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## Newsletter for May 2026

### Pastor's Ponderings

*... for now the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone.  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of the singing of birds has come,  
and the voice of the turtledove  
is heard in our land. (Song of Solomon 2:11-12)*



Birds are amazing and inspiring creatures, and often a sign of new life. At the end of the Great Flood in Genesis, a dove brings an olive leaf as a sign that the deluge is over and life is beginning again on the earth. Here in the northeastern US, robins are seen as a hopeful sign of spring when they reappear as winter loses its grip. We call people who go south for the winter “snowbirds” because many birds do migrate seasonally, and in some cases they travel stunningly long distances. The little Blackpoll Warbler, for instance, which weighs about as much as a ballpoint pen, migrates from the northeastern US (including Western NY) to South America for the winter and then back to their northern homes in summer. How do they find their way? What enables them to fly 1,200 miles in a single non-stop three-day flight (and in some cases up to 12,000 miles annually)? Bird migration has been studied



extensively for numerous decades. I listened recently to a panel of three experts discussing this mystery. They all agreed the bottom-line answer to how birds find their way with such precision across such long distances is, “we don’t know.” It is one of the miraculous wonders of our world. One of millions, or millions of millions. At bottom, all life is miraculous, and all that happens is mysterious—we never truly know why or how. But we don’t need to know. We just need to marvel with appreciation and gratitude and do our best to live in harmony with the unfolding life of the world as the miraculous gift of God. The birds don’t know why or how they migrate as they do. They just do it according to and in harmony with their God-given nature. And it is a beautiful and wondrous thing.

As I look back across the journey of my life, I don’t really know how or why I came to be here in this particular place, living this particular life. As a young person I imagined many different futures, and I took many unplanned paths along the way to get here. I do know things have gone best for me when I have been most in tune with the leadings of God, the deep yearnings within me, and the miraculous unfolding of life around me. I think that is how the birds live, and how they find their way season by season.

I am glad to have spent this season of my life, these past seven years, as your pastor here at Faith United Church of Christ. It has been, and I will remember it as, a beautiful and wondrous thing. God led me here, or drew me here, and I now feel led to move on into a new season of life.

As of June 1, I will no longer be your pastor. Transitions can be difficult. But truly, all life is a continuous transition as we travel along life's way. The best we can do, as I have already said, is marvel with appreciation and gratitude at the miraculousness of it all and do our best to live in harmony with the unfolding life of the world as a miraculous gift of God. I'm sure there are many gifts ahead for Faith Church, and for me, and for all of us. We just need to allow ourselves to be drawn toward them.

May it be so,

Ted

### **News about our neighbors and friends**

- Barb Fink is currently at Elderwood in Hamburg and appreciates your cards and prayers. Her address is: 5775 Maelou Drive, Hamburg, NY 14075.
- Janet Taber is at home. She appreciates our prayers and calls. Cards may be sent to her home address: 5845 Scherff Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127.
- Eleanor Kraft is at Elderwood Assisted Living. Her address is: Elderwood Assisted Living, 76 Buffalo Street Apartment 124, Hamburg, NY 14075
- Sally Schutt is now living with her son D.J. and his wife at 6181 Rice Road, Boston, NY 14025.



### • **CONCERNS & PRAYERS**

- For peace in our country and the world, for our military, for those who have lost loved ones recently and are grieving, and for those whose needs we may not know.
- For Vickie Bieger, Stephen Dearth, Barb Fink, Scot Kish, Eleanor Kraft, Carol Mueller, Claudia Renzi, Leroy Rockwood, Chuck & Sheila Recktenwalt, Tom & Marilyn Rucker, Joe Ryan, Sally Schutt, Janet Taber, Pat Granville. **For those in the Military:** Jacob Braun, Zachary Braun, Justin Buczek, Teagan Partridge, Caydan Skinner, Justin Slighter, Jamie-Lynn Smerka, Mary Solak, Joe Solak, Justin Slighter, Aaron Wellman, and Mark Williams.

### **Prayer Concerns**

Please email your prayer concerns to Pastor Ted ([pastor@faithunitedchurchucc.com](mailto:pastor@faithunitedchurchucc.com)) or stop by the church office when it is open and write your concerns on the prayer request sheet in the narthex.

