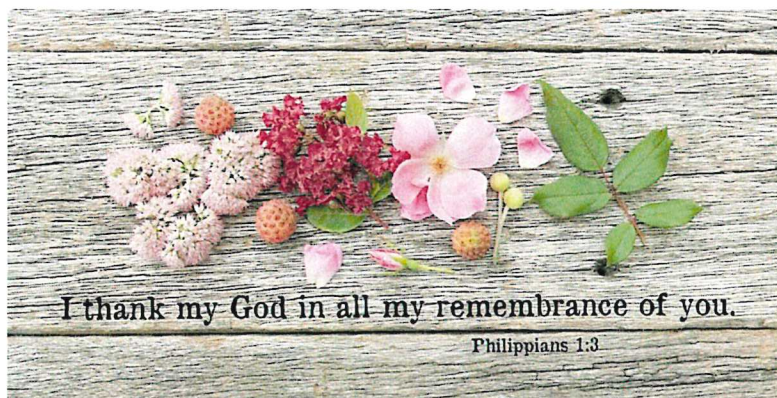


Hello friends,

Welcome to the month of August in what has felt like a LONG 2020! I continue to be grateful for all the ways I've seen our church lovingly and creatively handle the challenges of being the church during a pandemic. I remember the words Paul wrote to the people living in Philippi, saying, *"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."* (Philippians 1:3-6).



Paul's words echo my sentiments when I think of our church family. Since the beginning of the pandemic, evidence of your flexibility, understanding and thoughtfulness has been expressed in a variety of ways, and more than I can likely capture in one newsletter article. But I think it's important to try and remember our strengths in the midst of challenges, at least to strengthen us through some days where we find ourselves tired from "churching" a new way.

I have felt at times, through the pandemic, a sense of frustration when I can't pastor like I'm used to or need to, and I'm sure you have felt frustration when "church" can't be experienced like we have grown accustomed to experiencing life among the Body of Christ. So, in case you find yourself in the "COVID funk" I've mentioned before, may you find joy in what we have been able to accomplish together as the family of God:

- Deacons began calling their Shepherd teams to stay connected through the pandemic. Deacons have delivered soup to shut-ins, cards to nursing home residents and mailed gift cards to graduates. They are working hard to maintain connection throughout our church family.
- The Christian Education committee didn't say "no," to Vacation Bible School, but instead they worked hard (with other downtown churches) to re-design a VBS program into a virtual & at-home experience for 200 kids in our community. These 200 kids learned in a creative, engaging way to "Trust Jesus!"
- We've sustained Bible study opportunities through our Tuesday night small group and by offering a Friday at 12 noon women's study through Zoom. Our youth group met online, too, and even planned a special Pentecost/Graduate Recognition/New Members worship service on May 31.
- Instead of cancelling our monthly Community Luncheons because of COVID-19, our Mission and Evangelism committee adjusted plans and have offered over 400 bagged lunches since March. People continue to be fed!
- Until we knew the impact of entering into a pandemic, the Session felt it necessary to cancel groups meeting in the church, including those who participate in AA & NA. Rather than telling them they couldn't meet and locking our doors, we distributed a resource page to participants so they could

***continued on page 2***



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## PASTOR'S PAGE

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*(continued from the front page)*

continue to receive support through online means. And when we felt we could ensure the safety of groups gathering in the church, we have welcomed them back to meet.

- The Session had the imagination and initiative to use government money through the Payroll Protection Plan to hire additional short-term employment for the LPC Preschool so they could increase their marketing endeavors for the summer. The Session also hired a new part-time Tech Director (Cole Cullen) to help "polish up" our online presence and prepare us for livestreaming in the sanctuary. They saw the need for both these positions and created them to help us out.
- The Session led with their ordination vows to, "follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world," and approved a Statement of Faith on Racial Discrimination in response to rising racial tension. You can read the statement on page 10 in this month's newsletter.

These examples just touch the surface of what we have been able to achieve through the strength of the Holy Spirit in the life of God's church. Remembering these acts of service helps us hold onto eternal hope in the midst of many things that seem out of our control.

Thank you for the ways in which you share the love of Jesus Christ to one another, to our community and especially to your Pastor.

The Peace of Christ be with you all! God bless you this day and every day!

