

The Steeple

March 2025

Dear Friends

Greetings in the name of Jesus! Lent is an important time for spiritual growth both individually and as a church. It begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th with a worship service at 7:30 PM. As we think about growing spiritually, it may benefit us to take a closer look at our prayer lives. Most of us would agree that praying is important. Yet many of us feel as though our prayers lack power.

Let us take some time to consider the following questions:

Do you feel frustrated, stuck, overwhelmed and discontented?

Are you facing insurmountable odds and you are out of ideas?

Do you want more but are unsure how to get there?

Does your prayer life feel flat? Is it inward-focused and problem-focused?

Is prayer something you do out of obligation?

Have you ever wondered if God really hears you?

Do you need a breakthrough – to see supernatural possibilities beyond your earthly limitations?

Most of us have answered yes to one or all those questions from time to time. Many of us long for something more, which leads to a greater question. What if, through prayer, we could tap into the miraculous power of God's Holy Spirit and unleash more than we can ask, think or imagine in our lives and in our world?

Pastor Amanda and I would like to invite you to join us in a 28-day Dynamite Prayer experiment to invite God's resurrection power into our lives and the life of our church this Lent. It's that resurrection power that breaks through our regular routines, our regular kinds of thoughts, words, deeds and actions to focus on what God is trying to say to us in new ways. It's a powerful way to pray that increases our faith and transforms the world as new inspiration and hope is unleashed by God's Spirit.

This 28-day adventure will take you from feeling stuck, overwhelmed, and uninspired to curious and expectant as you surrender your own preferences and ideas and courageously follow the miracles God brings into your life. We will begin on Sunday, March 16th and pray our way to Saturday, April 12th (the day before Palm Sunday) using Dynamite Prayer by Rosario Picardo and Sue Nilson Kibbey. If you would like to join us, you may purchase the book through the church office. The cost is \$10 per copy. An order form will be in the bulletin through March 2nd with a deadline of noon Monday, March 3rd.

It is my prayer that as we do the 28-day experiment together we will experience God in new and powerful ways. I am excited to learn what God can do among us this Lent.

Blessings,
Pastor Keith

Join Us for worship! ON Sundays at 8:30am and 11:00am

Adult small groups at 9:45am

Nursery (available at 11:00am) Upper Education Wing **Nursery is available for infants and children up to 4 years old**

Junior Church will be dismissed after the children's moment at 11:00am worship



Ash Wednesday Worship, Mar 5th at 7:30pm We are about to begin the journey of Lent. A special season where we set aside time to examine our lives, re-center our walk with Jesus, and live with the Cross of Christ ever before us. Ash Wednesday is the first day of the Lenten

season. We are inviting you to join us on the first step of that Lent Journey with an evening service on Ash Wednesday

Men "Learning" Stuff

On **Monday, March 3rd**, the Men Doing Stuff group will take a break from "doing stuff" and instead spend time "learning stuff".

Art King from Harvest Valley Farms will be our guest speaker and give a presentation and answer any questions on home gardening.

Dinner starts at 6:30 with the presentation immediately after. This is a great chance to get your thoughts set on spring time!

Please RSVP to bakerstownumm@gmail.com if you plan on attending.

The Neighborhood Table | Thurs. Mar. 6 | Fellowship Hall

BUMC is continuing to partner with the Fox Chapel UMC to provide meals to the Sharpsburg Community.

Volunteers are needed to help prepare the meal at BUMC starting at 2:30 PM. The meals are then transported to Sharpsburg and volunteers are needed there to help serve and clean up afterwards. This has been a very rewarding ministry so far, so please consider volunteering by calling Roger Cramer at 724-443-2847.

Confirmation Classes—March 9th

All eighth-grade students and older youth interested in joining the church are eligible to participate in this class. Sessions will be held during the Sunday School hour in the Senior Pastor's study every Sunday except Easter through Confirmation Sunday, May 19th.

