

West Swamp News

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The new playground is installed!

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Matt Mood, with help from Case, Olivia and Eli (not pictured) lay borders and spread new mulch. The playground is delivered. Individual elements are placed, and Voila! A new playground is assembled and ready to use.

Pictures by Katie Mood and Rod Rush

FYI

- If you have trouble sleeping in August, check out the Perseid meteor shower that peaks on Aug. 12.
- After a summer hiatus, many church activities start up again in September, including the Prayer Breakfast, Senior Luncheon, the TLC Sunday School class, and music ensembles.



Pastor's Corner:

It happened again this morning. I was reading part of the gospel of Luke, and Jesus says to Peter, **“Don’t be afraid (5:10).”**

Here’s how it happened: Jesus had borrowed Peter’s boat to preach to the crowds, using the water as a natural amplifier for his voice, and the distance between the boat and the people onshore to keep them from crowding him. When he’s done teaching, he asks Peter to put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch.

Peter has just spent the night fishing and caught nothing, but he decides to indulge Jesus’ request. Perhaps he’s thinking that Jesus, a traveling rabbi, doesn’t know anything about fishing. **“Because you say so, I will let down the nets (5:5).”**

There will be times in our lives when the way of Jesus doesn’t seem to make sense to us. “Why should I forgive them? They really hurt me!” “I work hard for what I have! Why would I share

with the people who go to the food bank?” Sometimes we need to do it because Jesus says to, and we will often find that our obedient action changes our perspective.

You probably know the story—Peter catches so many fish that his boat begins to sink, and he calls his partners to help, and *their* boat is soon filled to the point of capsizing! Maybe Jesus *does* know something about fishing. Peter’s response is to say **“Go away from me, Lord, I’m a sinful man (5:8).”** That’s when Jesus tells him not to be afraid, and Peter winds up leaving his boat behind and following Jesus, learning how to fish for people.

Why does Jesus so often tell people not to be afraid? He does it later in Luke to Jairus, the synagogue leader who’s just received word that his only daughter has died. Spoiler alert: Jesus brings her back to life (8:50).

Today, there are many things

that can make us afraid. You might be struggling with a difficult medical diagnosis or a mental health challenge. A child or a grandchild could be going through a rough time. Every evening the news gives us more to be anxious about with domestic politics and world events.

In the midst of all that comes your way, I invite you to hear Jesus speak those words to you. **“Don’t be afraid.”** I encourage you to follow the counsel of 1 Peter 5:7, **“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”** The word “cast” isn’t the word that describes a lazy flick of the rod when you’re fly fishing, or the gentle arc of a shot when you’re playing driveway basketball. It means “fling.” Throw overboard.

So I encourage you, bundle up all your anxiety, and fling it overboard from your life, because Jesus cares for you.

Peace,

~ *Pastor Michael*

DISCO: Time to get rolling again

Prayer Breakfast will resume Sept. 1 at 9:30 am in the fellowship hall with a continental-style breakfast. Our prayer time will focus on students, teachers, and schools.

Topics, Learning, and Conversation (TLC) class will resume meeting Sept. 8 at 9:30 am. The anticipated resource will be *When You Pray - A Study of 6*

Prayers in the Bible which uses weekly video sessions and group discussion as well as an optional personal guide (look for a sign up sheet to request a copy of the personal guide). This is a 7 week resource, but you are always welcome to join at any time!

The Bible Project group continues to meet at 8:45 am, via Zoom and in person. The class just fin-

ished diving deeply into Genesis 1-11, and found that no matter how well-versed in the Bible you may be, there is always more to learn. As they keep moving through the Hebrew Bible (OT), they are excited to use the skills they’ve learned to see patterns, word connections and hyperlinks as they dig into God’s word.

~ *Katie Mood*

Ministry Team: Transitions & change

Transitions and change. Whether we want them to or not, they are a constant throughout our lives. More on that later. Now, I will transition to August...

