



1232 National Road  
Wheeling, WV 26003  
304-242-2455  
christumcwheeling@gmail.com  
September 2024, Issue 330

#### IN-PERSON WORSHIP

8:30 a.m. in the Chapel  
11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

#### ONLINE SERVICE

christwheeling.org

Watch live Sundays @ 11 a.m.  
or watch recorded services  
posted after 12 pm on Sundays

#### Staff

Rev. Jake Steele  
Pastor

Diann Nickerson  
Family Life Coordinator  
Director of Campus Ministries

Bill Stephens

Choir Director

Stephanie Gates

Children's Choir Director

Judith Allison

Organist

Carla Barris

Office Manager

Chelsea Young

Communications

Jamie Lafferty

Nursery Attendant

Ron Miller

Custodian

The Spire

## Next

The cool in the morning air signals a looming shift from summer to fall. *Next*. As such, our kids have begrudgingly traded sand buckets for lunch boxes. *Next*. It's not even October and there's already a giant inflatable Halloween spider donning the front yard of my neighbor's home. *Next*.

On so many levels, we've given the nod to *next*. It's not necessarily a bad thing. It's a normal rhythm of life, even though we have a tendency to bypass now in anticipation of next (you've got to admit: the spider sighting in September *is* a bit soon).

At any rate, you may be wondering, "What's next in the church," namely as we navigate communal life after General Conference? Since late April, early May—via our Sunday Evening Circles—we've gathered to discuss, wrestle, learn and deliberate over where we go from here given our global delegation's decision to remove the restrictive language that previously prohibited United Methodist pastors to conduct same-sex weddings as well as conference boards to ordain openly gay clergy. The permutations of such changes has found us in celebration, consternation and everything in-between. We've learned, however, that the church (within and without) is no stranger to seasons of strife and uncertainty. *Change* is a given; it is always challenging, but there's much to be said about how we manage *transition*. Change is the "what." Transition, alternately, deals with "how." From a pastoral leadership perspective, to label this transient season a challenging time would be a gross understatement. It's been tough for pastors as of recent. Despite the bevy of nerves involved, it's a necessary component of leading, especially when many of us ruminate over the notion of *next*.

So what *is* next for us? Where do we go from here? Is it business as usual? Do we sit on our hands? Some assume that "the decision" has been made and there's nothing for us to do. Others are concerned that there are elements that are out of our control and that we're at the mercy of "the powers to be." Straw men and assumptions can be constructed from all sides. Subsequently, I'm writing as a means to help us navigate this next component of our communal life together. Just so you know: there's no possible way that I can be comprehensive in this matter. Some question marks remain relative to moving forward and, in turn, our process will be somewhat of a living organism. Alas, I'll do my best to shed some light on what we can expect as we eyeball the weeks and months ahead and (in the name of efficiency and clarity), I do so by way of a Q&A:

#### **"So, General Conference has come and gone and there's no more for us to do. Right?"**

Wrong. To be clear, as a denominational body, we are structured so that leverage always exists on the local level. What's that mean? In a word, it means that our General Conference delegation has essentially left the decision-making on matters such as these to individual local churches and pastors. On the local level, these matters are particularly important for church trustees and pastor-parish relation committees.

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**“What do church trustees and pastor-parish relation committees do and why is this matter pertinent to those bodies specifically?”**

Unlike other denominational communities wherein “trustees” operate in a unique governmental/administrative capacity, UM church trustees oversee and manage all real property of the church, including the parsonage. They essentially look after the physical plant, making sure that all facilities are maintained, functioning and effective for the ongoing work of mission and ministry in the community. A function of the trustees, therefore, is to set building use policy for events that occur in and around church property (i.e. space rental, events, meetings, conferences and community-wide gatherings that might require use of the church’s facilities).

Christ Church has long since implemented facility use agreements for a number of events, namely that of weddings. Since the language within our denomination’s doctrinal stance related to human sexuality has changed, local church trustee teams will now be charged with drafting facility use agreements for weddings that invariably possess a theological bent. In other words, prior to May 2024, the UM Book of Discipline (the denomination’s document of governing doctrines and standards) was explicit in it’s stance, which prohibited same-sex weddings as well as the ordination of gay clergy. Since the restrictive language has been removed, local church trustees are now charged with the responsibility of creating specific policies that guide facility use in this particular vein.

