

The Steeple



CHIPPEWA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



2021/ Issue 152

Speaks the Word of God...

Shares the Love of Christ....

Makes the Kingdom of God Visible...

1796 - 2021 225 Years in Ministry

Our church will be 225 years strong this year. We started with meetings in the home of Abraham Powers in 1796. Since most of the pioneers that met there had been Methodist they met in the Methodist manner with scripture and songs of faith.

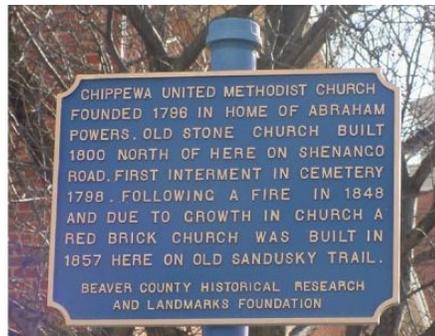
This means when our church started George Washington was president. Soon Circuit riding preachers were coming to preach. This is a long and storied history. It is a great legacy of faith that we inherit each time we gather for worship.

Each time Sunday School meets in person or virtually they echo the first meetings in the Powers cabin.

When we pray we stand on the shoulders of people of

faith who have prayed in this community for 225 years.

When we open scripture the Word of God unfolds in our midst as it has year after year.



What is amazing about our church is it is very old, but it has not stayed old. There are churches younger than ours that have already closed. There are historical

What is amazing in the middle of a pandemic is all of you were so generous to God and your church. We have not been able to pay our apportionments in full since 2016.

We also discovered an error in the amortization of our

churches that focus more on their past than on their present.

Our church has changed and changed to stay current with our world while keeping

anchored to scripture and Christian principles. That is amazing and wonderful. God is good and has been good for 225 years!

Pastor Allan

mortgage and were able to negotiate a new agreement with our bank to fix a 2.9% interest rate for the next ten years; when our mortgage is paid off.

Thank you and thank you again and praise God!



OUR CHURCH WILL BE 225 YEARS STRONG THIS YEAR."

2020 Financial Health of Our Church

Praise to God and thank you to the saints of Chippewa UMC. We finished 2020 paying all of our bills, paying all of our staff and paying our conference apportionments in full. We had a small surplus that went into our surplus fund.

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The Steeple

Children's Ministry Providing February Family Fun Kits



This I Know! is a family resource that provides devotions and activities for kids and their families for the month of February. Each week, families learn more about the love Jesus has for them. We know that Jesus loves us because the Bible tells us so. This month we will be focusing on four

stories from the New Testament that show us how we know that Jesus loves us.

The resource is designed to be used once a week. The kit will feature 4 family devotions, 4 games, 4 crafts, and 4 snack ideas.

Each family that registers for the *This I Know* kit will

be provided with the supplies needed to have meaningful and fun devotions at home!

If you would like a kit for your family, please contact Susan Winters at swinters@chippewaumc.org by February 1, 2021.

Next Door Youth Ministry

We are starting off our new year continuing our group discussions about how Jesus Redeems, and then we will transition into discussions about Walking with Jesus. I am excited about the things that are in store in 2021.

Our schedule for January and February are as follows:

January 24, Regular YG @ 5:00-7:00pm

February 7, Super Bowl Sunday *Special start time* @ 12:00-2:00pm

February 14, **No YG**

February 21, Regular YG @ 5:00-7:00pm

February 28, Regular YG @ 5:00-7:00pm

We will be meeting virtually on Zoom at 7:00pm on the Mondays following youth group for anyone who wasn't able to attend the Sunday prior.

We will not be holding Youth Sunday School for the foreseeable future.

We have begun discussions about moving youth group to a different day or time. If you or your student have an opinion that you would like to share, please feel free to share it with me. I'd love to hear from you.

Thank you so much for your support and thoughts. The care packages will be going out this month!

Blessings,

Kevin Jenkins



Chippewa UMC History



Did you know that our church used to be named "Chippewa Community Methodist Church"?

We found a number of metal signs which used to be posted around our community. Do you remember them? Isn't it telling that though our name has changed our com-

mitment to our community has not changed. And while these signs no longer grace the roads around Chippewa our church is known around Chippewa for helping and serving our community.

Hey, what is named "Community" now at our church?

Smiles from Susan

February makes its mark with red hearts, bouquets of roses, boxes of chocolates and lots of loving “will you be mine?” valentine sentiments. However, I’d like to travel down a different path and focus on another lesser known Christian festival called Candlemas!

