



# LIFE LINE



## January 2023 NEWSLETTER OF FAITH UMC

OUR MISSION: MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD  
OUR VISION: DEEPLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF JESUS, MAKING GOD'S KINGDOM REAL

### LOOK WHAT HAPPENED IN DECEMBER!



FSM Christmas Party



Praise Kids "Sheep Stuff" program





# THE VIEW FROM HERE



**Larry L. Leland**  
Lead Pastor  
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## The View From Here

This January, we will join in a series of messages connecting our faith in Jesus with our mental and emotional health. Over five weeks, we'll focus on a theological foundation for engaging with mental/emotional health. And we'll talk about specific struggles, some of which reach the level of mental illness: burnout, anxiety, and depression. We will also talk about the importance of walking alongside others who are struggling with these and so many other issues.

For a variety of reasons, I believe that we are facing a mental health crisis in our world. The isolation resulting from the COVID pandemic, political and cultural polarization, and challenging economic realities have all led to a heightened sense that, whether we face a diagnosed illness or not, many of us are not OK. And if God

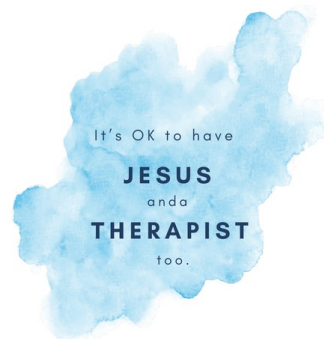
cares about our physical health, our relational health and our spiritual health, then you had better believe that God cares about our mental wellness. The shalom, or wholeness, that Jesus came to bring is for all of the parts of us.

For far too long, the Church has either been quiet about issues of mental and emotional wellness, or downright unhelpful. With advice to pull yourself up by your bootstrap, we've either implied or said outright that some of the struggles people have faced with regard to mental health somehow reflect a lack of faith. Imagine saying the same thing to someone who has experienced a trauma that has left a part of their body damaged – just trust Jesus to make it better.

Please hear me clearly. I believe that Jesus cares about our mental health. I believe Jesus longs for us to be healed. I believe that Jesus can supernaturally heal any ailment that we face. I believe that spiritual practices including prayer, Bible reading, community and service can be part of what Jesus uses to bring that healing and wholeness. I believe that Jesus uses counseling, medication, exercise, nutrition and science to be part of the healing as well. And I believe that there are people with great faith, who avail themselves of all the above who will continue to struggle with mental and emotional illness all their lives. And I believe that each of them is a beloved child of God who make up the body of Christ. And I believe that the Church is called to walk with one another through it all, loving one another as Christ loved us.

That's why I think this series is an incredibly important and timely one. I ask you to pray as I and others work to plan, prepare and lead. I ask you to pray for the whole armor of God to protect and guide all who will come and hear. I ask you to pray for God's healing peace to be at work in all of the ways that the Spirit can imagine.

In Christ,  
PL



## **PIZZA WITH THE PASTOR**

Join us for Pizza with the Pastor on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 am in Large Group Room 21 [Children's Wing].

Whether you're new to Faith Church or have been connecting with us for some time and desire to know what we're about, we hope you will join us!

You can Register with the church office at 570-368-2459, or at any time by indicating on your connect card.



## **MEMBERSHIP CLASS COMING IN JANUARY**

This one-day Membership Class experience will be January 28<sup>th</sup> 2:00-6:00 pm in Room 10 [Fairview wing]. We will explore together what membership looks like for a follower of Christ. Light refreshments will be available.

There are workbooks for each participant that we provide for you (a short and easy pre-read), with a little homework to do prior to our meeting. Workbooks are available at the Guest/ Info Hub in the Cafe area on Sundays, or through the church office during the week.

Please Register with the church office at 570-368-2459, or at any time by indicating on your connect card.



## **FAITH CHURCH STAFF**

- Larry L. Leland, Lead Pastor.....lleland@faithum.net
- Jim Anthony, Preschool Custodian.....jim\_anthonysr@comcast.net
- Christian Calehuff, FSM Team Leader.....fsm@faithum.net
- Diane Dunlap, Office Assistant.....diane.dunlap@hotmail.com
- Marion Handley, Director of Age-Level Ministries & Cong. Care .....mhandley@faithum.net
- Matthew Harris, Facilities Manager .....facilities@faithum.net
- Beth Jones, Director of Harvest of Hope.....harvestofhope@faithum.net
- Lisa Konkle, Choral Coordinator/Organist.....lkonkle@faithum.net
- Deb Lindner, Voices of Faith Accompanist .....dndlindner@epix.net
- Kristen Lowe, Tech Director .....klowe@faithum.net
- Maureen McBride, Finance Secretary.....finance@faithum.net
- Deb Ottenmiller, Director of Group Life & Assimilation.....dottenmiller@faithum.net
- Jessica Neiman, Director of Children's Ministries.....jneiman@faithum.net
- Mason Neiman, Director of Worship & Creative Arts.....mneiman@faithum.net
- Jody Robinson, Business Manager.....Finances - treasurer@faithum.net
- .....Office - office@faithum.net

