



POUGHKEEPSIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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The Journey

AUGUST 2023

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MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KREGG

The rolling of your thunder was heard, your lightning-flashes lit up the world, the earth shuddered and shook. Your way led over the sea, your path over the countless waters, and none could trace your footsteps. You guided your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

— Psalm 77:18-20

Author *Scott Walker* begins his latest book, *Glimpses of God: Stories that Point the Way*, with a gripping narrative of a group of young men lost in the woods on a dark stormy winter's night. The young men had spent the day hunting. They were to meet back at a certain field by a certain time, but one, *Walker* himself, fell asleep in a tree and ended up getting back as a fierce storm moved into the valley. Another young man got lost in the woods as the darkness gathered. The three men who waited for him on the edge of the field heard first one shot, and they let off a round in reply — following the shots, they found each other in the dark, which was complete in the icy falling winter rain.

Each young man's heart sank as they thought of the stormy night ahead, lost in the woods. Just when they resigned themselves to their fate, a blaze of lightning lit up the woods, and they could see through the trees into a field.

They made their way in its direction, navigating from thunderous flash to flash. They soon could see the car's outline on the roadside at the edge of the field. Getting in the car was a moment of relief and satisfaction. Now warm and dry, the flashes, glimpses of the way to go in the darkness led them to comfort and safety.

Walker concludes the following about this adventure:

“Perhaps, above all, the graphic imagery of the lightning has seared across my memory. . . . The lightning was a pure gift; nothing we had earned or could make happen. With all of our frantic willpower we could not generate nor coerce its bursts of illumination. Rather, the lightning came to us. It was something that graced our path and gave us a sense of direction in the midst of our wandering and perplexity.”

“Many times since that night I have again experienced life as one who is lost and in need of insight and guidance. Even in the brilliance of a noontday, my internal world has sometimes been shrouded and obscure, and I have found myself fighting panic and confusion. . . . In all of these moments of lostness, blindness, and insecurity, I have found that *God* has been faithful to send the lightning again — a flash of something that gave me a momentary glimpse into my future or the meaning of my life.” (pp. 11-12)

Sometimes in our lives, a darkness of the soul seems to cover us. We search for direction concerning careers, personal relationships, or just answers amid our affliction. How often do we grope in the dark, thinking that movement is always the best thing, as we console ourselves that at least we are doing something?

At these times, we must look for, wait for, the lightning to strike in the night, for a few more steps to become plain, and then take them in patience. Too often, we either fear the power of the flash — thinking it will change us or light up areas we don't want to pursue — or close our eyes until the light is gone and sound subsides — thinking that we can move better on our own by simply feeling the way out.

God has worked through my life in flashes. Some I have let pass by. I have closed my eyes to some flashes in the dark, fearing to look at where I was going: the precipice one sees, tends to be much more daunting than one that only might hypothetically exist. But *God* has allowed the grace of multiple strikes in my life, multiple opportunities to get it right in the flashes. Such providential and duplicitous Divine inspiration is the case for all of us. If you are in the middle of a storm, are you praying and waiting for *God's* spark to guide you? If all is well, are you just meandering down the path, or are you looking to *God* to still blaze in life and lead you to new vitality and joy? How are you using the Spirit's flash of direction to guide and guard your footsteps, and how are you discerning, not seizing, *God's* revelation for your life today?

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE AUTUMN FAIR IS COMING IN OCTOBER!



Our wonderful Autumn Fair will be here before you know it. You will be able to shop for handmade items, homemade goodies, and fancy jewels and enjoy a delicious take away lunch.

One of the most popular spots is our "famous" display of gift baskets. We have the most creative basket makers in town. While you are on vacation, be looking for ideas for something unique to put in a basket. Remember that baskets for men and children are always needed. Baskets to hold your items can be provided if needed.

Sign-ups will begin right after Labor Day. We are looking forward to your special creations!



