



FIRST CHURCH WINDOWS



*To see all people **WORSHIP** God,
CONNECT with His people,
and join His **MISSION** in this world.*

Worship the Lord with Us!

Sunday Worship

Live-Streamed Service at 10:00 AM

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, all in-person worship activities are cancelled until further notice.

Please visit www.fumccollingswood.org for our online worship experience.

FIRST CHURCH WINDOWS is published by:

The First United Methodist Church

201 Dayton Avenue, Collingswood, NJ 08108

Phone: (856)858-1186 Fax: (856)858-1775

E-mail: info@fumccollingswood.org

Church Staff

Pastor Sam Mountain, Senior Pastor

(pastorsam@fumccollingswood.org)

Shawn Zook, Pastoral Assistant for Outreach and Youth

(shawn@fumccollingswood.org)

Maria Gianfrancesco, Administrative Assistant

(maria@fumccollingswood.org)

Will Walker, Organist

(will@fumccollingswood.org)

Pat Gunning, Children's Program Director

(pat@fumccollingswood.org)

Matt Peace, Connections Pastor

(pastormatt@fumccollingswood.org)



**Office closed due to COVID-19
pandemic.**

FIRST CHURCH WINDOWS

is online at

www.fumccollingswood.org

and is available via e-mail.

Send an e-mail to

***ewindows@fumccollingswood.org
to subscribe.***

In Windows This Month...

From the Pastor's Heart	4
Announcements	5
Sermons and Scriptures	7
Missionary Messages.....	8
Birthdays and Anniversaries	12
The Kid's Page.....	13



The submission deadline for the *February* issue of Windows is January 22nd.

**THANK YOU FOR
SUPPORTING WINDOWS!**



First Church Windows is only available online and in full-color due to the COVID pandemic.



From The Pastor's Heart



This week, I started putting together our Advent and Christmas lists to accomplish in December for the church and my family. How I needed a strong cup of hot coffee for this task! Before I let myself shift into high gear for the tasks ahead, my mind wandered to some thought provoking questions which I read last week in my study time. Try to imagine what it would be like if there were no Christmas. What would you miss most in 2020, the year of the pandemic and many changes?

Now try to imagine what life would be like if Jesus had not come. How would it be different? There are many people even in our own country who have neither Christmas or Jesus. This thought can help us have a better picture of what it was like for people before Jesus came to earth. Most people worshiped other gods, many that they even feared. Our fears can do many things to us. They can even squeeze the joy right out of us.

For God's people, the Israelites, before Jesus came, it was different. They had hope because of God's promises. We read from the prophet Isaiah "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

So, for this Christmas and Advent season, as the COVID-19 virus is on the rise, how can we celebrate and make this Christmas a special one? We want to rediscover Christmas together. We will be sharing messages online each week even if we can't meet in person. And we have online and printed Advent devotions to go with our Advent series. Our prayer is that we will be encouraged by the hope, peace, joy and love that our Lord brought to our lives 2000 years ago and continues to bring today.

What an amazing journey when you think about it! As we celebrate this Christmas season, may the Lord's presence shine in our lives. Our prayer is that you will rediscover the good news of Christmas in the midst of troubling times this Christmas season. May the Lord's presence guide us to new opportunities to share His love throughout this season, for His glory!

What a privilege it is to be a part of the First Church Family. We are grateful for each one of you!

In the love of our Savior,
Pastor Sam





With Great Appreciation, We Look to the Future

At the close of this year our office secretary for over 21 years, Maria, will be retiring. We all have come to love and appreciate her cheerfulness and love for the FUMC church family throughout the years. We will be recognizing her years of service in the New Year.



