

The Cornerstone

The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:22-23

VOLUME LXIV NUMBER 33

August 20, 2026

Summer Worship Series:



Leadership Lessons From the Toy Box



This Sunday:

*THE ROCKING
HORSE*

Mark 12:28-34



Thank you for your generous support of Interfaith Neighbors. Your recent donation of \$1,243 donated on 6/30/26 supports our mission to build healthier, more resilient communities. (June's Communion offering)

As valid donors, you join IFN's legion of compassionate neighbors and supporters who, for 38 years, have been helping vulnerable neighbors throughout Monmouth County secure life's critical necessities.

Paul L. McEvily
Senior Advisor

Conference Opportunities

Rebuilding the Village - hosted by GNJ COSROW

Many of us have felt isolated or struggled with burnout at one time or another. On **Sept. 26, from 9:30am-2:30pm**, GNJ's Commission on the Status and Role of Women will be hosting **Rebuilding the Village**, an event seeking to support and uplift women, their voices, and their lived experiences.

Through storytelling and reflection, we'll explore ways we have experienced villages of support, ways we've failed to be a village, and steps we can take to build villages for one another.

[Register here.](#)



Location: Mission and Resource Center (205 Jumping Brook Rd., Neptune, NJ)

9:30am: Registration & Coffee Fellowship

10:00am: Program



Small group app now offers Henri Nouwen study

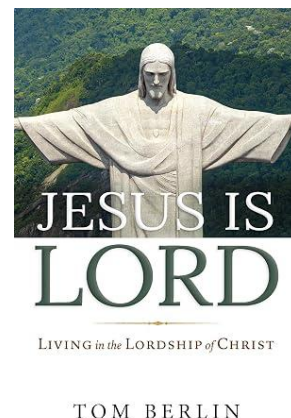
The [BeADisciple Study App](#) provides the small group infrastructure to help your church host its own small groups in a new and more flexible way, giving groups everything they need in an app-based format.

NEW! Henri Nouwen's [Following Jesus: Finding Home in an Age of Anxiety](#) — a six-week study of the book with embedded daily prayer practices and videos clips of Nouwen from the Henri Nouwen Society.



CONNECTED: New four-week worship, discipleship, and stewardship journey

Preview "Connected," the upcoming Breakthrough worship series that invites your congregation to recognize life as gift, discover that everyone matters and belongs, reconnect with their God-given purpose, and participate more fully in God's mission.



One of the many ways Christians grow in faith together is through Sunday school. While Sunday school is often associated with children and youth, it is equally vital for adults. **Adult classes create space for deeper spiritual formation, meaningful conversation, and the kind of Christian community that sustains discipleship over time.**

Join the adult Sunday school class as they study UM Bishop Tom Berlin's *Jesus Is Lord: Living in the Lordship of Christ*.

This study calls Christians to an integrated faith that is credible, joyful, and faithful in everyday life.

The class will begin this study on Sunday, September 13th. It meets in Wesley Hall at 11 am.

NOTE: There is a book of the same name on which this study is based. You may purchase it on your own or check your local library. The book is NOT needed to enjoy the study.

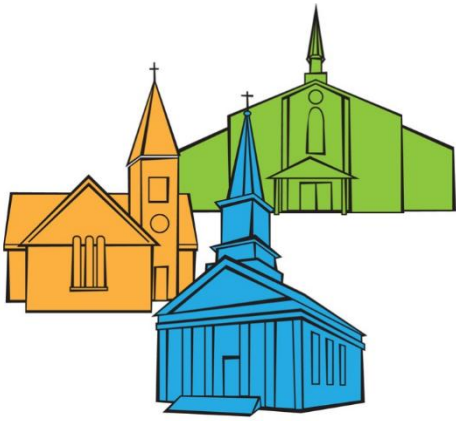


The pastor's summer book club proved to be a popular gathering. The participants have decided to continue it. The club will meet the first Wednesday of each month. Each participant will have the opportunity to pick a book for the following month. September's book is *The Music of Bees*. *The Music of Bees* is a heartwarming novel by Eileen Garvin about friendship, healing, and the unifying power of honeybees in a small Oregon town.