**Pastor Sarah**



### EPIPHANY WORDS IN A PANDEMIC



Way, way, back in January we celebrated Epiphany Sunday. During Epiphany, we remembered that the one born in Bethlehem is a light to all nations (represented by the magi). We sought the "revelation" of God, as we chose (or it chose us?) an Epiphany word to focus on this year.

My word was "truth." Do you remember yours? I glanced at my word often and long before the word, "pandemic" became a part of my daily vocabulary. Often, I saw the word, "truth" play out in a number of ways in my life.

Not once did I imagine that this year would include a worldwide pandemic when I wrote words upon wooden stars in preparation of our Epiphany Sunday worship. And I imagine you weren't thinking about a pandemic when you placed your hand in a basket of wooden stars to select just one.

But here we are and what an interesting way to reflect on our Epiphany words at a time like this. If your word isn't visible to you . . . find it and individually or with others ponder these questions:

***How has your "epiphany word" impacted you as you've experienced a pandemic?***

***What feeling do you experience when you read your "epiphany word" in your current context? Why do you think you feel this way?***

**Epiphany is a biblical word that means  
"manifestation" or "revelation."**

***What "revelation" have you experienced in this  
COVID-19 season?***

Please share your answers to these questions with your church family by emailing the church office at [lewispres@comcast.net](mailto:lewispres@comcast.net) or Pastor Sarah at [pastorsedgwick@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsedgwick@gmail.com).





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## CHRISTIAN ED

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Ginny Westover, Christian Ed Director

"Keeping connected" is a familiar phrase these days; one that we hear quite often, especially as the Covid-19 virus drags on. The importance of meaningful social connections has been addressed in articles, blog posts, TED talks and sermons. It's been the subject of Facebook banter and concerned conversations among friends and health care professionals. Just the other week, a local doctor who treated a number of Covid-19 patients earlier in the spring, said that for these folks the effects of isolation were even more costly than the effects of the virus.

It is no secret that we are hard-wired for human interaction. In a Health Affairs policy brief released June 22, 2020, author Julianne Holt-Lunstad wrote, "being socially connected in meaningful ways is key to human health and survival." The longer the pandemic lasts, the more apparent the effects of dis-connection and social isolation become. These may show up as loneliness, anxiety, depression, boredom and restlessness, among other things. Each of us has felt the impact of disconnection on some level over the course of the past five months. Thankfully, as a church, we've sought ways to address these and will continue to do so.

As crucial as human connectedness is, there is a deeper need within each of us that is absolutely essential to the health and survival of those who want to follow and serve Jesus Christ. This is a spiritual connectedness that the Bible describes as "abiding" or "remaining" in Christ. In John 15 Jesus uses the analogy of a grape vine and its branches to illustrate the vital connection between himself and his followers and the fruit that grows as a natural result. It is a familiar passage worth frequent re-visits. The words of our savior are life-changing.

"I am the true vine," Jesus says in the opening verse of this chapter. "Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself;



it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." I love how The Message puts it: "Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you." Jesus invites us into the same intimacy that he enjoys with God, his Father. "As the Father has loved me, I have loved you", Jesus goes on to say. "Now, remain (settle down into and make yourself at home) in my love. If you

keep my commands, you will remain in my love."

As we discussed these verses at youth group, recently, we concluded that this kind of intimate relationship with Jesus, this business of "remaining connected" takes time and intentionality. Jesus has already guaranteed growth and fruit through an unending, constant supply of his love. We do nothing to produce that. The thought of a branch exerting strained effort to produce a bunch of grapes is ludicrous. It's what the branch was made for. The fruit is the natural result of the branch's healthy connection to the vine. Our job is to stay there; to receive and enjoy the life of the vine. God is the gardener. God will take care of the pruning and fertilizing and tending. Our job is to remain. Jesus says this happens when we do what he says. We learn what he says by listening to his words, recorded in the Bible, and then acting on them. Primarily, (the "root command" as The Message says) "Love one another."

Nothing new, right? We have heard those three words more times than we can keep track of. Maybe we should ask ourselves what kind of fruit are we seeing in our lives. Kind of like the temperature checks these days. Is joy, peace, kindness, gentleness, patience and self-control evident? Is our focus more "other" or more "my needs, my rights, my comfort"? With the latter usually comes discontent, anger, apathy, jealousy and short-temperedness. If the fruit of our lives is more rotten than healthy and life-giving, it's time to check our connectedness.