### **Update on Sunday school activities...** - Cris Palczak, Sunday School Superintendent

No Sunday school Memorial Day weekend. The last day of Sunday school is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Vacation Bible School is June 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 11:15 a.m.

## Farewell to Pastor Ted

As we prepare for Pastor Ted's retirement, a memory book is being compiled. This will include events that happened while Ted was pastor at Faith Church. If anyone would like to share a memory, a picture, or just wish Ted luck in his new phase of life, forms will be available on the table across from the door to the sanctuary starting in the middle of March. All forms must be returned by May 10<sup>th</sup> (Mother's Day). Forms should be returned to the church office.

\*If you are sending a photo, please remember to send a copy as photos will not be returned. Also, if you do not have the form to fill out, any suitable paper will do.



## Ted's Retirement party – help needed



The retirement party for Pastor Ted is on May 31, 2026. We need volunteers to help with this event. Sandwiches, vegetable trays, and cake will be served. There is a sign-up sheet for people to donate sandwiches. We are asking that you bring 4 uncut sandwiches for the reception. If you can help, sign up under the kind you will be bringing.

We also need people to help in the kitchen and at the serving tables. Sign up if you can help.

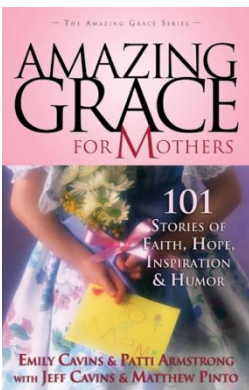
Let's make Ted's retirement party the best!

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## FELLOWSHIP

**Men's Group** – The Men's Group meets the first Saturday of each month at 9:00 at the church. As always we will talk about the small tasks at hand and then proceed to complete the tasks if possible! Then we gather back in the Fellowship Hall for coffee, pastries and conversation. If you have any questions, feel free to speak to Bruce Lounsbury on a Sunday morning or call him at 716-662-7357.

**Women's Support** – There will not be a women's support group meeting for May, but June 10<sup>th</sup> is the Women's Group picnic.



**Library** - Mother's Day is in May, and we celebrate mothers. They ARE special people. But sometimes moms need help, and Emily Cavins and Patti Armstrong have done that.

In their book *Amazing Grace for Mothers*, there are stories for hope, inspiration, faith, and humor.

This book can be found in the Church Library, located in the Gathering Room.

**Publicity:** Pictures taken at church events are often used for publicity, especially on the church's website. If you do not want you or your child's picture used, please contact the church office. It will be assumed that it is okay to use your picture if we do not hear from you.



## Remember to Wear Your Red

Pentecost, which falls on May 24 this year, is the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending “like tongues of fire” on the followers of Jesus according to Acts chapter 2. Red is rarely used as a liturgical color. Purple is the color for Advent and Lent, white for the twelve days of Christmas and the seven-week season of Easter, and green is the color for the rest of the year, except Pentecost. Red is preserved only for Pentecost Sunday and few other special occasions such as ordinations and installations of pastors. So, remember to wear your red on May 24 and help us fill the church with the fire of the Spirit!



### EVENTS

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> – **Men’s Group** meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Communion service.

Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> – **Mother’s Day**.

Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> – **Ascension Day**.

Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> – **PPRC Meeting following worship**.

Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> – **Board Meeting** at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> – **Game Night** at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> – **Memorial** service for Bob Tills at 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup> – **Pentecost**. Communion service. No Sunday school.

Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> – **Town of Boston** parade. **Meditation class** from 6-7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> – **Pastor Ted’s reception** following service. Last day of **Sunday School**.



### Ted’s Retirement party

**As we all know by now, Pastor Ted will be retiring on May 31, 2026. There will be a retirement reception on that date from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Light refreshments will be served.**

**This reception is open to everyone: congregation members, friends, and community members. Come and wish Ted well as he and Leslie start this new chapter in their lives!**





## NEWS

Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> – **Men’s Group** meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> – **Vacation Bible School**, 10:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> – **Women’s Group** picnic.

Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> – **Vacation Bible School**, 10:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> – **Board Meeting** 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> – **Music Recital**, students of Marcia Herren at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup> – **Father’s Day & Graduation Sunday**.

Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> – **School supply collection** begins – August.

