

June 2026



# THE MUSTARD SEED



Prayers for Summer...

As we approach summer, our vacations, the end of school, the beginning of summer jobs, and some potential downtime we might pause to consider what it is we wish for the most. As we enter the warmer and longer days of summer for what will we be praying? Perhaps our prayers will be offered for safe travels on behalf of ourselves and others. Maybe we will be praying for the end of school to come quickly or maybe, as parents, we will pray for an extended school year. If we or a loved one is heading off to college soon perhaps we will be praying for that new horizon yet to be discovered. We may also offer prayers for our friends both old and new. We may even be praying for the passage of time to seem slower while we are on vacation and quicker as our vacations approach. From friends to travel to new opportunities we are facing, we have many things about which we can pray.

This summer, in addition to our many prayers, I want to challenge us to also pray to grow closer to God and to grow in our faith. May our prayer be for God to bless us with more chances to grow in our faith and discipleship. May God open our eyes to the beauty of creation in warm and glorious sunsets; may we pray for God's blessings to pour down upon us like summer rain. May we be blessed with the taste of fresh produce that reminds us of the goodness of God.

Whatever your concerns and needs are for this summer and beyond, may God consecrate your time in this season. May your journey be sanctified and your awareness of the sacred be expanded. Wherever you find yourselves this summer, at home or far away, with friends and with strangers, in church and out in the yard, may you go with God.

Summer Blessing and Peace,

Pastor Matt

## Prayer List Announcement:

At Salem, we value praying for our friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners. In effort to make sure our prayer list is current and up to date, we will be "resetting" the prayer list this summer on Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup>. In the interim, if you have name that is currently on the prayer list that you wish to remain on the prayer list (or a name you wish to add) please let Pat Young or Pastor Matt know. In the future we hope to periodically check in to make sure we continue to stay current.





**The Book Club will meet June 29 at 7 p.m.** to discuss “The Correspondent” by Virginia Evans. The book for July is “Demon Copperhead” by Barbara Kingsolver and they will meet July 120 at 7 p.m. The book for August is “These Summer Storms” by Sarah MacLean. Any questions contact, Carin Kaag [cas207@yahoo.com](mailto:cas207@yahoo.com)

**SUSTAINABLE SUMMER LAWN CARE TIPS MOW HIGH (3-4”  
and don’t cut more than 1/3 of the stalk)**

Reduces evaporation, prevents weeds, promotes deep roots

**MOW LESS** (only mow if needed)

Over-mowing weakens the lawn and increases water demand

“GRASSCYCLE” (Leave the grass clippings)

Returns nutrients to soil, reduces need for fertilizer

**REDUCE LAWN SIZE**

Add natives!

More ideas found here: [Green Mountain Energy LINK](#)

? C.A.R.E. today for Mother Nature ?



**The Caring Cupboard** thanks us for our recent gift of \$340. Because of your generosity, a parent can prepare a healthy meal for their children, a senior can access fresh, nourishing groceries, and a family can experience a moment of relief during an otherwise stressful time.

**The Lebanon Rescue Mission** would like to thank you for your support and gift of \$100 to be used for their various ministries. Thank you for your continued, faithful support of their ministry.



**Take Steps is the Crohn’s & Colitis Foundations** largest fundraising campaign, where we raise funds to accelerate research, advance treatments, and provide programs and support to improve the quality of life for those living with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Saturday, May 16, 2026, \$103,102 was raised from 583 donations that were received from 283 participants. Our team alone raised \$1,023. We laced up our sneakers and united with others to take a walk underneath Carolina blue skies with one path in mind: Forward to Remission and IBD cures.

On this, our 17<sup>th</sup> year, we are always so grateful for all of your generous donations that allowed us to raise funds for a cause so near and dear to our hearts.

Thank You! Ashleigh, Mike, Susan and our wires Joey and Mary Kate.



June is busting out all over!!! It's time for summer music while the choir is on hiatus. Please visit the sign-up sheet in the east narthex and choose your Sunday. Solos, duets, trios, quartets, vocalists and instrumentalists are greatly appreciated. Karen is available for accompaniment as needed. Please prayerfully consider sharing your talents with us in June, July and August!



**A Child’s Favorite Word**

A 6-year-old boy attended a church conference with his parents. After listening for a short while, he began to fidget in his seat. To help him settle down, his mother handed him a notepad and pencil and suggested he make a mark every time the speaker said the word “and.”

Before long, the boy grew restless again. “Would you like to listen for a different word?” his mother whispered. “Yes,” he replied. “I’d like to listen for ‘Amen.’”