We are now looking to fill the following position in order to care for the needs of our office staff and church ministries:

Office Manager

Twenty hours/week

Tuesday- Friday

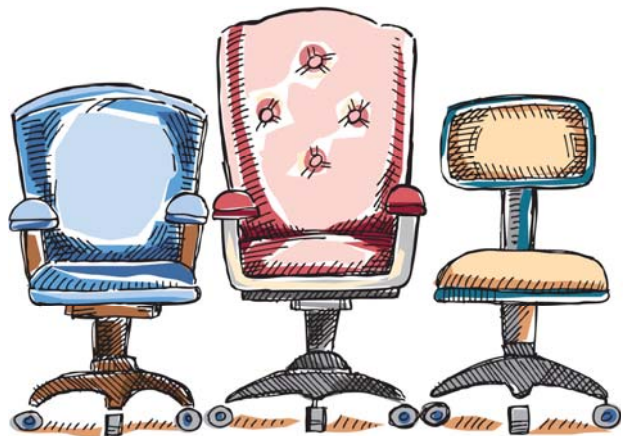
9:00 am - 2:00 pm

If you or anyone you know might be interested in this position, please contact Carol Doran for more information.

SHOWING OUR LOVE TO OUR STAFF

Our staff works diligently to serve the Lord and to serve us. Each year we give you – our church members and friends – an opportunity to show them love and thank them for all they do. You should have received a letter in the mail describing this annual event. The letter will describe how you can give and asks that all monies be received by the church no later than Sunday, December 13th so we can present checks to our staff on Sunday, December 20th. Every gift is important; any amount is welcome. Any questions can be directed to the SPR ministry team. Thank you in advance for your generosity toward our selfless staff.

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee



FUMC BUILDING CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases in our immediate area, FUMC will be closing our building until further notice. This includes Sunday morning in-person services, as well as all small group activity throughout the week. Please know that this isn't a decision we take lightly, and as always, we will continue to re-evaluate things as the pandemic progresses.

We will still be live streaming our Sunday morning worship services at 10am. Please click on the link above to access the livestream, and click on the "services" tab above to access a digital bulletin or view any previously live streamed service.

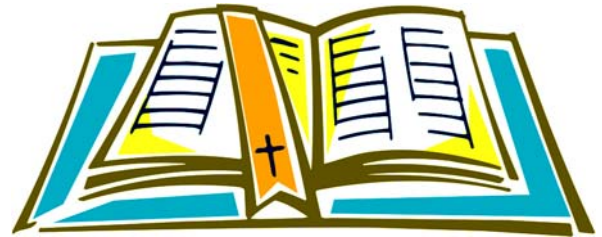
We know that this is a disappointment for many of us, but our main priority is the safety of our church family, and we feel that this is the right decision at this time. It's easy to say that "the church is more than just a building", and that "we are together even though we are apart", and even though we FIRMLY BELIEVE those things, we also recognize that those words don't ease the pain felt by so many as we are forced with another time of isolation. That being said, if you have any needs, we urge you to call or email the church office at 856-858-1186 or office@fumccollingswood.org. We will be doing our best to check for messages on a regular basis.

Finally, please know that your FUMC staff & church family are praying for you... we are still here for you... and we love you!

In Christ's Name,
The FUMC Staff & Church Council



UPCOMING SERMONS AND SCRIPTURES



ReDiscover Christmas: Good News In Troubling Times

This is a season of hope. Advent is all about hope. The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival,” and the season is traditionally a time of expectation, waiting, anticipation, and longing. Far too often, our Christmases become frenzied and overwhelmingly busy. We pack our schedules with many seasonal happenings. Our season of peace is quickly overloaded as a season of stress. Advent is an opportunity to set all that aside. Advent is a time to prepare our hearts and help us place our focus on a far greater story than our own—the story of God’s redeeming love for our world.

So wherever you are on your level of 2020 anxiety and uncertainty, wherever you are on your own spiritual journey, we invite you into this season of Advent. We’d like to even suggest that in the craziness and uncertainty and pandemic of this year, we’ve been given a gift. We’ve been given the opportunity to rediscover Christmas. For the next four weeks, we’re going to be exploring the attributes of Christ encapsulated in His birth and the Christmas season: hope, peace, joy, and love. And, on Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the arrival of Jesus, the Christ. Today we begin with rediscovering the hope of Christmas, even when we are surrounded by uncertainty.