## MISSIONS

Thank you to all who contributed to our food and necessities collection for VALOR.



**Chicken BBQ** was a huge success  
with a net profit of \$1,842.85.  
Thank you to everyone who helped or participated.



## Update from the Profile/Search Committee

The profile/search committee has held several meetings and are very close to recommending a bridge interim pastor to the board for approval.

With the help of Rev. Gary Ferner, the Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call, we will be asking the congregation to fill out a Welcoming Diversity Inventory questionnaire. This is a very important step that needs to be done in order to move forward in our search for a settled pastor. More information on this important survey will be presented at service on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

If anyone has any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the committee.

Kevin Biddle  
Linda Bishop  
Corky Forney

Pricilla Granville  
Zach Munger

Sandy Jordan  
Ginny Taber

## **BOARD MEETING Recap**

### **April 21, 2026**

#### **Consent Agenda**

The Meeting was opened by board President Cathy Kobel at 7:01 p.m.

Leslie brought cookies in for everyone to celebrate Ted's birthday! Happy Birthday Ted!

Ted led us in an opening prayer.

Minutes from March 2026 meeting were reviewed.

All in favor – Minutes approved.

#### **Discussion Agenda**

**Reports: The Financial Secretary's Report** was read by Corky – March's income was \$11,347.22. This was for the 5 weeks in March. Year to date total income \$40,134.89.

**The Treasurer's Report** was read by Mary Beth – March's expenses were \$31,412.39.

Church expenses \$18,136.48 + 150 piano repair from memorial fund + \$13,125.91 for windows from the long-term major repair fund.

All in favor – Financial reports approved.

All in favor – all reports approved.

#### **Old Business:**

- **Search Committee update** – members from the Search Committee reported that they met with Rev. Gary Ferner on Sunday, March 12th. He handed out a Search & Call Timeline for UCCNY Churches in transition. Good news- we have completed several of the tasks on the list already! He also showed us a "Congregational Welcoming Diversity Inventory" power point. Discussion was held about securing a bridge pastor, supply pastors, or laity presented messages. This is one of our next steps. The other next step is to have congregants complete a "Congregation Welcoming Diversity Inventory".

This inventory, or survey, will be distributed to all members to complete and return by May 24<sup>th</sup>. Surveys can be done electronically (preferred) or hard copy. Responses will be anonymous. Questions can be left blank. You can also leave comments.

Further discussion was held about the search process

- **Parsonage repair committee** — Most of the new windows have been installed. Comfort Windows will be coming out to measure for the 2 additional windows this week. Ken and Bob also did smaller repairs around the parsonage.
- **Church Refreshing Committee – Sanctuary lighting** – Cathy commented that she would like to see a couple of quotes and designs from different commercial lighting companies. Bob Bishop has done some preliminary work on this project already. We will invite Bob to come to our next board meeting to present his findings.
- **Chicken BBQ** outcome - \$4699 gross income - \$2856.15 food cost = \$1842.85 net profit. We sold out!! Thanks to everyone that helped make this event a success!

- **Pastor's retirement party** – planning. Gail had an example of the invitations she will be sending out and listed the newspapers where the notice will be posted. The party will take place on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> from 12 – 2.  
Gail has made sign-up sheets for kitchen help and sandwiches. There will also be vegetable trays and a cake.
- **Roof & gutter damage update** – Ken reports that he has been working with the contractor who has repaired the damaged shingles and will be repairing the gutter. Unfortunately, there have been some signs of possible carpenter ants that Ken will be keeping an eye on.
- **Piano repairs** – In March, the sanctuary piano was tuned. The tuner came back to repair some sticky keys, vacuum and lubricate. The piano may need more repairs. Details to follow.

