



The Grapevine

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER OF CHESTER BETHEL UMC

LLELUIA

love is come again;
like wheat that springeth green

The Road to Emmaus - Luke 24:13 - 35

This passage begins with Cleopas and his friend grieving the passing of a loved one – their friend Jesus.... Sad that Jesus had died, disappointed that he didn’t bring about the changes they had hoped, angry at their leaders for giving him up and grieving for what was and for what might have been.

Jesus was powerful, they said. A prophet. But their leaders turned him over to the Roman authorities, who crucified him. They had hoped he would redeem the world. With his death, their hopes were dashed.

The travelers went on to mention to the “stranger” who joined them that some women had found his tomb empty and had a vision of angels telling them Jesus was alive. But the travelers didn’t believe it. They thought the anticipated Jesus revolution was over and done.

You can imagine them stumbling along with their heads down, feeling lost and bereft, focusing on their loss. We all know that feeling. We have been there before. Maybe we are there now.

(cont. Page 3)

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- PAGE 2 - PRESCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE
- PASTOR'S LETTER
- PAGE 3 - ROAD TO EMMAUS (CONT)
- MISSION UPDATES
- DATES TO REMEMBER

- PAGE 4 - HOUSING ALLIANCE DE
- PAGE 5 - THRIFT SHOP
- PRAYERS
- PAGE 6 - JARGON (CONT)
- PAGE 7 - PRESCH. BLDG (CONT)

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A PRESCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT?



You've probably heard some rumblings around the church of a renewal of the Preschool Building project, begun many years ago at Chester Bethel.

As you may recall from pre-pandemic times, the Preschool Building Committee found it impractical to embark upon the "new wing" due to the restrictions and costs imposed by DelDOT. Simply put, DelDOT said that if we were to expand our preschool with a new building of the proposed size, we would also need to pay for a turn lane running the length of our Foulk Rd. frontage. Those costs were too high for us to reasonably continue planning for the proposed size building.

Enter 2020: the pandemic stalled our Preschool Building Committee's considerations of other ways to expand our preschool, upgrade facilities to the current code, and eliminate the need for our mobile classroom unit.

In 2023 we began meeting again, discussing new options that don't require such a large turn lane. Nothing has been signed or set in stone, but we now have a company Contractor helping us gather the details needed for a reliable cost estimate. You might occasionally see these folks around during the week, as they measure, learn about building systems, and talk with the Preschool Building Committee about our hopes for the project. *(continued inside on p. 6)*

CLEARING UP the JARGON! By Rev. Kelly conner



The Mt. Lebanon UMC church choir recently rehearsed an arrangement of the great spiritual, "Standing in the Need of Prayer." One of the lines in the second stanza included the lyrics, "Not my deacon, not my elder, but it's me O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer."

As we sang, one of the members asked about the words "deacon" and "elder." "We have those in The United Methodist Church, right? But they're clergy, not laypeople?" I was reminded that we (clergy) often wrongly assume that all the folks in our churches know the jargon that we use. Sometimes, as is the case here, such jargon may be used differently between denominations!

Continued on page 5

(Continued from p. 1)

The Road to Emmaus, continued...

“ This passage links us with our own griefs, our end-of-the-rope experiences when we felt powerless and not able to control the sequence of events. When have you been on your road to Emmaus – trying to walk away from the burdens that you carry? When you have been broken by life and just wanted to forget it all?”. . .

“ **Jesus comes in many guises** – we don’t always see him. But sometimes, there is something that cuts through our awareness, and we realize that we are not alone.”. . . We are in the company of God, who was there all along – just not recognized”. . .

By the Rev. Dr. Roderick J. Miller
From the Center for Vital Leadership of the Peninsula-Delaware
and Baltimore-Washington Conferences

MISSIONS UPDATE

by Nancy Storer

Chester Bethel continues to be active with Missions; every week our donated food is delivered to the Claymont Community Center.