This ancient festival marks the midpoint of winter, half-way between the shortest day and the spring equinox. Candlemas commemorates the ritual purification of Mary. It takes place 40 days after the birth of Jesus. Counting forward from December 25 as Day One, we find that Day Forty is February 2. On this day, Christians remember the presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple. Forty days after the birth of a Jewish boy, it was the custom to take him to the temple in Jerusalem to be presented to God by his thankful parents.

In pre-Christian times, this day was known as the 'Feast of Lights' and celebrated the increased strength of the life-giving sun as winter gave way to spring.

Candlemas was based on the Old Testament Scripture reading from Zephaniah 1:12, "I will search Jerusalem with candles." It became the day of the year when all the candles, that were used in the church during the coming year, were brought into church and a blessing was said over them - so it was the Festival Day (or 'mass') of the Candles.

“Candles were important in those days not only because there were no electric lights. Some people thought they gave protection against plague and illness and famine. For Christians, they were (and still are) a reminder of something even more important. Before Jesus came to earth, it was as if everyone was 'in the dark'. People often felt lost and lonely. Afraid. As if they were on their own, with no one to help them. Then came Jesus with his message that he is with his followers always ready to help and comfort them. As if he is a guiding light to them in the darkness. Christians often talk of Jesus as 'the light of the World' - and candles are lit during church services to remind Christians of this.”

Early Christians in Europe celebrated Candlemas Day as a custom for the preacher to bless candles and give them to people in the dark of winter. A lighted candle was placed in each window of the homes. The day's weather was very important. If the sun came out on February 2 halfway between winter and spring, it meant six more weeks of wintry weather. The following poem was said to be spoken on Candlemas Day:

**If Candlemas be fair and bright,
Come, winter, have another flight.
If Candlemas brings clouds and rain.
Go, winter, and not come again.**

It was also believed that hibernating animals were able to predict the arrival of springtime by their emergence. The German immigrants known as Pennsylvania Dutch brought the tradition to America in the 1800's. And, because there were so many groundhogs in Pennsylvania they used groundhogs to predict the weather. German tradition holds...the groundhog is supposed to awaken on February 2nd, Groundhog Day, and come up out of his burrow. If he sees his shadow, he will return to the burrow for six more weeks of winter. If he doesn't see his shadow, he remains outside and begins the year, because he knows spring has arrived early.

Well whether or not that little furry critter can actually predict the weather remains to be seen. As for my home, there is a lighted candle in the window – a sign of welcome, a sign that we acknowledge Jesus as the light of the world.

Maybe Punxsutawney Phil just needs reminded of the Scripture found in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness.”

Peace & Blessings,



MAYBE
PUNXSUTAWNEY
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The Steeple



I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO PREPARE FOR THE SEASON OF LENT BY LEARNING A LITTLE ON YOUR OWN ABOUT SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES.

Lent Challenge from Pastor Tai

It never fails that when I begin to think about Lent I think about spiritual disciplines that have been significant acts in the life of Christians for centuries. Pastor Allan and I will be talking about some of the spiritual disciplines in our sermons during Lent. We'll also be offering a Monday evening study that will go along with the discipline/s we talk about in our sermons.

I want to encourage you to prepare for the season of Lent by learning a little on your own about spiritual disciplines. For some of us we need to make the time for more prayer and fasting and reading our Bible. But there are more disciplines that God might be calling you to take time with in your own personal journey of faith. So I'd like

to recommend a few books that can help you learn more and discern what God might be inviting you to work on with Him.



Two books from Richard Foster are

Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth

and

A Year with God: Living Out the Spiritual Disciplines

Other helpful books are:

Spiritual Disciplines for Children: A Guide to a Deeper Spiritual Life for You and Your Children

by Vernie Schorr Love

Praying in the Wesleyan Spirit: 52 Prayers for Today

by Paul Wesley Chilcote

The Wesley Prayer Challenge Participant Book: 21 Days to a Closer Walk with Christ

by Chris Folmsbee

* You can search for these books on your favorite online bookstore.



Bible Study

An 8 week study of the Beatitudes from the book of Matthew starts on January 27.

It will run through March 24 skipping Ash Wednesday (Feb 17).

All are welcome to join Dr. Dan for this study on Wednesdays at 11 am or 7pm in the Wesley Room. This study will also be recorded and available on our Facebook page and website. It is helpful for us to know if you plan to attend.

Please call or email the church office, if you plan to attend.

724-843-4828

info@chippewaumc.org

Pastor Tai's Journey to Ordination

Anyone who feels called to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church will have their own unique journey arriving at Ordination as a Full Member. My journey is almost complete. I will start by sharing that Pastor Gary and I graduated seminary together in 2012. He received his Full Ordination several years ago. After graduation I moved to Maryland. When I moved, I transferred my membership from Western PA to the Baltimore-Washington Conference. I had planned to complete my Ordination in that Conference. God had other plans.