### **New Business:**

- **Summer hours** – Comparison was made in regard to attendance last summer. There was no significant difference in attendance between 9:30 or 10:15 services. After discussion, Ginny made a motion to keep the summer service time at 10:15am. Cathy seconded. 7 in favor, 2 against, 1 abstain. Motion passed. Summer services will be at 10:15am.
- **Supply pastor scheduling** – Rev. Gary Ferner suggested that we can use church members to fill in some weeks rather than getting a supply pastor – so start sharpening your pencils and putting your thoughts together! Cathy and Zach have already volunteered. If you are willing to provide a message- please see Tim Plewik- Chair of the Deacons
- **Policies document approval** – Ted had finalized an update to the “Policies” document that included a raise in prices for Fellowship Hall rental as well as a list of rules for use of the Fellowship Hall. A motion was made by Ginny, seconded by Cathy, to approve the new Policies document as it was distributed by Ted.  
All in Favor – Motion approved
- **Welcoming & Invitation Team** were scheduled to host a coffee hour on June 14. After discussion, it was decided not to have a coffee hour on June 14 we will have just had Ted's Retirement party 2 weeks before.
- **Congregation feedback** –
  - Corky reported that a lady came into the office to inquire about getting a plot in our cemetery, commenting on how well kept and peaceful it was. She was referred to Bob Bishop who takes care of the cemetery.
  - A comment was made that the church didn't look very clean for Palm Sunday and Easter. Sexton's performance to be tabled until next month.

All in favor, meeting adjourned 8:04

Ted closed the meeting with a prayer.

March 2026		TREASURER'S MONTHLY FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
Operating Fund	Start Balance	Receipts	Interest	Total Income	Expenses	End Balance	
Current Account	26,468.68	11,014.22		37,482.90	18,136.48	19,346.42	
Benevolent Account	393.44	173.00		566.44		566.44	
Operating Fund Total	26,862.12	11,187.22	0.00	38,049.34	18,136.48	19,912.86	
2027 Prepaid Pledges						0.00	
Other Funds (not included in Operating Fund or Budget)						0.00	
WACIC Grant (Griefshare, Grace for the Journey) \$2643	1,489.71	0.00		1,489.71		1,489.71	
Special Benevolent	0.00	160.00		160.00		160.00	
Major Repairs Long Term Fund	56,675.50	0.00		56,675.50	13,125.91	43,549.59	
Memorial Fund	7,429.79	0.00		7,429.79	150.00	7,279.79	
Other Funds Total	65,595.00	160.00		65,755.00	13,275.91	52,479.09	
Total of All Funds	92,457.12	11,347.22	0.00	103,804.34	31,412.39	72,391.95	
Asset Accounts - Evans Bank - Checking, Savings, CDs	92,457.12	11,347.22	0.00	103,804.34	31,412.39	72,391.95	
<b>Weekly Income</b>	<b>3/1/2026</b>	<b>3/8/2026</b>	<b>3/15/2026</b>	<b>3/22/2026</b>	<b>3/29/2026</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Current Account	4,995.07	752.15	602.00	3,448.00	1,217.00	11,014.22	
Benevolent Account	110.00		52.00		11.00	173.00	
Operating Fund Total	5,105.07	752.15	654.00	3,448.00	1,228.00	11,187.22	
2023 Prepaid Pledges						0.00	
PayPal fees						0.00	
WACIC Grant (Griefshare, Grace for the Journey) \$2643						0.00	
Special Benevolent			70.00	35.00	55.00	160.00	
Major Repairs Long Term Fund						0.00	
Memorial Fund						0.00	
Total Weekly Income	5,105.07	752.15	724.00	3,483.00	1,283.00	11,347.22	

