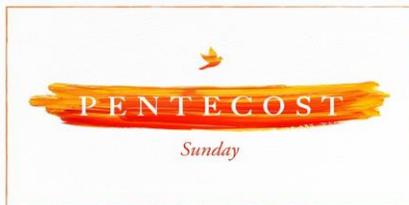




May 20, 2021



It's the Last Sunday of Easter on May 23rd! Pentecost Sunday!

Christ is risen! Pentecost Sunday this year will coincide with a return to in-person worship after more than a year of being separated because of the pandemic. Our LiveStream service continues

as usual at 9:00 a.m. Audio pre-service music begins at 8:45 a.m. Here's Pastor Bill's sermon theme based on readings from Acts 2 and John 15 and 16: The Easter Season ends with a stirring promise of an Advocate, a Counselor, who comes to announce that God's ways in the world are Christ's ways of living, caring, and loving. When God calls humanity to the faithful life, it can count on God to send the Spirit to keep it from falling afoul of its desires and devices. The Holy Spirit is the near-and-present God, in constant conversation with the Church about keeping hope alive in the truth of the angels' song at the birth of Christ, telling us of God's determination to rescue the world from war, hatred, and oppression. We can't deny that there are tragic forms of death, decay, and decline in the world and the Church, and yet God continues to breathe the breath of life upon the Church and sets fires within its heart, bringing life from death, hope from despair, and light from the darkness. Join us on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#)!



Our Service is Simulcast Each Sunday on Facebook Live and YouTube! -- Join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on our Facebook Page [click here](#), or YouTube Channel [click here](#) for a weekly praise, prayer, and proclamation celebration of

God's love. We love discovering who worships with us, so [click here](#) to sign our Virtual Friendship Pad. Access our weekly digital bulletin to sing along and read the lessons, [click here](#), and you can listen to sermons when you [click here](#)! Our doors may be closed to worshippers right now, but our hearts, minds, and hands continue to serve. You're welcome to join us anytime!



Return to In-Person Worship! Register Weekly! Online LiveStream Continues! -- It's a joy to announce we'll return to in-person worship this Sunday. The service will continue to broadcast LiveStream on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)! Registrations are still

open for Sunday's service at 9:00 a.m. and will close on **Saturday, May 22 at noon**. You can register by clicking [here](#). Only fully vaccinated church members will qualify to register until Pennsylvania's Covid Guidelines change on May 31st. All details relating to registration are on the registration form. After this week's "soft opening," attendance protocol will be reevaluated using guidelines from the commonwealth and the annual conference. Transitional times can be emotional as we encounter familiar and unfamiliar aspects of commonplace experiences and places. Patience is the key to making a healthy transition.



A Reality Check on Worship Attendance During a Pandemic
By Pastor Bill Lentz

On May 13, 2021, Ryan Burge, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Eastern Illinois University, published an article in an online magazine called *The Conversation*. The magazine is a network of not-for-profit media outlets that publish news stories on the Internet that are written by academics and researchers, under a free Creative Commons license, allowing reuse but only without modification. That article, *Faith in Numbers: Is Church Attendance Linked to Higher Rates of Coronavirus?*, appeared on May 19th in an online resource I subscribe to called *Ministry Matters*, which is affiliated with The United Methodist Church. Burge's research presents the data gleaned in surveys in a readable fashion, in my opinion. Its conclusions are balanced, thoughtful, and without judgment. As we return to in-person worship this

Sunday, I found the research a helpful reminder that we are a community called for care for one another. Click [here](#) to read the entire article in *Ministry Matters*.



The 236th Session of the Eastern PA Annual Conference, May 20-22, will take place mostly online for a second consecutive year, after making history with that first-time format in 2020. The conference business session will again be held via a Zoom webinar, with pre-recorded reports and eBallot voting on Friday, May 21. Non-members will again be able to view the session livestreamed on the [Conference's Facebook page](#).