FEASTING ON FINANCE

God, our provider, in *Christ* you give us a spring of pure water that overflows to eternal life. Your love and hope fill our hearts, so we want to worship you in Spirit and truth. Open our eyes to see the places in this community where our church's ministries could reach new people. Direct our energies for your purposes and the fulfillment of your mission, so that our community will become like a field ripe for harvest. We ask this through *Christ*, our risen *Lord*. Amen

Ephesians 3:20

To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of: to *God* be the glory in the church and in *Christ Jesus* for all time, forever and ever!

NOW, ON TO FINANCES

From the PUMC Balance Sheet dated June 30, 2023

	<u>Checking</u>		<u>Savings</u>
00540 Non-Restricted	\$83,002.84	00600 Seeds of Strength	\$33,003.05
00541 Restricted	\$29,925.63		

From the PUMC P&L dated Jun 30, 2023

Revenues	\$169,284.88
Expenses	199,750.91 *
Net Ordinary Income	-\$30,466.03

* Includes \$11,782.95 of additional expenses funded with PPP funds.

Budget Actual vs Planned

- as of **June 30th** we are **6 months**, or **50%**, into the 12 month **fiscal year**.
 - 43.4% of Total Fiscal Year Revenue, to date.
 - 51.2% of Total Fiscal Year Expense, to date
- FYI, apportionment payments are paid monthly and are current as of **June 30th**.

SOME OF WHAT YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE LOOKS FORWARD TO IN 2023 INCLUDES

- **Audit of 2022 Church Finances** data collection is complete. Written reports are in process.
- **Employee Retention Credit (ERC)** is part of the Paycheck Protection Program of the CARES Act. This is a reimbursement credit against part of our employee salaries for CNS, HTASC and PUMC in both 2020 and 2021. Any ERC funds received will be distributed pro-rata to CNS, HTASC & PUMC.
- **2024 Budget** — In September, the Finance Committee will begin developing the 2024 Budget.
- **United Methodist Special Sunday's in 2023**
 - 10-01-2023 World Communion Sunday
 - 11-26-2023 United Methodist Student Day Sunday

As always, feel free to contact me.

In service,
Will Cass _____
 Finance Committee Chair



STEWARDSHIP

(Beth Borchert)



SPOTLIGHT ON STEWARDSHIP: PIECE # 6 – TONGUE

I don't know about you, but sometimes I say something, and even before it is fully out of my mouth, I want to take it back. Sometimes I don't even realize I have said something hurtful until I notice the pained reaction it evokes. What I intended as a "little joke" may have struck a deep chord. But I didn't mean it . . .

Likewise, sometimes I make a sincere statement that brightens someone's day – it was just the right thing at just the right moment.

There is a whole section on taming the tongue in the book of James Chapter 3. The bottom line is that our words are powerful and we need to be good stewards of what we say. Do our words uplift or strike down?

I am very happy to report that I hear a lot of encouraging words on the tongues of our church members. Especially when we are speaking to and speaking about our children and youth. This spring I had the privilege of attending a Quinceañera service. My favorite part was when friends and relatives were invited to speak about the qualities they most loved or admired about the honoree. What an effective use of the tongue to uplift! To be honest, on occasion I will hear something less-than-uplifting within these walls, so I guess there is always room for improvement.

This month I am asking myself, "How can I be more uplifting with my tongue?" How about you?

"To watch over mouth and tongue is to keep out of trouble." – Proverbs 21:23 (NRSV)

FITTING TOGETHER OUR FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP PUZZLE FOR 2023

Pledged giving through June 30, 2023 was \$128,416 or 54.6% of our budget goal (\$235,000). Non-Pledged giving through June 30, 2023 was \$19,677 or 26.2% of our budget goal (\$75,000). Our combined giving was almost 48% of our budget goal – a little shy of our goal going into the summer months. We continue to praise God for helping the pieces of our financial stewardship puzzle fall into place! Thank you for your support of PUMC's ministries. Please pray that we will be able to continue our vital work.