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## SHEAVES AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD

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Rev. Robert Zorn, Pastor Emeritus

Every summer at the grain harvest time on our local farms, there comes into view a scene which takes me back in time when I was yet a barefoot boy living with my three sisters and three brothers and our parents on a hundred-acre farm in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. As the barley, wheat and oats ripened and turned from



green to golden hues, another inevitable scenario took place. A huge mechanical monster (to my young eyes) was uncovered from its resting place at the very back of the wagon shed.

Then there were the sounds of greasing, sharpening, oiling and adjusting filling the air.

That machine was no less than the old McCormick grain binder. That ingenious machine which did the work of scythe, cradle, sickle bar and hand tying of bundles. The binder, called the harvester, cut, bundled, tied and discharged the sheaves (bundles) of cut grain across the grain fields. The sheaves of cut grain were subsequently gathered into small clusters of up to eight sheaves and assembled into a single unit, which we called a shock of grain.

Meanwhile, back at the farm, as the noisy binder, pulled by a slightly "spooked" team of horses, accomplished its task of distributing bundles of grain all over the field. There they lay waiting to be assembled into shocks. Inevitably, depending upon the speed of the team of horses, and the terrain over which they traveled, some bundles would be kicked into the high grass or weeds at the edge of the fields. It then became the responsibility of my siblings and myself to seek out the errant sheaves and bring them back to be included in the harvest. Sometimes we complained about this unglamorous task. Whereupon our father would point out to us that each and every bundle was important, and meant, among other things, a loaf of bread, a bowl of cereal, three breakfast eggs or a glass of fresh milk. In other words, every single stalk of grain is

too important to allow to be left to decay in the weeds at the edge of the field.

If we may translate this picture into a metaphor of our lives, may we never underestimate the singular contribution that each and every individual may make to the welfare of humankind.

Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in

the inventor of the above mentioned McCormick Reaper. It has often been suggested that this magnificent machine and its successors may well have averted world wide hunger and starvation. It is well known that Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the harvester was a devout Calvinistic Presbyterian. His devotion to his Lord and the church was well demonstrated in his great generosity in promoting the mission and message of Jesus Christ. His philanthropy endowed many venues of Christian education and biblical knowledge. McCormick Seminary, of our own denomination, is one such example of his devotion to the practice of his faith. Thus may we trace an important episode in the history of our Church back to the humble machine which we see about us in the fields.

Regrettably, in human terms, in our world as is demonstrated to us every day, there are many persons of inestimable value that are relegated to useless oblivion in the weeds at the edge of the field of life. Perhaps sometimes, we feel that we are among them. It need not be. It must not be!

It may well have been such a simple, bucolic scene of harvest that inspired Mr. Henry Alford to write the words to the hymn, "Come Ye Thankful People Come." Verse 4 of that hymn reads: "Even so Lord, quickly come to thy final harvest home; Gather thou thy people in, Free from sorrows, free from sin; There, forever purified, In thy presence to abide; Come with all thine angels come, Raise the glorious harvest home."



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# JUST TRUST JESUS

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Christian Ed Committee

We knew back in the winter that it was our turn to host the Lewistown Community Bible School. What we didn't know was that God was going to guide us on an amazing train ride of ups and downs that would force us to practice what we were about preach to children: **"TRUST JESUS!"**

We picked Group Publishing's **Rocky Railway: Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through** after attending Friendship Bookstore's preview in the winter. By spring, things changed dramatically, as you know, and most churches across the nation were waiting or calling off Bible School this year.

Then, at our Zoom meeting in late April, we made a decision NOT to do Bible School this summer as we know it – not in June, not in July, not in August. There were too many "Ifs" still surrounding the coronavirus, and safety is always a top priority.

However, when you get a group of women together, God can inspire amazing things! No Bible School at all wasn't one of them. We wanted to be sure Lewistown children were well aware that Jesus' power pulls us through the tough times in life – like the coronavirus! Friends from Lewistown Presbyterian, Sacred Heart and First United Methodist met weekly on Zoom to plan something. What that something turned out to be was Bible School in a Bag with online videos.

So many people came together to help in so many ways ... and the LPC Christian Education Committee wants to say, "THANK YOU!"

*Thank  
you!*

**Puppets** – Carole Auker turned a piece of cardboard into the perfect puppet train, and playing the puppet parts of Trax and Carly were Olivia Smith and Miranda Shoop, with sound effects by Hailee Weader.