This year's session will include resolutions with legislative debate and amendments allowed. But the plan is to reduce the amount of session time given to debate and amendments by urging members to read resolutions once they are published and respond promptly with any questions and suggested revisions to resolution authors. [Read More](#)



Peace With Justice Sunday, May 30 -- Peace With Justice Sunday is one of the special Sundays of The United Methodist Church. Each year, on the first Sunday after Pentecost, United Methodists celebrate efforts across the connection that are building peace.

Thank You...! for your generosity in 2020!

You gave \$288,487 to the Peace with Justice Sunday offering. Peace with Justice is a faithful

expression of shalom in the Bible. It calls the church to strengthen its capacity to advocate

publicly in communities and nations throughout the world. The offering is administered by the General Board of Church and Society and benefits peace with justice ministries in the Annual Conferences and around the world. In EPA Conference, one-half of the offering stays in the conference for local Peace with

Justice ministries. Rev. Jessica Ross is the EPA Peace with Justice Coordinator who facilitates grants. Recent grants were awarded to:

1. Casa del Pueblo Latino Ministry for tutoring for immigrant families.
2. True Justice Conference on criminal justice reforms, especially for people and communities of color.
3. Delaware Valley Justice for Our Neighbors to legal assistance for immigrants.
4. Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence for neighborhood awareness days in Philadelphia
5. Phoenixville Bridges for education programs on root causes of poverty

You can support Peace With Justice Sunday in three ways: Snail mail your check payable to LUMC, memo: Peace With Justice Sunday or give here, click the dropdown menu to find Peace With Justice, or text message your gift to 73256 with the message "LansdaleFirstUMC." Thank you for your generous support!



Red Cross Blood Drive -- June 9, 2021 -- 1:00 - 7:00 p.m.

The American Red Cross has a constant and ongoing need for blood and platelet donations. With the ongoing pandemic, the Red Cross needs the help of blood and platelet

donors and blood drive hosts to meet the needs of patient care. [Please schedule your donation appointment now to help prevent another blood shortage.](#)

The American Red Cross is testing all blood, platelet and plasma donations for COVID-19 antibodies. As part of that effort, plasma from whole blood donations that test positive for COVID-19 antibodies may now help current coronavirus patients in need of convalescent plasma transfusions. We are committed to helping others in meaningful ways during this pandemic. **The Red Cross is following FDA blood donation eligibility guidance for those who receive a COVID-19 vaccination. If you receive a vaccine, knowing the name of the manufacturer (e.g. Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson) is important in determining your eligibility. In most cases, there's no deferral time if you receive a vaccine.**

Donating blood products is essential to community health and the need for blood products is constant. As part of our nation's critical infrastructure, healthy

individuals can still donate in areas that have issued shelter in place declarations or are operating under a phased reopening plan. The Red Cross follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need. As hospitals resume surgical procedures and patient treatments that were temporarily paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, donors are urged to give now to ensure blood products are readily available for patients.



Class of 2021 Recognition

Are you or do you know a 2021 graduate? Pastor Bill will be recognizing graduates at worship on Sunday, June 13. Please e-mail Becky in the [office](#) with graduate's name, graduating from, degree, future plans, and a picture by Wednesday, June 9, to have your graduate recognized.



A Called Church Conference Is Set for June 13th!

On Sunday, June 13th, at 10:15 a.m., a Called Church Conference will be held in-person and by Zoom. D.S. Dr. Andrew Foster will conduct the conference. All church members in good standing are eligible to vote on two agenda items: (1) to authorize the Church Council to proceed with developing a plan to simplify the church's leadership and governance structure; and (2) to elect a slate of interim church offices to lead from July 1 to December 31, 2021. The Nominations and Leadership Committee will present the slate of nominees.

Here are the details: In the recent past, LUMC has held a called church conference to elect leadership for the ensuing year, usually in June, to cover a term from July 1 to June 30. That pattern was interrupted because of the Covid-19 pandemic emergency in 2020. It's now been deemed desirable to return to electing officers at the usual autumn charge conference. Interim officers have been serving diligently since January 1, whose term ends on June 30, 2021. In the meantime, the committee worked on a plan to simplify LUMC's governance by streamlining the

number of people in leadership positions. The simplified leadership plan seeks to refocus the church toward mission and ministry teams and away from institutional-focused leadership. The simplified leadership plan concept was approved by the Church Council last Monday evening. It will now ask the Church Conference **on June 13th** to approve developing the plan for final approval in the autumn and the election of leaders to serve under the new plan. More details are forthcoming.



