

The Steeple

November 2024

Dear Friends

Greetings in the name of Jesus! Earlier this year, I had a revelation about how I was approaching the ministry and the challenges I was facing. Having turned 61 in June, I often think about the fact that I am getting closer to retirement. I never expected to spend the end of my ministerial career dealing with a pandemic, a schism within our denomination and sweeping changes to our Book of Discipline. I must admit I was feeling sorry for myself. During my prayer time, I realized that I should be grateful for facing these challenges with a wealth of experience and the wisdom of lessons learned throughout my career.

I had a bit of a “reset” because of having an attitude of gratitude. I have read that there is a mental health benefit to finding three specific things for which to be thankful each day. There are days when that is a challenge. There are others when it is easy to thank God for the beauty around me and the ability to experience it. I can thank God for a person who has blessed me and the opportunity to bless others.

In this month when we often think about what we are grateful for, I thank God for the privilege of being your pastor. There are many things I thank God for about Bakerstown United Methodist Church. I am grateful for the experiences we have shared. Many of you remember when Pastor Alyce was your student assistant pastor. I thank God for the way you nurtured a young seminarian and her fiancé. I thank God for the over six years I have been your pastor. I am grateful for the pastors, staff and leaders I have served with. I give thanks for relationships formed with you and with those who have gone to be with Jesus. We have shared both happy and sad memories together. I cherish these times.

I thank God for a church that has a heart for serving. It is amazing the number of meals we prepare each month. Some of those meals are for the benefit of others like the Neighborhood Table in Sharpsburg, Drive Through Dinners for friends in our community and some of our own members. Other meals like the pancake breakfasts are made to raise funds so we can help others. I think of the hours spent serving in youth ministry, children’s ministry, tech team and choir. While serving, we fellowship together. Relationships are formed inside and outside the walls of our church.

I am grateful for our leaders. I often refer to you as the Farmers Insurance of church leaders. You “know a thing or two because you have seen a thing or two.” As a person who tends to be excitable, I appreciate the wisdom you have by drawing on past experiences. You have given me a fresh perspective in trying to lead through challenging times. In relying on our history, we remember God’s faithfulness to us, which gives us faith to move forward.

I thank God for the opportunities we have to worship together. Whether we gather early for traditional worship, later for our blended worship or participate via You Tube, we grow in our faith through prayers, hymns, spiritual songs, scripture passages and sermons. The gifts that are offered in worship to God are a blessing to all.

I hope that you too are blessed by the people and ministries of Bakerstown UMC. We have much for which to be grateful. You are invited to our Thanksgiving service, which will be recorded and appear on our You Tube channel the week of November 25th. Happy Thanksgiving!

Blessings,
Pastor Keith

Join Us for worship! ON Sundays at 8:30am and 11:00am

Adult small groups at 9:45am

Nursery (available at 11:00am) Upper Education Wing **Nursery is available for infants and children up to 4 years old**

Junior Church will be dismissed after the children’s moment at 11:00am worship

Mark your calendars for the annual Church Conference on Saturday, November 2nd at 1:00pm at Ingomar United Methodist Church All members of the church are encouraged and invited to attend this meeting with District Superintendent Paul Richey, presiding. At this meeting everyone has a voice to vote.



Daylight savings time ends on November 3rd. Remember to set your clocks back 1 hour.

All Saints Sunday, November 3rd at both services. We will be honoring all the members of Bakerstown UMC that passed away between -November 5, 2023—November 3, 2024.

Men Doing Stuff | Nov. 4 | 6:30pm | Fellowship Hall The Men Doing Stuff group will meet on Monday, November 4th for dinner and a Shoebox Packing Party for the Operation Christmas Child project. Many thanks to those that have been filling up the donation box. If you still want to contribute, please try to have your donations to the church by Sunday, November 3rd.

For those that plan on helping pack the shoeboxes, please let Roger Cramer know by emailing to: bak-erstownumm@gmail.com This helps me make sure there will be enough food for dinner.



Women's Advent Bible Study | Nov. 7 | 9:00am | Fellowship Hall The Marvel and Miracle of Advent by Lisa Harper and Christine Caine. (Due to lack of interest, there will be no Monday night option.)

The Marvel and Miracle of Advent

tells us how Jesus' arrival on earth changed the course of history forever. Not only for those who lived in the first century, but for those of us in the twenty-first century as well. The miracle and marvel of the Advent season demonstrates that we are precious to Him. He's not a distant God. He is Emmanuel, God with us. That includes wherever you are, right now. Join us this Advent season for this four-session video Bible study. Your hope and spirit will be revived as you recapture the wonder of Jesus' obvious love for you. You'll discover that Advent is not only a season of waiting and preparation, but also, it's a season of action to share

the hope of Jesus with everyone. Workbooks are \$13.00.

