



# The Messenger



Chalfont United Methodist Church \* 11 Meadowbrook Lane, Chalfont, PA 18914-2810  
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September 2017

*This month's editorial is a sermon written by my daughter Pastor Stacy. I chose to use it this month as I feel it speaks directly to us at Chalfont. - Pastor Barb*

## **MAKING ROOM** (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

**I want to tell you about Friday Family Lunch.** One of the things I miss the most about being home in Pennsylvania. "Friday Family Lunch" started many years ago, not with a plan or any long-term goals. Instead, my family just started showing up every Friday to have lunch together. Every Friday, we would meet at a different restaurant in town. My Grammy, mom, step dad, brother, aunts, uncles and cousins always had an open invitation. We would schedule around lunch breaks and doctors' appointments, and we would sit for an hour or two and just enjoy each other's company. In all of these years, we have showed up at the table and stayed present to one another. We have had chronic illnesses, and financial issues, struggles in school or at work, and deaths of friends and family. We rejoiced with each other in moments of healing, in births of grandchildren, in graduations and retirements. Our answer to all of these life events was just to keep showing up at the table. That is all we knew how to do and let me tell you that it was more than enough.

**Our gospel lesson today has the words of Jesus,** "*Come to me, all who are weary and heavy burdened and I will give you rest...*"

**But what happens when rest can't be found?** Sometimes the grief is too deep. Or the anxiety keeps you awake at night. Or life is just simply too much. Have you been there? Where is God in these moments? What happens when we can't seem to find rest and our burdens have no relief in sight?

**As you know, my family is grieving the sudden death of my Aunt Marsha.** She became unexpectedly ill with Pancreatic cancer and passed away within a week of diagnosis. She left behind a husband of 45 years, a daughter, son-in-law and 2 teenage grandsons. To say they are heavy burdened right now is an understatement. Grief like that has no easy answers, no quick fixes, and very little periods of relief. It is heavy and it is dark.

**So what does this promise from Jesus mean in these moments?** I think for any of us who have experienced grief or hardship, we know that this doesn't just mean that things become easy or that the pain just goes away.

**When I was studying the scripture passage in preparation for this sermon, I read that the words my "yoke is easy" did not mean a life of ease.** But rather it meant "deliverance from the artificial burdens of human religion" and the barriers keeping us from the true fellowship found in the Kingdom of God. Rest in this passage does not mean "ease" but rather salvation and eternal life.

**What I hear in this is that the rest and the ease are found in the community, in the body of Christ.** The kingdom of God here on earth is not without pain and heartache because we still live in a broken and fallen world. But rather it means presence in the midst of the pain. Rest can be found here, rest should be found here. That's our calling, that's our purpose.

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## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

**In Memory:** Since our last newsletter, members **Emily Mahler** (*May 1, 2017 at age 95*) and; **Emma Morgan** (*April 25, 2017*) have passed away.

Also on July 25, 2017, **Georgia Hertneck**, mother of **Pat Kerr**, also passed away at the age of 95. Our condolences to Pat and Alan Kerr and their family.

### LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS (2017 – 2018)

**September** - UMWomen's Pot Pie Sale

**December 9** - UMWomen's Christmas Cookie Sale

**February-** (*Tickets on sale for Flapjack breakfast*)

**March 3** - UMMen's Flapjack breakfast at Applebees

**March** - Boy Scout Spaghetti Dinner

**April** - UMMen's Hoagie Sale

**May** - UMWomen's Community Tea

### AGING WATER PIPES

**On Thursday, August 10th, Pat found the ladies bathroom flooded.** The middle toilet's water supply line had failed and water was pouring out of the wall. Luckily Jim Weikert was home & came to the rescue turning the very stiff water main supply off; he also used his old Navy skills in mopping up the floor after using the shop vac.

**To our horror the water was also pouring down the control panel wall in the boiler room located under the ladies room, shorting out the telephone system and fire alarm system.** A plumber was called and the leak was fixed the same day, but the phone and alarm system were still down. ServePro came and dried out the facility in time for the Beacon concert on Saturday. However, on Saturday before the concert the handicapped toilet in the ladies room was having new parts installed, when that waterline failed and flooded everything again. So the main level bathrooms were immediately closed and we directed everyone to use the lower level facilities until all of the toilets could be inspected by the plumber. Monday morning the plumber repaired the second leak and inspected the remaining toilets on the main floor. **A BIG thank you to Jim Weikert, Bill Vandegrift, John Paynter & Jim Reece.**

## MEMORY CAFE UPDATE

**Erin Maurer and Joan Jensen were instrumental in the startup of the Memory Cafe at Chalfont UMC in October of 2013.** The Cafe is now entering its fourth year of serving people with early to moderate stage of Alzheimer's and their caregivers. It is held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

*The café will be open to persons with early to moderate Alzheimer disease or related dementia and a care giver. The time will include opportunity for coffee and conversation, different types of activities will be offered each month such as sing-a-longs, reminiscence games, life review, and arts and crafts.*

**Our group of guests while small are faithful attendees.** They have bonded together well.

**Our meeting begins with a welcoming, food and conversion.** The guests participate by reading to the group "The Gazette" (*a monthly reminiscing newspaper from the Alzheimer Assoc.*). They enjoy bingo, word games and reminiscing about the past (*they have very interesting memories*). A craft that is especially enjoyed is making greeting cards with matching envelopes. The cards they make are then given to family and friends. We end the meeting with "YOGA" which, believe it or not, they really enjoy.