I am looking forward to this year's class and the time of growing in faith together. I am always blessed by the opportunity to get to know our youth. I am also willing to provide sessions via Zoom for students who are sick or traveling. This worked quite well the past couple of years. If you have questions or would like to know more, please feel free to contact me. Pastor Keith



Don't forget to spring forward and turn you clocks ahead

1 hour on **March 9th**

Drive Thru Dinner | Tues. Mar. 11 | Fellowship Hall

The Mission Team has been serving a monthly meal for The Lighthouse. If the Lord is calling you to participate in this ministry either by helping with food prep in the kitchen, packing meals, delivering them to our church friends or to cars, please plan on coming to the fellowship hall at 2:30pm, or if you have any other questions, please contact Carol Skolnik at cnikskol@gmail.com.

The Bakerstown Book Club | Wed., Mar. 12th | 1:00pm | Church Library The books that are being suggested to read are: Theo of Golden by Allen Levi; or New Creations by Sarah Hanks; or Lowcountry Lost by T. I. Lowe. Or - bring along a book you've read and enjoyed this winter – and join us for a fun discussion of the books. There's ALWAYS chocolate!!

GriefShare Outreach Ministry - Spring 2025

NEW weekly meetings begin Wednesday evenings, starting **March 12th through June 4th**, from 7:00pm till 8:30pm in the Wesley Room.

GriefShare is a special support group designed to offer you help and encouragement after losing a loved one. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days ahead. We know it hurts, and we want to help. Our GriefShare program is co-led by Rev. Bill Dambach, Marcia Shipley, Tim McDermott, Judy Moore, and Marge Kirkpatrick.

GriefShare recently put out their best edition of GriefShare yet and we are using it here at Bakerstown United Methodist Church. The curriculum is Christ-centered and biblical and the weekly videos feature some of the nation's foremost Christian experts on grief and recovery. Please feel free to call the church office at 724-443-3184 if you have any questions or would like more information about GriefShare. GriefShare is a drop-in anytime group and open to anyone in the church or community. All are welcome.

All-U-Can-Eat Breakfast! | Saturday, Mar. 15 | 8:00-11:00am | Fellowship Hall Breakfast will be served from 8:00 am to 11:00 am, \$7.00 for Adults, \$3.00 for ages 6-12 and under age 6 eat for free. Come and get your choice of Plain, Blueberry, Buckwheat or Chocolate Chip Pancakes and the options of eggs, bacon, sausage and/or home-fries to go with them. Wash it all down with coffee, tea or OJ.

A Stitch and a Prayer | Saturday, Mar. 15 | 10am to 2pm | Old Fellowship Hall We sew, knit, and crochet blankets and prayer shawls for Project Linus, baptisms, and those who are ill in our church. We need help sorting, sewing, ironing, pinning, and cutting. All are welcome. Bring a lunch!!!! If you are not able to join us when we meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10-2, please contact Louise Himes, Mary Pouchot or Marge Kirkpatrick if you have questions regarding how you can help.

NEW FOUR WEEK LENTEN STUDY - Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study - Beginning March 20th through April 10th - The Promise and Power of Easter by Lisa Harper and Christine Caine.

Easter is so much more than a holiday. Easter isn't just a date on the calendar; it's the most significant event in human history. It's the celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, and His victory over everything that holds us back in our earthly lives. It's the day we focus on the promise and power of Jesus and draw closer to Him. Join with us as we walk through four weeks of the Lenten season taking in the details of Jesus' life, his death, and the overwhelming joy of His resurrection.

Relive His steps with a heart full of hope. See it all with eyes of faith. You'll be ready to celebrate Easter in more ways than you ever have and be inspired to share the joy only Jesus could make possible. Workbooks are \$13.00.

DIGGING Deeper | Sundays | 9:45am | Wesley Room | The Case For Easter | March 23rd

The Case For Easter, by Lee Strobel examines the events of Easter, particularly the resurrection of Jesus. Christianity is the only world religion that has a risen Savior. Strobel was formerly an atheist but is now an apologist. He is also an award winning legal journalist and New York Times best selling author.. Strobel uses his skills as a legal journalist to examine the evidence of a resurrection. There can be no other verdict. Jesus is a resurrected Savior.



Good movies capture our imaginations and transport us to other worlds. As we watch our favorite movies with popcorn in hand, we may not realize all of the work, edits, and rewrites that went into making the cinematic masterpiece.