The Neighborhood Table | Nov. 7 | Fellowship Hall BUMC is continuing to partner with the Fox Chapel UMC to provide meals to the Sharpsburg Community.

Volunteers are needed to help prepare the meal at BUMC starting at 2:30 PM. The meals are then transported to Sharpsburg and volunteers are needed there to help serve and clean up afterwards. This has been a very rewarding ministry so far, so please consider volunteering by calling Roger Cramer at 724-443-2847.

Drive Thru Dinner | Nov. 12 | Fellowship Hall

The Mission Team has been serving a monthly meal for The Lighthouse. If the Lord is calling you to participate in this ministry either by helping with food prep in the kitchen, packing meals, delivering them to our church friends or to cars, please plan on coming to the fellowship hall at 2:30pm, or if you have any other questions, please contact Carol Skolnik at cnik-skol@gmail.com.



GriefShare's "Surviving the Holidays" Seminar - Nov. 13 | 7:00pm | Wesley Room

Our GriefShare regular group sessions continue to meet every Wednesday evening through December 11th. But all are invited to a special GriefShare "Surviving the Holidays" This evening will offer practical strategies for making it through the holiday season following the loss of a loved one. You will view a video featuring advice from people in grief who've faced the holidays after their loss. You'll hear insights from respected Christian counselors, pastors, and psychologists, as well as other experts in the field of grief support. This event is free and open to anyone in the community. All are welcome.

All-U-Can-Eat Breakfast! | Saturday, Nov. 16 | 8:00-11:00am | Fellowship Hall Breakfast will be served from 8:00 am to 11:00 am, \$7.00 for Adults, \$3.00 for ages 6-12 and under age 6 eat for free. Come and get your choice of Plain, Blueberry, Buckwheat or Chocolate Chip Pancakes and the options of eggs, bacon, sausage and/or home-fries to go with them. Wash it all down with coffee, tea or OJ and then go out and change the world!

A Stitch and a Prayer | Saturday, Nov. 16 | 10am to 2pm | Old Fellowship Hall Sewing, knitting and crocheting blankets and prayer shawls for Linus Project, baptisms and ill in our church. Need help sorting, sewing, ironing, pinning, cutting.....all hands welcome. Bring a lunch!!!!

If you sew, crochet, or knit your talent can be used in making quilts for Project Linus, shawls for shut-ins or even lap robes for people in nursing homes. If you are not able to join us when we meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10-2, please contact Louise Himes, Mary Pouchot or Marge Kirkpatrick if you have questions regarding how you can help.

DIGging Deeper | Sunday's | 9:45am | Wesley Room Advent Study—December 1st

An Unlikely Advent - Extraordinary People of the Christmas Story is a four-week study that focuses on the experiences of four sets of often overlooked characters in the Nativity story. During this Advent season, Rev. Rachel Billups guides readers through the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the shepherds. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas. Rev. Billups is lead pastor of New Albany UMC in New Albany, Ohio. You are invited to join us as we dig deeper into An Unlikely Advent.



Autumn has arrived, and with it the splendor of bright blue skies and a multitude of colored leaves. It's a glorious time to be alive! And, it's also a good time to give thanks for life and all of its blessings! Before you get busy with preparations for the approaching holidays, please

take the opportunity to schedule an appointment to donate the life-giving gift of blood. The year's final Red Cross blood drive for Gibsonia and surrounding communities will be held from 1:00 to 6:00 pm on Tuesday, December 3, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Gibsonia. As always, you can make an appointment on-line at <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html>. Or, if you need help with scheduling, call the Trinity church office at 724-443-8110. Thank you!



Women's Annual Christmas Brunch – Saturday morning, December 7th, at 9:00am - with the return of Pastor Alyce and a new Christmas message, a fun craft, and the always hysterical BUMC Women's Drama group –

as well as Chef Kevin McGrath, his world famous cinnamon rolls, and his band of merry kitchen elves to provide the meal!! We will once again be supporting the

Deer Lakes Backpack Initiative to Fight Hunger – which serves over 200 children weekly in our community. You may bring food items or a monetary contribution (make checks payable to D L Backpack Initiative or bring a cash donation). Please sign up in the Narthex or call the church office to register by December 1st, so we know how many to prepare for. Thank you!