Consonantly, local church pastor-parish relation committees (or Staff-Parish Relation Committee, SPRC) serve as systems of support from the congregation to the pastor and staff. This team serves as a sounding board from the congregation to the pastoral staff and vice versa. SPRC is not only responsible for regular pastoral and staff evaluations, it is also an instrumental part in assisting the bishop and cabinet of district superintendents to discern needs for clergy leadership in the event the current pastor is reassigned and there is a need to appoint a new clergyperson. During such consultations moving forward, it will be important that members of SPRC possess a sound understanding of the type of clergy Christ Church will need in order to lead well internally and to remain missionally vital in the community at large.

In each instance, the church Trustees (in crafting wedding policy) and SPRC (in assessing leadership needs of current and future clergy) would want to operate with as much of an informed voice as possible. This would involve having a representative understanding of CUMC’s membership. This is where your voice is valued.

**“So what now?”**

In the coming weeks, I will initiate dialogue with members of Christ UMC’s Discipleship Council. From there, the Council will begin work crafting a mechanism/process that will allow us to collect as much feedback and information from this congregation’s membership as is possible. We desire to do this the right way. While it may seem efficient to pursue a measure to address matters in one fell swoop, it is our intention to engage in a process that is thoughtful, thorough, clear and effective.

In the meantime, my door is always open for you if you have questions or concerns about the days ahead. It is my hope that you will agree with us in prayer for wisdom, patience, and courage to possess the mind of Christ as we sojourn together in this season, navigating now and looking toward *next* with ready anticipation.

In Christ,

Pastor Jake

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# Sunday School Update

## 2024 -2025 Sunday School for Children

We are beginning a new Cokesbury Curriculum entitled **Big Faith**, which is designed around four Big Faith ideas: **Faith in God** (each fall), **Faith in Community** (each winter), **Faith in Jesus** (each spring), and **Faith in Action** (each summer).

Big Faith is an interactive journey that invites children to explore their faith in the context of their everyday lives. Each session is designed to engage children in a faith concept, a Bible story, age-appropriate hands-on activities, and reflection sessions where they can share what they have learned with each other.

A Scope and Sequence will be available to parents on September 15th so that they can follow along and support the curriculum taught each Sunday.

4 years through Kindergarten - Ms. Tammy Tomazoli assisted by Ms. Jamie Lafferty

1st through 5th grade - Mrs. Marci Marshall and Mrs. Cheryl Sprague

## 2024-2025 Sunday School for Middle School and Up

Mr. Gary Sprague will facilitate the Middle School and Up class which will focus during the Fall season on “The God Who Created Us”, “The God Who Corrects Us”, and “The God Who Calls Us”, through the use of the publication The Rock by David Cook.

The book Learning to Study the Bible by L.J. Zimmerman will also be used as a resource and study guide. The Bible will be explored using the classic question: Who? What?

When? Where? Why? and How?  
All materials are provided.

## 3 Adult Sunday School Classes Beginning September 15, 2024 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.

### **Seekers for Christ is facilitated by Wayne Smith in the Conference Room**

Wayne’s class has been working through the summer on a study of Prayer by Anne Graham Lotz and will begin a David Jeremiah study entitled “The God You May Not Know.”

### **Inquirers Class facilitated by Winnie Hurd - Room 108**

At the opening session on September 15, 2024, the Inquirers Class will view and discuss a sermon by the late Bishop John Shelby Spong. This Sermon is an example of reading the Gospel of John in a historical and metaphorical context rather than literally, which is the style of progressive theology.

On September 15th, we will also select the next area of study from the library of resources at our disposal. The Inquirers Class encourages the exchange of thoughts and experiences and examines scripture through the lens of progressive Christian theology, especially as it pertains to social justice issues. The class is registered with Reconciling Ministries Network (rmnetwork.org) as a Reconciling Community, meaning that it welcomes and affirms LGBTQ+ persons in becoming and living authentic whole selves in a safe place.

### **Fall Short Term Book Study facilitated by Diann Nickerson - 3rd Floor room 208**

The Amen Effect : Ancient Wisdom to Mend Our Broken Hearts and the World by Sharon Brous

This inspiring book about the power of community is based on a sermon from one of the country’s most prominent rabbis. The book helps make the case that our spiritual work is to find our way to one another, and we do that through celebration, sorrow, and in solidarity. We are expected to show up for each other in moments of joy and pain, vulnerability, and possibility and to invest in relationships based on shared purpose to build caring communities. The book explores our most basic instinct - the yearning for real connection.

“I invite you to join us for this short-term study during the Sunday School hour. Each week, we will read a chapter outside of class and then discuss it during our meeting time - Sundays at 9:45 in the upstairs adult Sunday School room.”