May's Mission Emphasis - Keystone Opportunity Center

The mission of Keystone Opportunity Center is to help community members in need by offering a comprehensive array of social services that educate, encourage, and empower them to become self-sufficient. Their services include:

Housing the Homeless in Upper Bucks and Montgomery counties – Keystone Opportunity Center provides a continuum of support from Homelessness Prevention, Rental Assistance, and Eviction Diversion, to Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing. We provide case management across the board to help our families successfully get back on their feet and maintain safe housing. We also own/operate over two dozen affordable housing units. One important factor in homelessness in the US is a lack of affordable housing, so we are doing our part to increase the number of safe, affordable homes.

Feeding the Hungry – Keystone Opportunity Center operates a food pantry serving nearly 1,000 neighbors across the Souderton Area School District who are dealing with food insecurity. Pantry users qualify for assistance based on their income, and are allowed to visit the pantry once per month to receive a 3-day emergency supply, along with donated items from local farms, grocers or individuals.

Educating Adults – Keystone Opportunity Center provides life-changing education in several locations within Montgomery and Bucks counties, with the largest classes held in Souderton and Lansdale. Classes include English as a Second Language, High School Equivalency, Citizenship, Adult Basic Education, English for College and Career, individual tutoring, and more. We know that literacy, the completion of

schooling, and citizenship are essentials for leading a self-sufficient life.

You can support the ministry in three ways: Snail mail your check payable to LUMC, memo: Keystone Opportunity Center in your Blue Envelope or give here, click the dropdown menu to find Keystone Opportunity Center, or text message your gift to 73256 with the message "LansdaleFirstUMC." Thank you for your generous support!



Camp and Retreat Centers Foresee "a Future with Hope" -- *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.— Jeremiah 29:11 (NRSV)*

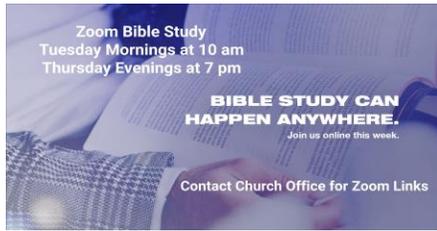
What a difference a year can make—especially this year, and especially for the four Eastern PA Conference's Camp & Retreat Ministry (CRM) sites. Click [here](#) to read the rest of John Coleman's article about what our Camps are doing this year.



Montgomery County Hazardous Waste Recycling Events -- Montgomery County-sponsored household hazardous waste collection events have begun. The events are by appointment only and pre-registration is required. COVID-19 CDC guidelines must be

followed when attending an event. No televisions, electronics or appliances are accepted at these chemical collections. Businesses and contractors will be turned away from these residential events. Click [here](#) to go to the Church and Society page of our website for dates, a list of the recyclable items and a list of date.

Church and Society



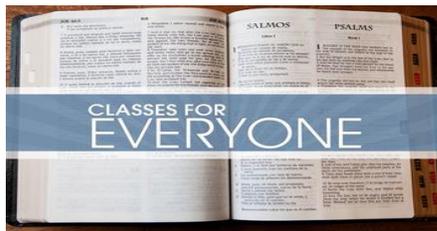
Zoom Bible Studies Continue! -- You can join your congregation, friends, and Pastor Bill at two Zoom Bible Studies offered each week. The **Tuesday morning** study meets at 10:00 a.m. The **Thursday evening study meets** at 7:00 p.m. Our normal practice is to study the daily lectionary

readings for the Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. The listed readings can be found on our website at www.lansdaleumc.com. On the homepage you'll find "Zoom Bible Study" under the Heading "Making Disciples." You're welcome to use any translation of the Bible that comfortable for you. Pastor Bill uses a PowerPoint presentation of the readings and his commentary, and then discussion follows. We offer prayers at the beginning and end of the hour. Join us! Contact [Becky](#) for the Zoom Meeting links to access the studies!