The same is true of our faith, too. We might expect our relationship with God to look like a finished product, but really, our faith and relationship with God are still in the making. In this 4-week series from the Gospels and Epistles, we'll explore what can happen when we invest in spiritual formation. We'll see how spending time with God can make us more like Jesus and how, when we face temptation, we can ask God for help. We'll also discover how with God, difficult moments can help our character grow and how we grow when we make things right with God.

Every Sunday from 6-7:30 pm. Also, there is a youth lock in on March 28-29th! If you want to be involved in our Youth Ministry Program, or have questions concerning a program, please contact Pastor Amanda at amitchell@bakerstovnumc.org if you have any questions.

YOUTH CAMPING SCHOLARSHIPS

The Men's Group would like to encourage parents to consider sending their children to a faith-based camping experience this summer.

As an added incentive, the UMM are providing scholarships to cover up to \$500 of the cost of the event your child would like to attend.

Our conference affiliated camps are Camp Allegheny, Jumonville and Wesley Woods, but the scholarships may also be used for children that want to attend another faith-based summer camp experience.

There is a form to fill out, so if you are interested, please see Roger Cramer or Pastor Keith or call Lora in the church office (724-443-3184) to receive the form.

March JUMP (Junior United Methodist Program): If you are a 3rd-5th grader, please join us for pizza and games on Sunday, March 9th. We will meet in New Fellowship Hall from 12:15-1:45pm for food and fun. This is a drop-off event, but *volunteers are more than welcome!*

To RSVP for your child(ren) or to sign up to volunteer, please use this link: [March JUMP RSVP](#)

March Kingdom Kids: Children who are enrolled in Kindergarten-2nd Grade are invited to attend Kingdom Kids on Sunday, March 23rd from 12:15-1:45pm. Join us in New Fellowship Hall for a Bible lesson, snack, craft, game and more! This is a drop-off event. However, *volunteers are always needed!*

To RSVP for your child(ren) or sign up to volunteer, please use this link: [March Kingdom Kids RSVP](#)

Junior Church:

Every Sunday, children ages kindergarten-5th grade will be dismissed following Children's Moment in the 11:00 service. We will head back to our room(s) (just past the li-

brary) in either one or two groups, k-2nd and 3rd-5th, depending on the size of attendance that week. This Fall in Junior Church we are learning that God is a good God who keeps His promises! We will be exploring the Old Testament leading up to the birth of Jesus!

Please RSVP for your child here: [Junior Church](#)

Volunteer for Junior Church:

We cannot make Junior Church work without help! Please consider volunteering to support BUMC's Children's Ministry. All materials and lessons will be prepped for you and any support you may need or want will be provided.

To volunteer, use this link: [Junior Church Volunteers](#)

Looking Ahead (with links to register):

Combined JUMP and Kingdom Kids Spring Event April 5th 1-3pm register: [Spring Event RSVP](#)
Combined JUMP and Kingdom Kids Sunday May 4th 12:15-1:45pm register: [May Combined Event RSVP](#)

End of School Year Celebration Potluck: Sunday, May 18th, 2025



Vacation Bible School Registration is open! We will journey through the New Testament and learn how we can trust in Jesus in a wild world at True North VBS June 23rd-27th from 9:00am-12:00pm! To register for your child, please use the link here: [VBS Registration](#)

Want to help with VBS? If you would like to volunteer for VBS, please register using the link here: [Volunteer Registration](#)

Spotlight on VBS Volunteer roles:

Imagination Station/Crafts Station:

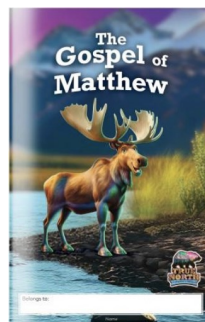
The Imagination Station leader encourages creativity and brings the Bible point to life through interactive and impactful illustrations for groups of elementary age kids. This will be a station with a combination of crafts and/or science experiments throughout the week to engage children in

learning about the Bible point for the day and to point kids to our True North, Jesus!

Sticky Scripture Leader:

This master of discussion shares Bible-point-reinforcing video resources with groups of elementary age kids before leading them in discussion on how they can apply the point to their own lives.