Nov. 29	<i>Finding Hope In Our Uncertainties</i>	Luke 2:22-38 Hebrews 15:13	1 st Sunday of Advent	Matt
Dec. 6	<i>Finding Peace in Our Struggles</i>	Luke 2:8-20 Philippians 4:4-72 Thessalonians 3:16 Isaiah 9:6-7	Communion 2 nd Sunday of Advent	Sam
Dec. 13	<i>Finding Love in Our Differences</i>	1 John 4:7-16 Ephesians 3:17-19	3 rd Sunday of Advent	Shawn
Dec. 20	<i>Finding Joy in Our Discouragements</i>	Luke 1:46-55	4 th Sunday of Advent	Sam
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Service - <i>Believe</i>	Luke 2:6-7	Christmas Eve	Sam
Dec. 27	<i>Finding Praise in the Moment</i>			Staff





We approach the end of yet another year. But this has been a year like no other that we can remember. COVID-19 has profoundly changed the world and the way we do everyday things. It's been a year of full of trials and challenges no one could have expected. Yet, in the midst of everything that has happened this year, there have probably been bright spots and joys that we did not expect either.

For me, I've been able to do the Windows newsletter in a whole new way—in color! That's been an enjoyable change and I hope it's been able to bring a little brightness to your days. I've also been able to share in presenting the Kid's Korner on Sunday mornings—and found it an unexpected blessing. For these things and more, I am thankful.

As I have done in years past, I would like to extend my thanks to everyone who helps to keep the ministries of our church going. Thank you to all of our teachers, helpers, ushers, greeters, musicians, singers, tech crew, nursery workers and everyone who has helped out and pitched in this year—even if only for a couple months. Your efforts are always greatly appreciated.

Of course, special thanks go to Kathy for proofreading Windows each month. I couldn't do the newsletter without her support (and red pen).

As she heads into retirement, my thanks go out to Maria for her help to get submissions to me on time from the office over the years.

Finally, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord this year. I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Be safe!



Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year!

MISSIONARY MESSAGES



Bob and Barbara Alber

Moving ahead with moving!

After spending time with my friends in Florida in October, then spending time at JAARS, I (Barbara) came home to Texas finally feeling settled on the question of where we should live. Florida, here we come! Bob will benefit greatly from being on Wycliffe USA's campus in Orlando: serving with others who are also involved in young-adult ministry, partnering with CRU (a nearby mission) in children's and youth ministry, serving families who come for re-entry programs, networking with colleagues, and having resources at hand to grow and enhance the young-adult ministry. Please pray with us as we begin to make plans to transition to the Orlando area, hopefully by this spring.

Dave and Liz Givens

Thankful in the midst of a pandemic.

The sun is shining brightly outside and a crisp wind blowing. The air smells of leaves, and wood smoke, and most of all, autumn. Here we are in the eleventh month of 2020, nine months into what has been a weird and crazy year, and yet, thankful for all God is doing in our lives and through our lives. While none of us chose for 2020 to roll out as it has, we can say with honesty that we have thrived in the pandemic.

Here are the highlights:

1. Thankful in the midst of pandemic
2. Teaching in China continues -- without us
3. Praise for many opportunities
4. Pray with us for future decisions
5. Pictures from recent trips
6. Happy Thanksgiving & Merry Christmas

Jim and Diane Larkin

We are enjoying a lovely, pleasantly cool day with lots of sunshine here in North-central Pennsylvania. We pray that God has helped you all through the many challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We were disappointed earlier this year when the planned celebration of the entrance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into Papua (formerly Irian Jaya), Indonesian in 1855 did not take place. We assume the idea was too much to execute.