In 2017 God nudged my husband, Sean, who encouraged me to ask for an appointment to a church in Western PA. This was able to happen because I had also completed Local Pastor Licensing School (a program offered through the WPA Conference and required of all candidates for ordained ministry).

I was appointed to serve three small churches in the Bedford area. After arriving there I continued the process for ordi-

nation. I met with the District Committee on Ministry who helped me prepare for my interview with the Board of Ordained Ministry. I had to answer questions about my theology, my understanding of United Methodist Doctrine, and my abilities for ministry. The Board then asked me questions about my answers and voted whether or not to approve me as a candidate to be Commissioned at that year's Annual Conference. In 2018 I was Commissioned as a Provisional Elder.

Commissioned Elders and Deacons are then part of a Provisional Class. For the next three years we have met together three different times (9 total) and gone through some continuing education the WPA Conference has deemed helpful for ministry.

Also, over that time we have had every right and privilege of other pastors. We have been able to preside over communion, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. You might think of this process as completing a doctor's residency or a professor getting tenured.

I am currently preparing answers to 16 new questions to submit to the Board of Ordained Ministry as well as a Bible Study I have led, a video of a worship service I have led and preached in, a Project that was completed over those three years, and about four other forms.

In March of 2021 I will be invited to the interview for Ordination as an Elder. If the Board recommends me, this recommendation will go to the Order of Elders (all ordained Elders in the WPA Conference) who will receive the recommendation and vote to approve or deny that recommendation at our Annual Conference to be held June 17-19 this year. Once they approve the recommendation I will then be Ordained during Annual Conference as an Elder in Full Connection to the WPA Annual Conference. I covet all of your prayers as I make my way through this final part of my journey.



ANYONE WHO FEELS CALLED TO ORDAINED MINISTRY IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WILL HAVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE JOURNEY ARRIVING AT ORDAINATION AS A FULL MEMBER.

Our Church Family

SYMPATHIES

Carla Helbling, Carol Eckman and family of Shirley Buchholz

Family and Friends of Dr. Schoeneweis

Pat Bischoff upon the passing of Paul Bischoff

MEMORIALS

Memorial Development Fund
In Memory of Kathy Damaska by Nancy Lamey, Barry & Margie Smith, Judy Rogers.

In Memory of Marge Stoker by Nancy Lamey, Don & Tina Ray, Barry & Margie Smith, Judy Rogers, Michael & Susan Hill, Bob & Alice Black.

In Memory of Edie Yokel by Michael & Susan Hill.

In Memory of Ruth Lindsay by Nancy Foster.

In memory of Jean Robinson by Sherie Miller Cash.

Sew Many Blessings

In memory of Marge Stoker by Cherie Grunzke and Al & Rose Stratton

In memory of Dorothy Hage by Donna Hage

Thank you, Church Family, for all your prayers, phone calls and many cards during my confinement after my fall. Words cannot express how thankful I am. Nancy Hurley



The Steeple

Prayer Shawl Ministry

In 2020, the total of prayer shawls given out at the CUMC main church was 18. The total for CLC was 4.

Seems like the total should be more. Remember, the church was closed for a time.

DONATIONS WERE WONDERFUL! 6 shawls from our

dear Marge S., 17 shawls from Gerry, 8 shawls from Marlene, and 2 lap blankets from Caren.

Thank you dear shawl angels.



United Methodist Women

"The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as a whole person through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through global ministries of the church."

Thank you for your support of the Chippewa United Methodist Women in 2020. Thank you for your financial contributions, and your time and effort

placed towards our ministries. The proceeds from the rummage sale and other events have made our annual contributions possible.

Due to the current state of the COVID pandemic, unfortunately our Valentines Day Tea and Lenten lunches will be cancelled.

We hope to resume our UMW programs in the Spring. We will keep the UMW Facebook page and the Steeple updat-

ed with newly scheduled events and programs.

Tentatively, we hope to have the following events:

April 18-21 - Spring Rummage Sale

May 12 - Mother/Daughter Banquet

Stay safe and God Bless!

