

THE SPIRE

Love God! Love Others!



Upland Baptist Church, 1851

Summer 2017

Upland Baptist Church
325 Main Street, Upland, PA 19015
610-874-7474

Email: uplandbaptist@verizon.net

Website: www.uplandbaptist.org

A Powerful Book, A Painful Story

Though I get excited when spring begins, one of the things that saddens me is that Small Groups end for a few months. I enjoy getting together with a small group, sharing prayer concerns, feeling connected and studying God's Word together. It is a wonderful gift (and the food's not bad either!).

There is always some pressure to pick a good book for the next round of Small Group. A book that will capture the very diverse groups' attention, a book that will teach us something, a book that will create good conversation, is for what I'm searching. This is a lot to hope for in a book, but each time we make a selection, I hope that the book we read will do all that and more.

I have a small pile of books on my desk that I have begun perusing as possibilities for next fall. I am hopeful that one of them will speak to me and to all of us as we work and learn together. I began reading, **Hearts of Fire: Eight Women in the Underground Church and Their Stories of Costly Faith.** I have read one chapter and put it down. I simply can't read another right now. The story was too painful, too sad, too scary to continue. I will finish the book, because I believe I need to finish it, not because I want to read more.

The women in this book are not from some far-off time, in a distant land. They are women who live in our time. The first story was of Adel and her story began in 2000. I almost cannot comprehend the horrors that she endured, because she claimed Jesus as her Lord and Savior in the year 2000. What was I doing that year? I was graduating from Seminary, being called as your pastor, and beginning a new chapter of my life. Not running for my life, being beaten, watching loved ones being killed before my eyes, all because they would not renounce their faith.

I have no idea if I would have the strength that these women have. Would I be able to stand, facing death, and proclaim Jesus? My prayer is that I would; but my heart knows that it cannot be sure, because I have never been faced with such a choice.

This book needs to be read, because I need to know the stories of those who are standing up for their faith. I need to be praying for my sisters and brothers who are dying for their faith. I want to be encouraging to them. So, I begin by reading their stories. I may do so slowly, because they are so painful to read; but I will lift them up in prayer, knowing God walks with them.

If you are interested in learning more about the persecution Christians are facing, simply because they believe in Jesus, I encourage you to go to:

<https://www.persecution.com/>. I will also be happy to loan you my book.

We don't want to bury our heads in the sand. We want to be informed, be prayerful, and be on guard about what is happening in our world. It has not happened to us, but it is happening.

I don't imagine we will read **Hearts of Fire** for Small Group next year. Though it is a powerful book, I don't imagine we can discuss these stories for weeks together. I still think that it is a book that needs to be read.

Pastor Brenda

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.”
I Peter 4:12-14

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.”

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

THANK YOU

Very Much

All Upland Baptist Church volunteers are invited to a thank you luncheon.

Sunday, June 11, 2017
following worship

Please look for a sign-up sheet at the back of the church, or call the church office to say you will attend!

I thank my God every time I remember you.
Philippians 1:3





From the Legal Corporation and Ministry Council . . .

At the May Meetings, we . . .

- Discussed Church finances and reviewed expenses;
- Discussed personnel issues, including let go of our Church secretary;
- Discussed repairs to be done in the cemetery;
- Discussed completed repairs around the Church and Chapel;
- Discussed other property issues; and
- Each of the Team Leaders reported on various items they were working on and/or hoping to initiate. Their reports can be found in this issue of the *Spire*.

Our Church **Planning Meeting** is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 27th at 7:00** for all members of the Ministry Council.



School Supplies



For Main Street Elementary School

During the months of June, July, and August, we will be collecting **pencils, yellow highlighters, and boxes of 24 crayons** for students in Main Street Elementary School. There will be a basket in the back of the Chapel for your donations. Monetary donations will also be accepted and can be given to Linda Cook. Watch for sales this summer and stock up! Many students cannot afford to buy school supplies or replenish them when they run out and it is left to the teachers to purchase school supplies. Our donations will help the children be ready for school!





Children, Youth, and Adult News..

- **Katie Boyer-Mason and Tom Geveke** continue to play in the *Joyful Noise* Bell Choir.
- **Katie Boyer-Mason** is volunteering on Monday afternoons at Main Street Elementary School. She is helping them with their gardening project.
- **Megan DeVecchis** and **Katelyn DeVecchis** graduated from Widener University this past Saturday, May 20. **Katelyn** graduated cum laude with a Bachelors of Science degree in nursing. She prepares now to take the state board examination for her RN license. **Megan** graduated cum laude with a Bachelors of Arts in communication studies with a concentration in marketing and public relations. **Sammy DeVecchis** was granted a press pass for the Commencement ceremonies and was taking photos of all the grads!
- **Sam DeVecchis**, is entering his junior year at Widener University with a Communications Studies-Film concentration major. He is again traveling to Costa Rica this summer for a course, but this time as a Teaching Assistant.
- **Anna Geveke** was awarded a scholarship from West Chester University based on her SAT score and GPA. She will be working again this summer at the Brookhaven Swim Club.
- **Tom Geveke** also will be working at the Brookhaven Swim Club this summer.

