

Center Avenue United Methodist Church

Reverend Kathleen Schoeneck, Pastor

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CAUMC Closed Through the End of April

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our church will remain closed through the end of April. We will reach out in the coming weeks with more information about resuming Sunday School and Worship Services.

To watch Pastor Kathleen's video messages, go to <https://centeravenueumchurch.faithlifesites.com/sermons> and click on the links for each Sunday.

"Three times I prayed to the Lord about this and asked him to take it away. But his answer was: "My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak."

(2 Corinthians 12:8-10 - TEV)

Dear Friends,

This is not the usual scripture that I think about when we come into Holy Week! Over the past several weeks our lives have changed as the Coronavirus has moved around the world, taking lives and bringing suffering. It is forcing us out of our daily routines and into "social distancing". Churches cannot gather without jeopardizing the safety of our congregation, and we are forced to quickly rethink how to "be the Church". Now, how do we reach to people with the hope of the Gospel; crucial in times of illness, fear, and feelings of powerlessness and weakness.

Yet, in some ways the truth that Paul relays here seems to me to be at the heart of the gospel message of Holy Week. Paul was struggling with a "thorn in the flesh" that brought suffering upon him. It drove him to his knees three times, begging God to take the suffering away. Have you ever been there? Asking, "Why? Where are you? Take this suffering away."

God's answer seems puzzling. "My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." God did not take away Paul's suffering; rather God empowered Paul through it. What Paul found, and celebrated was that the "thorn" not only didn't take away his ability to live, but God's grace gave Paul power to live an even more joyful and full life. God birthed a new depth of life that grew out of Paul's facing and embracing his weakness. In Holy Week I hear God saying to us the same message in the story of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

I believe in Holy Week God says “You think your life is based on your power and ability to be in control? Your life is greatest when you realize that you are not in control! Let me work through you!” I see God revealing in Jesus power to walk through the journey of the week; facing the pain, being honest in the suffering, staying faithful to the message of love, justice, and compassion. While the injustice and brokenness of the world has power; it does not have ultimate power! I see revealed in Jesus our human weakness: “My God, and My God why have you forsaken me?” I also see revealed in this Crucified One the power to refuse to let go of faith, hope and love; “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”. I see revealed in Jesus the willingness to let go: “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.” While this seems weak, it reveals the truth of a power that is stronger than suffering, injustice, brokenness and even death. The power that is ultimate and transforming comes from God and nothing can take that away! It is released in the times of weakness and suffering.

Over the next week as we travel through this time of suffering, may we follow the example set by Jesus in Holy Week; trusting God’s love, power and direction. May we discover the truth that Paul discovered, “when I am weak, then I am strong”, because God makes me strong! New life does come! May the world see that truth in the way we walk through these very Holy Weeks.

God’s Peace,

Rev. Kathleen Schoeneck

Pastor Kathleen Schoeneck Appointed to Oakmont United Methodist Church

After 5 years with Center Avenue, Pastor Kathleen Schoeneck has been appointed to Oakmont United Methodist Church. Kathleen’s time with us has seen a change from fire hall worship to a traditional sanctuary worship, the celebration of our 125th Anniversary, the confirmation of 6 young Christians, and the expansion of our community outreach. Kathleen’s new appointment will begin July 1, 2020.

Kathleen is thrilled to be appointed to the Oakmont congregation and work together with new friends to continue their mission and ministry.

Please join us in congratulating Kathleen and wishing her well on this next step in her ministerial journey.

Plans for Kathleen’s final service and luncheon will be announced later in May.

CAUMC and McMasters UMC Welcome Daniel D. Cunkelman, Pastor

Daniel D. Cunkelman has been appointed as the new pastor for CAUMC and McMasters UMC as of July 1, 2020.

He was born and raised in Indiana County. He graduated from Blairsville Senior High School in 1974 and Indiana University of Pa in 1978 and was an educator in the Blairsville School District from 1978 thru his retirement in 2012.

Before he was licensed as a local pastor, Dan was actively involved in lay ministry. He was a Certified Lay Speaker and held a number of laity positions at Hopewell UMC and Black Lick Charge: Sunday School teacher and superintendent, SPRC chair, Administrative Council chair, and Lay Leader. He also has served as Indiana District Director of Lay Servant Ministries.

Dan has served since 2017 as a Licensed Local Pastor for Greater Blairsville Cooperative Parish. Prior to that, as a CLM, he served in pastoral ministry at Saltsburg, New Beginnings, and Vandergrift UMC's in late 2012 and at Blairsville First from 2014-2017.

Dan has been married for 42 years to Marcy and they have an adult daughter, Dana Lee, who lives with quadriplegic cerebral palsy and mental and physical disabilities and whom they deeply love. Dan, Marcy and Dana live in Conemaugh Township between Blairsville and Saltsburg. His interests include nature and sports. He's a track and field/cross country official for high school and college. He and Marcy enjoy birdwatching and gardening. In his spare time, Dan serves as board member for Family Promise of Indiana County.

Offerings and Donations

During our closure, offerings and donations can be mailed to our Financial Secretary, David McMasters. Email David at webmaster.caumc@gmail.com for contact information. Please do not send cash through the mail.

We have an electronic giving service for anyone wishing to contribute electronically on a regular basis. For information, contact David McMasters.

We also have a new service called Give+ Text that allows anyone to contribute to Center Avenue United Methodist Church by sending a text. An introductory video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nj7AiH6rty0> . Our Give+ Text number is 833-985-1793.

Members to Remember in Prayer	Friends to Remember in Prayer	Military Prayer List		
Mary Ruth Clevenger	Linda & Harry Davis	Dennis Price	S-Sgt	USMC
David Crane	Mary McCoy	Randy Shannon	2nd Class	USN
Dorothy Fails	Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi and the Cabinet	Bill Maher	Sgt	USMC
Ray Middlekauf	Gregg & Milee Wareham			
	Tom Decker			