- Diann Nickerson\*

Outline for Study:

**September 15** - Introductions, Chapter 1 - “Show Up”

**September 22** - Chapter 2 “Please, Hold On”

**September 29** - Chapter 3 “See No Stranger”

**October 6** - Chapter 4 “Come Live”

**October 13** - Chapter 5 “Grieve and Live”

**October 20** - Chapters 6 & 7 “Hold the Healers”; “Bear With-ness”

**October 27** - Chapter 8 “Wonder”

\*Please inform Diann if you wish for her to order you a book.

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## Christ's Kids

Welcome to the new section of the newsletter! We will be lifting up all things kids – so share what’s happening in your children’s lives. We want to see pictures of school, social activities, hobbies, vacations, pets, or sports – anything and everything so our CUMC family can participate in the lives of our children. You can friend me on Facebook, send emails, or text with pictures of the kids, grandchildren, and even pets!!!! We want to share all parts of our lives with one another.



Tiegan and Camden Crosten (grandparents are Dixie and David Ellwood) having fun on vacation.

Tammy Tomazoli's first day of school!

Bethany Steele's first day of school.

Jaxon and Maddox Church – fall ball and back to school.

Brody Steele - First Middle School Cross Country  
Meet @ St. Mary's Autumn Classic  
24 middle schools with over 120 runners  
15th place overall and first 6th grader to finish.

Our kids were looking pretty spiffy for all the back-to-school pics! Wishing all our children and teachers a wonderful school year filled with lots of learning, love, and kindness. Fall sports have started as well and we have some gifted athletes in our congregation. Go teams!

Please share your pictures via email, text, or on Facebook (see contact information below).



Each month we will be sharing ways to help us carry out living a Christian life in our homes. This month we will begin with compassion.

### *Compassion – Secret Helpers Week*

Awareness is the key to compassion and while some people have the ability to readily tune into the needs of others, it is something that can be learned and practiced by all of us. This practice helps your children not only recognize ways to show compassion to other members of the family, but it will also allow them to experience acts of kindness and reflect on how good it feels when someone helps them.

Designed for ages 4+

Time investment: 2-3 minutes intervals throughout the week.

Explain to your family that for one week you will be having “Secret Helpers Week.” Anytime someone sees a family member with a special need, he or she will make a special effort to help that person, immediately, without being asked, and without expecting something in return. And because it’s “Secret Helpers” no family members can bring attention to what they are doing.

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Throughout the week, parents/grandparents/caregivers will vocalize little clues to the children to remind them about the challenges for the week. Something like this: “Wow – dad helped me carry in groceries from the car’ or “I’m really excited to do something special for each of you this week.” Some children might benefit from a little (or a lot!) of prompting and encouragement.

At the end of the week, have a conversation about the experience. You can use these questions to help guide your discussion.

- How did it feel to give special help to your family this week?
- What kind of things did you do for others this week?
- Was it easy or hard to help family members? Why?
- Were there times you did something special and the family member noticed? What happened?
  - What about times that they didn’t notice?
- Should we do this again? How often?

Variations you can try:

Try secret helper days rather than a week.

Draw family member names for the week and focus on helping the person whose name you drew. At the end of the week try to guess who was your helper.

Do this on a regular basis such as every Monday, every first week of the month, every November, etc.



Our next Messy Church is scheduled for September 11<sup>th</sup> and we will be learning about Joshua and the battle of Jericho. Please plan to join us at 6 pm for dinner followed by activities, music, and a bible story.

We are always looking for volunteers too! We need to help with crafts, playing with the kids, clean up, etc. See Diann if you’d like to share in this program.

## **Advent Devotionals**

For the past several years, laity from across the Annual Conference have written devotionals for our Advent and Easter seasons and we will be doing that again this year. The devotionals will be sent via email to subscribers as well as appearing several places on the web including Facebook. For those of you unfamiliar with them, here is a link to last year’s devotionals: <https://www.wvumc.org/2024-laity-easter-devotions/>.

As the newly elected assistant lay leader for the WV Annual Conference I will be assisting with this project and I’m hopeful Christ UMC will volunteer to write several this year. I would love to see a good representation from the Northern District!! Please call or email me if this is something that interests you!





## Happenings on the Hilltop

WLU had 150+ students moving into Krise Hall this year and Campus Ministry students helped serve water to the students and families on Move-In Day. We appreciate your donations for the event. It was a hot day, and the folks were thankful for the cool drinks between walking up floors with bushels of clothes, electronics, fridges, microwaves, and all the personal necessities needed for dorm life!