# Know Before You Go: Burial and Funeral Options

June 28, 2026 12 Noon  
Salem United Church of Christ  
2761 Horseshoe Pike, Campbelltown, PA

Join us for a concise one-hour seminar covering various burial options and funeral arrangement considerations.

Enjoy light refreshments while you learn the essentials to help you make informed decisions—before you need them.

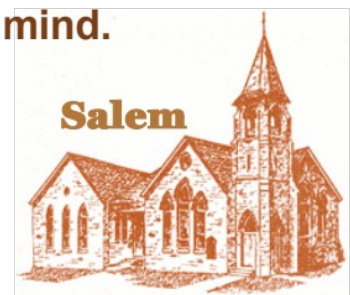
**Presented by:**

Donna R. G. Buse, Funeral Director, Buse Funeral Home  
Matt Hoover, Pastor, Salem United Church of Christ

**Prepare with knowledge and peace of mind.**



Palmyra and Grantville



**United Church of Christ**

**Called Friends by Christ**



According to John's Gospel, Jesus said to those who knew him best, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends. ... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" (John 15:15–16, ESV).

The depth of Christ's friendship is seen in his willingness to give his life for his friends — and for us as well. "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you" (John 15:13–14, ESV).

By obeying our Lord and showing love to others, we demonstrate our friendship with Christ. Friendship with Christ and with one another is, according to the Christian layman and president Woodrow Wilson, "the only cement that will hold the world together."

**Salem UCC Council Meeting Agenda**  
**4/13/26**

**Present:** Faith Bicksler, Jared Cooper, Michelle Alger, Missy Weidler, Gretchen Monahan, Matt Kaag, Bill McNamara, Pastor Matt Hoover, Tom Peiffer, Jim Flanagan, Barb Kaufman, Cindy Umberger

Via Zoom: Megan Wheelden

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM**

**Opening Devotions (Faith)**

**Approval of Agenda by unanimous consent**

**Secretary's report (Bill)** – After Bill reviewed minor edits, motion to approve the March 2026 minutes by Barb, second by Gretchen.

**Treasurer's Report (Tom)**

- General fund receipts up 2.5% from the same first three months of last year
- 2 months worth of electricity bill, so it appears larger than normal
- Overall loss of \$4,300 for the month of March (despite transfer from Moyer fund and surplus into General fund)
- Stock market was down in March, resulting in a loss of \$12,650 in overall funds that are in the market
- McNamara approved the treasurer's report, Jared second. Motion passed unanimously.

**Pastor's Report (Pastor Matt)**

- Post Christian Age Initiative (PPCAI) Continuing education conference – Pastor Matt selected to attend a 3-day meeting at Pittsburgh Seminary. Additional meetings will be held over the next year.

**Old Business:**

- **By-laws Update and Discussion (Pastor Matt and committee)**
  - Discussion on minor bylaw edits after full council had a chance to review the latest draft
  - Email changes to Policy doc to Barb by Monday April 20.
- **Update on Horseshoe Pike Lot and discussion of most recent offer (Jared and Tom)**
  - We had an initial offer requesting seller financing (financed by Salem). The same offeror then made a cash offer for less than the original offer.
  - Meeting in two weeks with the Methodist church
  - Council agreed that there is not a rush, and Jared and Tom will continue to work on the options.

## New Business

- Question from the search committee discussed and feedback provided.
- Louise Adams will be a delegate to the Penn Central conference annual meeting in mid-June (in Harrisburg). Pastor Matt will inquire if Kristin Vines is also interested in attending.

## Committee Reports :

- **Building, Grounds, Cemetery (Jared)** –
  - A/C units needs fairly significant repair totaling to \$4,306. Motion by Jared to spend \$4,306 on repairs on 3 of the 4 units, plus \$500 towards an annual maintenance fee, seconded by Barb. Motion passed unanimously.
  - Tom reported that the custodian is working out well under the “trial” period
- **Christian Education (Jim)** – No meeting during this timeframe
- **Fellowship (Michelle)** – May 31 is next fellowship event for Graduation Sunday
- **Finance Stewardship (Tom)** – Nothing to report
- **Membership (Bill)** – June 28 noon at the church – “Know before you Go: Burial and Funeral Options” - Donna Buse
- **Missions (Matt)** – mission committee collecting kits
- **Creation Care (Cindy)** - April 12, next meeting at Campbelltown park to discuss spring events, met with the master gardener, lots of ideas, May 9 activity 10-12 PM in conjunction with CCA, May 16 plant exchange
- **PACC (Tom)** – Nothing to report, meeting later this month
- **Women’s Fellowship (Faith)** – Meeting 4/22
- **Pastoral Relations (Missy)** – Met 4/13, nothing else to report
- **Music and Worship (Faith)** – no meeting
- **Youth Fellowship (Bill for Sarah)** –
  - Youth filled easter eggs on Palm Sunday
  - All age Sunday School before church on Easter, including egg hunt
  - Provided Sip and Chat on Easter

