

Pastor's Pen

Who we are and who we are becoming!

Dear Congregation,

There is a lot in a name. Your name identifies you, and lets the world know who you are, setting you apart as uniquely you. It can identify your family and ethnic background, and other things like your family's convictions, quirks, and obsessions. If people know you, just hearing your name will remind them of who you are, what you look like, your character, your relationship with them. It works at the church and business level too. What do names like "McDonald's," "The Eagles," or "St. Peter's" evoke for you?

On January 5, 2025, at 10:00 AM on the first Sunday of the new year, we plan to inaugurate our new name: **Christ Fellowship Church**. There will be one combined worship service at 10 AM, with Holy Communion and the Wesley Covenant Renewal service, with a **Celebration Reception** to follow. We want the whole church to attend as we celebrate our new name together.

This new name marks a day of new beginnings, new associations, and new expectations for the future. We should be very clear about why the new name is necessary: We are shedding an old identity we have already begun to leave in spirit. It no longer properly represents who we are. We are forgetting what lies behind and moving forward to what lies ahead.

With the new name, we are boldly declaring who we are and who we want to be. We are a church committed first and foremost to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and to the final authority of his Holy Scripture, the source of true apostolic faith once delivered. We are committed to both right belief and right living according to scriptural standards of holiness, rejecting compromise with the world's standards, living in obedience to Christ, and to being a church where genuine Christian disciples are made, and God's love is freely shared with others. Let's embrace our new future together with one heart and mind in Christ Jesus our Lord!

We are changing church signs, the website, our advertising, letterhead, brochures and business cards to reflect the new name. Because we are still in the lawsuit, we cannot yet change our legal name on the deed and registered with the courts and the UMC.



However, there is nothing in UM discipline which forbids changing those other things or publicly using our new “*Doing Business As*” name. That is what we are kicking off on January 5.

Here are some things to know:

- 1) We have a new website: www.havencfc.org. The old site will still work for some time, pointing people to the new site.
- 2) The Trustees have ordered a beautiful new white lit cross for the steeple to replace the old UM cross-and-flame.
- 3) The Trustees have covered the old street signs and are ordering new signs for the outdoor marques.
- 4) We are looking for a new logo for the church letterhead. We are happy to consider anyone’s creative vision for this and have received one nice entry so far. Let’s get prayerfully creative as we prepare for our future together.
- 5) We will issue a press release about the name change.

Hope to see you all on January 5 for our name-change celebration!

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!!!

Yours in the love of Christ! Pastor Chris Fisher



Worship & Preaching Schedule

Jan – Feb 2025

Sunday Worship: 9:00AM Live & Online


11:00 AM Coffeehouse Worship in Fellowship Hall

Saturday Worship: Live at 6:00 PM

9 AM Theme: *Book of Hebrews*

Coffeehouse Theme: *The Book of Acts*

We will conclude the **Revelation Series** in January and begin a new series in the **Book of Hebrews**. **Coffeehouse** will focus on the **Book of Acts** and the **Holy Spirit**.

Jan 5  **Epiphany Sunday w/ Holy Communion** 
SINGLE SERVICE – 10 AM
Wesley New-Year Covenant Renewal
New Name Dedication Sunday

Jan 12 ***1st Sunday after Epiphany***
9:00 AM Worship – Revelations 22
11:00 AM– Acts Series Part 1

- Jan 19** **2nd Sunday in Christmas**
Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
 9:00 AM Worship – Revelation 22
 11:00 AM– Acts Series Part 2
- Jan 26** **5th Sunday in Christmas**
 10:00 – Hebrews 1
Children's message Sunday
 11:00 – Acts Series Part 3
- Feb 2** **6th Sunday in Christmas w/ Holy Communion**
 9:00 – Hebrews 2
 11:00 – Acts Series Part 4
- Feb 9** **7th Sunday in Christmas**
 9:00 – Hebrews 3
 11:00 – Acts Series Part 5
- Feb 16** **3rd Sunday in Advent**
 9:00 – Hebrews 4
 11:00 – Acts Series Part 6
- Feb 23** **4th Sunday in Advent**
 9:00 – Hebrews 5
 11:00 – New Series TBD



Communion Offerings

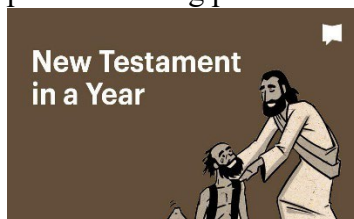
- Jan 5 Jewel Ministry in honor of Sanctity of Human Life
 Feb 2 Pastor's Discretionary Fund



THROUGH the BIBLE in a YEAR

In 2025, we will once again offer a group Bible reading plan hosted through the YouVersion® Bible App.

