

A Note from the Pastor

As I write this letter, we are only a few days away from summer vacation! Although I haven't been in school for many years now, I still get giddy with the prospect of 2 months of pure freedom to enjoy the long, hot days of summer! Is it any wonder that summer is often the favorite season of so many? Sure, the weather is nice, but I think it's much more than that. We Americans are exceedingly productive, so much so that rest is often viewed with disdain. Most employees bring work with them on vacation, or they put in many extra hours to prepare for their absence. Indeed, we most certainly do not honor the 4th commandment of honoring the Sabbath.

In Exodus 20, God commands, "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it." Actually, there are many other Biblical verses about sabbath, rest, and restoration as well. Leviticus speaks of allowing land to lie fallow so that it may be regain its productivity.

Just about every business is now open on Sunday, which is certainly problematic, but I think the larger issue is that we are unwilling to truly slow down, stop, rest, breathe, observe, think, pray. We ignore our entire spiritual side, and as a result, so many of us are struggling. We feel overwhelmed and stressed out, we may fall into depression, and few have little hope for the future. We love summer (and any vacation time we can muster) because we finally have a little time to think about what we are doing and how we might do things differently! And remarkable things happen – we begin to feel better, we might be inspired for a new endeavor, we begin to see that God is very much present all around us but we never took the time to notice.

So, I wish for all of us much rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation this summer (and throughout the year). Turn off your phones, get lost in a good book, take a hike, have some heartfelt conversations, be still and listen to the birds, pray. Allow God's Spirit to speak to you without distractions and the many pressures of life!

Happy Summer! - Jesse

Congratulations to all our graduates! Whether you're leaving a building or heading off to college, we wish you all the best in the year ahead!

The Chimes is taking a break for the month of August. We will be back with a new issue in September. Have a wonderful summer! -Annie

Christian Education Update

June has come and gone so we are officially in the throes of summer at FPCEA. On June 15th, we took a moment to recognize multiple FPCEA youth entering high school in the fall and one senior beginning college. We are excited to support them in their new adventure.

Also in June, the money raised for RESTORE ELIKIA was sent. We pray that the funds raised will assist in protecting people from malaria. The check was accompanied with a letters and pictures celebrating the mission. A special THANK YOU to Sarah Byer for informing us of this wonder organization.

While we will not be having official Sunday School classes for pk-confirmation, we encourage all youth to attend church service in July and August. Children's bulletins will be available each week. They are located at the back of the church as you enter the sanctuary. The bulletins will provide multiple activities related to scripture reading.

Have a Safe and Happy Summer!

Community Engagement Update

After a number of very busy years the Mission/Community Engagement Team is stepping back. We have determined with the guidance of Pastor Jesse, that we are in need of a Sabbath time to connect with one another in our church family, to rest and be present. We want to discern where the Holy Spirit will lead us next.

It has been decided that from June until January 2026 we will not be meeting regularly to plan outreach. At that point we will discuss how to proceed forward. **Please ask yourself, during this time, what are we the church called to do in loving our neighbor?** If you feel inspired to do some sort of outreach with a few others, just let Session know your needs and intentions. All things are possible!

July Birthdays! Happy Birthday Everyone!

Morgan Adams
Cora Beyer
Barbara Buno
Cathy Dechert
Amy Gipe

Sara Guppenberger
Rick Hausauer
Kathy Keenan-Takagi
Alyssa Krieger
David Kurtz

Nina Majchrzak
Emma Poturalski
Evan Roden
Marcia Siebert

Ms. Bridget's Sprouts

Come each week to join Ms. Bridget and her friend Sprout this summer! Sprouts is designed to enhance your child's early growth & development and increase socialization. Get ready to learn and have fun each Tuesday at 10am! Ages 6m-5y. Please contact Bridget Pacholec to register at 716-982-2000.



Join us for worship Sundays at 10am, in person or on Facebook!
The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of every month.