## **FAITH CHURCH COUNCIL**

- Jim Carpenter - Chairperson
- Lisa Vrabec - Recorder
- Ben Clark
- Rachel Knipe
- Scott Konkle
- Chip Lamade
- Sheila Lomax
- Susan Marshall
- Paul Zimmerer

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



**Jessica Neiman**  
Dir. of Children's Ministries  
jneiman@faithum.net

## ORANGE SPOTLIGHT

Orange Spotlight: Kid Connection uses Orange Curriculum to partner with churches and families in creating community around a timeless message that mobilizes the next generation to love God and serve others.

Preschool: Jesus is our BEST Teacher teaching us important things—the MOST important things—for our whole life! And He wants to be our friend! During January our preschoolers will get ready to search for some CLUBHOUSE CLUES to help them discover that Jesus teaches us how to live the best life with God!

K-5th Grade: In Psalm 24:1, David wrote, "The earth belongs to the Lord. And so does everything in it." (NIV) God is the author of creation, and God has entrusted us to care for and cultivate the world we see around us. We do that by taking responsibility. From work we need to accomplish, to people we meet, to the words we use, life is filled with moments where we can decide to reflect

God's character, take responsibility, and use what we have wisely—always with the help of the Holy Spirit. When we practice listening and follow through and do what needs to be done, we can point others to our friend and helper- Jesus. The One who took the ultimate responsibility for us and made it possible for all of us to live life with God now and forever.

For weekly encouragement and up to date information, check out Facebook - Faith Church Kid Connection!

## KID CONNECTION SERVING TEAM SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2024-FEBRUARY 2024

<b>Team 1:</b> Jenn Larson, Linda Lloyd, Lauren Reeder, Vanessa Johnston	
<b>Team 2:</b> Ryan Tira, Amy Tucker, Kim Rakestraw, Stephanie Matlack	1/07 Team 3
<b>Team 3:</b> Danielle or Matt Harris, Carrie Knapp, Cherie Wurster, Jamie Burns & Lilly	1/14 Team 4
<b>Team 4:</b> Lisa Good, Tiffany Feigles, Taylor Stark, Kim Winters	1/21 Team 5
<b>Team 5:</b> Rachel/Chris Knipe, Tessa Little, Jenna LoCricchio, Erica Blake	1/28 Team 6
<b>Team 6:</b> Brenda Clouser, Chelsea Howe, EvieLynn Perry, Kristi Michael, Brittany Ring	2/04 Team 7
<b>Team 7:</b> Robyn Smelko, Brigitte Wright, Chelsea Burkholder, Chris Meckbach	2/11 Team 8
<b>Team 8:</b> Andrea Lucas, Julie Vogel, Pamela/Riley/Cameron Nelson, Rebecca McDaniel	2/18 Team 1
	2/25 Team 2

## FAITH CHURCH NURSERY SCHEDULE JANUARY 2024-FEBRUARY 2024

- 1/07 Kelly Howell, Michelle Eckert
- 1/14 Nicole Duarte, Katie Farley
- 1/21 Joni Perchinski, Dottie Mathers
- 1/28 Hillary Hofstrom, Kitty Hofer
- 2/04 Ben Clark, Katie Farley
- 2/11 Erica Yoder, Erica Blake
- 2/18 Kelly Howell, Joni Perchinski
- 2/25 Hillary Hofstrom, Kitty Hofer

## FAITH STUDENT MINISTRIES

**FSM 6:8 - GRADES 6-8 - SUNDAYS FROM 4:00-6:00 PM**  
**FSM 9:12 - GRADES 9-12 - SUNDAYS FROM 5:30-7:30 PM**

Happy New Year Faith Church! May you find a new beginning and a fresh start to this upcoming season. I want to start out thanking everyone who helps with this Ministry, from the loyal volunteers to the congregation who supports us each week. These kids experience a love that comes from you inspired from God. We have this wonderful church that enables students to learn about God and how he loves us, and a place to have fun with each other through games, community service, and special events.