Want to purchase items from the wishlist for VBS to help make this week a transformative experience for kids in our community? Use this link: [VBS Wish List](#)



Spotlight on Wishlist items:

This year, we once again get the opportunity to send each child home with a copy of a Gospel! During VBS, children will get the opportunity to learn scripture and learn how to find scripture in the Gospel of Matthew! Each book is \$3.99. Consider donating to help us make sure each child can take their book home with them at the end of the week.

Items to save for VBS (additional donation items will be shared as planning continues):

- Large pieces of cardboard (preferably flat) like what a TV or appliance comes in

From the Prayer Corner - A Prayer for Lent 2025

As we enter the season of Lent, we are reminded once again to pray and to fast... to pray and to act... to pray and to serve.... to pray and to forgive.... it is much more than simply praying on its own. Consider praying this well known "Prayer of St. Francis" every Sunday or perhaps even every morning for the 40 days of Lent. The opening lines encapsulate the essence of St. Francis's approach to life. He was known for his commitment to peace, love, and compassion, and this prayer reflects his desire to bring these virtues into the world. Read through these words purposefully and thoughtfully. And then every day during Lent, see where you can put this prayer into action. See where you can sow love and charity in your community, where you can spread faith in your family, where you can share hope with those who are grieving, shed light on those in darkness, or give some sunshine and joy away to strangers.

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is error, truth;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master,

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

"A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows. And if God can work through me, He can work through anyone." - St Francis of Assisi

From the Prayer Corner A PERSONAL INVITATION TO YOU!!

The Prayer Team would like to extend an invitation to be part of the BUMC Prayer Team and have the privilege of praying for our church, our community, and each other. All are welcome. Simply send your e-mail address to Lora Stafura (lstafura@bakerstownumc.org) or Cathy Dambach (hwdambach@consolidated.net) or Heather Brown (hldrdb@hotmail.com) and you will begin to receive the e-mail prayer requests that go out periodically.

Our very own Leah Swineford has been named a global missionary of the United Methodist Church. She will be serving as a teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the Nyadire Mission Center in Zimbabwe beginning this spring. There are about 30 elementary level students at the Mission Center who require sign language to communicate. Leah will be teaching them to read and write using sign language, as well as training other local community members.

To date, Leah has completed a week of global missionary training in Africa and is currently in the process of obtaining the necessary visas for travel to Zimbabwe. If you would like to know more about the work Leah will be doing or contribute to her support, check out her global mission webpage at [Swineford, Leah - Global Ministries](#). You can donate electronically on her webpage or by mailing your check to:

The Advance

458 Ponce de Leon Ave NE Building A, Suite 1
Atlanta, GA 30308
Leah Swineford Advance: #3022842



You can email Leah at lswineford@umcmision.org

The Junque Sale Returns on Saturday, April 26th! Junque Sale donations can be dropped off starting April 21st. **Please remember we do NOT take, TV'S, computers, printers, DVD players, or any other electronics, no encyclopedias or magazines, no clothing or shoes, or fitness equipment. All other donations are welcome. We would appreciate your donations be clean and in working order. Thank you!** If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 724-443-3184



Lighthouse Food Pantry Collection for the month of **March are macaroni and cheese, instant mashed potatoes, cans of tuna or salmon.**

California Wildfire Relief

Many of us have been moved by the images we have seen of the damage caused by the wildfires in California. We are offering two ways to support relief efforts through our church.

- 1. United Methodist Committee on Relief is working in California. Please mark your envelope or check "UMCOR – Wildfires".**
- 2. The Pacific Palisades Community United Methodist Church and surrounding area homes were lost to the fire. The pastor of the church is Rev. John Shaver, who also lost his home. Pastor John's father, Rev. Jim Shaver was the pastor of BUMC from 1989-1995. If you would like to donate to John's church to help the efforts to rebuild their community and their church, you can mark your envelope or check "Church – Wildfires."**

Most importantly, let us be in prayer for the people impacted by these wildfires.