**Videos** – Group Publishing did not allow us to use their videos, but we were allowed to video their videos with our people in them. Elaine Siddons recorded all the local videos on a simple iPhone. Susan Ferguson displayed music, Bible Buddy and KidVid videos while we recorded our videos. For example, Leah Riden introduced the daily Bible Buddies and friends from First UM (Laura Buffington and Crystal Ferencz) introduced the

music and KidVid. Then Alex Garner used his technology talents to create the 5 daily videos you see posted on You Tube/Facebook (and available to LPC members on Right Now Media). Oh, and Susan also downloaded and/or edited this or that, as well as created the online registration form, which was an amazing addition – 200 children participated in Bible School in a Bag!

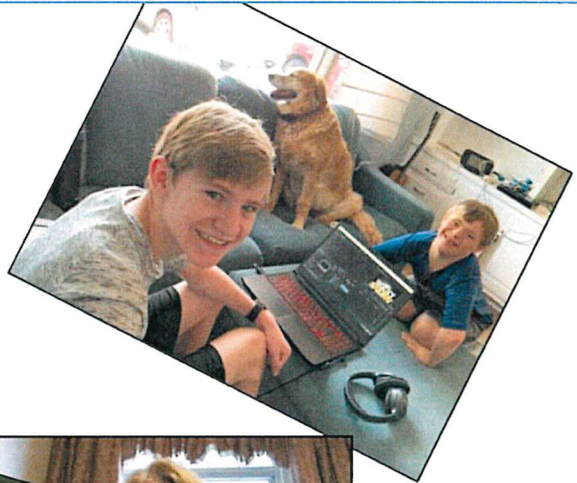
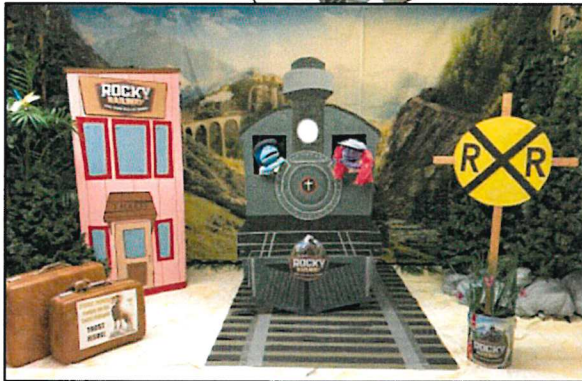
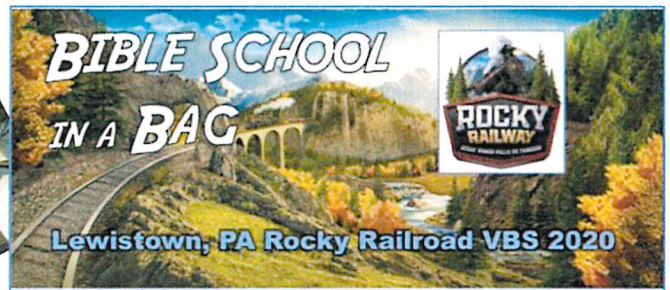
**Bible Adventures** – Bible stories are a most important part of Bible School. If you haven't watched the videos, we recommend you do so. No one will know if you fast-forward to Bible Adventures! A pastor, including Pastor Sarah Sedgwick, shared the daily scripture and a prayer. The other participating pastors were Randy Hughes from First UM, Sean Moon from Calvary-Lewistown, Father William Weary from Sacred Heart and Pastor Rick Williams from Grace UM. Then Ginny Westover, our Christian Education Director, shared the story of the day. She put A LOT of prayer and preparation (including scenery) into the amazing stories you see on the videos. When she needed a storm, she called on Riley Cullen, who used his artistic talents to paint a backdrop. Olivia Smith also helped create scenery – and haul stuff from the basement to the third floor!

**Bible School in a Bag** – Children were excited to discover a train whistle in their bags! We also included a Tracking with Jesus Bible Book to guide participants through the stories. McKenzie Donahue helped us stuff the daily bags, featuring a ticket, Bible Buddy, coloring page, God Sightings train, Imagination Station craft and a snack. A lot of YOU donated snacks and we thank you! Snacks also came from First UM, Sacred Heart, St. John's Lutheran and Hartley's! By the way, we made sure Pastor Robert Zorn got a bag (with a few extra snacks in it). When it came time to deliver the bags to the 200 children, Sacred Heart and First UM shared the responsibility with us, and we thank Pastor Sarah, McKenzie Donahue, John Gregory and Lynn Curry for helping with this important task, too!

