



Mount Gretna UMC

Happenings

October 2021

Dear Friends,

September has arrived and another summer here in Mount Gretna has come to an end.

Summer was fun! We enjoyed the Bible festival and the Arts Show, got Wet'n Wacky for a couple weeks with the children of the community, hosted the Hershey Chocolate Tour bicyclists, and the National Christian Choir. We also continued our ministry to the homeless of Lebanon by preparing and delivering meals at the LCCM Resource Center.

At the church our fall schedule is a busy one as well. Unlike our little town that slows down and seems to hibernate over the winter, our church is just catching its second wind!

In this edition of the Newsletter, you will find more information about activities taking place in our church. Please make note of them and place them on your calendar. As always, I hope to see you at church and may God continue to bless you and your family.

**Blessings,
Pastor Mike**



This year World Communion Sunday will be on October 3rd. Please come out and join us for a special Communion Service at either the 8:30 or 10:00 service.



It might seem odd to begin an October newsletter with an article about Advent. After all, Halloween and Thanksgiving are weeks away yet. However, Advent is a season of preparation and this year there are plenty of preparations to be done!

Advent Sermon Series:

In planning for our advent sermon series this year, I wanted to include you, the congregation, in it in a significant way. Therefore, I'm asking all of you to help me write it. Yes, you!

This year I am asking members to bring me an object that makes Christmas meaningful to you. Then it is my task to create a sermon around that object. Maybe it's Christmas cards, a manger scene, candle, or other decoration or object that is meaningful to you. It could be serious or funny, large (needs to be able to fit in the sanctuary) or small. Maybe it's a food? Could it be a person? I don't know because you haven't told me yet! I hope this will be an engaging, meaningful, and fun series!

If you would like to participate, please bring your item to me by the first Sunday in November. Who knows... you might even stump the pastor!

Please also, remember that there are only 4 weeks so not all submissions may be chosen, but could still be used in some way.

Advent Bible Study:

We also will be offering a 4-week Advent bible study this year. The class will be offered as a hybrid of in person or via Zoom depending on the participants' comfort level.

Pastor Mike hopes that all our congregation members will join in reading this short study over the Advent Season even if you can't attend the weekly gatherings. It would be great to literally have everyone on the same page this year during Advent as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.

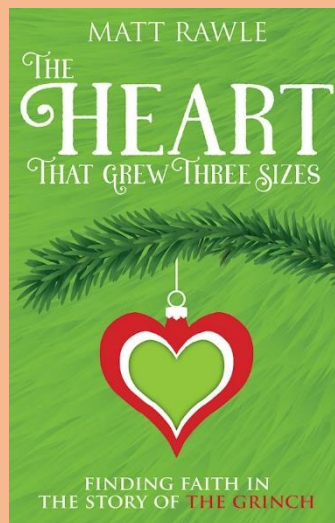
The study is a fun one too. Author [Matt Rawle](#) has prepared it, using Dr. Seuss's classic *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. Copies will be made available in a couple weeks. Please let Pastor Mike know if you would like one. They are free, but if you would like to give a \$10 donation for your copy to offset the costs, your generosity would be greatly appreciated.

Sessions will be offered on Sunday evenings at 6:30 PM starting November 28th. There will also be posts on the church's Facebook page to discuss some of the discussion questions as well.

Below is a brief description of the book

The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Find the True Meaning of Christmas in The Grinch. By:

Rediscover the gift of Advent that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows. We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. If we're being honest, there's probably something within the Christmas season celebration that awakens a Grinch within all of us. Maybe the gift we unwrap was all wrong, or memories that were supposed to be joyful never were. When everything seems wrong in the world, even joyful celebrations are much too loud. In his new Advent study, Matt Rawle explores the faith themes in the Christmas classic, How the Grinch Stole Christmas including how did the Grinch's heart grow three sizes come Christmas morning? How did Christmas save the Grinch? Could it be that the very thing we think we hate, is the one thing that changes our life? Rediscover and reinvigorate your Christian faith this Advent and Christmas season and look at this familiar classic through the lens of faith.



Sunday school is resuming! The teachers will be working with the children of our congregation outdoors as much as possible for classes that will occur during the regular 10:00 AM worship services.

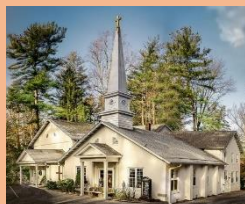
The Sunday School is always happy to welcome new teachers and roamers. If you love children and see the need for a Sunday School program in our church as being important, please consider volunteering one Sunday a month.

If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about the Sunday School, please speak with Anna McDonald.

SERVICES IN THE TABERNACLE



OR



This month we are asking for your input for worship location. Please answer the following question and let the Church Office know your preference by October 3, 2021.

- 1) Do to Covid-19 I prefer to remain worshipping in the Tabernacle for a few more week this year.
- 2) I would prefer the 10 AM worship service returned to the church sanctuary.

Please note: Facemasks will be required when we return to the sanctuary.



Dick & Ruth Robinson have been supported by our church for a few years now. They are currently in the United States and will be joining us on Sunday, October 10 for both the 8:30 & 10:00 to share with us how their ministry in Peru is doing. We will also be taking a love offering to help support their ministry. Below is a brief biography for them.

We are missionaries in the jungle of Peru. We developed program for training indigenous leaders and pastors in Orality, a methodology that involves teaching the Word of God as spoken, chronological stories from

the

scriptures. This is also known as Narrative Theology.

We started our work in 2013 in the District of Tahuania, far upriver the city of Pucallpa where we live and have our mission center. The evangelical churches of Tahuania were dead or weak, most villages had no evangelical churches and the Catholic church was not present in the villages.