March Birthday's & Anniversaries

03/02 Jennie Smith	03/16 Jamie McClish	03/28 Paula Shepherd
03/03 Becky Kyle	03/17 Alice Berkner	03/29 Ross Shipley
03/03 Chase Rinker	03/17 Dean Kelley	03/29 Parker Streiff
03/04 Kurt Olson	03/18 Sam Gilligan	03/31 Jim Semler
03/05 Dorothy Cramer	03/18 Marie Edinger	
03/06 Jim Werkmeister	03/18 Tyler Szalc	Kurt & Leslie Olson ~ March 18
03/07 Lillian Schmidt	03/18 Marlene Haller	
03/08 Penny Fischetti	03/19 Joy Lancaster	
03/09 Chuck Koval	03/24 Paul Edinger	
03/14 Bryce Cramer	03/25 Ellen Kelley	
03/14 Kathy Cleary	03/26 Sally Borland	

A note from the Trustees

“Trustees Corner”

In January, the Trustees said good bye to 3 of their members who had completed their 3-year terms. Thank you to John Cleary, Parvez Khambatta, and Elaine Schmidt for their service over this period. In turn, the Trustees offered a welcome to the 3 new incoming members – Anne Stevens, Bob Grier, and Dave Meuschke.

- New officers were elected in January as follows: President – Ben Devore, Vice President – Larry Halliwell, Treasurer – Nancy Hollinger, Secretary – Dave Meuschke and Day School Board Rep.- Peggy Hill.
- A major improvement recently completed by Trustees was the retrofit of LED lighting into the choir loft ceiling. We are now blessed to have a fully illuminate choir loft because of this improvement. A big thanks to Bill Shepherd for his work on this project. The Trustees are currently investigating possible LED upgrades to other fixtures in the sanctuary and balcony areas.
- Minor repairs were also completed to flooring in the Old Fellowship Hall and the Stitch and a Prayer Room.
- The Trustees are also planning and considering other improvements around the church building, both parsonages, and the church grounds. Stay tuned for updates on these projects.
- We continue our regular reviews of maintenance items for all the church buildings. These items include both cleaning and safety related matters to keep our church properties safe and usable.
- Spring will be here soon. When weather improves, we hope to complete some sitework improvements to maintain our curb appeal to the Route 8 traffic, including our regular church members, guest, and visitors.
- There will be some new concrete work done at the New Fellowship Hall Entrance this Spring. This work is currently scheduled for late March weather permitting. This work will result in a closure of the New Fellowship Hall Entrance for a brief period. We will keep you updated with a specific schedule once it is confirmed.

If you have spare time and would be interested in assisting the Trustees complete any of this work, your help would be much appreciated. Please contact the church office if you are interested.

Bakerstown United Methodist Church
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724-443-3184
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*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.*

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Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving in many ways:

Online Giving: If you go to our website at www.bakerstownumc.org and select the donations link it will take you to a website that processes our electronic giving, called VAN-CO. Once you are there you can choose to set up a recurring donation, make a one-time donation or view your online donation history.

Bill pay via your bank: Many of us pay our bills via online banking. Why not set up Bakerstown UMC as one of your "bills"? Set up Bakerstown United Methodist Church 5760 William Flynn Highway Gibsonia, PA 15044 as the payee. From there you can select if it is a recurring donation or a one-time donation. The bank sends the church your donation via a paper check. This service costs nothing to you or the church and you can leave your checkbook at home and come immerse yourself in worship. As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving.

If you have any questions, please contact Kay Cramer, Financial Secretary at 724-443-2847.

Financial Update



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
FINANCIAL
SUPPORT

	January 2025	January 2024
Current Expense Giving	\$30,817.43	\$47,648.70
Current Fund Expenses	\$42,338.84	\$30,991.90

Hello my friends! I am sorry to see the groundhog was actually correct...Brr...it's cold out there. The expenses of the church have also felt the impact of this cold spell with the heating bills higher and snow plowing costs higher than in the past. But, through your faithful support of the church we have been able to pay all of the bills that are due. As a heads up, we will have tax bills and Worker's compensation bills due in March.

Please stop and say hi on your way into church. Ask me a question or just give me a hug. I love hugs ♥

Kay Cramer, Financial Secretary 724-443-2847