

JUNE, 2023

MOUNT NITTANY NEWS

The Newsletter of Mount Nittany Church



Transition & Trust

BY PASTOR CHRIS

Times of transition often are uncomfortable for us. For most, we'd like to be able to control those times, or at the very least prepare for them. But that's not always the case.

Just as we could not control the pandemic and how it changed our church, and just as we cannot control our denomination to keep all of us "united," the seasons of our lives are unceasing in their changing.

What my experiences have taught me was that it's not about fighting change or transitions; it's about trusting God during them, that we would move forward.

The author of Proverbs 3 aptly writes: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Trusting in God is the important part, and the writer even says that trusting in yourself (our own understanding) is fruitlessly and faithlessly trying to control the outcome.

Each year, pastors are asked by their district superintendents to estimate what their retirement year will be. Every year that I've filled out that form, I wrote "Never." I simply couldn't ever imagine NOT being a pastor.

After being called by God to shepherd God's people, watching God kick down door after door after door to ensure that I would go to seminary, begin pastoring in my very first semester, have the resources as a single dad with two small children to travel to Washington DC each week for four years, grow my church and raise two amazing kids, graduate with honors, and somehow wind up in the church I had dreamed of serving, it is now unfathomable to me to begin feeling God's winds of change once again stirring in my life.

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And, ah, isn't that the overwhelming indication: beginning to feel restless in your current season, and watching as passions begin to shift? This, my friends, is the Holy Spirit. The breath, wind, "ruach" of God calling us to a new place. But is the pandemic or the splitting of the United Methodist Church caused by God that we follow God's Winds of Change? I wouldn't bet on that

(although I won't speak for God here, either) However, it's not about who causes the change; it's about who we trust through the change.

And it's within the former that we tend to get mired down, where we try to dig in our heels and hold with a death grip that thing that's slipping through our hands — the things we

ultimately find we cannot control. Those are the things we have to give to God. And those are the times in which we put our full trust in God.

And, what I've learned is that those are the times to be ... excited.

Now, being fired from a job, going through a hard breakup, having to move from your hometown...

No one is excited to endure these seasons.

However, what is our most common prayer?

Whether we realize it or not, we're asking God to give us more faith to trust God. We want to see God answer our prayers through our faith. We all want faith bigger than a mustard seed. We all want faith that will move mountains.

We want the kind of faith that makes us alright in any season.

So when I feel those winds of change stirring, I've begun thinking this: "Hmmm. I wonder what God's going to do in my life now?" And when I reframe transitions or painful seasons in that way, then I remember all that God has done for me in my life, and what God has done in the life

of this world. And I know that not only is it going to be alright; it's going to be awesome. Why?

Because God wants good in our lives. God wants us to experience God's abundant love. And God wants us to be kingdom-builders, here on earth as it is in heaven



Many have asked "Pastor Chris, what are you going to do after this?" The honest answer is that I really don't know.

Sure, I'm going to spend some time getting healthier and working on some side-lined writing projects, but the truth is that I'm going to enter a season of listening, a season of wondering, a season of dreaming with God, and a season of

excitement.

Although it's yet unfathomable that I will not be a pastoral minister, I do know that I will always serve God. And I will; I just don't know in what way.

But I trust. And I trust with great excitement and anticipation to see how I can add another stone to this kingdom, help make tomorrow better than today, and share Christ's love with the world.

Not as I want, but as God wants.

My prayer for you all is that you face the winds of change with great excitement, too. God is always on the move, always looking where your spiritual gifts can be best used.

And when yet another page turns or a new chapter begins:

it's done with excitement.

It's done in grace.

And it's done in Christ's love.

God Bless You and Keep You Always.

In Christ's Abundant Love, Pastor Chris

Children & Youth Ministry

BY PATTY DECAPRIA

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry has been busy during the month of May.

On May 5, Jamie Gregory taught the children numbers, letters, basic words, and their names in sign language during Parents Night Out. We also painted butterfly memo holders and had a yummy snack of dessert tacos. Thank you to Jamie and Everett for sharing this language with the children. We will again meet on June 2 for more fun and games. We look forward to July as Joanna Jones will share planting and the importance of the Giving Garden. Parents Night Out is open to all children ages 4-13 on the first Friday of every month from 6-7:30 pm. It's a fun way for children to begin the weekend and gives parents a chance to have dinner or shopping knowing their children are safe and having fun. Many thanks to our wonderful helpers during these fun nights as they build strong Christian relationships.