The school year officially began for Campus Ministry with a taco bar dinner and worship service on Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Jake provided the message, and our students were fed both physically and spiritually. Music was provided by our student, Tiffany Sites, who will be joining the choir again this year.

We have a few programs offered in the next few weeks including an ice cream social on August 27<sup>th</sup> and bible study on Tuesdays at 4 pm. We are also planning an overnight mission project to help make apple butter for the Burlington Apple Fest. We will be heading down to Burlington on Friday, September 27 and will return on Saturday, September 28 so if this is something you'd like to participate in – please let me know! I would love to include some of our middle and high school students too.

I'm thankful to be serving alongside you and may we continue being the hands and feet of Christ for all those we encounter.

Love,  
Diann

Contact Information:

Email: [nickerson246@gmail.com](mailto:nickerson246@gmail.com)

Cell: 304-312-0347 (texts are welcome!)

Office: 304-242-2455

Facebook: Diann Mosso Nickerson or WLU Campus Ministry

# September Birthdays & Anniversaries

Patricia Stephens Sept. 2  
 Jeffrey Wharton Sept. 2  
 Winnie Hurd Sept. 3  
 John Warnick Sept. 3  
 Keiston Jones Sept. 4  
 Steven\* Shoemaker Sept. 5  
 Wayne Soard Sept. 6  
 Jason Smith Sept. 7  
 Carol Carroll Sept. 8  
 Alma Johnson Sept. 8  
 Carol Butler Sept. 9  
 Mary Lu Hutchins Sept. 9  
 Michele Wells Sept. 9  
 Karla Weeks Sept. 11  
 Shawn West Sept. 12  
 Charles Williams Sept. 12  
 Robin Channel Sept. 13  
 Robert Hoffman Sept. 13  
 Beau\* Robinette Sept. 13  
 Palmer\* Robinette Sept. 13  
 Vincent Lazear Sept. 14  
 Kelly\* McCardle Sept. 14  
 Allison\* McCardle Sept. 14  
 Matt\* Waris Sept. 15  
 James Bitzer Sept. 16  
 Brad D. Brown Sept. 16  
 James\* Hofmann Sept. 16  
 Alicia Kepner Sept. 16  
 Zachary Morris Sept. 16  
 Jay Dyer Sept. 17  
 Pamela Robinson Sept. 17  
 Dean Wright Sept. 17  
 Garrison\* Gessler Sept. 18  
 Jim Kepner Sept. 19  
 Mara\* Wright Sept. 19  
 Christopher Johnston Sept. 20  
 Kaeleigh\* Koish Sept. 20  
 Jenny Matz Sept. 21  
 Errol Sambuco Sept. 21  
 Robert W. Galbreath Sept. 22  
 Jack\* Robinette Sept. 24  
 Spencer Curry Sept. 25  
 Nicholas\* Cunningham Sept. 27  
 H. Michel Freismuth Sept. 27  
 Jessica\* Hornyak Sept. 27  
 Darlene Jebbia Sept. 27

David\* Jebbia Sept. 28  
 Kane\* Kiester Sept. 28  
 Shannon Galbreath Sept. 29  
 Bonnie Nolte Sept. 29

**Yonnie & Wray Voegelin**  
 September 4

**Mary & Bruce Bandi**  
 September 6

**Spencer & Sherry Curry**  
 September 8

**Emily & Justin\* Crosten**  
 September 9

**Toyoko & Ricky \* Onishi**  
 September 23

**Brent & Cheri Fullerton**  
 September 28

**Doug & Crystal Clatterback**  
 September 29

## CARE FACILITIES

•**Good Shepherd**  
 Denny Hon 235  
 Jack Kerr 320  
 Mildred Posey

•**Peterson**  
 Jane Friebertshauser 520



## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Please take a minute to review the list, and let the church office know if there are any names to be removed .**