INTERIM PLEDGE STATEMENTS

The Stewardship Committee handed out interim pledge statements in church on June 25 and July 2. The remaining statements were mailed. If you have any questions about - or corrections to - your statement, please contact our Financial Secretary, *Kaye Schrock*. If you did not receive a statement, Kaye will be happy to prepare one for you upon request.

CHORTLE





— VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

(RESPONSE TO EDITOR@POKUMC.ORG)

BACKUP FOR THE JOURNEY'S EDITOR

Want to try something new or revisit a previous newsletter experience? Do you have some computer skills, a creative bent, and like to work with a fine group of people? You might want to consider becoming a backup to the Editor of PUMC's newsletter The Journey (and eventual Editor). On the job training is provided before any solo flight.

TALLYING PUMC'S OFFERINGS

We currently have 10 paired volunteers committed to counting the church offering once a month, **usually** after Sunday service. There are also three substitutes, who serve when a regular volunteer is unavailable, and an Administrative Counter. What is now needed are three volunteers, two as additional **Substitute Counters**, and one to serve as the **Administrative Counter's Backup**. Pick a Sunday, and we can arrange for you to observe the process. Note, once you volunteer you will always begin by being paired with someone experienced with the process.

KIDS' CORNER



Godly, biblical wisdom is more valuable than gold or silver. Make this do-it-yourself toy to practice your searching skills.

What you need:

- 12 small, smooth rocks
- An empty, clean egg carton
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic paint (gold or silver)
- Black permanent marker

What you do:

1. Clean the rocks and egg carton. Place newspaper on a table to protect it from paint.
2. Paint all sides of the rocks and carton. Let dry. Add a second coat, if desired.
3. When rocks are dry, number each rock (1-12) with marker. Place rocks in the carton.
4. Play hide-and-seek with a friend. Take turns hiding the rocks in a room, sandbox or backyard. Give clues, if needed, and count the rocks as they're returned.
5. Use your imagination to incorporate a treasure hunt into study time or family devotions.



A PATH TO PRAYER

God's Word offers lots of insights about how to pray.

Directions: Use the code to fill in the blanks and complete a Bible passage about prayer.



R G S Z M P N B T L W
 V E V I B G R N V R
 I V N V N Y V I B L F
 R M Z O O N B
 K I Z B V I H U L I Z O O
 L U B L F R Z O D Z B H
 K I Z B D R G S Q L B
 K S R O R K K R Z M H

1:3-4, NIV

Answers: I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. Philippians 1:3-4, NIV

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

OUR MEMBERS & THEIR FAMILIES

Barbara Bates, Gladys Bierce, Janet Cole, Ron Cole, Dylan Coughlin, Sandra DeGuzman, Irene Feller, Emily Griess, Betsy Grover, Tom Halloran, Sandra Hansen, Gwen Higgins, Pat Hughes, Dick James, Donna Jonnigan, Danny Jones, Betty Longobardi, Julia Miller, Kathleen Nicodemus, Michelle Olavarria, Karla Quinlan, Diana Silverman, Michelle Simonis, Jeff Tryon, Harold Veeder, Kerianne Wendover, Catherine White, Sarah-Grace White, Marilyn Zier.

FRIENDS OF OUR CHURCH

Jonathan Brown, Georgia Kustas-Beurket, Cris and John Burke, Jerry Calvin, Jordan Fidler, Bryan Foy, Tom Humphries, Edgar Martinez, Adonis Marzan, Hilary McAllister, Jean Slater, Wayne Surico, Robert Thompson-Gee, Ronald Tomaso, Jackie Triguero, Clifford Zier.

Also all those impacted by the Coronavirus, and the people in Ukraine.

MEMBERS OF OUR MILITARY (BOTH THE ACTIVE AND/OR RETIRED)

Joshua Lord, 1-69 Infantry Medical Platoon Sergeant, NYC; **Randal Middleton**, Naples, Italy Naval Base, **Major Jason Oliver**, Texas.