**Sing-along music is by far the favorite part of the program.** Upon arrival their first question is, "*will Erin be here?*". Much of the time Erin is able to come and conduct the sing along. (*It is a challenge to find a pianist to play for us, even when we pay them. If anyone knows of someone who is willing to play the piano once a month, please let us know.*)

**The Memory Cafe has a dedicated staff who give of their time and creativity** (*some even take time off from work or serve on their days off*). We are working on developing current brochures, and plan to get them printed soon. Jim Weikert has given us guidance towards getting this project completed. The brochures will be distributed to those in the medical profession, retirement homes, the YWCA, public events and caregiver agencies.

**We thank you for your prayers and support.**

*The Memory Cafe workers*

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**As the church, our job is to make room for people to find this rest, this place to drop their burdens and breathe for a while.** It's not complicated, we often over-complicate things. Our job is just to show up and create space for everyone else to do the same.

**Our job isn't to judge someone for their sin or force them out of it or fix them.** Our job is to create space where we can come as we are and allow God to work on us and in us.

**Our job isn't to put a Band-Aid on someone's grief or rush them through it, but rather to create a space where they can come and find rest.** Where they feel loved in the midst of it, while God does the work of healing. Our job isn't to answer all of the questions. Our job is to create a space where those questions can be safely asked and where God is welcomed to answer.

**We have been putting too much pressure on ourselves, taking on responsibilities that we are not meant to carry.** It is so much simpler yet so much greater than we often realize.

**We have been called to carry the sin, the grief, and the questions of the whole world.** Not to fix them, not to heal them, not to answer them. But to hold them - with gentleness, with care, and with deep and abiding faith that God is bigger than us, than our church. God is bigger than the sin and the grief, and the questions. When our whole wide world is confused and broken, we can say: come, we have a place for you. Come, you who are weary, you who are burdened, you who are greatly in need of rest. There is space here for your hurting heart and your tired body.

**What a beautiful gift that we have to offer the world.** It's not to be taken lightly. So we must ask ourselves, each and every day, are we adding to the grief? Or are we easing it?

**What if we make room for everyone?** The ones who are rejoicing and the ones who are grieving? What would the church look like if we just kept making more room at the table?

**I know the power of making room, because Friday Family lunch has taught me.** As my family grieves deeply the loss of my Aunt Marsha, there are no words to make them feel better. No platitudes, *she's in a better place now or this was God's will*, will take away the stinging, aching pain of losing someone you love. Grief can't be rushed. But what my family will do is show up to that table each and every week. They will be present with each other. They will share meals together. They will hold space for my Uncle to just show up and be there. And they will quietly share his grief with him, so that in time God's healing balm of grace can ease his burdens. God will do the work. My family will make room for it to happen.

**This is how it is supposed to happen.** We create the space or make room for the hurting to show up and for God to do the work of healing. Let's uncomplicate the situation. Our job is simple but it is tremendously powerful. May we be the church that people run to find rest for their souls. May we be known as the people who ease the grief of the world, instead of adding to it. May we make room for God to show up. And in turn, may our own hearts find the rest that we are longing for.

*Pastor Stacy Gonzalez*

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### **BEACON CONCERT**

**Weather did not cooperate Saturday, August 12th for the outdoor courtyard performance.** Saturday morning the decision was made to move inside due to the threat of rain (*which did come briefly at 7:30 pm*). 50 people attended. Great job Beacon (*Mike & Erin Maurer, Larry Schenk, Mike Mooney, Andy Seekford & Alan Kerr, sound board*)!

**UMM (*Ed Schnell & Jim Reece*) offered pulled pork sandwiches, hot pretzels & refreshments for a donation.**

**Thanks to *Neil & Janet Boylan* who spent 2 days in the courtyard trimming the bushes/hedges & weeding the flower beds; also *Sue Cody & Debra Schaar* for the colorful plants.** You still have another chance to enjoy the courtyard, mark your calendar for Sunday, September 3rd 10:00 outdoor worship service.

## *The Messenger*

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### STAFF DIRECTORY

REV. BARBARA SEEKFORD	Pastor
REV. ERIN MAURER	Deacon, Worship Leader
CRIS FRISCO	Director of Music
PATRICIA L. KERR	Church Administrator

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## IMPORTANT DATES

### **Sunday, August 27**

*(Last morning worship at 9:30 and 11:00  
in the Family Life Center)*

### **Sunday, September 3**

*(Combined morning worship at 10:00  
in the newly completed courtyard)*

### **Sunday, September 10**

*(Morning worship at 9:30 in the sanctuary and 11:00;  
Sunday school begins)*

### **Sunday, September 17**

*(Morning worship at 9:30 and 11:00)*

### **Sunday, September 24**

*(Morning worship at 9:30 and 11:00)*

Join us for...  
a special combined, outdoor  
Morning Worship

**Sunday, September 3  
10:00 am**

*(This service will be held  
in the newly completed courtyard -  
weather permitting)*