On our Sunday mornings, we have learned that God helps us be brave through Old Testament heroes like Moses, Caleb, Joshua, and Rehab. God helps us be brave through Jesus. We trust in Jesus to give us strength when we face difficult situations.

The Children's Ministry presented flowers to the ladies of the church on Sunday, May 14 for Mother's Day. A flower can show our love and appreciation for those who do so much for us all year long.

This July we will bring back our VBS program with "Pets Unleashed-Where Jesus Cares For You."

This is a two-night "pet-themed" experience where kids learn through God's word that Jesus lovingly cares for us and all of creation.

An informational meeting was held May 30 and decided that "Pets Unleashed" will be held Thursday, July 27, and Friday, July 28.

Our children need time to be silly, play games, and build relationships with other children and



adults. Vacation Bible School allows children and adults the opportunity to do just that! What better way to check out Children's Ministry than by being childlike yourself!

Please pray how you may contribute to this fun-filled ministry. Stay tuned: a needs list of supplies will be shared in June. Please pray for our children and adults as they embark upon this fun and meaningful experience.

Conference Events

There is still time for children to attend one of the Conference Camping Programs. Many children have been introduced to Christ through the camping experience. Camps begin in June and continue into August.

Programs range from music to soccer to fishing to backpacking to wacky fun!

Camp Greene Hills and Camp Wesley Forest are within an hour's drive from us. Financial aid is available to those who wish to attend. Please see Patty DeCapria for more details.

Thank You For Your Support

Thank you for your support and prayers for the Children's Ministry. It is an exciting time to be part of the Kingdom of God. Please continue to pray how you may be part of this ministry.

Contact Patty DeCapria at pattydecapria@gmail.com

Giving Garden News

GIVING GARDEN IN FULL SWING

The garden planting will be in full swing by the time you read this, and we'll be putting in the hot-weather transplants, weeding, and repairing beds. Hopefully the first peas, lettuce, and radish will be available soon! Gardening is scheduled for Wednesdays at 6:15 pm and Saturdays at 10 am. Join the Facebook group to learn more about what's going on.

If you aren't able to come to the garden and help, we do have a wishlist of sorts. We'd like to add covered tool storage and another planting bed.

This season we'll also need to replace one of the water hoses and several rotted timbers. We do these repairs and replacements as our small budget allows for, so donations to the Garden's fund helps to move things along.

Our biggest-ticket item is a new planting bed -- we want to try yet another type that won't cost as much as the others, but the topsoil to fill it is expensive. Another high-cost, high-priority is new fencing for bed #3, so we can remove the tallest fences and their supports.

Those were installed in 2016 to keep deer out of at least some beds, but their useful span is ending and the new stronger fences ought to work -- but that would be \$250, which is half our budget.



You can talk to Joanna, Bob, Rik or Leonard about donating to the gardening fund, or simply designate the gift on your offering envelope. One last item we are looking for -- herb plants! We are going to plant a kitchen garden, so we will be accepting donations of the following plants : rosemary, oregano, parsley, cilantro, basil, dill and anything else you might have! (We won't need chives; those are already growing all over the Garden). We are always happy to take any spare plants you may have, and if we can't make space for them, we'll pass them on to others who can.

Thank you for your consideration and support these 10 years! See you in the Garden!

Hello, Mount Nittany UMC!

It is hard to believe that in just a few short weeks, I will be meeting many of you in person. Seasons of transition and new beginnings are filled with such a mix of emotions and responses. As United Methodists, the June/July transition like we are experiencing together is one of saying goodbye and hello. At moments I have felt like the White Rabbit in Disney's "Alice in Wonderland"... "Hello, goodbye, I'm late! I'm late! I'm late!" This transition has been almost frenzied in meetings, trainings, introductions,

endings, and beginnings. It has been good, but at times, I have been concerned I have forgotten something important.