Lansdale UMC Children's Ministry on Facebook and YouTube -- Miss Liz Bonner posts interesting items for our children to watch, read and do throughout the week. Click the image to join us on Facebook.

Miss Liz also LiveStreams the weekly Sunday School lesson on our YouTube channel at 10:00 each Sunday morning. Click [here](#) to access our YouTube Channel.



New Horizons Fellowship Will Not Meet May 23, May 30, or June 6. When we resume, we'll meet at 10:00 a.m. following the Sunday morning worship service via Zoom (the connection details are below). Anyone is welcome to join at that time by clicking [here](#).

Meeting ID: 875 4237 2475 Passcode: 710204

Wesleyan Class -- The Wesleyan Class will continue with Reflections and meditation on the topic "Life After the Pandemic" with occasional tie-in to the Sunday sermon. It will be sent by email to class members and others who wish to

be on the distribution list. It will continue until the end of May. Contact Verna Colliver (vmcolliver@gmail.com) if you want to be added to the distribution list



Conversations on Race -- Conversations on Race recently resumed with an analysis of the presidential election results and what they say about racism in America. Our group decided to concentrate its efforts on a meaningful Lenten

experience to face the "isms" (racism, sexism, classism) that keep us from meeting our neighbors eye-to-eye as equals in Christ's eyes, on a level plain. If you'd like to help plan the experience, you're welcome to join the conversation.

The next Zoom Meeting will be announced soon. Here's the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87919827576pwd=NVJIZld3V0dtRitERWVKdmcxRDhUdz09>;

Meeting ID: 879 1982 7576; Passcode: 573307.



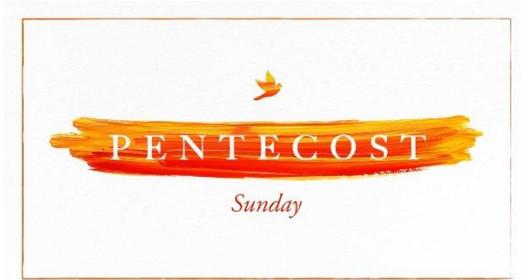
Special Lansdale UMC Collection

Covid-19 Impact Fund Is Making a Difference

Sometimes, simply making a difference is all that's needed. The Covid-19 Impact Fund has been doing just that! Reaching about \$15,000 at its start, we've distributed over \$5,200 to pay 10

rents, make 1 car repair, buy 1 bundle of groceries, help one person get current with their electric bill, help one person get current with their health insurance premiums, and partner with another UMC to provide Christmas presents for 2 families. We are working with several churches in the borough as well as Manna on Main to share the interviewing of those in need and the cost associated with helping. It's been a rewarding experience. In addition to the congregational and community care, we've also paid to buy PPE to return to worship safely at the right time, and pay for costs associated with the LiveStream broadcasts on Sunday mornings.

Click on an image below for more information:



UPDATED! – COVID-19 STATUS – NEW!

Currently, Montco's case count continues on a steady decline. At current case levels, the county has changed its risk status to the **high-risk** category according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Montgomery County health authorities. While vaccinated people are at minimal risk of contracting the

disease, partially vaccinated and unvaccinated people still run a high risk in the county. While hospitalizations are down, deaths from the virus continue. The test positivity rate has declined to **5%**. Vaccinations are proceeding at a slower rate, which is a concern. Prayerfully consider your choices about vaccinations, which are proving to be safe and effective. LUMC will remain in its current status of limited openings for limited worship attendance and other approved uses until **May 31st** at the soonest. Let your prayers continue to flow for all concerns.



Vaccines are now available for everybody over age 12!

Click [here](#) to go directly to the PA Health Department's Vaccine Provider Map; type in your zip code, and you'll be taken to a map of local sites. Please consider getting your vaccination soon. We are looking forward to getting back to in-person worship!



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Our mailing address is:

300 N. Broad Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

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