Overview

Published in 2021, *The Music of Bees* follows three lonely individuals in Hood River, Oregon, whose lives intersect on a local honeybee farm. The story centers on Alice Holtzman, a 44-year-old widow and beekeeper struggling with panic attacks and grief; Jake Stevenson, an 18-year-old paraplegic teenager coping with depression; and Harry Stokes, a socially anxious young man seeking purpose and connection.

******Please note that for September, the club will meet on the 9th.**



CHURCH CONFERENCE

October 31st, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

All are invited to attend the annual church conference here at FUMCO.

REMINDER: If you are submitting a report, they are due in the Brick River reporting system by September 30th. However, if Joy is entering your report for you, she must have it by September 21st. Please call the church office with any questions.



Summer Communion Service in the Prayer Garden –

**Sept. 6th
8:00 a.m.**

Busy summer schedule? Want to worship and still maximize the day? Want to be outside and worship amid God's beautiful creation yet still beat the heat of the day?

We have a service for you. The first Sunday of the month in the summer, Jill leads us in a Communion service in our prayer garden. Come sit in this beautiful space for Word, message, song, and Communion.

You are invited to follow the sidewalk from the parking lot north on Monmouth Road to the garden entrance.



Have questions? They have answers!
Here you'll find responses to many of the questions asked most often or you may submit one of your own. There's even a live chat!

We Walk By Faith: Immigration

In the face of growing challenges affecting immigrant communities, We Walk by Faith is a call to stand together. Join us on **Thursday, September 10, at Haddonfield United Methodist Church (29 Warwick Rd., Haddonfield, NJ)** for an evening of learning, honest conversation, and faithful action. We will gather for dinner at **6:00 PM**, followed by the program at **7:00 PM**.



United Methodists and the broader community will hear from local leaders, advocates, and those working alongside immigrants and families impacted by detention, engage in table conversations, and connect with organizations making a difference across New Jersey. Whether you are looking to deepen your understanding, ask honest questions, or discover meaningful ways to get involved, this evening offers an opportunity to listen, learn, and discern how we can faithfully respond together. Join us at Haddonfield UMC along with Bishop Moore-Koikoi as we walk by faith in pursuit of justice, compassion, and hope. [Register here.](#)

NEW! Pen Pal Ministry

If it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." Romans 12:8

Debbie Eckert (Old First) has spoken with the leaders at Keswick, and they are ready to begin the Pen Pal Ministry now entitled Connected. This is a letter program to encourage men and women going through the addiction program at America's Keswick.

Here is how it works:

- Write to either a man or a woman.
- Put it in an unsealed envelope with the gender for whom it is written.
- Use only your first name (no last name please).
- Indicate if you are from FUMCO or Old First UMC so the recipient can respond.
- Put your notes of encouragement in the basket marked "Connected" just outside the sanctuary.
- Your notes will be delivered on Fridays.
- Notes back to us will be put in the basket as well so don't forget to check the basket.

Wondering what to write in your note?

They are individuals who need encouragement and support. They are folks probably missing home and need to be reminded of God's love for them. They may or may not have family, so this is a wonderful way to help them know that they have a spiritual family.

Any questions, call Debbie Ecker: 908-489-7619 or eckertpartygirl@hotmail.com





**Monmouth Medical
Center is seeking NEW,
Birth - 2 Years old toys
for their pediatrics
department along with
DVD's (not needed to be
new)! Drop off to WNS!!**



Worship

13th Sunday after Pentecost
August 23, 2026

Counters: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

Greeter: Pamela Lynch

Usher: Gerry Busfield

Acolyte: Faye Snorton

Lay Reader: David Furda

Altar Flowers

Given in loving memory of Betty Lou Beckmann
by Peggy Ann.

