



# Baldwin Community News

A United Methodist Church

Summer 2020



Pamela Gardner, Senior Pastor

*"By the rivers of Babylon – there we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!'"*

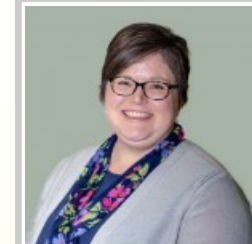
Psalm 137:1-3

At the very beginning of our stay-at-home order, I remember quoting this psalm as we left our beautiful church building and headed toward our homes. Leaving our building for a few weeks seemed surreal as no one could have anticipated such a surprising turn of events. Now that a few weeks have turned into 8-9 weeks, we still find ourselves lamenting all that we love about being in community at Baldwin Community UMC —our church friends, music, worship, and familiar things. We miss each other. How will we sing our songs?

As we look to our Governor Tom Wolf, Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine, and our Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi to provide vital information for our safe return into our building and community life, we realize that our safe return looks further away than we had first anticipated. What seemed like only a few weeks has extended itself across several months and looking forward several months might not be enough to halt the spread of this virus. Consequently, the global church is finding ways to adapt and change to remain a strong, vital witness for Christ.

In this newsletter, you will find articles that will help you move into changes being made daily at Baldwin Community UMC. Some will make sense and feel like the next reasonable step, while others will feel unnatural and inconvenient. It's enough to make us want to hang our harps on the willows and weep for all that was dear to us. Take heart! The changes being implemented are inviting us to learn a new song of praise to God. The contemporary Christian artist Paul Baloche in his song "Our God Saves" calls us to sing, "Our God saves, our God saves, there is hope in Your name. Mourning turns to songs of praise, our God saves, our God saves." Whatever song that you can find to cling to as we faithfully move forward into the summer,

let us sing with heavenly gusto about a God who cannot be confined or stopped by anything, not even this virus! Sing, sing!



Ginger Thomas, Administrative Pastor

*"They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to serve."*

1 Timothy 6:18

Thank you for your continued generosity during this difficult time. With your gifts, we have been able to keep church staff working, enable small groups and committees to meet online, extend the reach of our ministries through our new online presence, serve food to hungry families through the Lord's Pantry, and offer financial assistance to congregation members who have been hit hard by the pandemic. Your giving is allowing the church to be a blessing to others. Thank you for your continued financial support!

## In this newsletter:

- ♦ Learning Opportunities page 2
- ♦ Online Information page 3
- ♦ Announcements page 4
- ♦ Outreach & Volunteer page 5
- ♦ Pandemic Information page 6
- ♦ Children's Program News page 7

Baldwin Community United Methodist Church  
5001 Baptist Road Pittsburgh, PA 15236  
412-882-9300

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PITTSBURGH, PA.  
Permit No. 308

## Baldwin Family Feud

Which family will be crowned the true champion?  
Find out on the battlefield of Zoom!

- Sunday, May 31, 2020
- 5:00 p.m.
- Families and Individuals welcome.
- Register at: [bit.ly/baldwinfeud](https://bit.ly/baldwinfeud) by May 30th

## Online Vacation Bible School "Journey of Faith"

- June 22nd—26th
- 10:00 a.m.
- Pre-K through 5th grade
- Register with Justin Pearl at 412-882-9300 x213

The Journey of  
**FAITH**  
ONLINE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



### Children's Sunday School:

Sunday School for the kids has started online. Join us on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. via Zoom. Leo Butcher will be gathering the children of the church together for a time of fun and sharing. Each week, we will ask the students to bring something to share with the group. For more information, contact Leo Butcher.

### Youth Group:

Students in 6th—12th grade are encouraged to join us on a Zoom call on Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m. We will share a short devotional and play some great online games together. Spend some time with us each week laughing and having fun. Contact Justin Pearl for login information, [jpearl@baldwincommunityumc.com](mailto:jpearl@baldwincommunityumc.com).

### Further Learning Opportunities:

- ♦ Women's Acts Study—Mondays at 12:30 p.m.  
Contact Mary Lou Englert
- ♦ Devoted Disciples—2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.  
Contact Steven King
- ♦ Proverbs Book Study—3rd Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.  
Contact Carol Coyle
- ♦ Men's Ministry —2nd & 4th Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.  
Contact Mike Daly

All Zoom meeting information will be sent upon request.