The plan is **The BibleProject's New Testament in One Year.** It includes daily readings through the NT, with short videos on each book.



If you would like an invitation to the group, please contact Pastor Fisher through the church office (currently office@havenfirstumc.org). You will need to join the YouVersion® Bible App first and give him the email you registered with so he can invite you. You can preview the plan at the following link: **<https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/13233>**.

For the more ambitious, consider two other plans:

Eat This Book: One Year Bible Plan with Daily Psalms:

<https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/206>

The BibleProject's Old Testament in a Year:

<https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/13630>



Online Worship Inquiry

Dear Friends, if you are watching our Sunday worship services online, we're glad you are tuning in. Please drop a comment to let us know you did. Otherwise, we have no way of knowing who is watching. We often have over 100 viewing households each week, but it is difficult to help you all stay connected. We have at least one online Bible study during the winter you could join if interested. Contact the office for details. We would also love to see you at live worship from time to time to catch up. We miss you!



Update on the Community Lunch

Many thanks to Kelly Daley for accepting the call to direct the Community Lunch ministry into the future, and for all those who have and continue to help to make the ministry possible, including by shopping, setting up, cooking, cleaning, and serving tables! Please continue to pray for the ministry and consider how God might be calling you to help.

Community Lunch is held at Noon the 2nd Saturday of the month.





Church Prayer Ministry Updates

7 Things to Pray about in Jan – Feb 2025

- 1) Pray for your fellow believers here, and for their strengthening in faith. Pray for our children, youth, and their families.
- 2) Pray for your neighbors. Pray for the lonely and disconnected, the vulnerable, the sick, and our shut-ins.
- 3) Pray for our small groups, our leadership, and our pastor and staff. Pray for the missionaries and ministries we support.
- 4) Pray for the lawyers at the NCLL who represent us, and for those who oppose us. Our Lord instructs us: “‘You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”(Mt 5:43-45)
- 5) Pray for those in authority in the church and in the government. Pray for the leaders of the nations and the peace of Jerusalem.
- 6) Pray for spiritual awakening among the people of Schuylkill County. Pray for next year’s Fall 2025 Alpha Course.
- 7) Pray that we as a congregation will share the Gospel boldly and effectively, with truth, love, & good works.

Weekly prayer team ministry continues.

We continue to recruit prayer teams to pray for one hour a day for one week for the Kingdom of God to come more fully in our church and community.

An invitation to spend concentrated time with God each week:

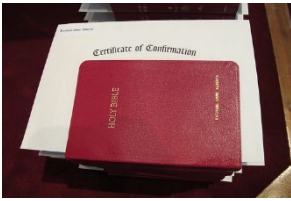
Consider spending concentrated time alone with God as part of your daily and weekly prayer life. Devoting time each week to reading scripture and sitting in God’s presence will bring immeasurable blessings to you and those around you. The church sanctuary or prayer chapel are available most days.

Do you have a testimony to share?

Please consider sharing your story as part of our faith-stories series. Contact the office at office@havenfirstumc.org if you want to share.



Confirmation Class of 2025 Organizing



Do you have a child who is ready for confirmation class? Confirmation is a serious discipleship class which takes young people through the basics of Christian faith and helps them make a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. It is

for children who were baptized as infants but have never made a public commitment to Christ, for children who have never been baptized but are seeking Christ, and for youth baptized at a later age who have not yet been trained in Christian discipleship basics.

Youth will need to be at least 12 years old and in middle school or older to begin. This is the age when we believe they are old enough to know the difference between right and wrong, and to take responsibility for their faith and relationship with God.

This year's Confirmation Class will begin on February 12th, running on Wednesday nights through early Spring at 6 pm. The Class will be viewing the new ***Youth Alpha Course Series*** (just redone in 2024). This is a very exciting opportunity for young people to confirm their faith and prepare for a true walk with Jesus Christ that will last for the rest of their lives and into eternity. Please contact the church office to register your child.

Faith Community Nurse's Notes

Brought to you by Ann Moyer RN, FCN

Winter Health and Safety

The cold of winter, along with ice and snow, creates many challenges to our health and safety. It includes the peak season for respiratory illnesses. Contaminated respiratory droplets travel more easily in the cold dry air of winter. That coupled with people congregating indoors, allow viruses to be shared more readily. If not feeling well, stay home. Most respiratory illnesses can be helped by resting, drinking plenty of fluids and taking over the counter pain relievers and cough suppressants. If your symptoms become severe seek medical attention. If you sneeze or cough, do so into the crook of your arm, NOT YOUR HANDS! Wash your hands often with warm water and soap (a 20 second thorough wash) or use hand sanitizer. Do not share utensils, cups, food, clothing, towels, or other personal items. Disinfect high touch areas in your house and work area. Use of a humidifier may also be helpful.