We are thankful that the COVID-19 has not been as devastating to Papua as we thought it might be. We thank the Lord for our good health and that we have not had the virus. The same is true for our adult children and their families. Two of our granddaughters are working in the nursing field and thus far have not contracted the virus. The Lord continues to provide for our needs. We continue our ministries at our church. Jim serves as an

elder. He leads the weekly Bible study and prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings. On Thursday mornings he teaches our seniors group, called “Young At Hearts.” He has been teaching 1 & 2 Samuel for a couple of years. Diane serves as a deaconess and shares teaching of a weekly women’s Bible study on Wednesday mornings. Because of the virus we have not been visiting folk as often as we would like.

Please pray for the on-going Awana program in Papua. Parents have been reading the Bible because of their children’s Bible memory efforts. Thank you for your support gifts of March and July. We are thankful for you and your partnership with us these many decades.

Curt and Carol Detwiler

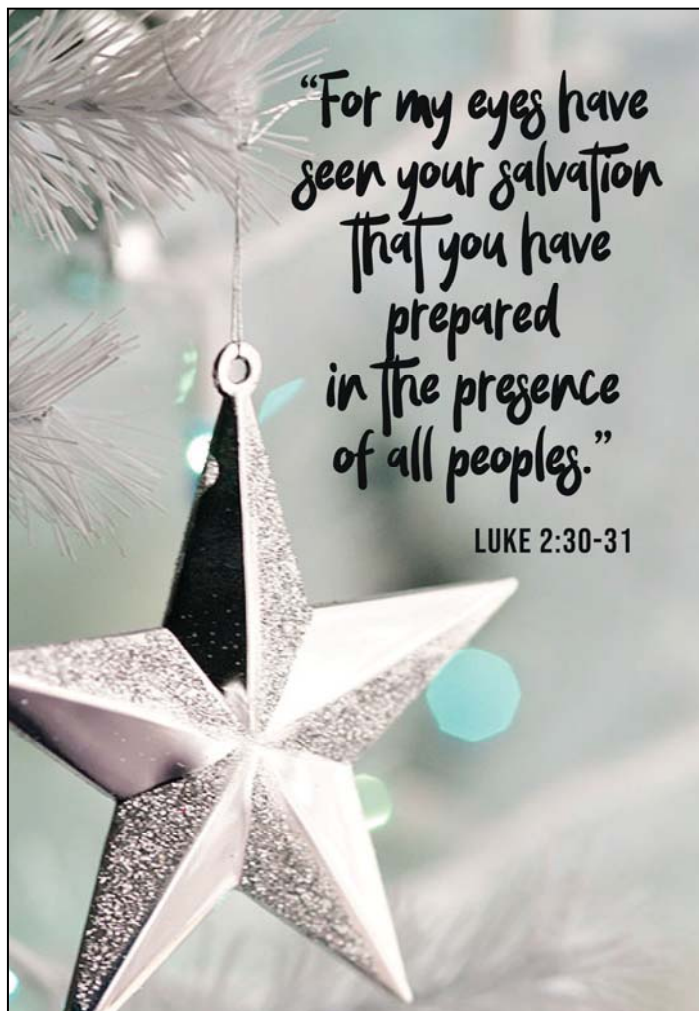
January 1, 2020. What did you imagine and hope your year would bring; weight loss, a new job, better health, more time with family? Who could have imagined how it has all turned out? Instead, most of us have gained weight, feared for our health, maybe lost a job and have been cloistered with our loved ones for months. We have all adapted to changes we had never dreamt of.

Our own year has passed in ways that have had us making many unexpected decisions. We have had events work out well and some that have surprised us. Despite lockdowns, restrictions and 3 different times of quarantine, we still managed to cover over 14,000 miles internationally and 10,980 domestic miles; with another trip to Dallas – 2,900 miles – ahead of us for Thanksgiving. We visited in person, or by Zoom, many of our supporting churches, supporters and friends throughout the month of August. We were especially blessed to visit with both of our children and grandchildren.

Just as there have been incredible changes during this year, the new year holds some as well. Our responsibilities are being reshaped, and the need for travel will be reduced. After 38 years of living and working in various settings with TWR, we will be making ourselves available as a consultant for TWR as they have need of audits in their locations around the world. And as senior members of their global staff, we will continue to be ambassadors and advocates for TWR whenever and wherever we are. You will continue to hear from us as always through our regular prayer letters and church visits.

