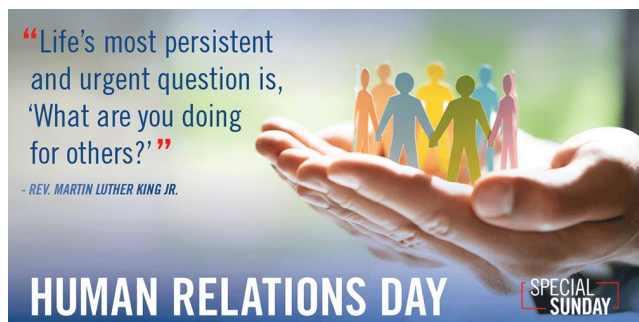

The Cornerstone

The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:22-23

VOLUME LXXIII NUMBER 3

January 16, 2025



The Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Steve Garnaas-Holmes, *Unfolding Light*, written on 1/16/25

*Between a president who recently died
and one about to begin
we remember a man who was never president.*

*See how our choices matter—
not our position, nor our power, but our character.*

*We remember Martin, who was famous,
and in his name thousands more who were not,
but just as brave and merciful and mighty.*

*We remember all those who were peacemakers,
the nonviolent seekers of justice who have gone before,
and those who are now among us, without office.*

*We give thanks for those who stood against injustice,
who faced violence, hatred and anger with gentle courage,
and we pray for that spirit as well:*

*that we will not walk with the haughty and the cruel,
that we will be truthful and kind,
that we confront the power to exclude with the power to love.*

*With blessed leaders showing us the way,
we pray that we will choose love over fear,
generosity over selfishness, service over supremacy.*

*We give thanks for the saints who have gone before,
link arms with the saints who risk even now,
and with their song in our throats, we carry on.*

...we also remember and pray for all those affected by the raging wildfires in CA., the first responders, the second responders – those beginning the cleanup so rebuilding might begin, the advocates, the families, and neighbors. This Sunday (1/19/25) is one of six UM Special Sundays-“Human Relations Sunday.” All giving on this special Sunday is used to raise awareness and to support programs that promote better human relations. This UM initiative supports Community Developers, UM Voluntary Services, and Youth Offender Rehabilitation programs which are all aimed at building a “beloved community” as envisioned by a faithful follower of Jesus, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Like your giving to UMCOR, these initiatives are supported by the denomination, which is supported through local churches and conferences’ shared ministry allowing 2nd giving offerings to be directly designated to the projects. I thank this church family of FUMCO as we once again paid 100% of our shared ministry and billables for 2024. This connects us with the outreach, mission, and ministry work of this global denomination we are a part of. On behalf of the Finance Committee and the Administrative Council, THANK YOU!

Also, this Sunday I welcome Len Gruezke to the pulpit as he celebrates his father’s life, ministry, and faithful discipleship. On this 50th anniversary of eternal life, Len with input from his siblings, will share one of his father’s sermons. I thank Len for leading our congregational family in this moving message and celebration of a man who led this church in his final days of ministry.

I look forward to seeing each of you, God’s beloved, as we gather in community—our church family.
Peace and prayers, Jill



Please take note:

DIAPER DRIVE: **ALL OF JANUARY**

The congregation is invited to bring diapers to the Christ Child’s manger. This drive will help support a UM ministry, Maker’s Place in Trenton. For every diaper brought to the manager of the newborn Jesus, Pastor Jill will match. **Please drop off your donations in the church office.**



The next community dinner is on January 19th at 5PM. This is a free dinner to which everyone is invited. Please spread the word that there is good food and good fellowship. If you can bring or drop off a dessert, please let the office know. 732-531-1150.



Sunday

**2nd Sunday After Epiphany
January 19, 2025**

**Counters: Gerry Busfield, Randy Danielson,
Jane Gittines**

Greeter: Jeff Danielson

Usher: Chip Stoll

Acolyte: Kitty Amato

Lay Reader: Soon Hur

Fellowship Host: Jeff Danielson

Altar Flowers:

Given in honor of Vivian Gill's eleventh birthday
by her grandma, Carol Whyte.
Given in loving memory of Pat Whitney by Robin
Whitney & Tommy Vignola.