Crazy as it sounds ... we're already thinking about continuing to provide an online presence of some sort in the future, when we return to our big, beautiful sanctuary for Bible School to teach children – and adults – to **TRUST JESUS!**



## COMMUNITY VBS HELPERS!





## COMMUNITY VBS PICTURES



Khloe  
and  
Zayden  
Stitt



Lucas  
Garner



Ginny Westover's  
Grands!

# Bible School in a Bag



Leland  
and  
Maela  
Mitchell



Abi  
and  
Donny  
Riden

THANK YOU church children  
for sharing pictures  
and videos of you enjoying  
Rocky Railway from the safety  
of your homes this summer!





# FINANCIAL REPORT

Susan L. Ferguson, Church Treasurer

	Jan - Jun 2020	Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>			
BUDGETED INCOME	84,397.87	201,121.00	41.96%
INVESTMENT INCOME	71,950.47	135,672.00	53.03%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>156,348.34</b>	<b>336,793.00</b>	<b>46.42%</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
BENEVOLENCE	8,377.49	30,000.00	27.93%
MINISTRY OF THE WORD	37,831.46	82,462.00	45.88%
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	1,745.96	5,700.00	30.63%
MUSIC AND WORSHIP	77.76	2,750.00	2.83%
PROPERTY	22,046.25	47,740.00	46.18%
ADMINISTRATION	13,098.16	25,873.00	50.63%
PERSONNEL	65,508.54	136,968.00	47.83%
FELLOWSHIP	218.21	1,800.00	12.12%
PRESCHOOL	721.84	3,500.00	20.62%
CAPITAL RESERVE	0.00	0.00	0.0%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>149,625.67</b>	<b>336,793.00</b>	<b>44.43%</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>6,722.67</b>		

\* Note June 30 marks 50% of the year to date

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**AN ALL CHURCH PICNIC IS PLANNED FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 @ 5:30 PM.** We have reserved half of the green pavilion at Kish Park. **All food and paper goods will be provided by the church.** Mark your calendars and plan for an enjoyable evening! CDC guidelines will be followed.

**RIGHT NOW MEDIA**—Please don't forget that YOU have a FREE subscription to Right Now Media and have access to thousands of video and print resources to support your faith journey. Everyone received an invitation link that offers instructions on registering online. If you have missed your link, contact Susan Ferguson, Ginny Westover or Pastor Sarah and they will send you another invitation link. On your Right Now Media account you can also find the church worship services and "Bible School in a Bag" videos.

**BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG**—You can participate in Crossroads Pregnancy Center's fundraiser by taking home a baby bottle bank and filling it with your loose change (or bills if you choose!). Bottles are available in the church narthex or contact the church office and we will try and arrange a bottle drop-off to your home.



Children attending Lewistown Presbyterian Church's Backyard Ministries group in Lewistown. They meet every Monday at 4 PM. Please consider volunteering with Lynn Curry or donating bagged snacks to be handed out during weekly lessons. Our church will be providing Backyard Ministries t-shirts to about 40 kids in Lewistown!

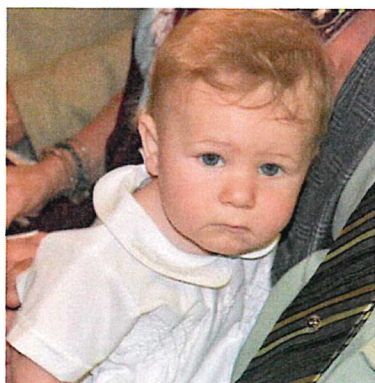


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## A CELEBRATION OF HOLY BAPTISM

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Happy Baptism Day, Lochlan Donald Finan!



Participating with Pastor Sarah in the sacrament of baptism were:  
Don Hirakis (great-grandfather) and Donis Zagurskie (grandmother).  
Lochlan is brother to Cillian, and youngest son of Ciarán and Zoë Finan.