We are still collecting “New Socks” for all ages as well as hygiene products for both men and women. Baskets for these items are in the Narthex.

We receive thank-you notes from the charities that get these and know all are appreciated.

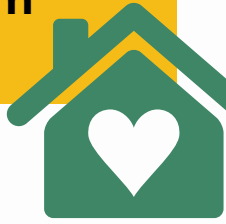
From Jan through June 2024 all donations received by Missions will go to Habitat for Humanity, Claymont Community Center, and Salvation Army. The Preschool families are also beginning to donate food in our food wagons!

Dates to Remember

- April** 7 - Worship & communion at 9:30
8-17 - Pastor Kelly on vacation
9 - Trustees Mtg at 6 PM
14 - 9:30 Worship/ Native American Ministries Sunday
- May** 5 - Worship and communion at 9:30
9 - Trip to Dover with Housing Alliance Delaware
12 - Mother’s Day
14 - SPRC meeting 3:30 / Trustees meeting 6:00
23 - Preschool Graduation!
27 - Memorial Day
- June** 11 - Trustees Meeting @6PM
30 - Joint Worship at Mt. Lebanon UMC @11 AM



Walking Our Faith - - a letter from Housing Alliance Delaware



I don't need to tell you there is an affordable housing crisis going on in all three counties of Delaware.

-More than 1,300 people are homeless each night in Delaware (sleeping outside, in a car, in a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness, in a hotel/motel paid for by the state or charity).

-25% of all homeless people in Delaware are under 18.

-60% of all those who are homeless are Black.

As people of faith we are to walk our faith into our everyday, mundane life.

There are data proven solutions to this horrible reality.

On May 9th, we are asking people from across the state to meet in Dover to meet with our legislators to communicate the magnitude of this problem.

Will you come to Dover on May 9th? I am asking you to pray with your feet!

As always, if you have any questions or learning opportunities for me, please contact me.

Respectfully, Sonya

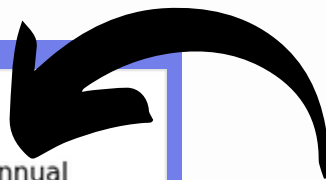
Rabbi Sonya Starr, Policy Director
Housing Alliance Delaware
(302)654-0126 ext. 103



Day for Housing 2024

Day for Housing is Housing Alliance DE's annual event at Legislative Hall in Dover. Housing advocates will visit legislators to make sure they...

[HAD Site](#)



Register!



TOGETHER WE CAN!

Spring Food Drive benefitting the Claymont Food Closet

FEED OUR NEIGHBORS!

Bring in shelf stable food to either boxes in the lobby or at the side door

2619 FOULK RD, WILM DE 19810 302-475-3549

Did you know? The plate you walk by when you come forward to receive communion is a special offering to the Good Samaritan Fund, providing help to the most needy among us in our church and community. Be generous in remembering that what we have is not shared by all.

THRIFT SHOP UPDATES, by Dora Greer

Spring and Summer have made their way to the thrift shop. We are well stocked with summer items. As Easter has passed, now we soon will need decorations for Memorial Day and the 4th of July. I'm sure you will find something you just can't do without! That includes books for summer reading, sandals, sunglasses, and toys for the beach.

We will be having our annual garage sale in June.

Watch for the date.

Thanks to all who have kept the thrift shop up and running. It is a full-time job! We wish you a fun filled and blessed spring and summer!

Please Pray for:

Holly Dorner (H); Donna McCormick (H); Bill Rice (H); DeBrock Family (O); Laura White (H); Allison (H); Kim Nally; Amy (H); Cecelia Steele's family (L); Gail Kracyla (H); Dominic King (LT); Jill Brownback (LT); Nancy Walker (H); Mabel & Alan Ladd (H); MaryAnn Rumford (LT); Rick Browne (LT); all peoples impacted by war.