At present our organization is recognized by the Shipibo-Conibo Evangelical Church Association (AIESHC). They ordained five pastors who were trained by RiverWind. Today seven churches have been started by our students, most are being pastored by our RiverWind graduates ordained by the AIESHC. These pastors have organized a network they call the Evangelical Churches of Tahuania. Together they planted a new church this year in the toughest area where there was much alcoholism and perdition. Today there is a church in that village and one of our students was sent as pastor. Each of the other seven churches have donated corrugated iron sheets for the construction of the new church building.

Thank you very much *Iglesia* Mt. Gretna UMC for participating with us in God's mission called RiverWind.

TRICK- OR TREAT!

Don't forget to come out on this year for our annual Trick-or-Treat Open House:
6-8 PM on Thursday, October 28th



*If you would like to donate individually wrapped candy for the open house, please drop it off in the church lobby by Sunday, October 24.



You have probably seen the display of Prayer Shawls in the church (hallway??) and might have wondered about them.

Several years ago, a group of women in the congregation decided to knit or crochet these shawls/blankets to be given to members and friends who needed a tangible reminder of God's love—

whether they were ill, grieving or going through any hard time. With them, we include the following note:

This gift of a prayer shawl is to remind you of God's ever-present love, as near to you as your own skin is to your body. You have received this shawl from the people of the Mt. Gretna United Methodist Church. That maker of this shawl prayed while making it. After it was made, it was prayed over by our pastor and the congregation at one of our morning worship services.

This gift is given in the hope that it may offer God's presence to you in times of joy and sorrow.

Whenever you wear it or have it close to you, be reminded that God loves you and cares for you. This shawl is now yours to enjoy and use as you will. Remember that prayers surround you.

May God's loving care and eternal peace be yours.

We are currently considering renewing this ministry. Although it could be fun to meet occasionally and stitch together, the shawls could also be made at home and donated to the church supply.

If you are interested, please contact Pastor Marilyn at Marilynn@jub.org or call her at 717.269.8613.

2021 CHARGE CONFERENCE

Yes, it's that time of year again! Charge Conference is just around the corner. So, it is time to hold the meetings and fill out the forms as we prepare to review the past year's ministry and to set goals for next year. Watch your Sunday bulletin for committee meetings and times.

This year, Charge Conference will once again be held with other churches of our area and will be held on: **Tuesday, November 30th at 6:30 PM at Rocherty UMC.** District Superintendent, Rev. Bumkoo Chung will preside at the meeting.

WEEKLY ZOOM PRAYER MEETINGS THURSDAYS AT 7 PM

You are invited to join Pastor Marilyn and members of our congregation as they come together on Zoom to pray for the joys and concerns of friends and family, our nation, and the world. The group was formed during the Covid lockdown and continues to be a time of fellowship and taking our cares to God.

ZOOM can be done on a laptop, tablet, or smart phone. If you have email: the church will send you an email every week with the link.

BUT PLEASE NOTE--ZOOM calls can also be made from any cell phone by dialing in to the phone number that is in the weekly email.

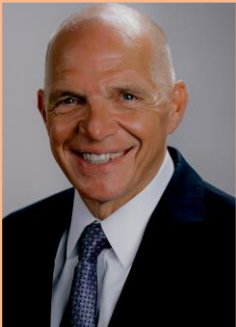
Don't forget: We still have an email Prayer Chain that is coordinated by member Sarah Ellis. You may call the office with prayer requests at 717.964.3241 or email them directly to Sarah at stellis999@gmail.com. If you have any questions, feel free to call Pastor Marilyn at 717.269.8613

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

The first Sunday of each month we collect money, non-perishable food items and paper products for the Lebanon County Christian Ministry Food Bank.

We thank those who have participated in the past and encourage everyone to use the list of suggested items that can be picked up in the church lobby each month to help with purchasing items that are needed.

Welcome Bishop John Schol



Bishop John R. Schol was raised in Philadelphia and here first in his ministry career, where his faith and leadership skills were nurtured. Here is where he developed strong values of hard work, a respect for diversity, a drive toward ingenuity and excellence, and a spirit of grace.

Bishop Schol served congregations in Saugus, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, and West Chester. In each church worship grew, mission in the community expanded with new creativity, and new disciples were made.

For 12 years he served as the Executive Director of the Frankford Group Ministry in Philadelphia. This new, emerging cooperative ministry that aligned four United Methodist congregations grew from one staff person to more than 50 staff positions. The ministry led its community in developing better race relations and providing social services, community economic development and community arts programs for human development. During and after his ministry there, the ministry also led its community in building and rehabilitating more than 200 housing units and served more than 20,000 people a year.

In the 1990s John Schol served the denomination by leading Urban Ministries at the General Board of Global Ministries. There he developed and led at least two major, successful resourcing initiatives: Communities of Shalom and Holy Boldness. The Communities of Shalom initiative started more than 1,000 sites globally and trained more than 5,000 people in church and community development. And Holy Boldness developed into a

collaborative urban ministry training and congregational development movement that served districts and conferences around the UMC connection.

Since his election in 2004, Bishop Schol has served with distinction as the Episcopal Leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference (Washington Episcopal Area) and currently as Bishop of the Greater New Jersey Conference (New Jersey Episcopal Area). He now provides episcopal leadership to the Eastern PA Conference (Philadelphia Area), while continuing to lead Greater New Jersey.

Bishop Schol received a bachelor's degree from Moravian College and master's and doctoral degrees from Boston University. He has helped start six nonprofit organizations and served on numerous boards.

He is married to Beverly Schol, his partner in life and ministry. They have three grown children, Mark, Kristin and Rebecca, and three grandchildren. His hobbies and interests include family, reading, running, photography and travel.