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## SESSION NOTES

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- Session approved a request from Jimmy Zagurskie to build a "blessing box" on church property for his Eagle Scout project. The purpose of the "blessing box" is to provide food pantry items, books, cold weather gear and other items depending on the season for those in our community in need. The message will be, "Take what you need; leave what you can," and encourages the community to help one another.
- Session affirmed the work of Backyard Ministries by committing Mission and Evangelism money to purchase t-shirts for children participating in the weekly outreach program in their neighborhoods. Lynn Curry leads a local program, sponsored by our church, and invites adults and older youth to help her every Monday at 4 PM. Masks and social distancing are used, and the program lasts about an hour. Contact Lynn to participate. You don't have to commit to every week!
- Session approved expenditures to boost the internet in the sanctuary by installing a "hotspot," as well as, purchasing two cameras, switcher and output for livestreaming worship services.

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## IN LOVING MEMORY OF WILLIAM CARTER

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William W. Carter Jr., 95, of Loop Road, Lewistown, passed away Tuesday, June 30, 2020, at his home. William is survived by his loving wife, Nancy (Host) Carter; children, Connie Mae Hassinger, and Brenda McCardle, all of Lewistown.

William served in the U.S. Army, serving in World War II (one of the greatest generations!). He was employed at Piper Aircraft in Lock Haven, Ford Motor Company, Eastside Road Works, Montgomery Ward, Mifflin County Landscape, American Viscose Corporation, Pan Tech, James F. Havice Distributors, D.M.E. and served as an usher at Beaver Stadium for Penn State Football games.

He was a member of The Lewistown Presbyterian Church, where he served as secretary of his Sunday school class, and a deacon of the church.

In his free time, he enjoyed landscaping classes at Penn State University, participating in the senior Olympics, Twilight League Baseball, golfing and spending time with his loving family.

Revs. Sarah Sedgwick and Robert Zorn officiated his funeral service on July 2, 2020. We wish to express our condolences to Nancy, Connie and Brenda.



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## STATEMENT OF FAITH ON RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

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Lewistown Presbyterian Church  
Statement of Faith on Racial Discrimination  
(Written by Bill Sisson, Ruling Elder, and Rev. Sarah Sedgwick)

In response to ongoing racism and the recent death of Mr. George Floyd and others, we have sadly witnessed our nation being divided by conflict. Now more than ever we must heed the call of Christ to love one another, end conflict, and join together to treat everyone with dignity and respect. We believe it is very important to stand in solidarity with all people of color who have felt discrimination in our nation.



We believe in the words Jesus spoke, recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, when he says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Christ directs us to love everyone, without exception. Christ commands us to celebrate what makes us different; and love our brothers and sisters in Christ without conditions. God tells all nations to "beat their swords into plowshares," that is, to stop violence against others, including the destruction of lives and property, and bring peace to the world.

Christ also says, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." This includes ending racism, so that people of different races treat each other with dignity, respect, and equality, just as they would want to be treated. We call all people to love one another, stop conflict with others, and end racism in our country.

At Lewistown Presbyterian Church, we affirm that all people - including all people of color - are beloved children of God. We make every effort to provide a space of inclusion and well-being inside our church and in our community. We promise to speak the truth in love towards any person or group that hurts a human being based upon their skin color, so that we can participate fully in the dismantling of centuries-old racism. We may live in a fearfully dark time, but we have faith that heeding God's call will bring us all to a brighter future.

The Peace of Christ be with all God's children this day and forevermore!

Rev. Sarah Sedgwick and Ruling Elders of Lewistown Presbyterian Church Session

Mrs. Ruth Fisher  
Mrs. Leah Noerr  
Mrs. Karen McCurdy  
Mrs. Leah Riden  
Mrs. Lisa Snyder

Mrs. Carole Auker  
Mr. Ed Curry  
Ms. Susan Ferguson  
Mr. Doug Garner  
Mr. Carl Haldeman

Mrs. Sue Garner  
Mrs. Tara Merry  
Mr. Brad Siddons  
Ms. Mercy Westover



## PRESCHOOL GRADUATION AT HOME





Lewistown Presbyterian Church  
17 East Third Street  
Lewistown, PA 17044  
*Address Correction Requested*



Please contact us if you would like more information.  
Phone: 717-248-4561  
Email: lewispres@comcast.net  
Visit us at Website: [www.lewistownpresbyterian.org](http://www.lewistownpresbyterian.org)  
Find us on Facebook!

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