

Dear Friends...

For short period of time when our kids were young, Dave and I talked about moving, not out of Meadville but to a bigger house. When I asked our son Dan, about ten at the time, what he thought about a move, his response was emphatic. “We can't move, Mom!”. When asked why he said, “Because this is where we live!”. Such simple circular reasoning! As it turned out, we didn't move but rather added on to the house we were already living in.

This story came to mind as I've considered all the changes made at the church over these past few months. For those of us who have been at Stone church for a long time (I include myself in this group as I first became a lay member here almost forty years ago) it is tempting to say, “The church can't change because this church is “The Church” just as it is!”

What has happened over these past five months is that while we haven't moved, at least not physically, we have definitely added on! We have added on to our online presence through our website and Facebook page. We have a new church management platform (Tithe.ly) that allows us to have a church app on our phones and a new way to financially give. We have a new staff position, Director of Online Ministries. We have called on those who can't be with us in person and we have a plan to reach out to young families this fall. We are “adding on” to make room for new people!

God's call on the community of faith known as Stone Church is big and bold; to be a conduit of God's love and saving grace, meeting people where they are, connecting them to Christ and one another, helping them grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. This work will take faith, energy, ideas, compassion, courage and love. Each of us will need to both ask for and offer help, ask for and offer forgiveness.

I am encouraged by your faith and look forward to all the ways that together we can be the church Christ calls us to be.

In the name of “the One who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly more than all we can ask for or imagine”...Pastor Sarah

### Worship Calendar

**Throughout September we will continue to worship at 9am ...  
**in person and on Armstrong cable channels 23 and 100.**  
**You can also worship with Stone on our Facebook Page**  
**StoneUMC.org****

**THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!** A heartfelt thanks to...All who have safely transitioned back to in person worship and those who continue to join us from home via Armstrong Cable and Facebook...The dedicated electricians who worked long hours laying wiring for a new security system, improved sound and video equipment in the sanctuary and reliable internet access throughout the building...Jen Ashbaugh for helping train staff to effectively use our new online resources...All who have already said yes to new (or renewed) lay leadership commitments in 2021...Our Soup Kitchen, Lord's Locker and Senior Food box volunteers for stepping up to ensure these vital ministries carry on... All who continue to support the ministries of Stone through their prayers and financial giving... Thanks to all who give, serve, lead and love. **THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!**



### **Crawford Gives was a great success!!**

Crawford Gives took place for 48 hours on August 10 & 11. \$953 was raised for the Outreach! Matching funds will be added to that total after the Heritage Foundation processes the final totals. As a community, we raised \$377,638.64 for over 100 different nonprofits in Crawford County! It is always an honor to be a part of this event! Thank you to everyone that donated, spread the word, and supported us during this campaign! We appreciate your generous support.



### **Welcome new members Suzanne and Andy Lawlor!**

With great joy we welcome Suzanne and Andy Lawlor as “official members” of Stone Church. For some time, Suzanne and Andy have been a part of the church, sharing in worship and other activities with their daughter Sarah Johnston, her husband Tyson and their daughters. When asked what they enjoy, Suzanne responded, “We love spending time with our adorable granddaughters Morgan and Ashley Johnston (as well as their parents). As a retired art teacher, I enjoy spending time in my home ceramics studio and riding my horse Ellie. Andy is a senior IT executive with Campus Works and is currently working with the College of Southern Maryland. Andy is an avid runner and is looking for a horse of his own”. Andy has already come on board to assist with our newly formed communications and technology committee. Welcome Suzanne and Andy!



**Would you like to find calm in the midst of chaos?  
If so...you've come to the right place!**

**Beginning the week of September 13<sup>th</sup>, we will be offering  
two different discussion groups based on Max Lucado's book:**

***“Anxious for Nothing: Finding Calm in a Chaotic World”***

**The evening session, led by Pastor Sarah and Marian Beckman, will be  
on Zoom so you can join in from the comfort of your own home.**

This conversation happens every

**Monday evening 6:30-7:30 from September 14<sup>th</sup> - October 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**The morning session, led by Pastor Sarah,  
will be every Wednesday morning 10-11am September 16<sup>th</sup> - October 14<sup>th</sup>.  
We will meet in person in Miller Parlor.**

**For both of these sessions, you need to register. You can do so by calling or emailing the  
church office (814-724-6736/ [churchoffice@stoneumc.org](mailto:churchoffice@stoneumc.org)), on our website  
([www.stoneumc.org](http://www.stoneumc.org)) or Facebook page([www.facebook.com/stoneumc.org](https://www.facebook.com/stoneumc.org)).**

Parents and Grandparents...

Coming soon! Our fall outreach to all ages of kids and youth!  
Keep your eye on our Facebook and Website for more information!



Congratulations to Kris Lambert on the birth of her grandson, Eli Vincent Lambert,  
born July 30, 2020.

Congratulations to Faith and DJ Costa on the birth of their son, Kobe Roger , born on  
August 21, 2020. Grandma is Gloria Shields.



Girl Scouts Troop #36520 will be collecting nonperishable food items for the Salvation Army's  
food box program throughout the month of September. A collection boxes will be in the church  
lobby. Please be sure to check the expiration date before bringing in your donations.

Thank you!