Sunday

**3rd Sunday After Epiphany
January 26, 2025**

**Counters: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John
Montgomery**

Greeter: Randy Danielson

Usher: Scott Danielson

Acolyte: Kayleigh Becker

Lay Reader: Steve Skoulas

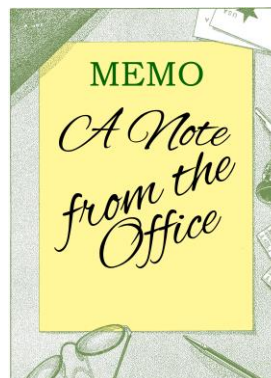
Fellowship Hosts: Judy Gorra & Soon Hur

Altar Flowers:

Given in loving memory of Mae & Harry Duerrler
by Kitty Amato.
Given in honor of Jaxson Liam Henderson's 3rd
birthday by his family.



My family and I would like to thank the saints at the
First United Methodist Church in Oakhurst for their
heartfelt expressions of sympathy and support at the
passing of my dad. It meant more to us than you
know.
Tim Haider



The church office will be
closed on January 20th in
observance of Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day.



Java with Jill

Join Jill at the Blue Swan Diner for coffee and conversation

(or the drink of your preference).

This informal time of fellowship will be every 4th Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

Mark your calendars: **January 21st.**

Thanks to Pam Lynch who will take the lead this month in Pastor Jill's absence.

Tsedalech Tesfaye, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia, is sponsored for the month of January by Diane Maher.



Something to think about:

A beautiful day does not depend on how much sun there is outside but on how much light we carry inside us.



If you would like to purchase a personalized brick for the Prayer Garden, please complete the form attached to the *Cornerstone* on or before March 1, 2025. The bricks will be dedicated to the Prayer Garden at the sunrise service Easter morning.

Questions can be forwarded to Jennifer Scisco at jeniscis@gmail.com

OUR JANUARY COMMUNION OFFERING BENEFITS THE PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND



Mercy Center Collection

Mercy Center is in need of the following items: canned or bagged beans, no-salt/low-sodium canned vegetables, canned tomatoes, organic or low-sodium spaghetti sauce, whole-grain and low-salt crackers, low-sugar fiber cereal, unsweetened oatmeal, unsweetened dried fruit or nuts, canned fruit, no-sugar added applesauce, low-sodium soup, canned or instant potatoes, whole-wheat pasta, olive or canola oils, vinegar, low-sodium soy sauce, dried herbs, evaporated skim milk, salsa, taco kits, non-stick cooking spray, condiments, all-natural jams/jellies, no-sugar or salt added peanut or almond butter, 100% fruit or vegetable juice, bottled water, Pediasure, Ensure, low-sugar Gatorade, coffee, tea, dye-free/fragrance-free wipes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, & hand sanitizer.



Our homebound: David Miller, Bev Itell, Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens, Cary Carlisle, Priscilla Smith, Madeline Starkey, Pam Miller, Nancy Burt

Genesis: Shirley Bailey, Cliff Miller

Our church family at a distance: Barbara Novick, Jean Gillette, Laura Eble



Our 2025 calendars have arrived! Our thanks to Fiore-Buckley Funeral Home for this gift. You may pick one up on the table in the foyer.



WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS

January 19-January 25

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
I Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11



The Little Free Pantry

Please think of stocking applesauce, canned beans, canned chicken, canned fish, canned meat, canned vegetables, cooking oils, crackers, dried herbs, spices, canned fruit, dried fruit, granola bars, instant mashed potatoes, meals in a box, nuts, pasta, peanut butter, rice, shelf-stable milk, powdered milk, soup, stew, chili, & whole grain cereal in the bench.

A good idea this week:
Microwavable rice



World Vision Child

It's time to sign up to sponsor our World Vision Child. **The following months are available: May, June, November, & December.** You may dedicate your sponsorship in memory of or in honor of loved ones or to mark a special occasion. The donation amount is \$39. Please contact the church office with your information. 732-531-1150