For example, in my limited understanding, Presbyterians tend to use the term “elder” to describe layfolks who serve on the “Board of Elders,” which functions the same way that our Administrative Council does: they are charged with leading in the administrative duties of their local church, including finance, visioning, and other “business” aspects. They use the term “deacon” to describe layfolks who serve on the “Board of Deacons,” which governs the local church’s mission and ministry programs and initiatives.

In the Catholic and Orthodox denominations, the terms “deacon” and “elder” refer to ordained clergy. One must first be ordained a deacon before moving on to be ordained as an elder; but it is possible for ordained Deacon to choose not to pursue elder’s orders. Deacons preach, assist the elder during sacraments, and do similar pastoral care tasks; but only the ordained elder has true authority to preside over the act of consecration of sacramental elements (like the bread and wine for Holy Communion, or the water for Baptism).

The United Methodist Church has its own unique understandings of the roles of deacons and elders. Unlike our Presbyterian siblings (but like our Catholic and Orthodox siblings), we apply these terms not to laypersons, but to clergy. The UMC also, like the Catholics and Orthodox, ordained clergy first as deacons and then, if they pursued and met the requirements, as elders. However, at General Conference in 1996 (held in Denver), the rules changed to make Deacons and Elders into their own separate clergy orders. “Deacon” was no longer seen as a kind of pathway on the journey to having full sacramental and voting rights within the UMC; instead, the Order of Deacons was created to bridge the all-too-common gap between the church and the world.

Deacons and Elders are both ordained clergy; each have different foci:

While both Deacons and Elders are called to serve as ordained clergy, those drawn to each order maintain different foci within their callings:

ELDER-

**Word, Order,
Sacrament, Service**

DEACON-

**Word, Compassion,
Justice, Service**

Elders are called more to preaching, church administration, ensuring that church folks receive Baptism and Holy Communion, and congregational/ community service. Deacons are called more to preaching in the church, congregational/ community service, and offering and witnessing to compassion ministries and justice needs outside of the church. In other words, ordained deacons in our tradition are more likely to be found in what we call “extension ministries”: ministries that happen outside the church, like hospice or hospital chaplaincy, counseling work, campus ministry, or other local community organizations. These pastors are still connected

Preschool Building Project *(Continued from Page 2)*

Now we are considering an entirely new approach: an addition to the building of less than 1000 sq. ft., on the south side of the narthex. This addition would link the narthex to a new church office, pastoral office, and adult classroom/ meeting space. This proposal would allow the preschool to use the existing rest of the building as classrooms (with the exception of the Fellowship Hall, which would continue to be a shared space).

Some key components of the possible addition:

- We would no longer be grandfathered into building codes, and therefore large expenditures such as fire sprinklers for the entire building would need to be installed.
- Due to its size of under 1000 sq. ft., the new addition would not require a turn lane.
- We would have the opportunity to upgrade our space so that our current members, friends and new visitors can find renewed excitement in being here and encountering God here.



Again, none of this is set in stone; at this stage, we are simply investigating whether this proposed addition is feasible for our church and our preschool to take on. When we are able to present you with a full proposal, details will be more clear. It's important for the congregation to know about the PS Building Committee's renewed interest in a possible new iteration of the project; we want to keep you in the loop!

JARGON *(Continued)* with a local church, but they also go out into the world to bring the church toothers. Elders, such as myself, tend to be appointed to local churches like ours, and also to military chaplaincy (as military chaplains must be certified by their respective faith organizations to offer sacraments, which deacons are not called to provide).

We are certainly blessed to have laypersons (non-clergy) like you, who are called to serve on ministry teams, as administrative committee members, as special roles within the church, or simply as followers of God who come to worship the Lord! We are equally blessed that our clergy in the United Methodist connection are called to serve in many different ministry settings, poised to share the Word with people wherever they may be located. Glory be to God!

by Pastor Kelly Conner