Our condolences go out to Harry Jewell and family whose brother, Gene, passed away on August 2, 2020.

#### DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

As we continue to grow our online ministries, every day, we'll be posting an inspirational, scriptural or conversation post to help our Facebook and Instagram pages reach more people.

We encourage all of you to become digital missionaries...here's how you can do it! Go to our church Facebook page and check out our daily posts. The more you like and share our graphics, the greater our reach and impact can be on Facebook!

When you share our daily graphics with your friends, they'll see these posts in their newsfeeds as well. Not only will your Facebook friends see our church name, they can then like, share or comment on the image, giving our church the opportunity to reach those that are hurting, need some encouragement or don't know Jesus yet.

This is an important part. As you share the post, please take a moment to pray for those who will see it. Pray that they will be encouraged and challenged. Pray that God will use these simple posts to draw others closer to him. This is a great way to be actively engaged in praying for our friends who may not be Christians or go to church regularly.

Share our inspiring daily posts every day or as often as you can to help us reach new people in our community and help introduce them to our church, but more importantly, the love and hope of Jesus Christ.



#### **The Race is On...to end Homelessness in Erie!**

Register today to join Stone's "Ride for the Refuge" team, "The Stone Riders".

You can ride a bike of any size or type, peddle or motorized...

Any distance, any time in the month of September.

All money raised goes to support our own United Methodist ministry in Erie  
Erie United Methodist Alliance (EUMA)

Go to **Stoneumc.org** to register to ride or to make a donation.

**Together we are in it to win it!**

## **Exciting updates from the Communications and Technology Committee...**

With the help of contractors, staff and volunteers, the month of August has ushered in major technological upgrades at Stone UMC. Behind the scenes (literally), thousands of feet of computer networking (ethernet) cables have been run throughout the entire building, a process taking about two-and-a-half weeks. All of these cables and the special hardware connecting them together provide a strong backbone that allows many types of devices (more on that below) to communicate with each other. Most importantly, it provides reliable internet access for everyone in the entire building, something we've never had before.

### **Security Cameras**

Thanks to the generous donations of several Stone families, 16 high-definition digital security cameras have been installed in strategic locations inside and outside of the building. Each camera runs on a single ethernet cable. The cameras work in both light and dark and will record the digital footage to a centralized unit that can be monitored on site or off site via a secure connection over the internet. The cameras will not only help in the event of a security breach but may also help in premises liability cases should the need ever arise. Because these cameras use a standard ethernet cable for power and signal instead of a proprietary cable or cables, when the time comes to replace or upgrade the cameras, we will be able to use the existing cables.

### **Sanctuary and broadcast upgrades**

In the Sanctuary, many additions have been made to improve our weekly broadcasts/streams on cable TV and online. The first upgrade was a digital soundboard which allows us to have finer control over the audio quality - particularly on our online stream. This soundboard also has the ability to be controlled remotely with an iPad, which is helpful during musical practice sessions so someone does not have to run up and down the stairs to the balcony to make adjustments. Related to the sound board is the addition of new microphones in the organ chamber. These microphones allow us to better capture the sound of the organ for our online and TV viewers.

The second upgrade was the addition of two high-definition robotically controlled video cameras in the Sanctuary. One camera is mounted on the pillar nearest the organ and the other on the balcony railing. These two new cameras replace the one analog camera on a tripod that Armstrong provided

for our use for so many years. The two new cameras are controlled by one person using push-buttons in the sound booth in the balcony. The video, sound and any text or graphics are mixed with a computer in the sound booth and the final signal is streamed live online (our website and Facebook page) and to Armstrong cable on CTV-13 (channels 23 and 100). Sunday, August 23 was our first Sunday using these cameras - you probably noticed the improved picture quality and the addition of a new camera angle!

Four 60" flat-panel monitors make up the third upgrade to the Sanctuary. The first pair are mounted next to the speakers on the left and right sides in the front of the church and the next pair are mounted on the second row of pillars on the left and right sides. These monitors open up many possibilities including, but not limited to, the display of announcements, video close-ups, playback of pre-recorded media (like our virtual choir) and, when we start congregation singing again, hymn lyrics! Additionally, we will now be able to broadcast whatever is on the Sanctuary monitors to the existing lobby monitor.

### **What's next?**

These technological upgrades have moved Stone UMC to the cutting edge of technology. All of these upgrades had been discussed for many years, but COVID-19 really forced us to adapt or be left behind. We have worked very hard to ensure that there have not been any gaps in Sunday worship service since the COVID-19 pandemic started. Yes, there have been some glitches along the way, but we continue to strive to provide the highest quality broadcast/stream that we can. Further, with our building now being fully internet-connected, new possibilities are afoot, such as hybrid in-person/virtual meetings, bible studies, etc. Stay tuned! God has great things in store for the ministry of Stone UMC!

On behalf of the Communications and Technology Committee,  
Tyson Johnston

### **Tithe.ly ChMS**

What exactly is Tithe.ly ChMS? As part of our Communications and Technology updates, in the month of September, we will be implementing a new online church management system. As a member, you will have access to a member site, online church directory, a record of your personal giving, information about services and events and much, much more! In the next few weeks, you will be receiving an email with login information for the site. Take a moment today to contact the church office to update your email and contact information so we can serve you better during this season.