### Adult Sunday School:

In a time of global pandemic, it is easy to feel that we are living in apocalyptic times. Are we living through the book of Revelation?, some ask, but contrary to our popular imagination, the book of Revelation is not a text about the end of the world. It is a text about living as a faithful witness in our own complicated world; it is about finding hope in a time that feels hopeless. This message of faith and hope could not be more relevant to our current situation.

On Sundays at 11:00 a.m., we will be working out way through this beautiful and inspiring text. Upcoming topics will be:

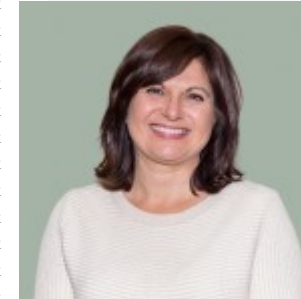
- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| ♦ May 31—Seven Letters (Rev 2-3)            | ♦ June 7—Seeing God (Rev 4-5)      |
| ♦ June 14—7 Seals & 4 Horsemen (Rev 6-7)    | ♦ June 21—7 Trumpets (Rev 8-11)    |
| ♦ June 28—A Menagerie of Beasts (Rev 12-14) | ♦ July 5—7 Bowls (Rev 15-16)       |
| ♦ July 12—Final Victory (Rev 17-20)         | ♦ July 19—A New Heaven & New Earth |

Zoom Meeting ID: 850 5432 3391

Password: 013659



Dr. Justin Pearl, Discipleship and Youth Coordinator



Jamie Carr,  
Preschool Director

As the 2019-2020 school year comes to an end, I want to take a moment to say THANK YOU to my incredible staff of teachers and administrative assistant, the preschool families and the students. It was an amazing year up until we had to close. We weren't able to hold our Open House, go on a field trip to the Children's Museum, have our end of year celebrations, or have summer camp. It ended so abruptly. The teachers made the best of working from home by sending their students lessons, craft ideas, packets to work on and videos of teacher story times. Many of the children were not able to understand why they weren't able to come to school anymore to see their teachers and friends. One of our amazing teachers, Jessica Heckroth, thought about how to best explain this to children and wrote and published a story to help them better understand. Her gifted artist son, Thomas, did all the illustrations and the book is now available on Amazon.

A few weeks ago, we organized each class to come down on different days and separate times to meet in the parking lot to say goodbye to their teachers, pick up their belongings, and return their key fobs. It was so nice to see the children but really hard to say goodbye, especially to our 5 year-old "graduates". They will all have a special place in our hearts. Nicole and I have been very busy in the office wrapping up the 2019-2020 school year. We are currently moving forward with preparing for the 2020-2021 school year. Registration began in February, and we already have 206 children enrolled. All the morning time slots have been filled, but we still have 2 and 3 year old afternoon classes available. We are super excited to start the new school year and see all our wonderful children again. Stay safe, stay healthy and God bless you all!

### Bright and Early Update

While our church preschool program has ended for the school year, the Bright and Early Childcare Center that meets upstairs in the education wing anticipates starting to offer child care to community families again in June. The Health and Wellness Task Force has been working closely with the Bright and Early Director, Janet Grgurich, to ensure that all safety measures are followed once the program reopens.





# Statement on Reopening

For weeks now, we have been experiencing worship online, and it's truly not the same as being with you. Many are calling with questions about reopening the church building, since Gov. Wolf is planning to allow Allegheny County to move to the yellow phase on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Under the yellow phase, restrictions limit churches to 25 people in the building with masks and social distancing, which is problematic for a church our size. The truth is, we do want to be together again, and to worship God in the sanctuary the way we always have. But the pandemic changes everything, and at this point we feel like we are very unprepared to return safely. You need to know things are going to be different when we return, and the governor's orders can't take us back to the way things were before.

As you know, this virus spreads easily. The daunting responsibility that is before us is to make sure that when we gather again, we are doing all that we can to keep everyone well. A Health and Wellness Task Force is currently convening in concert with the pastors to create safety procedures and ensure that the church is ready before opening to any events, groups, or worship. Even though we have the Health and Wellness Task Force, we still need the commitment from everyone at church—every member—to hold to the restrictions that are set before us because we believe that this is part of our witness as our disciples of Christ.

