

The United Presbyterian Church of New Kensington



Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

Happy August to you! At this time of year - EVERY year - I wonder at how time moves so quickly. I hope you've had the opportunity to enjoy some outdoor activities that are typically reserved for the summer months.

Just the other day I ventured over to the ArtFest in Vandergrift. As always, this community event revolves around one central theme, such as *The Wizard of Oz* or *Alice in Wonderland*. This year, the theme was simply, "Strange Encounters: Art of the Unexplained" - so naturally, there were green aliens popping out of windows to greet attendees, mermaids blowing bubbles, Big Foot sightings, etc.



Of course, this was all in good fun and did wonders for making the afternoon memorable - but it got me thinking.

We all probably have encounters with others on a regular basis that we might deem "strange" in one way or another - that notion is nothing new. But did you know that Christians are the ones described in Scripture as "aliens, strangers, and exiles" in this world? What does that even mean?

In a world that tends to lean towards violence, greed, selfishness, and hate, followers of Christ are called to live by different standards. We know that. We also know those standards often clash mightily with the culture that surrounds us. Because the Holy Spirit has stamped our hearts with no

less than the grace and love of Christ, we **SHOULD** feel out of place. People **SHOULD** walk away from an encounter with us and think to themselves, *"I'm not sure what it is but there's something really different about that person."*

They might not rank us on the same level as a green alien zooming past or a mermaid blowing bubbles - but the encounter should (prayerfully) remain with them as a memorable one. Maybe it was because of the surprising kindness we offered someone in a parking lot or how quickly we forgave a wrong.

I encourage you to read and refer often to this passage from 1 Peter:

"You are chosen, set aside as God's own; so that you may proclaim the wondrous acts of the One who called you out of inky darkness into shimmering light. Beloved, remember you don't belong in this world. You are resident aliens living in exile, so resist the desires that battle against the soul" (1 Peter 2:9, 11 paraphrased).

So go ahead, channel your inner Big Foot...or whatever it takes to embrace being "different" because of our love for Christ.

Grace and peace to each of you,

Pastor Becca

In this newsletter you will find:

TUPCNK News

Bulletin Board
(Birthdays, Prayer
Concerns, etc.)

Upcoming Dates &
Events

Committee
Highlights

Monthly Feature

Church Calendar



3rd Annual Slow Roll Independence Day Celebration

Though it was our third time hosting the Slow Roll Neighborhood Bicycle group, we wanted to make it extra special in honor of our country's 250th birthday! The leaders of Slow Roll like to have someone from their hosting organization share a brief inspirational message with the young people, so we thought it might be really special for them to hear what liberty means from a veteran's perspective - and Mal Zelefwow did not disappoint! Mal helped them to understand what religious freedom is all about and the group of about 45 youth didn't hesitate to ask him some really great questions.

We are grateful to each of you who donated all the fixins' for us to provide the riders with a meal before they set off: Walking Tacos, watermelon, corn on the cob, and of course, dessert and cold drinks (this was on one of those days that temps were above 90 all day)!

Thanks also to Lynn Crumley, Donna Lindh, Kathryn Whitacre, Alyssa Pistininzi, Stacey Oden, and Pastor Becca for serving the group their food - they didn't hesitate to gobble it up.

Nothin' Says Lovin' Like Something From the Oven

For the past couple months, several folks have had the joy of preparing and delivering meals or snacks to various church members. This act of friendship and service is an outreach ministry of our newly revamped Congregational Life committee. Our next meal is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 12th**. If you are willing to prepare a dish, and/or pack & deliver the food with a visit, *please contact Donna Lindh*. Meals will be delivered to three or four individuals on the 12th. The following food items are needed for our August menu:

- Main course: chicken (Donna)
- Side dish: vegetable
- Side dish: salad (greens, jello, etc.)
- Dessert/Breakfast: pastry (muffin, donuts, etc.)
- Snacks: (individual cracker or cookie packets, jello, pudding or fruit cups, pieces of fresh fruit)

Items in parentheses are only ideas.
Blessings, Donna Lindh



Our own "Revolutionary" ladies at our Slow Roll Independence Day Celebration

Bulletin Board



John Conte	8/4
Jackson Dameron	8/6
Ryan Yates	8/9
Paul Yates	8/10
Carter Whitacre	8/11
Jayden Alexander	8/17
Deborah Lee Kazor	8/17
Joseph Nixon	8/23
Eleanor Manley	8/30
Kelli Williams-Slosky	8/31

Summer Worship News

Our Sunday worship services will be held in the air-conditioned chapel for the remainder of the summer (**except Aug. 2** when we'll be at the park!) and will begin at 10 a.m. We will plan to return to the sanctuary Sept. 13, at which time we will also resume our 11:00 start time.