- **Matthew Shaw** is excited to be finishing Kindergarten and moving to first grade at Coebourn Elementary this fall. He helped to plant the garden and is anxiously awaiting the sunflowers to get bigger than he is!
- **Stephen Shaw** had a great baseball season. He really enjoyed playing catcher. He played in his first band concert and looks forward to continuing to play the trumpet.

VBS Night

A **BIG Thank You** to our VBS Night Volunteers:

Brenda Shaw

Linda Cook

Jane Kofroth

John Kofroth

Charlene Miller

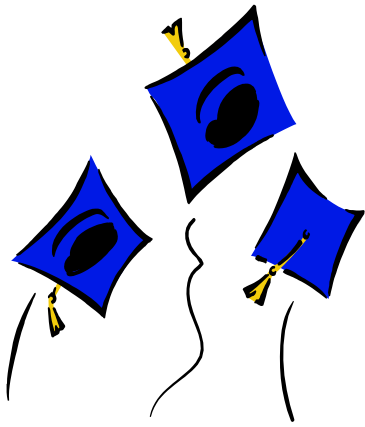
Hans Geveke

Joan Decker

Betty Vandergrift

Dawn Rafalski

Also, we would like to give a **BIG Thank You** to everyone in the congregation who has supported the VBS Night with monetary and food donations. We could not afford the program without your support.



congratulations!

This year, four of our former Sunday School students graduated from college! Let's give a cheer and a round of applause to . . .

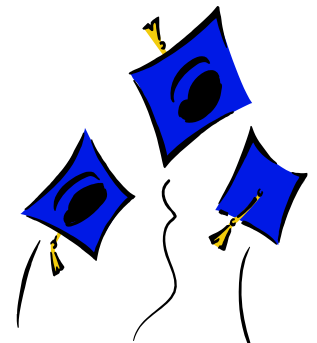
Katelyn DeVecchis
Widener University

Megan DeVecchis
Widener University

Billy Lord
University of the Sciences

Stephanie Pysher
West Chester University

We wish them much luck and success as they pursue job opportunities and/or continue their education.



DISCIPLESHIP – Jane Kofroth

Summer Lunch Program

This will be our 5th summer to provide free lunch for the youth of our community. This has been an important ministry that continues to grow. We will again provide 45 minutes of activities before lunch time 4 days a week for the second half of the summer. Activities will be outdoor games, crafts, board games and library day with a guest reader. We continue to teach those who attend Bible verses.

Consider volunteering one day a week to help with the activities. We always need more hands to help show the youth how much God loves them. This is a great opportunity to invest in the lives of children in our community.



MINISTRY TO MEMBERS – Dawn Rafalski

At worship on June 11th we will be honoring our college graduates. We have four graduates this year. Following worship we will be having a thank you brunch in the chapel. Hope to see you there.

We can always use more help with Home Communion. If that is something you would like to do see Dawn Rafalski. It means so much to our shut-ins to not only serve them communion but to visit with them.

Men's News

AB Men and Young Men mark your calendars for Friday, 7/28 – Sunday, 7/30/17. The Annual Retreat for Men and Young Men will be held at Shippensburg University. The theme is “Nothing is Impossible with God” and “So Let Your Light Shine for Jesus to All!” Keynote speaker is Rev. Steve Etner. Cost is discounted if paid by May 1. See the flyers on the table at the rear of the church for more information.

Home and International Missionary Birthdays for June:

(There are no birthdays for July or August)

Rev Yamina Apolinaris 6/2
Corporation Milagros del Amor
(Loves Miracles Corporation)
P.O. Box 6445
Caguas, PR 00726
E-mail: yaponaris@gmail.com

Rev. Rick Bunker 6/2
Philadelphia Park
P.O. Box 1000
3001 Street Rd.
Bensalem, PA 19020
E-mail: rbunker@rtca-pa.org

Mr. Philip Smith 6/8
1801 Dante Michilini – APTO 501
Mata Da Pria – Vitoria, ES-Brazil
E-mail: Philip.smith@internationalministries.org

Rev. Vital Pierre 6/15
Apartado 21
La Romana, Dominican Republic
E-mail: vital.pierre@internationalministries.org

Mrs. Kelly Bunker 6/22
Philadelphia Park
P.O. Box 1000
3001 Street Rd.
Bensalem, PA 19020
E-mail: rbunker@rtca-pa.org

June Birthdays

- 6 Colleen Walker
- 7 Adam Robert Moore
- 8 Henry Strunk
- 18 Axel Williams
- 23 Madison Hahn

June Anniversaries

- 11 John and Rev. Brenda Shaw
- 22 Darlene and David Pysher
- 30 Frank & Sue Kulp

July Birthdays

- 2 John Fraim
- 7 Linda Cook
- 8 Billy Lord
- 10 Karen Johnston
- 13 Grace Miles
- 16 Betty Vandergrift
Christy Mason
- 18 Jesse Kulp
- 28 Harold Hampton
- 30 Stephen Shaw
- 31 Charlene Miller

July Anniversaries

- 7 Bill & Karin Lord

August Birthdays

- 1 John Kofroth
- 6 Carol Arscott
- 8 Elinore Ottey
- 15 Doris Fraim
- 21 Cameron Klimek
Lucas Charles Gervase
- 22 Ava Noelle Harman

August Anniversaries

- 2 Henry & Darlene Srunk