I hope that everyone has been enjoying this summer season. As we are in “the dog days of summer,” I hear Nat King Cole’s “Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer” in my head. At the same time, I hear Andy Williams’ “It’s The Most Wonderful Time of The Year,” remembering the TV commercial where the parents are gleefully shopping for new school supplies for their less than thrilled children. What a combination! Summer fun and back to school. Both in the same sentence! A time of change for many. Another time of transition just around the corner on the horizon.

We have been commonly referred to as creatures of habit. As I alluded to earlier, we generally do not adapt well to change. Here is some food for thought. Perhaps God in His own way, uses transition as a way of gently nudging us to make ‘adjustments’ (or change) to our so-called normal routines. After all, He gave us the four seasons which are constantly changing around us. He also provides us with a chance to experience life changing roles. We can be a student learning new things around us every day, become a parent, grandparent, caregiver for a loved one, foster or mentor someone, have the courage to make a job change, take up a different task, or volunteer to join a committee. Any of these can be a leap of faith as we contemplate making a transi-

tion or change in our life.

Finally, let me say how grateful I am to everyone, past and present that has been and continues to be willing to transition and change their life by answering the calling over the years here at West Swamp. What a blessing! I wish to say “Thank You” to everyone that has previously or is currently serving on any committee. The willingness of each person to volunteer their time and talents has not only changed each of their own lives in the process, but also the recipients, both past, present and those in the future. Everyone’s gift of serving here at West Swamp to help expand God’s kingdom is very much appreciated. Blessings to you all!

~ Carl Raub

All God's children march for a ceasefire

On Thursday, July 18 Mennonites and interfaith allies from the US and Canada embarked on an 11-day, 135-mile march from Harrisonburg, VA to Washington, DC. Singing hymns and holding evening worship services along the way, the march draws attention to the suffering, death and destruction unfolding in Gaza.

Upon their arrival in Washington, the Mennonite marchers

will join an interfaith coalition that will counter the annual conference of Christians United for Israel (CUFI) and confront US lawmakers who are embracing CUFI’s agenda.

Ben Rush is seen here on Day 2 of the March, heading to Luray, Va.

Contact Lynne Rush if you are interested in signing the Mennonite Action petition.



Stewardship: Crossing things off the list

Now that we have caught up on some long outstanding items that needed attention we are back to the normal swing of things for the Stewardship Commission.

Seasonal work has been getting performed such as mulching and weeding gardens and around trees at the church and the cemetery. Leon Probst and Jim Snyder have been taking great care of the lawns. A self-propelled mower was purchased to assist in this effort at a very

discounted price thanks to some investigation by Leon and his family.

Matt Mood and his family donated and installed new mulch and a border for the playground equipment that should be installed by the time this newsletter comes out.

The fire inspection was performed and passed. The exterminator treated for the ant infestation that we had in the nursery space. The cleaning crew took

care of any remaining mess from the ants.

I think that Terri Welsh has been working out well as our new cleaning person, and I know that she has provided additional attention to detail in a number of areas of the church already.

Thank you to all those who have donated time, materials, or funds towards the church's upkeep who are not already mentioned above.

~ *Alex Parzych*

Worship: Men-O-Lan Sunday is coming!

The time is here for our annual service at Camp Men-O-Lan, with Solidarity and Harmony Church, on Sunday, Aug. 11 at 10:30 am. Feel free to come early and enjoy the peaceful, quiet outdoors to commune with nature and God.

Following the service, we'll enjoy a meal together. Enjoy Haitian food (courtesy of S&H) and fresh

corn and melon (courtesy of the Moods). If you can, please bring a dessert to share. Beverages will be provided. A few volunteers to help with meal prep and service are needed; please sign up on the bulletin board.

Plan to spend the day: go on a hike, boat on the lake, and stay to swim in the pool (3-5 pm). It's

always a good day communing with fellow believers.

On Sept. 1 we'll worship outside in the pavilion. Stay after the service for an informal time of socializing. Bring a bagged lunch for yourself, and maybe a snack to share; beverages will be provided

~ *Joan Hallman*

Worship: Music practices begin in September

Share your musical talent with the congregation. Join Chimin' In or Choir—or both!

Practices begin Sept. 11 and happen about twice a month (possibly more in December). Chimin' In meets at 6:30 pm; Choir meets at 7:15 pm.