News from the Finance Committee

Since my letter in September much has progressed and this newsletter provides me an opportunity to give you a partial update on several items. First, let me thank you for your response to the request for monies to help us meet our mortgage payments. During the last four months (September – December), your contributions have enabled us to meet our monthly payments. Second, the new agreement with S & T Bank concerning the loan for the CLC has been agreed upon, after months of negotiations concerning the language in the contract. Our original payment of \$9,106 has now increased to \$10,879. This new payment will allow us to pay off the note on the CLC mort-

gage in 2031. Although the monthly amount has increased, our new interest rate has been reduced from 4.875% to 2.97%. **What this means is significant.** In 2020, our monthly payments reduced the principal amount by about \$60,000, but in 2021 the new interest rate will reduce that principal amount by about \$94,000. Because the mortgage is not a line item in the budget, it is still imperative that we receive contributions to help the church meet this new payment. Contributions made to the program fund (our general operating expenses) are not used to help pay the monthly mortgage payments. When contributing, please denote **"Mortgage Fund"** on the memo line of

your check or giving amount. Third: I am also very pleased to inform you that due to your faithful giving response in 2020 we were able meet our full Connectional Apportionment. The overall budget for 2021 is slightly lower than 2020 (around \$8000) but our Connectional Apportionment will slightly increase (about \$640).

Once again, thank you for giving prayerful and meaningful consideration to this financial obligation. May the new year find you safe, healthy, and hopeful for a brighter 2021.

Sincerely,
Edward Dambach
Finance Chairperson

FIRST, LET ME
THANK YOU FOR
YOUR RESPONSE
TO THE REQUEST
FOR MONIES TO
HELP US MEET
OUR MORTGAGE
PAYMENTS.

Hello, Men of GOD, I want to thank you for all your support. Also, my whole church family, thank you.

You can just imagine what I am going through with the loss of my precious Margie. There's a memorial service scheduled for May 22, 2021. More details to follow.

I don't know if you can imagine some of my talks with GOD as I walk with HIM, and I have walked with HIM a lot, or rather HE has walked with me. HE has never left me; HE is my strength.

There's a lot of scripture about walking with GOD. I think for me it is Isaiah 43:2, "When you pass through the waters, I WILL be with you. And when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze".

No matter what we go through, Men, GOD is there

with us walking by our side, holding our hand. He won't let the waters of adversity overwhelm us. He won't let the fiery trials burn us and consume us. Though we may feel as though we are overwhelmed and drowning in the sea of despair, He will uphold us. We so often cannot see the way out when we're in the midst of the storm. This is the hope we have in GOD that He is always with us every moment of the day. He is always there. He already knows what we will face. We can completely trust Him to walk us through it and to be there when we come out the other side. And we will get through it, as long as we trust the Lord and keep our eyes on Jesus. He is the source of our comfort and hope and is totally dependable.

You may ask "how are you doing?" or "how are you getting through this?", I am and have been trusting in Jesus.

If any of you feel overwhelmed right now with what you are facing, keep looking

to Jesus. He is there with you even when we may not feel as though He is. He will walk with us. He is there; just extend your hand and hold on tight to His.

I will keep on trusting in Jesus Christ. He is the way, the truth, the light, and I'm holding on tight. These words from Psalm 139:16 "Your eyes saw my unformed body: all the days ordained for me were written in your book of life, before one of them came to be." I know it was her time and the COVID-19 was just a means, she went peacefully.

Of all the times, Men, it really is time to keep our eyes on Jesus and hold on tight to His hand and keep on praying.

Love ya all. As always if someone is in need of prayer, please call. I will be honored to pray with you or for you.

Brother Al Stoker

I WILL KEEP ON TRUSTING IN JESUS CHRIST. HE IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIGHT, AND I'M HOLDING ON TIGHT.

Thank You

A huge thank you to three cold "snowmen!" Blessings to Ryan, Grant and Aidan Wissner for shoveling my driveway twice over Christmas. It brought joy and tears to my heart to witness neighbors loving neighbors in action. A true Christmas gift from God.

Linda Neely

PS. For you strong people living near an elder person, don't wait to be asked, just do what you see and know needs done. Oldsters don't always like to ask for help. It's difficult to admit your aging body isn't always up to the task. It's neighbors loving neighbors in Jesus' name.



WORSHIP

SATURDAY NIGHT WORSHIP

5:30pm Informal Traditional Worship
Church Sanctuary

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

8:30am & 11am

Morning Traditional Worship / Church Sanctuary

9:45am Contemporary Worship
Community Life Center

Live Streaming on Facebook ! 9:45AM & 11:00AM

ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 17, 2021

Worship with Communion

11:00am & 7:00pm in our Sanctuary

Pastor Allan Brooks
412.992.7007

Church Office Hours
Mon - Fri 9am - 4pm
724.843.4828
www.chippewaumc.org
info@chippewaumc.org

Pastor Tai Courtemanche
724.799.5699

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