David King; Andy Cunningham; Sarah; Family of Robert Blount, Jr.; Shirley Conaway; Bill & Barbara Clough; Gary Galbreath; Craig; Justin; Randy Jones; Clem & Nancy Schutler; Kim & Buddy Bowman; Roxie Derheimer; Charlie Palmer; Parker Fox; Katie Histing; Kevin Barton; Frank Gilbert & Family; Richard Gilliam; Logan; Barbara Buckwach; Harry; James Gyer; Brittany Yoho; Bob & Debbie Becker; Lee; Suzanne; Ruth Wade; Jeff Winslow; Addison Stephans; John Lendon; Travis Ellis; Bill; Sony and Gary; Josh Chaplin; Melissa; Breanne; Karen & Jim Bruhn; Sandy Thames; Leslie Heldreth; Glenn Balla; John Witzberger; Freda Blake, Sherry Curry; Barb Wotojwicz; Family of Anya Robertson; Joan McClelland; Joanne Taylor; Randy Austin & Family; Miller Family; Jason Broadwater; Betty Dent; Bob McDonald; Paul & Kim Weber; Carol Pattim; Pat Staton; Jim Bowman; Rosemary Leicet; Terry; Linda & Jack Kerr; Kenny Nickerson; Dawn Walker Schemp; Jessie; Cathy Pavlock; Zach Henry; Harold Tharp; Randy Straub; Scott Morris; Michael Selick; Sara Madison; Sherwood Dobbs; Lauren Robinson; Harriett McCardle; Ted Allen; Gary Haight; Betty Hissom; Brad King; Jim Jones; Jenn; Gail; Jeff; Sara Staley; Cody McAvoy; Kristen Smith; Betty Love; Jonathan Chance; Elizabeth Carson; Connie Macek; Bill Harr; Mr. P.; Linda Moffit.

# New Covenant Unit Fundraiser

The New Covenant Unit is sponsoring a fundraiser to benefit women's and children's services in the area.

We will be selling:

## GOURMET CLASSICS COOKIE DOUGH

**Scoop & Bake (Makes 36 cookies) - \$20.00 per tub**

Chunky Chocolate Chip  
Salted Carmel  
Snickerdoodle  
Oatmeal Raisin

**Place & Bake (36 cookie dough portions) - \$22.00 per box**

White Chocolate Macadamia  
Chunky Chocolate Chip

These cookies are shelf-stable for 21 days at 66-77° degrees; can be refrigerated for up to 6 months or frozen for up to a year. Note: orders ship frozen and can be refrozen.

**Selling dates: September 15 —→ October 18, 2024**

**Orders will ship 12-14 days after receipt of order.**

- **Delivery before the holidays**
- **Money due with the order**  
Checks made to: NCU
- **Order forms will be available in the Narthex during both services**

Turn orders and money into Becky Applegate 304-280-4027 or Tammy Tomazoli 740-317-2348 or any NCU member. Orders and money may be left in the church office.

**Thank you in advance for making this a successful fundraiser.**



NCU Members

*Cookies Make  
Life Better!*

## HOC Donations

For the month of September, we will be collecting canned soup and crackers for the food pantry at the House of the Carpenter.

If you would like to donate but don't have time or can't get out to shop, Shelby can do the shopping for you. Please catch up with her during worship or contact her at 304-242-6127.

Thank you to everyone that donated for the month of August.

## Bible Presentation

On Sunday, October 06, 2024, children who are presently in the 3rd or 4th grades and who have not yet received a Bible from the church should submit their name to the church office no later than September 20 so that their name can be placed on the list to receive a Bible at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Send your child's name to: [christumcwheeling@gmail.com](mailto:christumcwheeling@gmail.com)

This is a meaningful moment in the life of our church family as we share the word of God with our children.

## Sunday School Volunteer

If you desire to work with our church's youth (middle school and up), Gary Sprague, our youth Sunday School teacher, would appreciate you joining him this year to get to know our youth better and help them grow spiritually. See Gary personally or email him at [gsprague@linsly.org](mailto:gsprague@linsly.org).

## Christian Education

### Sunday

Christian Education Sunday will be held on. On this special day, the Christian Formation team will provide a Coffee Hour following the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services. During this time, you can peruse the information on the tables highlighting what our Sunday School classes offer children, youth, and adults, while enjoying some tasty treats.





# West Virginia Conference

The United Methodist Church

## FALL WORKSHOP

Join us for an epic fall workshop with  
the ultimate quest theme:

**"Armor of God"**

*inspired by Ephesians 6:10-20*

Gear up for an adventure that will power  
up your spiritual armor, helping you  
level up in your faith and conquer the  
challenges of everyday life.



Prepare for a  
transformative experience  
where you'll unlock new  
skills, earn achievements  
in spiritual strength, and  
navigate life's battles  
like a true hero. Don't  
miss this chance to join  
your squad and embark on a  
faith-filled journey!

**WHERE: JACKSON'S MILL**  
**WHEN: NOV. 22-24**  
**COST: \$125**  
**MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH**  
**AGED 12-18**

Learn More - <https://www.wvumc.org/fall-workshop-2024/>



Christ United Methodist Church  
1232 National Road  
Wheeling, WV 26003

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