In December, we learned more about how Jesus became flesh and dwells among us, and the Good News of Christmas. Along with that, we created cards for seniors at a local nursing home. These were inspired with love for those who may not have someone in this season, to love on them. We also had an FSM Christmas Celebration when we played games, created ornaments, and decorated cookies. There was a great turnout with over 30 students uniting together. I am so thankful that we have this team, who put together an experience that was truly a blessing.

January's middle school lessons will be centered around choosing wisdom, when it comes to your mind set. How we choose to look at things will be an important lesson to reflect on. Our high schoolers have asked to read and reflect on a Gospel. This will be a study straight from the Bible. I am excited for this study as we learn more about Jesus and coming from a more organic approach to learning about God through reflection on the Word.

In upcoming months, we will also be planning a youth retreat at Westley Forest and will also be preparing for Winter Jam, a Christian music concert. This is an awesome experience for all who attend. Look at our bulletin board for more information regarding these events so that you can schedule your month of March with those in mind.



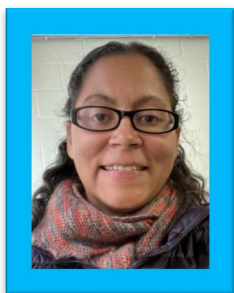
**Christian Calehuff**  
FSM Team Leader  
fsm@faithum.net  
Text - 570-916-1429



- Jan 07<sup>th</sup> - FSM lesson night
- Jan 14<sup>th</sup> - FSM lesson night
- Jan 21<sup>st</sup> - FSM lesson night
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> - FSM group activity night



## CONGREGATIONAL CARE



Marion Handley  
Dir. of Age-Level Ministries  
and Cong. Care  
mhandley@faithum.net  
570-368-2459

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he saves those whose spirits are crushed.” - Psalm 34:18  
“She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”” - Genesis 16:13  
“All great problems call for great love. “ - Karl A. Menninger

In Genesis, a despairing woman named Hagar calls our Lord the “God who sees me.” God does indeed see us. He intimately knows us and he calls us his beloved children. There is no need that we have that escapes his notice and no task in front of us that we face alone because he is always present. As we enter a new year, whether with joy or trepidation, God is with us and has given us one another as partners in our journey. Our calling as Christians is to care for those around us, serving as an overflow of our love for our Lord.

Our daily lives are filled with opportunities to care. I pray that, as we enter 2024, God will give each of us the eyes to see the needs of others around us and compassion and wisdom to meet those needs. Some days we will not need to look very far. Even mundane routine tasks done faithfully are an expression of care and can be done with great love. Providing essentials of life within your own home is an important type of care. God sees the needs of you and your loved ones in this season and those needs matter.

Expanding care beyond our immediate households is both an exercise in generosity and in faith. I hope that the Holy Spirit will prompt you toward that kind of care through the informal networks around you as you pray for friends, pause to send an encouraging text message, mail cards, take time to chat with your neighbors, or even cook a double batch of dinner and set half aside to offer to a tired coworker. In small ways, we are all given the chance to be the light behind someone’s smile simply by showing up unexpectedly and letting them know they are not forgotten.

In addition to those informal yet powerful care connections, we have a congregational care team at Faith Church organized around supporting one another in ways that remind us that we are the people of the God who sees. Our Congregational Care Team serves by praying with and for you and those you love, mailing cards to folks recovering from illness or grieving losses, visiting with people in hospitals and nursing homes, delivering meals through Casserole Ministry, bringing home communion to our homebound members and more. It is our joy and privilege to walk with you through your celebrations, challenges, and transitions.

Interested in serving our congregation as a member of the Congregational Care Team? We welcome new additions to the team! Contact [mhandley@faithum.net](mailto:mhandley@faithum.net) or call the church office for more information.

Happy New Year!



We are serious about caring for our congregation....but we also like to have fun!



### CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM OPPORTUNITIES

From time to time, our Congregational Care Team hears of short-term needs with house cleaning help following surgery, cancer diagnosis or pregnancy complications. Needs range from temporary weekly or biweekly cleaning to just a one-time visit to allow the patient to rest and recover. If you would be willing to assist or have questions, please contact Marion Handley [mhandley@faithum.net](mailto:mhandley@faithum.net) or make a note on your Connect Card.