Women at the Well | Sunday's | 9:50 - 10:45am | Library There will be short bible study lessons and discussion questions. Come spend some time with fellow Christian women and learn about different things in the life of our Lord. All women are invited to attend. Please join us, if you have questions or thoughts please contact Kim Szelc 412-908-4723 or kszelc@zoominternet.net

Tuesday Night Bible Study | 6:30-7:30pm | Fellowship Hall

Join together in a study of the Books of James and Jude.

We will see how these books compare to what is going on in the world today.

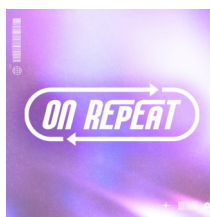
Bring your bible and join in this verse by verse study.

GriefShare | 7:00pm | Wesley Room

GriefShare is a special support group designed to offer you help and encouragement after losing a loved one. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days ahead. We know it hurts, and we want to help. Our GriefShare program is co-led by Rev. Bill Dambach, Marcia Shipley, Tim McDermott, Judy Moore, and Marge Kirkpatrick.

GriefShare has just put out their best edition of GriefShare yet and we are using it here at Bakerstown United Methodist Church. The curriculum is always Christ-centered and biblical and the weekly videos feature some of the nation's foremost Christian experts on grief and recovery. Please feel free to call the church office at 724-443-3184 if you have any questions or would like more information about GriefShare.

GriefShare is a drop-in anytime group and open to anyone in the church or community. All are welcome. Just stop in.



Bakerstown Youth Group—Sundays

For all youth in 6-12th grade! In November, we're starting a new series looking at how Jesus went out of his way to love people. It's called "On Repeat." Sunday nights from 6-7:30 pm at the Fellowship Hall entrance. We

would love to see you and bring a friend! If you want to be involved in our Youth Ministry Program, or have questions concerning a program, contact Pastor Amanda at 724-443-3184 or amitchell@bakerstownumc.org

Junior Church:

Every Sunday, children ages kindergarten-5th grade will be dismissed following Children's Moment in the 11:00 service. We will head back to our room(s) (just past the library) in either one or two groups, k-2nd and 3rd-5th, depending on the size of attendance that week. This Fall in Junior Church we are learning that God is a good God who keeps His promises! We will be exploring the Old Testament leading up to the birth of Jesus!

Please RSVP for your child here: [Junior Church RSVP](#)

Volunteer for Junior Church:

We cannot make Junior Church work without help! Please consider volunteering to support BUMC's Children's Ministry. All materials and lessons will be prepped for you and any support you may need or want will be provided.

To volunteer, use this link: [Volunteer Link](#)

****Note on Kingdom Kids**** With a million things going on for everyone's schedules, RSVP rates for Kingdom Kids and JUMP have been lower than expected.

Families, please fill out the linked survey to share when might work best for your family and some feedback about the actual events we have been offering.

Survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/DgjsfEpAc7>

November Kingdom Kids: Children who are enrolled in Kindergarten-2nd Grade are invited to attend Kingdom Kids on **Friday, November 15th** from 6:00-7:30pm. Join us in New Fellowship Hall for a Bible lesson, snack, craft, game and more! This is a drop-off event. However, *volunteers are always needed!* **To RSVP for your child(ren) or sign up to volunteer, please use this link: [Kingdom Kids RSVP](#)**

November JUMP (Junior United Methodist Program): If you are a 3rd-5th grader, please join us for pizza and games on **Sunday, November 10th**. We will meet in New Fellowship Hall from 12:15-1:45pm for food and fun. This is a drop-off event, but *volunteers are more than welcome!*

To RSVP for your child(ren) or to sign up to volunteer, please use this link: [JUMP RSVP](#)

Mission Team News...



Costa Rica Work Mission Trip

2025 will mark the 20 year anniversary of the first Work Mission Trip that BUMC members took to Costa Rica.

In those 20 years, we have sent 6 teams to work at our sister church, Iglesia Metodista Palabra Viva, and have seen the church buildings grow and established deep relationships with the people there.

The Mission Team is starting to put together plans on sending another team in the summer of 2025.

At this point, we have no dates, no estimate of the cost, and no plans on what we will do if we go there, BUT, we would like to see who might be interested. Children must be 16 or accompanied by a parent.

The Mission Team will be helping each member financially to help offset some of the cost.

If you feel that God is calling you to step out and travel to Costa Rica with a Work Mission team from BUMC, then please send an email to the Mission team at: bumcmteam@gmail.com.