When you do need to go outside. Dress appropriately. Cover your head with a hat or hood, making sure that your ears are protected. Use a scarf to protect your lower face. Dress in loose layers of clothing with properly fitted shoes or boots if indicated. Protect your hands with gloves or mittens. Limit your time outdoors in cold, wet, wintry weather. Frostbite can develop in minutes dependent upon conditions.

With winter comes snow (at least in our region)! If you need to shovel, be sure to stretch and warm up your muscles. Bend at the knees and use your legs to lift the shovel to avoid sprains and strains. If you become tired, take a break, keep hydrated, and proceed in increments that are tolerable.

When using a snowblower, be extra cautious. Keep children and pets away while operating it. Be sure to turn it off before clearing any snow jams.

Take your time walking outside, be aware of ice and snow-packed surfaces that increase your risk of falling. Take small penguin type steps when on slippery surfaces. Be especially careful exiting your car. It is a good idea to hold onto the car door while exiting your vehicle.

Make sure your car is winter ready for travel. Replace worn tires, check antifreeze levels, and keep at least a half a tank of gas in your car to help prevent freezing. Carry emergency supplies and extra warm clothing in case you should become stranded. Tell others about your travel plans , route, and expected date of return.

Stay safe and warm over the winter season. Enjoy the flakes of snow as they dance to the ground and blanket the earth.

He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes.
Psalm 147: 16 NIV



**Stephen Ministry
Class
January 2025**

The Stephen Ministry class will be held
on

Wednesdays at 1 PM.

The first class will begin on Wed., January 15th!

The class consists of 50 hours of specialized training in Christian caregiving, including topics on listening skills, ministering to those experiencing grief, dealing with depression, and much more.

Please pray about joining us. Everyone who has taken this course has greatly benefited by the teachings. It gives you a greater confidence in talking with friends and family and anyone experiencing a difficult situation in life.

If you have any questions about this ministry, or know of someone who may benefit from our program, please contact one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders - either Lynne O'Connell (570-449-2355) or Nancy Kraft (570-617-3121).

*"Carry each other's burdens, and in this
way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
~ Galatians 6:2 NIV*



Welcome our new staff to the
Youth Ministry!
Stacey Lehman



On November 3rd, the SPRC announced the position of Administrative Assistant to Youth Director being filled with one of our own, Stacey Lehman. She has been a value to the Fellowship Committee for some years, and also a great help to the youth ministry as well for many years. With the departure of April to continue Young Life in Schuylkill County, Stacey will be very important in the administrative support of both Middle and Senior Youth Ministry for David as he continues to lead the overall youth ministry program.

STAY **UP** TO DATE

Follow our Facebook page, visit
www.havenignite.org or sign up for
Flocknote to be in the know!

Upcoming Fundraising Events

Subs for 'sub' temps?



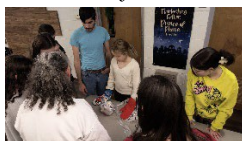
Order a sub from the
Youth thru R & K Subs!
During the month of January

C & C Candies
Youth Fundraiser



Coming this
SPRING

Youth Christmas Party!



Youth Ministry Ignite Winter/Spring 2025

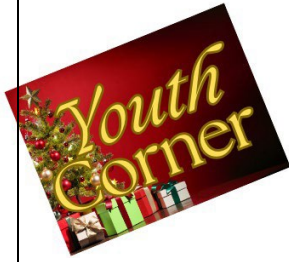
Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Location	Additional Info
Wednesday Jan 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2025	6pm – 7pm	Middle School Ignite	Youth Room	(cont. Power of Influence and Under Pressure studies)
	7:30 – 8:30pm	Senior Talk!	Youth Room	World Religions (continue)
Friday, Jan 17 th	5:30pm – 10pm	Neon Snowtubing	Meet at church at 5:30pm	Seats are limited to 20! RSVP Today! Cost is \$10
Jan 8 th – Feb 12 th	R & K Subs for Camp Fundraiser			
Sunday, Jan 26 th	10:15am – 11am	Last Sunday Latte	Fellowship Hall	
Wednesday, Feb 5	7pm	HCBC Parent/Youth Meeting 1		Initial meeting – cost, time, fundraiser support
Wednesday Feb 5, 12, 19, 26	6pm – 7pm	Middle School Ignite	Youth Room	12 – Start of Youth Alpha Series
	7:30 – 8:30pm	Senior Talk!	Youth Room	Financial Stewardship
Sunday, Feb 9 th	1pm – 3pm	Souper Bowl Food Drive	Haven Redner's	Dress warm!
Sunday, Feb 16 th	6pm – 8pm	Father/Daughter Dance	Walk In Art Center	
Sunday, Feb 23 rd	10:15am – 11am	Last Sunday Latte	Fellowship Hall	
March 5, 12, 19, 26	6pm – 7pm	Middle School Ignite	Youth Room	Lenten
	7:30 – 8:30pm	Senior Talk!	Youth Room	
Saturday March 8 – Sunday March 9		Winter JAM! Joint Church – Bethesda Youth	State College	Availability for the First 8 committed. Meet at church at 12pm Cost \$50 (\$15 deposit – 1/8, remaining \$35 – 2/26)
Sunday, March 16 th	NERF Event			
Wednesday April 2	7pm	Parent/Youth Meeting 2 HCBC		Update and paperwork for those attending.
March 12 th – April 2 nd	C & C Candies Easter Sale Fundraiser			
April 4 th – 5 th	Lock-in Event (tentative)			
April 2, 9, 23, 30 (16 th off – Holy Week)	6pm – 7pm	Middle School Ignite	Youth Room	Lenten
	7:30 – 8:30pm	Senior Talk!	Youth Room	
Sunday, May 4 th	End of Year Gathering / Party (more to be determined)			