Our bishop has asked that all churches use the yellow phase for planning and preparation. We agree that this is the right course of action, and we have decided we won't be opening the building until we are in the green phase. We will continue with worship on Facebook, YouTube, and the website, meetings and classes using Zoom by internet and phone, and the staff working from home as much as possible. We believe this is the safest way forward for our congregation right now.

Once we do start to meet in person, it will not feel the same. Until there is a vaccine and adequate testing, we will wear facemasks, and still stay physically distant from one another for safety. We will not sing together, and the number of people allowed in the building will likely still be limited. The way we enter and leave the building will change to accommodate contact tracing. We will need to deploy a team of volunteers for every gathering at our facility, and they will be trained to enforce our safety procedures. It's not going to feel like church felt just a few months ago.

Everyone is being asked to learn new things in this season. Some will be invited to learn how to log onto Zoom. Some will volunteer to record attendance at gatherings. Some will invite people to observe social distance. Right now, more than anything, we need everyone's best adaptive spirit so that we are able to care for the health and wellness of all in the congregation and on staff.

In the meantime, we will be keeping in touch with updates and news, and we encourage you to continue to tune in to worship on Saturdays at 7pm and Sundays at 10am, with weekday devotions on Wednesdays at 11am. May God bless you and keep you, in this time of pandemic, and always.

## How can we help?

- ◊ If you are in need of washable masks or toilet paper, call Ria Fruscello at the church office, 412-882-9300 x210, to make arrangements. Special thanks to the United Methodist Women for sewing the masks for church members.
- ◊ Recovery groups are still active with online meetings.
  - AA : <https://aa-intergroup.org/oiaa/meetings>
  - NA: <https://virtual.na.org>
  - GA: <https://www.gamblersanonymous.org>
  - AI Anon: <https://al-anon.org>
- ◊ The Lord's Pantry Food distribution is on the last Thursday of the month. Summer distributions will be on June 25th, July 23rd, and August 27th. Emergency food is also available. Contact Susan Eyrolles at x229.



Thank you to Susan Eyrolles and her team of volunteers who have been serving approximately 65 families a month.

## Lay Shepherds Program:

During this time of pandemic, we have rolled out a program to help church members keep in touch with one another and to make sure that everyone is cared for in their time of need. For more information or to sign up to help, contact Ria Fruscello at 412-882-9300 x 210.



# Talking About Technology



## How to use Zoom



Before joining a Zoom meeting on a computer or mobile device, you can download the Zoom app via the Zoom website download center or from the App Store or Google Play. Your other option is to click the meeting link which will prompt you to download and install Zoom. You can also join a test meeting to familiarize yourself with Zoom.

Each meeting has a unique 9, 10, or 11-digit number called a meeting ID that will be required to join a Zoom meeting.

- Open the Zoom desktop client or app.
- Join a meeting using one of these methods:
  - ◊ Click Join a Meeting if you want to join without signing in.
  - ◊ Sign in to Zoom then click Join.
- Enter the meeting ID number and your display name.
  - ◊ If you're signed in, change your name if you don't want your default name to appear.
  - ◊ If you're not signed in, enter a display name.
- Select if you'd like to connect and/or video and click join.

Using Zoom does not require the use of a computer. If you are joining via telephone, you will need the teleconferencing number provided in the invitation plus the meeting ID and password.

To schedule a Zoom meeting for your group, contact Ginger Thomas, [gthomas@baldwincommunityumc.com](mailto:gthomas@baldwincommunityumc.com) and she will provide further details as well as access to our church's Zoom account.

Worship can be viewed live at:

- ◆ <https://baldwincommunityumc.com/live-service/>
- ◆ [http://www.facebook.com/baldwincommunity/live\\_videos](http://www.facebook.com/baldwincommunity/live_videos)

Sign up to receive our weekly email blasts by updating your Elexio information:

[baldwincommunityumc.elexiochms.com](http://baldwincommunityumc.elexiochms.com)

Subscribe to our YouTube channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/baldwincommunityumc>

Like our Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/baldwincommunity>

## BALDWIN COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*... makes the Presence of God Real!*



All worship is online only until further notice. You can stream live on Facebook or the church website. You are also welcome to watch at your convenience.

- ⇒ **Wednesday Devotionals** 11:00 a.m.
- ⇒ **Thursday Evening Vespers** 7:00 p.m.
- ⇒ **Saturday Evening Worship** 7:00 p.m.
- ⇒ **Sunday Morning Worship** 10:00 a.m.