It is in the moments of transition that I often have to be pulled back and reminded to stop, pray, and be with God. Our lives are so much more than a schedule, a training, or a transition. We are fearfully and wonderfully made children of God; filled with the Holy Spirit, we learn to recognize that this community of believers we are a part of cares for our physical and

spiritual health just as we care for the physical and spiritual health of others. I look forward to our growing in the love we have for God, our neighbors, and ourselves. In doing this, we imitate the movement taught by Jesus. As these last few days before moving, unpacking, and beginning ministry together pass, take a moment with God. Breath deep, relax the shoulders, and smile. God let us know through Jesus, that we would not go through life alone. See you soon!
In Christ's service,
The Rev. Michael S. Swimley



Focus on Missions | June

JUNE 4 : THE MOMMY SHOPPE

The Mommy Shoppe exists to provide affordable clothing for children and to encourage families to reach their full potential. In exchange for 5 hours of volunteer work per year, families that work with the Mommy Shoppe can receive 1 free bag of clothing per child, per month.

The Mommy Shoppe is also open for public shopping to anyone looking for helpful prices on children's clothing. Check out the hours for shopping and volunteering on their website:

<https://themommyshoppe.weebly.com/calendar.html>

JUNE 11: VETERAN'S MULTI-SERVICE CENTER

The Veterans Multi-Service Center (VMC) was founded in 1980 to address the multiple needs of Vietnam Veterans. Since that time our programs and assistance have grown and diversified to encompass the needs of Veterans of all wars and conflicts, up to and including Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation New Dawn Veterans.

JUNE 18: CAMP GREEN HILLS

Greene Hills Camp has been offering a variety of summer church camp programs for over 50 years. While camps has changed in that time, many aspects of camp and the reasons why we do them haven't changed over the years. Church camp experiences can be powerful, transformative, and foundational for people of all ages and walks of life. There's something about camp that has the power to break down barriers and allows us to connect with each other in a community setting filled with love, grace, and learning from God's Word. Your support during the 2020 and 2021 when camping numbers were down has allowed Camp Greene Hills to plan for an incredible summer of transformation for campers of all ages in 2022. You can learn more about Camp Greene Hills, including their summer camp programs and the availability of camping for your group or family, at <http://www.susumcamps.org/>

JUNE 25: HELPING OTHER PEOPLE EXCEL INC.

It all started With a family in our community that needed help when faced with a horrific accident. When things seemed hopeless, a group of concerned people came together to raise money for this family. Following our first response to a need, it was suggested that we continue our efforts to help others in the surrounding areas. H.O.P.E has provided financial assistance to families following flood damage and purchased durable medical equipment after accidents.



Happenings/June

QUILTERS SHARING LOVE

The Loving Hands Quilters along with the Visitation/Home Communion committee provide two quilts to homebound church members each month during visitations/home communion. These quilts provide comfort to them in all seasons. These gifts of quilts lets the members know that we have not forgotten them.

NO JUNE SENIOR LUNCHEON

No June Senior Luncheon

There will not be a covered dish picnic for the month of June; but mark your calendars for Wednesday, August 9, for a pot luck picnic at noon, where we will invite the Rev. Michael Swimley and his family to our picnic, which will give us a chance to get acquainted. For more information, contact BJ Wurst at 814-548-7838 or 1happygram@comcast.net.

HOME COMMUNION NOTE

If you know of any church member or constituent who needs home communion, please contact Pastor Carl Hill 814-359-2920.

ACOLYTES WANTED

If you would like to help light the candles for Sunday worship as an acolyte, please see James Beatty after worship.

CARDS FOR PASTOR CHRIS

If you would like to share a card or other greeting with Pastor Chris as he leaves our Mount Nittany family, please place it in a special box labeled for this in the lobby. Each week we will gather the cards from the box and present all cards and greetings to him on June 11.

LUNCHEON FOR PASTOR CHRIS

There will be a special luncheon as we say goodbye to Pastor Chris and his family on June 11 following the worship service that day. Please sign up for a food item to share at this gathering. The signup sheet is in the lobby area. Please plan on attending as we say our formal goodbyes to Pastor Chris.

NURSERY HELP NEEDED

The nursery is looking for a loving childcare worker to join our nursery team. Childcare gives care for children during Sunday worship and special service times. If interested please see Bob Kidder or Patty DeCapria.