A THOUGHT

Your mind is like a parachute . . .
it functions only when open.

CALENDAR

Tuesday, August 1, 2023	Saturday, August 12, 2023	Tuesday, August 22, 2023
9:00AM CNS CAMP (UNTIL 11:30AM) 1:00PM ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA	8:30AM GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS	1:00PM ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA
Wednesday, August 2, 2023	Sunday, August 13, 2023	Wednesday, August 23, 2023
7:30AM MORNING PRAYERS 9:00AM CNS CAMP (UNTIL 11:30AM) 12:00PM MEDITATIVE MOMENTS (ZOOM) 1:30PM NANCY'S BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM CHURCH COUNCIL	8:00AM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICE 8:45AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00AM IN-PERSON & STREAMING SERVICE 10:00AM CHILDREN SUNDAY SCHOOL 2:00PM PARKSIDE AA	7:30AM MORNING PRAYERS 12:00PM MEDITATIVE MOMENTS (ZOOM) 1:00PM SANDY'S BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM TRUSTEES
Thursday, August 3, 2023	Monday, August 14, 2023	Thursday, August 24, 2023
9:00AM CNS CAMP (UNTIL 11:30AM) 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA	9:00AM MONDAY STUDY GROUP 6:30PM POUGH GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS 7:00PM TED TALK WATCH PARTY	5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA 7:00PM EVANGELISM & CHURCH GROWTH
Friday, August 4, 2023	Tuesday, August 15, 2023	Friday, August 25, 2023
9:00AM CNS CAMP (UNTIL 11:30AM)	1:00PM ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA 7:30PM DISMANTLING RACISM	8:30AM COLLATING/MAILING THE JOURNEY 7:00PM MOVIES WITH MEANING
Saturday, August 5, 2023	Wednesday, August 16, 2023	Saturday, August 26, 2023
8:30AM GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS	THE JOURNEY DEADLINE 7:30AM MORNING PRAYERS 12:00PM MEDITATIVE MOMENTS (ZOOM) 1:30PM NANCY'S BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM FINANCE	HOMELESS SHELTER 8:30AM GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS
Sunday, August 6, 2023	Thursday, August 17, 2023	Sunday, August 27, 2023
8:00AM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICE 8:45AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00AM IN-PERSON & STREAMING SERVICE 10:00AM CHILDREN SUNDAY SCHOOL 1:00PM SMITH AME SERVICE 2:00PM PARKSIDE AA	5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA	8:00AM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICE 8:45AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00AM IN-PERSON & STREAMING SERVICE 10:00AM CHILDREN SUNDAY SCHOOL 2:00PM PARKSIDE AA
Monday, August 7, 2023	Friday, August 18, 2023	Monday, August 28, 2023
9:00AM MONDAY STUDY GROUP 6:30PM POUGH GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS		9:00AM MONDAY STUDY GROUP 6:30PM POUGH GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS
Tuesday, August 8, 2023	Saturday, August 19, 2023	Tuesday, August 29, 2023
1:00PM ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA	8:30AM GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS	1:00PM ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA
Wednesday, August 9, 2023	Sunday, August 20, 2023	Wednesday, August 30, 2023
7:30AM MORNING PRAYERS 1:00PM SANDY'S BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM SPRC	8:00AM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICE 8:45AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00AM IN-PERSON & STREAMING SERVICE 10:00AM CHILDREN SUNDAY SCHOOL 2:00PM PARKSIDE AA	LANCASTER TRIP 7:30AM MORNING PRAYERS 12:00PM MEDITATIVE MOMENTS (ZOOM)
Thursday, August 10, 2023	Monday, August 21, 2023	Thursday, August 31, 2023
5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA	9:00AM MONDAY STUDY GROUP 6:30PM POUGH GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS	LANCASTER TRIP 5:30PM PRIMARY PURPOSE AA
Friday, August 11, 2023		