## Best Wishes on Retirement



Our Director of Music, Phil Aley, has decided to retire. His last day will be July 11, 2020. We are so grateful for his ministry of music that has blessed our congregation for more than a decade. Please join us in offering to Phil and his wife, Winnie, our best wishes. The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is already at work to find creative ways for our church to celebrate Phil's wonderful ministry and to bless them in their upcoming time of retirement.

## General Conference & Annual Conference Postponed:

The General Conference, which was to be held from May 5—15, 2020 and was intended to deal with issues of human sexuality, has been postponed until next year. The Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference Session, which was to be held June 11—13, 2020, has been rescheduled as a one-day session on Saturday, October 8, 2020 at the Erie Bayfront Convention Center.



## Online Vacation Bible School:

Just because we can't leave home doesn't mean that God isn't calling us to the path of discipleship. **Journey of Faith** is this year's online Vacation Bible School. Students from Pre-K to 5th grade are encouraged to join us each morning from June 22nd—June 26th at 10:00 a.m. for an action-packed adventure as we travel through the Bible and think about where God might be leading us. Exploring some of the most exciting travel stories in the Bible—from Abraham to Paul—students will learn that the life of faith is an exciting, challenging, and hope-filled journey. Activities include story time, music, crafts, games, and more. To register your students, contact Justin Pearl at [jpearl@baldwincommunityumc.com](mailto:jpearl@baldwincommunityumc.com) or 412-882-9300 x213.

For an opportunity to praise God through song, tune in live on the website or Facebook on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. for Sing-a-long Vespers with our own musicians, Phil Aley, Mike Clarke, and Helen Akers. Special thanks to Dave Stout for his help with this project.

## Church Receives Small Business Loan:



John Barone,  
Financial  
Administrator

We are grateful that our church was a recipient of a small business loan through the Federal CARES Act passed by Congress. This loan covers payroll costs and some utility costs for 8 weeks, and we anticipate that much or all of the loan amount will be forgiven. This loan has allowed us to quickly end the furloughs of our preschool and music staff so that there was no change in their regular pay.



# Outreach & Volunteer Opportunities

## Task Force is in Need of Volunteers:

A health and wellness task force, made up of church members who are Trustees, ushers, or serving in the health field, is at work to establish safety procedures for groups, events, and worship once the building is reopened. The task force seeks volunteers to assist with greeting people, reminding them of protocols to follow, taking attendance, sanitizing high touch points after events, etc. If you are willing to be a volunteer, please contact Ria Fruscello in the church office.

## The Nyadire Connection Opening:

TNC is seeking a Hearing Innovation Sponsorship Coordinator to:

- Manage annual HI Sponsorships which includes new registrations and renewals
- Keep a record of finances, sponsorship assignments, and student roster
- Be a point of contact for sponsors
- Facilitate mail collections and distributions
- Seek opportunities to obtain more sponsors
- Report to HI Program Leader, Molly Michael

If interested or for more information, please contact Molly Michael

\*Travel not required.



## Bread for the World

Hunger Advocacy Online Workshop

Saturday May 30, 2020

1:30 – 3:00 PM

To register:

[Bread2020.eventbrite.com](https://bread2020.eventbrite.com)

Main Speaker:

Dr. Eugene Cho, President-elect, Bread for the World

Workshop Sessions:

Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act:

Just Harvest Staff Member Ann Sanders

Pittsburgh Food Policy Action Strategic Plan:

Sam Applefield from the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

Advocating by Effective Congressional Office Visits

Linda Ambroso

Also:

Learn about Bread for the World's 2020 letter writing focus

Receive information about the June 9 (Virtual) Lobby Day



breadfortheworld  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

## Hearing Innovation

The Nyadire Connection has changed the name of their hearing impaired program to Hearing Innovation, in part to reflect the use of technology to help those who are deaf or have trouble hearing. The change also highlights the belief that deaf people don't regard themselves as "impaired," but rather as whole human beings who have their own culture and language. Since 1994, the Nyadire Primary School, with help from the community, the church and the Ministry of Education, has served as a school for deaf children in the Mashonaland East Province. Students learn and perfect Zimbabwean Sign Language and learn life skills such as arts and crafts, market gardening, welding, fashion and fabrics, and carpentry. The opportunity for them to receive an education gives students an identity and voice, teaches self-reliance, provides meaningful purpose, and encourages friendship, value and goals.