**Open Comment period (off the record)**

**Meeting adjournment by unanimous consent at 8:55 PM**

**Closing: Mizpah Benediction**

**Next Meeting: May 11, 2026 7:00 PM**

## God’s Bonus Days

An author writing in *Guideposts* magazine calls those nostalgic moments of memory “God’s bonus days.” LaVerne Sexton recalled that in her family, life’s unexpected dividends — a summer rainbow, a blazing sunset, a gentle spring thaw — were invitations to set aside ordinary tasks and celebrate something special.

She remembered one breathtaking day from her childhood when the sky stretched wide and impossibly blue, as if it had no edges at all. Her father grabbed the fishing poles and called out, “Let’s play hooky, hon. It’s one of God’s bonus days.”

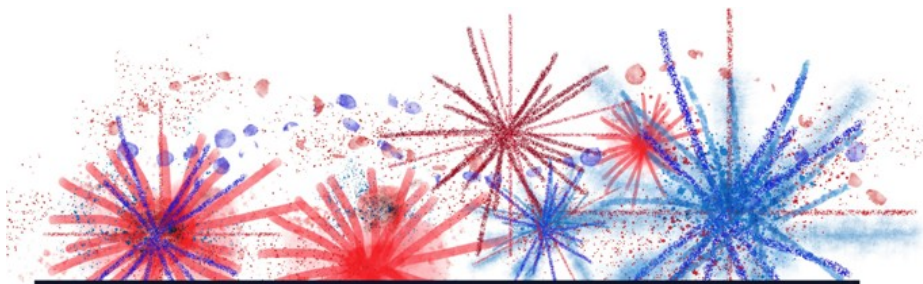
— Marion R. Vuilleumier, *Meditations by the Sea*





Wednesday	June 3	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Thursday	June 4	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Friday	June 5	Keystone Conference Annual Meeting Harrisburg
Saturday	June 6	Keystone Conference Annual Meeting Harrisburg
Sunday	June 7	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Keystone Conference Annual Meeting
Monday	June 8	Council 7 p.m. Hybrid
Wednesday	June 10	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger Membership Committee 7 p.m.
Thursday	June 11	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger Mainstreamers 6 p.m.
Sunday	June 14	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday	June 17	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Thursday	June 18	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Sunday	June 21	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday	June 23	Creation Care 1 p.m. at Mt. Gretna
Wednesday	June 24	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Thursday	June 25	Sanctuary Being Used 3:30-6:30 p.m. by Karen Umberger
Sunday	June 28	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Funeral Planning Seminar 12 Noon
Monday	June 29	Book Club 7 p.m.

*All Worship Services will also be livestreamed on YouTube*





**June 7, 2026**  
**Second Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 12:1-9  
Psalm 33:1-12  
Romans 4:13-25  
Matthew 9:8-12, 18-26

**June 14, 2026**  
**Third Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 18:1-15 (21:1-7)  
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
Romans 5:1-8  
Matthew 9:35-10:8

**June 21, 2026**  
**Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 21:8-21  
Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17  
Romans 6:1b-11  
Matthew 10:24-39

**June 28, 2026**  
**Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 22:1-14  
Psalm 13  
Romans 6:12-23  
Matthew 10:40-42

**July 5, 2026**  
**Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 68-67  
Psalm 45:10-17  
Romans 7:15-25a  
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

**July 12, 2026**  
**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 25:19-34  
Psalm 119:105-112  
Romans 8:1-11  
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

**July 19, 2026**  
**Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 18:10-19a  
Psalm 86 139:1-12, 23-24  
Romans 8:12-25  
Matthew 13:24-30-36-43

**July 26, 2026**  
**Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**  
Genesis 19:15-28  
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b  
Romans 8:26-39  
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



## **THE MUSTARD SEED**

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- 2 Madison Flory
- 6 Katelyn Gingrich
- 9 Ruth Gerhart
- 13 Crystal Aungst
- 13 Jacqueline Boyer
- 13 Richard Patrick
- 14 Sydney Weidler
- 16 Madeline Gingrich
- 18 Charles Doll
- 20 Nathan Longenecker
- 21 Kyle Uhler
- 24 Ruth Anna Basehore
- 24 Caden Weldon
- 26 Brian Weidler
- 30 Christina Cooper

