us, a God who will show up time and time again to teach us and show us the way both today and forevermore!

Blessings,

*-pastor Kim*

## *Facilities Rental*

***Did you know ...?*** Saint Peter's is now offering our facilities for rental to members and to the wider community for birthday parties, bridal and baby showers, rehearsal dinners, and other types of gatherings of up to 70 people.

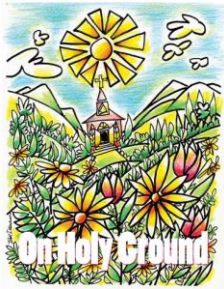
Rentals for the community center and pavilion begin at \$75 for members and \$150 for non-members plus a refundable security deposit and a non-refundable bathroom cleaning fee. Rental includes use of the space only; decoration, catering or music arrangements are the responsibility of the reserving party. Please keep in mind that alcoholic beverages are not permitted on church property. The use of the sanctuary and pavilion for the funerals and wedding ceremonies of members is free, but other fees, such as cleaning and an honorarium for organist and pastor, apply.

If you or someone you know is looking for a space to hold an event, please reach out to the office to learn more about scheduling, fees, and policies.

Many thanks to the Facilities Committee, led by Jane Brubaker, for developing these documents and procedures.

## *Sign UP!*

A sure sign that in person worship is once again the norm is the increased number of people visiting our sign-up table and taking an active role during worship services. We've put out fresh sign-up sheets for May through August. Please consider signing up to serve St. Peter's during worship as opener, reader, or greeter, or to bring flowers for worship or a treat for hospitality hour. For the more technically adventurous among the congregation, there is also an opportunity to help run the slide show. If you think you might like to learn about the slide show, please contact the church office and let us know.



## *Strengthen The Church*

The Strengthen the Church offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in the growth of UCC's local congregations, leading to support for new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

Your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in youth and young adults. Saint Peter's will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023.

## *St. Peter's Property Clean Up Day!*

Spring! What a beautiful time of the year! The sun shines more, flowers begin to grow, the grass returns to green, and ... weeds need pulling, old growth needs trimming, and the garden beds need mulching! If you are willing to come and help us beautify our grounds for the season, please bring your trimmers, rakes, shovels, etc. to St. Peter's on Saturday, May 13 at 8:00 a.m.

## *Women's Ministry Plant Sale*

Plans continue to evolve for 2023 Women's Ministry plant sale/swap scheduled for May 21 at the church. In addition to the plants for swap, there will be some annuals available for sale. Gardeners, as you are cleaning out your gardens in preparation for the summer season, please consider donating extra perennials that you may have. If you need pots for this purpose, please contact Louise Miller.

If you plan to donate plants, please bring them to church on Saturday morning, May 20, between 9:00 and 12:00. Please label your plants to help us in placing them with similar varieties.

If you have time to help, assistance is needed for both Saturday's set-up and Sunday's sale. Please contact Louise Miller or Elaine Wiley to let them know of your interest.

## *Youth Fellowship*

Over the winter the youth conducted their "Snow Day" raffle which raised funds for donations to be made to a local animal shelter and to CHOP. A small portion of the funds was also reserved to pay for a fellowship event which is now scheduled for May 21, 2-5 p.m. at Skateaway Family Fun & Sports Center.



## *Senior Center Programming*

The Senior Center meets on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. in the Community Center with the following scheduled programming beginning at 11:00 a.m. During meetings held at St. Peter's, lunch is available for a \$5 donation.

- May 2 Trip to Bethany Children's Home - Book review with author Jennifer Koch
- May 9 Hallie Vaughn speaks about female inventors
- May 16 Trip to Reading Railroad Heritage Museum - Hamburg
- May 23 Brandon Moyer - Uncle B's Bees
- June 6\* Music by the Phoebe 4 followed by a covered dish

\*June 6 is the last meeting of the season.

## Outreach Opportunities

### Wilson Area Food Pantry

The Wilson Area Food Pantry distributes food in our neighborhood on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month. A basket where you may leave donated nonperishables is located inside the Sanctuary. Come to church with a can, a box, or a jar, and you'll put some food on a neighbor's plate.

*The pantry's greatest need currently is for items such as peanut butter, tuna, pasta and pasta sauce, as well as other varieties of canned goods.*

### Hope Rescue Mission - Clothing Drive

In the April Beacon we talked about the donation that Women's Ministry recently made to one of Hope's newest projects - construction of the Lighthouse women & children's center. We would like to continue to help with their mission to provide, food, clothing, and shelter for the men at Hope Rescue Mission and the women and children at Lighthouse. One of the ways we can do this is through hosting a clothing drive for new or used clothing, shoes, belts, hats, scarves, purses, sheets, blankets, towels, and coats. They also have a need for *NEW* underwear, undershirts, and sweatpants all in sizes medium to xxxl. We plan to host this drive sometime during the summer months, however, they will take clothing for any season, so as you are swapping out your winter and summer wardrobe items, keep an eye out for gently used pieces that you may no longer need as well as for an announcement of the dates the drive will be held.

### Dates to Remember



May 7	Communion service
May 13	Property cleanup day
May 16	Municipal Primary elections
May 21	Youth Fellowship event at Skateaway
May 21	Women's Ministry plant sale
May 28	Collection of Strengthen the Church offering