Given by Carol Whyte in loving memory of her
son, Scott Gill, now in heaven 10 years.



Worship

14th Sunday after Pentecost
August 30, 2026

Counters: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

Greeter: Rand Danielson

Usher: Jay Aretino

Acolyte: Ian Furda

Lay Reader: Robert Crowther

Altar Flowers

Given by Bonnie McNamara in honor of Robin's
and Buddy's wedding anniversary.

Given in honor of Jenny Henderson by her
family.

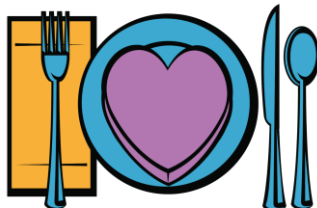


COMMUNITY JAVA WITH JILL

AUGUST 25th, 10 a.m.

Join Pastor Hubbard-Smith and friends at the
Blue Swan Diner for an informal gathering to
share conversation and perhaps a treat of your
choosing.

COMMUNITY



DINNER

The next **free** community spaghetti dinner will be on
September 20th at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited to
Fellowship Hall for a delicious meal and good
company.



Have you seen me?

Hidden around the
sanctuary are pocket-
sized Jesuses. If you
find one (or more) you
are invited to take it
with you or re-hide it for
someone else to find.
Thanks to Jim Starkey
for this fun idea!

*Please be
Praying for...*

Our homebound: Bev Itell, Virginia Haydu, Bob
Sproat, Bertha Ahrens, Carey Carlisle, Priscilla
Smith, Elaine Gould

At home: Carol Steinat

Jersey Shore Care Center: Dave Miller

The Rehab Center at Wedgwood Gardens: Nancy
Burt

Our church family worshipping at a distance:

Barbara Novick, Laura Eble, Jack & Caroline
Chesbro



MERCY CENTER

The Outreach Commission thanks you for your continued support of the Mercy Center food bank. Here are the current needs: canned meats, canned fish, beans, lentils, rice, pasta, oats, whole-grain cereals, low-sodium soup, canned fruits, canned vegetables, peanut butter, powdered milk, & nonperishable oils.

WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS



August 23 – August 29

Exodus 1:8-2:10
Psalm 124
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16 13-20

The Little Free Pantry



Please think of stocking shelf-stable milk, powdered milk, soup, stew, chili, whole grain cereal, toiletries, hygiene products, baby food, applesauce, canned beans, canned chicken, canned tuna,

canned salmon, SPAM, canned ham, canned vegetables, olive oil, canola oil, crackers, dried herbs, spices, canned fruit, dried fruit, granola bars, instant mashed potatoes, meals in a box, nuts, pasta, peanut butter, & rice.

A good idea this week:
Vinegar

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

**I will live forgiven. I will
forgive so that I may live.**
– Max Lucado



Tsedalech, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia, is sponsored for the month of August by Mel & Jeff Ragle in loving memory of Jeff's mother, Emma Jean Ragle.

OUR AUGUST COMMUNION OFFERING BENEFITS DISASTER RELIEF.

Beaded Crosses for Sale to Benefit Keswick Ministry.

Debbie Eckert (Old First UMC) is making & selling these small, beaded crosses to support the Keswick ministry. Keswick provides a program for addiction recovery that costs approximately \$11,000.00 yet they only charge the participant \$600.00.

By providing a donation to this life changing ministry, you will receive a handmade beaded cross from Debbie. They are available from Debbie on Sunday mornings or contact Debbie at Eckertpartygirl@hotmail.com.



August is a 5th Sunday month

What is a 5th Sunday? In the months when there are 5 Sundays, the Finance Committee and Board of Trustees ask for a collection that will help reduce the costs of snow removal and salting in the winter months. Those costs contribute significantly to the church's annual budget costs. If you would like to make an offering to this collection, please use the yellow envelopes found on the tables in the sanctuary entrances.