MISSION: POSSIBLE

If you would like to share your gifts of service in our community, please contact Bob Snyder after worship. Whether it be carpentry, plumbing, electrical, yard work, housework, shopping, painting or more, Mission: Possible has a place for you! Look for our sign-up sheet in the lobby bulletin board or call Bob at 814-371-2697.

SUNDAY A/V HELP NEEDED

That booth in the back of the church may seem very intimidating and you may think it requires knowledge about technology that you do not have. WRONG! Don't be afraid to find out more about any of the jobs of the AV/Visual Booth. Training will be provided. See Emily Gregory if interested.

WINDOW DEDICATION 6/25

We will be dedicating the new stained-glass windows in the sanctuary during worship on June 25. The Rev. Brenda Leigey will be present.

Financial Reports

CHURCH BUDGET | APRIL

General Fund Income 2023	\$136,557.67
General Fund Expenses 2023	\$116,724.85
Sanctuary/Lobby/Window Project Ending Balance 2022	\$51,485.32
Sanctuary/Lobby/Window Project Income 2023	\$5,500.00
Sanctuary/Lobby/Window Project Expenses 2023	\$55,543.79
Mission Fund Income 2023	\$14,656.88
Mission Fund Expenses 2023	\$14,656.88

MISSION GIVING

mission fund income	monthly total	yearly total
January 2023	\$3,244.28	\$3,244.28
February 2023	\$4,413.00	\$7657.28
March 2023	\$3,706.00	\$11,363.28

April 2023

Conference Benevolent Shares	\$890.00	
Habitat for Humanity	\$585.00	
Human Relations Sunday	\$5.00	
Kenya School in Gilgil	\$339.00	
Mission Central	\$542.00	
Native American Ministries	\$92.60	
UM Home for Children	\$722.00	
UMCOR	\$50.00	
UMCOR Sunday (One Great Hour)	\$68.00	
Total Mission Fund Income for April 2023	\$3,293.60	\$14,656.88

Nursery Worker Needed

Mount Nittany Church is seeking a Nursery Worker, beginning this month.

Primary responsibilities take place on Sunday mornings, but may involve other days or special events.

Minimal record-keeping involved. Safe Sanctuaries training required.

For more information, please contact Patty DeCapria at PattyDeCapria@gmail.com or Bob Kidder (814) 404-9646.

Calendar

June

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Kwanmu Martial Arts 5:30-6:30pm	2 Parents Night Out 6-7:30pm	3 Giving Garden Workday 10-11am
4 Friendship Class 8:30am Worship 9:30am Children's Class 9:30am Donuts+Fellowship 10:30am	5	6 Scouts 5-8pm	7 Giving Garden Workday 6:15-7:15pm	8 Kwanmu Martial Arts 5:30-6:30pm	9 Family Fun Night 6:30-8:30pm	10 Giving Garden Workday 10-11am
11 Friendship Class 8:30am Worship 9:30am Children's Class 9:30am Special Potluck Luncheon	12	13 SPRC 6pm Finance 7pm	14 Girl Scouts 6-7:30pm Giving Garden Workday 6:15-7:15pm	15 Kwanmu Martial Arts 5:30-6:30pm Bridge Dedication 11am-12pm	16	17 Giving Garden Workday 10-11am Sanctuary Closed for funeral
18 Friendship Class 8:30am Worship 9:30am Children's Class 9:30am	19	20	21 Giving Garden Workday 6:15-7:15pm	22 Blood Drive 12-5:30pm	23	24 Giving Garden Workday 10-11am SC District Lay Ministries 8am-2pm
25 Friendship Class 8:30am Worship 9:30am Children's Class 9:30am Donuts+Fellowship 10:30am	26 DN Board Session 6pm	27 Trustees 6pm Admin. Council 7pm	28 Girl Scouts 6-7:30pm Giving Garden Workday 6:15-7:15pm	29 Kwanmu Martial Arts 5:30-6:30pm	30	

Money Counters

JUNE 4 CHRIS MCCANN PATTY DECAPRIA JAMES BEATTY

JUNE 11 CATHY & JOHN RIDEOUT JOHN & LOUISA SHAWVER

JUNE 18 LEE & ELLEN COPPER TOM & GINNY KLINE

JUNE 25 LEE & ELLEN COPPER TOM & GINNY KLINE

Liturgists

JUDY SMITH

JAMES BEATTY

BOB KIDDER

CARL HILL