Church Secretary Position

As mentioned previously, Mary Ellen plans to retire at the end of September. Positions such as hers can be tricky to fill because it is for only 12 hours per week (and many folks looking for work today need full-time jobs). Please keep your eyes and ears open for those who may be interested! Work hours would be 9 - 12 each morning, Monday - Thursday.



Please pray for...

- Bobbly Long*
- Lou Ann Burford*
- Mildred Wagner
- Alyssa Pistininzi
- Cyndi & Mark Bondra
- Jackie & Gary Chickerella
- Carl Schultz (Randy's brother)
- Marianne Irwin (friend of Bob Thomas)
- Nora Pastrick (Bob Thomas' sister)
- Adam Veino (Robin Sorch's friend)
- Michelle Samios (Robing Sorch's friend)
- Marissa Montgomery (Ray Pinson's girlfriend)
- Bill Montgomery (Marissa's father)
- Corrine Colberg (Kathryn Whitacre's friend)
- Althea Joseph and family

**Denotes those who are homebound or nursing home residents*



Deacons' Emergency Food Pantry Wish List

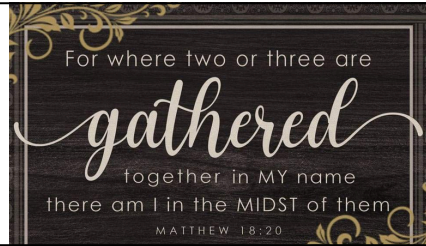
- Ramen, Cup of Soup
- Peanut Butter Crackers (individual packages)
- Jelly (plastic containers)
- Applesauce (plastic containers)
- Tuna
- Cans of Ravioli, Spaghetti O's, Beef-A-Roni
- Peanut Butter
- Pasta / Spaghetti
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Mac 'n Cheese
- Cereal
- Juice (plastic containers)

Upcoming Dates and Events

combined worship in the park

Worship at Memorial Park with Logan's Ferry Church: Aug. 2 at 10 am

We're really looking forward to seeing you at the park! This longstanding tradition is not only a great excuse to worship God outdoors, but also a chance to enjoy a delicious potluck lunch with friends. We have reserved pavilions A, B, & C at Memorial Park, so there will be plenty of space – not only for all the people – but all the food, too! The church will provide the chicken and water and you're invited to bring a side dish or dessert to share (as well as a chair for yourself, if possible).



Three-Church-Wide Fellowship Meal

We're excited about this opportunity BUT we know it will take lots of pairs of hands! On Sat. Oct 17 we want to host friends from both Logans Ferry and Grace Community Church for an afternoon of fellowship and a delicious meal. The goal is to help reconnect old friendships among our churches AND provide an opportunity for meeting some new friends as well! Please help us make this opportunity a reality by agreeing to tackle some of the tasks that will be part of pulling this off!! We're putting together a "task force" (NOT a committee with long-term commitment) and plan to meet **Tue. August 11 at 6 p.m. in the chapel** to map out the next couple months. Please let Donna Lindh or Pastor Becca know of your willingness to help out - it will be extremely appreciated!



Shawl Group

The Shawl Group will plan to meet on **Wednesday, August 5 at 1:00 pm** in the Library. If you've ever wanted to learn to knit, what are you waiting for? These ladies will be happy to show you how! But this group doesn't just knit, they fellowship and enjoy sharing snacks, too!



Book Club

Our book for August is Magic Hour by Kristin Hannah. It's about a disgraced child psychiatrist, Dr. Julia Cates, who returns to her hometown to help a mysterious, speechless six-year-old found alone in the forest. The book explores themes of trauma and challenges of recovery, and the search for identity and community. Come join us for discussion! We'll meet in the Chapel, **August 26, 6:30 pm**

Mark Your Calendars Now

We will return to our regular 11:00 a.m. start time for church, beginning **Sept. 13.**

For September we are reading The Wilder Widows by Katherine Hastings; our discussion date will be determined in August. (This book is not available from People's Library but we have several copies to share so all can read it.)

Committee Highlights



Session Highlights

There was no stated Session meeting for the month of July.