One exciting possibility we are considering is teaming up with some members of Pastor Luke Whipple's church as both he and Rachel Whipple have long standing relationships with Pastor Eddier and the people of his church.

From the Prayer Corner – A Month of Thankfulness

As we prepare for Thanksgiving this month of November, and with all the negative things going on in the world, how do we keep thankfulness and the practice of gratitude at the forefront?

Think about how often others do things for us, however small. Do we remember to thank them? The Amazon driver, the librarian, the dentist, the mailman, the teller at the bank, the receptionist at the doctor's office, the people who cut our lawns, the child who picks up their toys?

Now think about how often God helps us in life. Think about how much God has given us. When we pause to thank God, we recognize that He has a track record of blessing us, providing for us, and protecting us. How often do we truly say "Thanks" to Him? Thankfulness changes the way you look at the circumstances in your life.

Complaining and grumbling connects you to unhappiness; gratitude and praise connect you to the source of real joy - Jesus. When you make gratitude a regular part of your life, you stay focused on what God has done and continues to do for you. Expressing thanks for God's help is a form of worship. When you give thanks to God, you honor and praise Him for what He has done – in your life, in the lives of others you love, in your church, and in the world. Similarly, you honor others when you give thanks to them, respecting them for who they are and what they have done for you. This attitude of gratitude prevents you from expecting others to serve you and allows you to bless others with appreciation and honor while enjoying whatever blessings come your way.

Gracious God, as we gather together to celebrate Thanksgiving this year, we are reminded of the countless blessings that You have bestowed upon us. You are good and kind and loving. Open our hearts to recognize Your goodness and Your grace in every moment of our lives. We thank You for answered prayers, for the beauty of creation, for forgiveness, for helping us through our troubles, for life's basic needs of food, water, clothing, shelter, family and friends – and Jesus. May our gratitude overflow, as we offer our thanks and praise to You, the giver of all good gifts. In Jesus name, Amen

(portions taken from "Embrace the Season Fall 2024")

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." - 1 Chronicles 16:34

From the Prayer Corner A PERSONAL INVITATION TO YOU!!

The Prayer Team would like to extend an invitation to be part of the BUMC Prayer Team and have the privilege of praying for our church, our community, and each other. All are welcome. Simply send your e-mail address to Lora Stafura (lstafura@bakerstovnumc.org) or Cathy Dambach (hwdambach@consolidated.net or Heather Brown (hirdab@hotmail.com) and you will begin to receive the e-mail prayer requests that go out periodically.

Although Christians are a thankful people year-round, November is a time when we intentionally take stock of our blessings. The congregation of Bakerstown UMC is indeed a blessing to the mission team! You continually provide your time, talents and more than enough financial resources for the team to carry out the work we have been called to do. We appreciate your support more than we can say. Though prices have risen at the grocery store, we are able to provide over 325 meals every month to those in need. When natural disasters ravage our country, we are able to provide cleaning buckets. We support multiple ministries both close to home and around the world. None of this would be possible without you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Announcing...

**The 3rd Annual
Friendsgiving Dinner
In New Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, November 19, 2024
at 5:30 p.m.**



(In-person dining only)

Reservations due by

Friday, November 1, 2024

To reserve your seat please respond in one of the following ways:

Email: bumcmteam@gmail.com

Phone: 724-443-3184

We need your name, the number of adult / child meals, and your contact information. (phone or email)



Lighthouse Food Pantry Collection for the month of November are boxed potatoes, rice mixes, brown/white rice, or stuffing mix (regular and gluten free)

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 11/03 Diane Semler | 11/19 Julie Cramer | |
| 11/03 Laurie McLeister | 11/21 Larry Halliwell | 11/02 James & Pam Holcomb |
| 11/05 James Holcomb | 11/23 Corey Stevens | 11/11 Dave & Kathleen Meuschke |
| 11/08 Barbara Beri | 11/23 Nicole Edinger | 11/14 Dean & Ellen Kelley |
| 11/10 Donald Allaman Sr. | 11/23 Becky Rinker | 11/15 Michael & Penny Fischetti |
| 11/11 Leanne Walker | 11/25 Gregg Platt | 11/22 Joe & Barbara Beri |
| 11/12 Natalie Lowell | 11/25 Bradley McLeister | 11/27 Jim & Carol Skolnik |
| 11/13 Jim Skolnik | 11/25 Zachary Szalc | 11/28 Jay & Connie Martin |
| 11/14 Nancy Shipley | 11/26 Barbara Williams | |
| 11/17 Patti Sworden | 11/28 Andy Edinger | |