As we end this year, we would like to encourage you with this thought; Throughout the year the news we have received has often seemed negative and distressing. We have all wondered at times what would come next. And let’s not be afraid to admit, we have sometimes despaired over what we have seen and heard. But we are reminded of Joseph during those dark days of famine in Egypt and his encouragement to his brothers, “...you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day . . .” We can never know the mind of God, but we can be sure of one thing, He loves us and has nothing but our good in His intentions!

We wish each one of you a blessed holiday season.



'TIS THE SEASON TO REMEMBER MISSIONS AROUND THE WORLD

As we celebrate the holidays and approach the year 2021, let us remember all our missionaries in prayer.

Pray for:

- Peace during festivities where distance separates families during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.
- Strengthening of each missionary in his or her daily walk with God.
- Enthusiasm and renewed commitment to each of their ministries.
- Health and safety in many unstable political situations and the pandemic.
- Adequate finances to do the job well.



ADVENT: A TIME OF CELEBRATION

Join us each week as we celebrate the Advent season together. The word “Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” The focus of the next four weeks is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in His first Advent and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in His second Advent.

Daily Scripture Readings for Advent

The weeks of Advent remind us to set aside some of the hectic business of the Christmas season, and to quietly reflect on the promise of the baby born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago. The Bible readings listed below relate to the Advent themes of waiting, preparation, light in the darkness, and the coming of the promised Messiah.

First Week of Advent

Sunday - Romans 13:11-14
Monday - 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Tuesday - Mark 13:33-37
Wednesday - John 1:1-5
Thursday - John 1:6-9
Friday - Jeremiah 33:14-16
Saturday - Isaiah 60:19-22

Second Week of Advent

Sunday - Romans 15:4-13
Monday - Psalms 43:3-6
Tuesday - Psalms 27:1-4
Wednesday - Psalms 119:105-106
Thursday - John 12:35-36
Friday - Ephesians 5:6-14
Saturday - 1 Peter 2:5-9

Third Week of Advent

Sunday - Isaiah 60:1-3
Monday - 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Tuesday - 1 John 1:4-7
Wednesday - John 3:16-21
Thursday - Isaiah 40:1-11
Friday - John 9:1-7
Saturday - Luke 3:1-6

Fourth Week of Advent

Sunday - Isaiah 11:1-10
Monday - Zephaniah 3:14-17
Tuesday - Matthew 1:18-25
Wednesday - Luke 2:8-20
Thursday - Matthew 4:14-16
Friday - Isaiah 2:1-5
Saturday - Luke 2:25-33



Dec. 23 Louis and Cynthia VanPelt

Dec. 4 Keith VanPelt
 Dec. 9 Carol Shropshire
 Dec. 10 John Cluelow, Sr
 Dec. 12 Michele Cobert
 Linda Sabin
 Dec. 17 Tyson Chamberlain
 Dec. 19 Leslie Wallace
 Dec. 20 Zachary DeRue
 Dec. 22 Bill Doron
 Lillian Schwehm
 Dec. 23 Doug Wagner
 Dec. 24 Joyce Cluelow

Jan. 4 Jean Adams
 Jan. 5 Carolyn Thompson
 Jan. 7 James Jungclaus Jr.
 Jan. 12 Neil Kinky
 Jan. 17 Linda Adams
 Jan. 18 Jessica Brown
 Jan. 22 Myrtle Aurig
 Jan. 23 Armand LeBlanc
 Jan. 24 Rebecca Burgoon
 Jan. 26 Nicholas Santulli
 Jan. 30 James Jungclaus Sr.

If you have not already
 done so, please give your dates
 (birth dates and anniversary dates) to the
 church office in writing or by e-mail:
office@fumccollingswood.org.




Happy
 Birthday
 Jesus!