Deacon's Report

From the July 13, 2026 Meeting

For the July Food Bank:
79 Households served, including
7 New, 25 Seniors, and 11 Doubles.

There were no Birthday Bags distributed.

We had 22 volunteers, working a total of 76.5 hours.

For the August 2026 Food Bank:
Truck Delivery – August 6; arrive by 8:30
Distribution – August 8; arrive by 8:30

Food Ministry Wish List (see p. 3 in this newsletter)

Funeral Dinners – None

There will be no meeting in August.; next meeting scheduled for Sept. 8.

Submitted by Wendy Hartz

Property

Many of you know the large planters on the front porch were given to the church by the Pucketos Garden Club in memory of Marion Yates. We are grateful for the generous memorials and want to be certain that whatever is planted in them will be easy to care for, long-term.

As it relates to both the planters and our landscaping in general, we realize we have far fewer people than we used to who are able to tend the flowers and shrubs, so we are trying to be strategic about simplifying. As always, we are grateful to Althea, Kathryn, Dennis, Lynn, Bob (Berisko), and Pastor Becca for the time they spend watering, weeding, and trimming - but we could ALWAYS use more hands to help! Please consider volunteering some time - even 15 minutes of weeding per month would be a huge help!

Endowment, Finance, and Mission

Contribution Detail reports were mailed in mid-July. These reports list - for your review - donations you have made to the church as of the last Sunday in June. If you have not done so, please prayerfully compare the report you received to the stewardship commitment you made for this year. If you have any questions at all, please reach out to Karen Grillo, Financial Secretary.

Your contributions are what make our mission happen and we are so grateful for your faithful commitment!

Monthly Feature



You probably know TUPCNK has been a Food Bank distribution site for many, many years (nearly 35 years, to be precise)! But do you really know how “food banking” even works? The process is essentially the same nationwide; it’s an impressive system of partnerships and coordination. In Westmoreland County, the process can be summed up in four stages.

First, donations of food from manufacturers, farms, retailers, organizations, etc. all go to the main facility of the Westmoreland County Food Bank (WCFB) in Delmont. This site features a whopping 46,500 cubic feet of freezer space and 31,500 cubic feet of cooler space and is manned by dozens of staff and volunteers alike.

Upon its arrival in Delmont, all the food is recorded and measured out for each of the local food distribution sites (of which TUPCNK is one). Our deacons keep careful count of the number of recipients we have from month to month, so that lets the team in Delmont know how much food to deliver to the church.

Once per month - without fail - a large delivery truck from WCFB pulls up to the side of the church for the third stage of the process. We have a faithful team of volunteers at the ready. Some of them help unload the truck, put the pallets of food on our elevator and send it down to the fellowship hall. Once there, other volunteers unpack the pallets and get all the boxes opened up. Meanwhile, 80-100 large

empty boxes have been lined up on all the long tables we have in the fellowship hall. (The number of boxes varies month to month based on how many potential recipients have signed up to get food).

Yet another team of volunteers then goes around filling each of these empty boxes with one of each and every type of food we received on the pallets. We are able to accomplish this stage because we have volunteers, not only from our church, but from other churches such as St. Pete’s, Logans Ferry, and St. Mary’s. We are also blessed to have former food recipients volunteering with us!

The final stage, naturally, is about actually getting the food boxes in the hands of those who need it. On “Food Bank” Saturdays, recipients are lined up in their cars all the way down the block on 5th Ave. Our deacons (and others, too!) deliver a box containing a variety of food items to each car - and they do this rain or shine, every month of the year!

We are truly grateful for EACH person who plays a role in this mission. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, please reach out to Julia Yockey and she will happily get you started.

Thank you for reading!

Email the church: churchoffice@tupcnk.org or pastoroffice@tupcnk.org	724-339-6618
visit our website: tupcnk.org	601 5 th Avenue New Kensington, PA 15068

AUGUST 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 Worship and Picnic in the Park with Logan's Ferry Church	3 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA	4	5 1:00 Shawl Group	6 9:00 Food Truck Delivery	7	8 9:00 Food Bank Clients
9 10:00 Worship	10 10:00 Care Group 5:30 Session 7:30 AA	11 NO Deacons Meeting 6:00 3-Church Meal Task Force	12	13	14	15
16 10:00 Worship	17 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA	18	19	20	21	22
23 10:00 Worship	24 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA	25	26 6:30 Book Club <i>Magic Hour</i> by Kristen Hannah	27	28	29
30 10:00 Worship	31 10:00 Care Group 7:30 AA					

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