	ITEMIZED BUDGET AND EXPENSE REPORT					2026					% Spent to Date	Remaining Budget Amount	Totals
	BUDGET AMOUNT	EXPENSES January	EXPENSES February	EXPENSES March	EXPENSES April	EXPENSES May	EXPENSES June	EXPENSES July					
<b>CURRENT ACCOUNT</b>													
1. Pastor's Salary	39,600.00	6,600.00	6,600.00	6,600.00						50%	19,800.00	19,800.00	
2. Pastor's Medical	2,000.00	500.00	500.00	500.00						75%	500.00	1,500.00	
3. Pastor's Travel	400.00	208.60								52%	191.40	208.60	
4. Pastor's Professional Expenses and Continuing Education	500.00		125.00							25%	375.00	125.00	
5. Pastor's Pension 14% of salary	3,000.00	631.17	631.17	631.17						63%	1,106.49	1,893.51	
6. Pastor's Disability 1.5% of salary	150.00	67.63	67.63	67.63						135%	(52.89)	202.89	
7. Parsonage Utilities - Electric, Gas, Water	2,700.00	365.37	411.11	336.26						41%	1,587.26	1,112.74	
8. Supply Pastor	1,500.00		150.00							10%	1,350.00	150.00	
9. Organist and Choir Director	9,600.00	800.00	800.00	800.00						25%	7,200.00	2,400.00	
10. Church Office Secretary (18.00/hr.)	15,000.00	1,026.00	1,140.00	1,558.00						25%	11,276.00	3,724.00	
11. Church Sexton (\$300 per month)	3,600.00	300.00	300.00	300.00						25%	2,700.00	900.00	
12. Social Security and Medicare	2,600.00	736.70								28%	1,863.30	736.70	
13. Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance	2,000.00			72.64						4%	1,927.36	72.64	
14. Church & Office Supplies	2,000.00	580.35	39.38	238.85						43%	1,141.42	858.58	
15. Church School Supplies and Program	500.00									0%	500.00	-	
16. Music Supplies	200.00	-								0%	200.00	-	
17. Sexton Supplies	400.00									0%	400.00	-	
18. Church Fellowship/Invitation Team	200.00									0%	200.00	-	
19. Church Utilities	9,000.00	1,552.66	2,308.89	1,122.69						55%	4,015.76	4,984.24	
20. Insurance (Fire, Theft, Liability)	13,500.00	3,333.00		3,334.00						49%	6,833.00	6,667.00	
21. Taxes - County and Town	2,500.00			2,778.58						111%	(278.58)	2,778.58	
22. Maintenance and Repair	2,250.00									0%	2,250.00	-	
23. Grounds Maintenance - Snowplowing and Yard Maintenance	4,200.00									0%	4,200.00	-	
24. Our Church's Wider Mission	1,500.00									0%	1,500.00	-	
25. Churches in Covenant	750.00									0%	750.00	-	
26. Dunkirk Conference Center	500.00									0%	500.00	-	
27. Love INC	400.00									0%	400.00	-	
28. Bread of Life Outreach	400.00									0%	400.00	-	
29. Boston Valley School	400.00									0%	400.00	-	
30. Colden Elementary	400.00									0%	400.00	-	
31. Plymouth Crossroads	750.00									0%	750.00	-	
<b>TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET</b>	<b>122,500</b>	<b>16,701.48</b>	<b>13,073.18</b>	<b>18,339.82</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>74,386</b>	<b>48,114.48</b>		

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## MAY GREETERS 2026

<b>Date</b>	<b>Elevator Entrance</b>	<b>Main Entrance</b>
May 3	Priscilla Granville Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Linda Smerka
May 10	Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop	Linda Smerka
May 17	Pat Minnick Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Michele Rappi
May 24	Karen Winter Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Lois Thurnherr
May 31	Lorey Delia Herb Berlin, Bob Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Linda Bishop

Please call the church office, 716-941-3529, or Lois T., 716-941-3248, should you need to change the schedule. We appreciate you taking time to share your love of Christ with others by welcoming them to our worship service.

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### *Recognition of Longevity in life, marriage and membership!*



Pictured: Back row: Priscilla Granville, Loretta Rishell, Bonnie Cichuniec, Mark & Kim Williams, Helen Zittel, Bob Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury, Carl Berger, Bill & Deb Papich  
Front: Chuck & Sheila Recktenwalt, Gary & Gail Burdick, Pat Minnick, Sharon & Corky Forney, Linda Smerka, Herb Berlin

## ***May Birthdays & Anniversaries***

### **Happy Birthday To:**

1 – Kevin Biddle  
2 – Glen Richardson  
3 – Pat Richardson  
    Dave McEwan  
    Virginia Partridge  
4 – Tony Guzzetta  
7 – Ben Sikora  
11 – Dave Recktenwalt  
12 – Barb Fink  
    Karen Winter  
13 – Lynn Bratek  
    Claudia Renzi  
    Lauren Terry

14 – Daniel Forney  
15 – Penni Karb  
    Julia Rishel  
21 – Aidan Johnson  
    Kyle Bratek  
24 – Fred Roy, Jr.  
    Tom Rucker  
29 – Mike Cook  
    Morgan Ryan  
    Michael Jordan

### **Happy Anniversary To:**

18 – Bert & Kathy Gustafson  
19 – Bill & Deb Papich  
24 – Eric & Adiel Meyer

***Congratulations to all!***