- 1 Gregory Miller
- 3 Matthew Kaag
- 5 Carolyn Albright
- 5 Darrell Woomer
- 6 Grace Frew
- 9 Julia Fuhrman
- 10 James Binkley
- 18 Sophia Southers
- 20 Barbara Kauffman
- 21 Joanne Longenecker
- 22 Debra Weidler
- 29 Patricia Flanagan
- 28 Caleb Wheelden
- 31 Tara Jankouokas

### A Safe Haven in the Storm

Prolific hymn writer Charles Wesley penned the beloved hymn “Jesus, Lover of My Soul” in 1739. According to tradition, Wesley wrote the words after surviving a violent storm at sea. During the chaos, a frightened bird is said to have flown through a window and sought shelter in the folds of Wesley’s coat, a small but powerful image of refuge in the midst of danger. The opening stanza of the hymn echoes that sense of protection and trust:

*Jesus, lover of my soul,  
let me to thy bosom fly,  
while the nearer waters roll,  
while the tempest still is high.  
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,  
till the storm of life is past;  
safe into the haven guide;  
O receive my soul at last.*

These words call to mind the frightened disciples in Matthew 8:23–27. Tossed by wind and waves, they feared for their lives and cried out to Jesus for rescue. With a word, he calmed the storm and reminded them of his power and presence.

We, too, face seasons when life feels overwhelming. In those moments, we can take refuge in our Savior, trusting that he is our safe haven and that, no matter the storm, our destination is secure.

## SALEM COLLECTIONS -

**The Caring Cupboard** is a community food pantry, that has grown into a community necessity, that currently serves over 350 families living primarily in the Palmyra and Annville-Cleona School Districts. Products to be given to the Caring Cupboard may be placed on the designated shelves found at the end of the northwest hallway of Salem Church.

**Pop Tab Collection Program (Matt Waller) Ronald McDonald House.** The collection of aluminum beverage tabs began in 1996. The aluminum tabs are sold to a local recycling company and their proceeds help with daily operating expenses at the Ronald McDonald House. The generous amount from the tabs collected has been very beneficial to the House and the families they serve. They are averaging \$1,000 monthly just from these tiny tabs. You can help raise money by pulling tabs from any aluminum container. Pop Tabs may be placed in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance.

**Redner's Cash Register Receipts (Cindy Steger)** By using the Save-A-Tape card you picked up at Customer Service Desk each time you purchase merchandise at Redner's Warehouse Markets, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape customer receipt. When you come to Salem Church, place your **entire register/sales receipt (DO NOT CUT!)** in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance. Salem Church will receive a check for 1% of the total amount of tapes submitted, excluding items controlled by the government, such as tax, milk and tobacco products.

**Clothing Recycling** Old clothing and material that are too worn to use can be recycled. If possible, take to an Goodwill (mark the bag Recycling) otherwise put it in the box in the west narthex and we'll take it for you. Thank you!

**Writing Tool Recycling** You can recycle old writing tools – crayons, markers, pens, and pencils. Staples Store will recycle these items as well as many other items (check their website!). Feel free to take to a Staples or place in the "Crayola marker" collection tube on the windowsill in the west narthex. Thank you!

**Battery Recycling** Salem now has a battery recycling collection bin in the West narthex (shaped like a battery!). Place used rechargeable or single-use batteries there and they will be taken to Staples for proper disposal.

### From Gratitude to Faithful Praise

Gratitude is the beginning of faith; faith leads us to the ultimate gratitude.

Gratitude is often the first quiet step of faith. Before answers come, before circumstances change, gratitude teaches the heart to notice God's presence and provision. Scripture reminds us, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, KJV). Giving thanks, even in uncertain moments, opens our eyes to God's faithfulness already at work.

As gratitude grows, it naturally leads us into deeper trust. When we remember what God has done, faith finds solid ground. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, KJV). Gratitude strengthens that hope by anchoring it in God's past mercies. Each thankful prayer becomes a reminder that the same God who carried us before will carry us again.

Faith, in turn, leads us to ultimate gratitude, not just for blessings received, but for God himself. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15, KJV). This gratitude reaches beyond circumstances and rests in Christ, the greatest gift of all. When gratitude begins our journey and faith guides our steps, our hearts learn lasting praise, thankful not only for what God gives, but for who he is.