Agenda in studies and some events subject to change. Notifications will be relayed via Flocknote and FB Messenger.



Starting February 12th, we will be starting the Alpha Youth series for 8 weeks. This will also be part 1 of the confirmation program for any youth wanting to be confirmed. Continuation of confirmation program will occur during the Fall Season.



Serving and Celebrating!

The youth has been very active the last few months!! We had the honor of painting faces and pumpkins at The Island Fall Festival in October! Our youth also helped serve the Thanksgiving Community Lunch in November!! Later in November, the youth played games with the helpers before the Thanksgiving break. In December, we took some time away from our studies to discuss about what the Advent season is about before we had our annual Youth Christmas Party.



Thank you, Kristy Kraft, for helping create some nice craft items for a special gift!

Our youth council did get together in October and will again in January to discuss and expand on events coming up during this season of winter and spring. In the next months to come, we will be outside of Redner's for our annual "Souper-Bowl Sunday" Event!! Please come support the youth and the Vineyard on February 9th between 1-4! During the next four months, there will be two fundraisers to help support the youth with their camp and events costs later this year. We will be selling R&K subs right after the New Year! Later during the Lenten season, we'll have another candy sale with C & C Candies (more information to come).

A few big events coming up include snow tubing in January, Winter Jam in March, and a Lock-in event in April. Due to cost and limited availability, some of these events require advanced planning and commitment by the youth and parents. Speaking of, we will also have two upcoming parent/youth meetings next year in preparation for the Harvey Cedar Youth Camp in July 2025.

We will also finish up studies from last year as the senior group will dwell into Christian financial stewardship. Middle School group will start the new Alpha Youth series in February. This 8-week program will be part of next year's confirmation program. Please consider this commitment with sincere purpose and prayer if you have not gone through confirmation yet.

Thank you for all your help! Hope you all have a very Merry Christmas!!

God Bless!! David and Stacey

SPRC Update

By Linda Olsen (Chair)

The SPRC welcomes Stacey Lehman as our new Youth Ministry Administration Assistant, starting on Nov 1, 2024. In her position, she provides necessary planning, administrative, and logistical support to the Director of Youth Ministry, Dave Williams. She will add support at youth events as well as to regular youth meetings.

Stacey is excited about this position as she has been a regular volunteer with the youth for the past few years and has established a good rapport with our youth. Her daughter, Kendall, has brought a number of friends who participate in our youth group. Stacey and Kendall have also welcomed Virginia and Nigel into their family. She feels truly blessed with her family as well as with the extended church family.

Stacey has a full time job as an administrative assistant in Pottsville. She feels that this has given her the skills needed for her position with us, which is seven hours per week. She has already acclimated into this position and has a great working relationship with Dave.

A dark, moody photograph of a white ceramic coffee cup filled with dark liquid, resting on a thick, textured grey knit sweater. The background is dark and out of focus.

COFFEE HOUSE WORSHIP

RETURNING ON JANUARY 12

SERVICE BEGINS AT 11:00 AM

420 Saylor Street
Schuylkill Haven, PA.
17972
Phone:570-385-3941 Fax:570-385-6842
office@havenfirstumc.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
17972
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BULK RATE
POTTSVILLE, PA. 17901
PERMIT #26

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED
Dated Mail Please do not delay

The Circuit Writer
January /February 2025

First United Methodist Church

*"Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the
transformation of the world"*

*In Person Sunday Service at 9:00 A.M. & Saturday Night at 6:00 P.M.
11:00 A.M. Coffeehouse Worship Service
You can also join us online at: www.havenfirstumc.org Or like us on
Facebook and join us there.*