It would be wonderful to have at least 8 chimers (but we can use up to 10). As for Choir, we can use as many singers as want to join.

Not able to practice on a Wednesday evening? I'll try to get some Impromptu Choirs scheduled now and then so you

can join us now and then with only a run through on a Sunday morning.

Contact me if you're interested in either group—or both.

~ *Lynne Rush*

An indoor Hot Dog Social



It was a cool time at the annual June Hot Dog Social—especially since it was moved inside due to the extreme heat outside. Lawn games were exchanged for board games and puzzles, and a good time was had by young and old alike.

Above: Marian Wolf, Cheryl Frizinger and Jan Wieand play Sequence.

Above right: Tim Butenuth gets a puzzle started.

Cindy & Carl Raub (right) and Ophelia and Cameron Parzych enjoy some delicious food, while still saving room for ice cream.



Mission Commission Report

After a very busy spring the Mission Commission had a quiet July. August is the MCC school kit item collection. A list of required items has been in recent bulletins. Please see Mark Kemmerer if you have any questions.

Looking ahead we will be doing a coin collection September through November. The monies will be divided between Crossroads Community Center and Ripple Church. Please start saving your coins.

~ Karen Parzych



west swamp
mennonite church

2501 Allentown Road
Quakertown, PA 18951

Phone: 215-536-7468
FAX: 215-536-7709

E-mail: westswamp1@verizon.net

Reflecting God in our
living, loving and serving

Calendar of Events

August

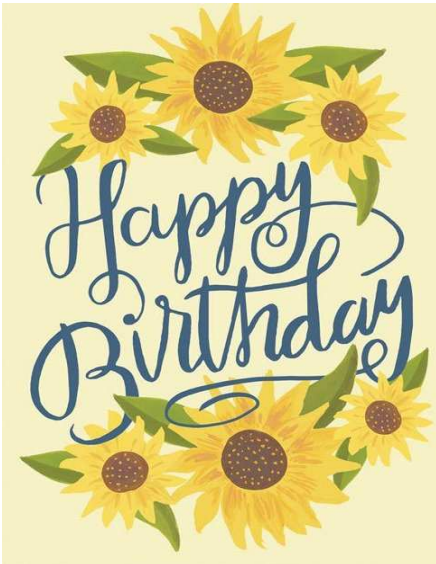
- 6, 7 pm—Community Com.
- 11, 10:30 am—Men-O-Lan Sunday
- 13, 7 pm—Mission Com.
- 14, 6:30 pm—Worship Com.
- 18, @12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
- 20, 7 pm—Ministry Team
- 27, 7 pm—DISCO

September

- 1, 9:30 am—Prayer Breakfast
- 1, 10:30 am—Pavilion Service
- 3, 7 pm—Community Com.
- 8, 9:30—TLC SS class resumes
- 10, 7 pm—Mission Com.
- 11, 6:30 pm—Chimin' In practice
- 11, 7:15 pm—Choir practice
- 17, 7 pm—Ministry Team
- 19, 12 pm—Senior Luncheon
- 22, 12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
- 24, 7 pm—DISCO
- 25, 6:30 pm—Chimin' In practice
- 25, 7:15 pm—Choir practice

Regular Activity

Tuesdays, 8 am-Knotting & Quilting



August

- 8/2 Bonnie Kiesel
Gary Parzych
- 8/4 Ben Rush
- 8/7 Jeff Rice
- 8/9 Marsha High
Carl Raub
- 8/15 Anita Husvar
- 8/16 Christine Allem
- 8/20 Karen Parzych
- 8/22 Katie Mood
- 8/23 Darlene Deecher
- 8/29 Lynne Rush
- 8/31 Elizabeth Deecher

September

- 9/1 Ashlynn Rice
- 9/2 Loretta Keiser
- 9/9 Margaret Marth
- 9/10 Joslyn Kirkpatrick
- 9/15 Marlene Stauffer
- 9/16 Dana Searfass
- 9/19 Doug Propst
Alyana Riley
- 9/20 Jason Kirkpatrick
- 9/26 Emily Rush
- 9/27 Joan Hallman
- 9/28 John Gwilliam