Scott and I would like to say thank you for the love and support through all the prayers, cards, meals & visits you showed us while Scott was in the hospital and home recovering. We love our church family! Have a Blessed New Year 2024! —Lisa and Scott Konkle



### VBS 2024

We plan to host Vacation Bible School Sunday June 23- Thursday June 27 in the evenings 6:00-8:30 pm. If you are Interested in helping to plan VBS or in leading an activity station such as Games, Bible, or Snack, please contact Marion Handley or Jessica Neiman with questions. Planning meetings will begin soon with dates to be determined. Stay tuned for additional information regarding summer 2023!

## GROW/SERVE



Deb Ottenmiller  
Dir. of Group Life  
and Assimilation  
dottenmiller@faithum.net  
570-368-2459

Hello friends! As most of you are aware, the Ottenmiller household has had their share of surgeries and lengthy timeframes of unexpected delays in returning to work. But I am happy to say I have returned to in-person worship and fellowship with my Faith Church family. I've missed you all very much. George misses everyone at Faith, and his job as well, but it may be some time before he is able to join us/them again.

We wanted to offer some words of appreciation for every prayer, card, hug and beyond, as you have all cared for us in so many meaningful ways during this life season. You are loved.

Deb [and George] Ottenmiller  
Director of Community Group life and Assimilation at Faith

### NEW SESSION OF GRIEF SHARE BEGINS JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>

Grief Share begins in January! Series dates: January 24, 2024 – April 17, 2024 Wednesdays at 6:00 pm  
FSM Room [Brushy Ridge]

Help and Encouragement after the Death of a Loved One. A Grief Share Support Group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. At this 13-week Group you will receive valuable guidance and tips, leading you to relief, comfort, and peace of mind. Go to: <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/179072> to register or for more information.



### FAITH WOMEN'S RETREAT: MARCH 2024



Are you looking to rest, recharge, and laugh with fellow ladies of our church? If so, we invite you to join us at Wesley Forest for an overnight retreat on March 22-23. 2-24. We will meet together Friday evening for a time of worship, games, and treats. On Saturday, we'll have breakfast together and enjoy a morning hearing the stories from some fellow women of Faith. Games, crafts, and more will be available for your choosing. Or, if you simply want to sit and chat with other women, that is wonderful too! Lunch will be provided and then we will head home in the early afternoon on Saturday.

If you are anything like us, it is hard to carve out space in the calendar to connect with others without feeling the pressure to rush off to the next thing. Please consider making time for this

overnight women's retreat, 7PM Friday- 1PM Saturday. The estimated retreat cost is \$60 per person; that cost includes lodging for Friday night and two meals Saturday.

This event is open to women of all ages; space is limited to 25-30 women max, so please express your interest in joining us by completing the interest form (see QR code for the link) or emailing Rachel Knipe at [rmknipe@gmail.com](mailto:rmknipe@gmail.com). Also, know that expressing interest does not mean you are locked in and officially signed up! We will email all interested ladies with more details and a sign up sheet in February.



Warmly,  
Rachel Knipe & Kristen Lowe

### WOMEN'S GATHERING

The next Women's Gathering will be on January 17th beginning at 10:00 am in Faith Café. All are welcome! Please join us! While you're at it, plan to join us on the third Wednesday of every month.



## OUTREACH



Mark your calendar to join our mission trip next summer, July 7th-13th! Faith Church is partnering with Appalachian Service Project (ASP) to bless our neighbors in (most likely) West Virginia by doing critical repairs that will make homes warmer, safer, and drier. And whether you are handy or not, if you've graduated 6th grade and have a clear national criminal background check, you are welcome to participate! This is a great opportunity to love our neighbors and enjoy Christian fellowship on the drive! If you are interested, feel free to reach out to Mason Neiman after service or at [mneiman@faithum.net](mailto:mneiman@faithum.net).



Mason Neiman  
Director of Worship &  
Creative Arts  
[mneiman@faithum.net](mailto:mneiman@faithum.net)  
570-368-2459



NEW SERMON SERIES

# Peace of Mind

January 07 - Herman's Story, Our Story

January 14 - Heal My Anxious Mind

January 21 - When You're Battling Depression, Remember

January 28 - Walk With Me

February 4 - Beating Burnout



**FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday-Thursday, 8:00 am-3:30 pm and Friday-8:00 am-Noon  
(Closed Daily 12:30-1:00 pm for Lunch)

**PHONE #:** 570-368-2459      **EMAIL:** office@faithum.net

**WEB:** www.faithum.net    **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/faithmontoursville

**HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST?** Call or email the office or fill out an online Connect Card on our website.

If you would like to receive the newsletter (in color!) via email, please contact the church office.

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DECEMBER 2023

# Life Line

**FAITH CHURCH**  
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