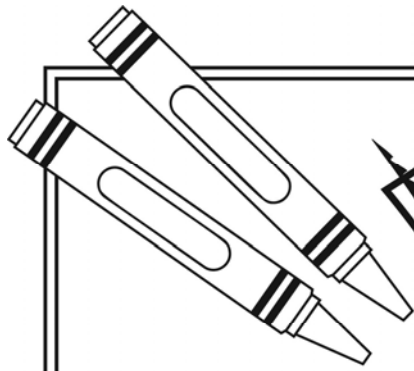
?? ? **Bible Quiz** ? ??

Which of the four Gospels name(s) Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth?

A. Only Luke
 B. Matthew and Luke
 C. Mark and John
 D. All four



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:1-7.)



PUZZLE

WHITE AS SNOW

Jesus, our Savior, came to earth to purify sinners.

Directions: Figure out which path through the puzzle is correct. Choose one to try, starting at the first picture under the "Path" box. Follow each picture's directional cues to see if the words make sense when placed in order in the blanks below. If not, try a different path until you figure out the Bible verse.



PATH 1	PATH 2	PATH 3	PATH 4	PATH 5	PATH 6
for	give	come	together	around	after
self	into	settle	eternal	thanks	forgive
God	LORD	says	without	Christ	warmth
love	sins	scarlet	other	light	praise
red	star	white	snow	winter	peace



“_____ now, let us _____ the matter,” _____ the
 _____. “Though your _____ are like _____,
 they shall be as _____ as _____”

ISAIAH 1:18, NIV

Answer: Path 3: come, settle, says, LORD, sins, scarlet, white, snow

Puzzle!

Use the code to complete Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus, our Savior.



CODE:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q

10 23 13 17 14 6 18 21 21

11 14 12 10 21 21 14 13

6 24 23 13 14 1 15 4 21

12 24 4 23 2 14 21 24 1 ,

22 18 16 17 3 8 16 24 13 ,

14 5 14 1 21 10 2 3 18 23 16

15 10 3 17 14 1 , 25 1 18 23 12 14

24 15 25 14 10 12 14 .

I S A I A H 9 : 6 , N I V

Answer: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6, NIV

LET IT snow!

Create a winter wonderland with this fun craft.



What you need:

- Glass jar with lid but no label
- Laminated photo (that will fit in the jar)
- Small plastic Christmas trinkets
- Hot or waterproof glue
- Container with spout
- 1 cup distilled water
- 3 tsp. glycerin
- Glitter



What you do:

1. Unscrew lid and flip jar upside down. Glue the photo and trinkets to the inside of the lid, standing upright.
2. In a container, mix water and glycerin. Pour the mixture into the jar, leaving space at the top.
3. Spoon in some glitter.
4. When glue is dry, attach the decorated lid tightly. Shake the jar to see "snow" swirl and settle.



CHRISMAS PRESENCE

Amid the secular trappings of the holidays, we can lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas, until we lament with Charlie Brown, “Isn’t there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?” These reminders call us back to where it all began — in the heart of God.

“The giving of gifts is not something [people] invented. God started the giving spree when he gave a gift beyond words, the unspeakable gift of his Son.”

—Robert Flatt

“Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that he gave his only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.”

—Corrie ten Boom

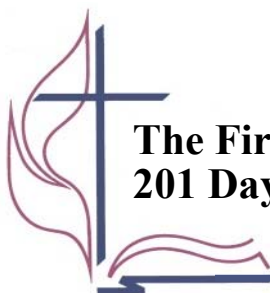


“The great challenge left to us is to cut through all the glitz and glam of the season that has grown increasingly secular and commercial, and be reminded of the beauty of the One who is Christmas.”

—Bill Crowder

“If we do not set aside time to focus together on what God’s word tells us about the promise of Christ, on Christmas morning we can find ourselves surrounded by mounds of torn gift wrap, our laps full of presents, but with hearts that are empty and unprepared.”

—Nancy Guthrie



The First United Methodist Church
201 Dayton Avenue, Collingswood, NJ 08108