	September 2024	YTD September 2024	YTD September 2023
Current Fund Giving	\$35,487.62	\$333,046.78	\$315,585.66
Current Fund Expense	\$49,884.30	\$344,352.04	\$324,462.06

Hello...Have you gotten a chance to do some leaf peeping? Some of those red and orange leaves are just beautiful. We have had a very busy September. It was a three payroll month along with expenditures for the dishwasher and a site survey regarding our wireless service at the church. All of the bills were paid, but cash flow was hit hard. Our fall programming has started. Please find a way to get connected to your church. From young children to us older adults we can find a way to get plugged in to learn more about Jesus

and make friends along the way. If you have any questions please let me know. Kay Cramer, Financial Secretary 724-443-2847

Sarris Candy Fundraiser

We are having an online fundraiser with Sarris Candies. Please help support the Day School by ordering your chocolate for **Thanksgiving**, and **Christmas** from Sarris. We earn a 25% profit with every online order! Please share this to anyone you think might be interested. Our Group ID# is 10-3713. All orders will be shipped directly to the address you provide. Shipping is FREE, but a \$7.00 packaging and handling fee will be applied to each order by Sarris Candies. (Orders must be placed through www.sarriscandiesfundraising.com). Orders will be taken until December 15.



Lighthouse Toy Shoppe at Bakerstown UMC—Pick a paper ornament from the Christmas tree in the Narthex. Bring back an unwrapped gift back under the tree, with your paper tag attached **by December 8th**

We will be hosting the Lighthouse Toy Shoppe on Saturday, December 14th 9:00 am—1:00 pm. Your donations are greatly appreciated. It allows families in need to receive presents for Christmas for their children. ***Look for the angel tree coming soon*** **If you would like to volunteer on Saturday, please contact the church office 724-443-3184.** We are always in need of younger teenager gifts...some suggestions for them are

make-up, jewelry, fishing rods and tackle boxes, hoodies (hooded sweatshirts), nerf toys, remote control helicopters/airplanes/cars, etc. ****The Lighthouse is also giving out \$25 gift cards for teenagers aged 16-18 this year, so if you would like to donate one, they'd appreciate it.**** Thank you so much for all of your support!

Bakerstown United Methodist Church
5760 William Flynn Highway
Gibsonia, PA 15044
724-443-3184
www.bakerstownumc.org



*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.*

Staff:

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Associate Pastor/Youth Director

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Joyce Gindlesperger

Director of Music

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Lora Stafura

Office Administrator

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Jennie Smith

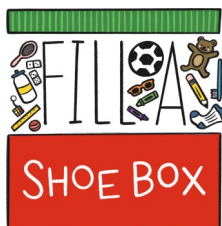
Children's Ministry Director

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Tracy Hefner

Worship Leader

thefner@bakerstownumc.org



LAST DAY TO BRING ITEMS NOV. 3rd

Operation Christmas Child It is that time of year again to start purchasing items to be packed into shoeboxes in November for the Samaritan's Purse organization Operation Christmas Child program.

A suggested list of donation items can be found at: <https://samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions/>

The list there suggests 3 different types of items:

- Wow Items -small toys, stuffed animals, small trucks and cars, balls
- Personal Care Items -combs, hair ties, wash clothes, socks, toothbrush and nail files
- School Supply items - pencils, pencil sharpeners, erasers, pens, crayons, markers, notebooks, glue sticks, rulers, small calculator, scissors, tape, index cards

Do Not Include:

Candy; toothpaste; gum; used or damaged items; scary or war-related items such as toy guns, knives, or military figures; chocolate or food; seeds; fruit rolls or other fruit snacks; drink mixes (powdered or liquid); liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving in many ways:

Online Giving: If you go to our website at www.bakerstownumc.org and select the donations link it will take you to a website that processes our electronic giving, called VANCO. Once you are there you can choose to set up a recurring donation, make a one-time donation or view your online donation history.

Bill pay via your bank: Many of us pay our bills via online banking. Why not set up Bakerstown UMC as one of your "bills"? Set up Bakerstown United Methodist Church 5760 William Flynn Highway Gibsonia, PA 15044 as the payee. From there you can select if it is a recurring donation or a one-time donation. The bank sends the church your donation via a paper check. This service costs nothing to you or the church and you can leave your checkbook at home and come immerse yourself in worship. As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving.

If you have any questions, please contact Kay Cramer, Financial Secretary at 724-443-2847.