



State Line UMC

May 2022

# Without Borders

## Letter to the Congregation

Dear Fellow Congregants:

I'm sure you're wondering how we as a church got to the point where we are facing the possibility of closing our doors. State Line UMC, along with many other churches, has struggled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some members said they left because we were forced to close; some were still fearful of the virus, while others didn't want to wear a mask. We've seen a few congregants return, and we are joyful to have them amongst us once more. As to the losses, we all knew things weren't great, but we have been muddling along ok, haven't we? The bills are (just barely) getting paid. But is that what Jesus calls us to do, just muddle along and pay the bills?

Since early in the pandemic, our leadership has been working closely with Conference leaders in an effort to pull ourselves out of the hole we found ourselves in. Conference graciously allowed us to 'catch up' over time when we couldn't meet the former pastor's insurance and retirement payments; likewise, we were permitted to withhold apportionments. Conference encouraged us to continue our only remaining mission, food delivery at State Line Inn, which we can proudly say we have done.

Our leadership made attempts at revitalization by offering online adult Sunday School, then video Sunday School for all ages. We revamped the nursery, and held a Fall Faith Festival in place of Vacation Bible School. We added the Adult Fellowship ministry, participated in the Greencastle Christmas Parade, and spruced up the church inside (basement) and out (landscaping work days). None of these attempts have made a noteworthy difference in improving our attendance or finances.

In February 2022 the Leadership Committee commenced a book study led by Pastor Chuck Sprenkle, assistant to the District Superintendent. *Choosing the Faithful Path* by Beth M. Crissman & Nancy B. Rankin, uses Bible study, prayer, and *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* to assist a declining church in determining an answer to the following question: ***"Are we faithfully fulfilling Christ's call and commission for our church?"*** With each chapter we assessed a different aspect (Ourselves; Our Neighbors; Our Ability, Willingness, and Commitment; and Choosing the Faithful Path (Re-Innovate or Transition to Legacy). With prayerful consideration, Leadership met bi-weekly to assess our church's future both subjectively (how we feel about it) and objectively (what the measurable data tells us about it) to reach an honest assessment of our ability, willingness and commitment to move forward to one of two paths: either a significant change, or legacy (closure). This task was not taken lightly; there were tears, heated discussion, and many prayers in making our decision. We poured over data and demographics and we debated possibilities. Ultimately our leaders were called to answer, by secret ballot, that question of whether our church is faithfully fulfilling Christ's call, and if we as a church have the Ability, Willingness and Commitment to make significant changes to fulfill that call and commission.

So here we are as a congregation, soon to be voting on something none of us wants to see happen: closing the church. On May 10 we will meet to answer questions about this decision and what happens next, and you are encouraged to write down your questions so that nothing is overlooked. Plan to attend the Wednesday prayer vigils this month, and pray on what God wants as the next step for State Line UMC. You'll recall that Christ didn't tell us to merely gather together in worship. While that is certainly important in the life of a Christian, and doing *only* that might make us feel good, in truth that would make us a chapel, not a church. Jesus charged churches with the mission of making new disciples for Him, something we ourselves proclaim in our bulletin and on our website. So if we are truly to be a church, and not just a chapel, then we must determine what State Line UMC will change so that new disciples are made in our place of worship. Paying the bills and just getting by aren't enough to satisfy the charge we have been given by Jesus Christ.

Terry Berkley  
Leadership Committee Chair

*Our Mission To make new disciples of Jesus Christ*

*Our Vision To invite and reach out to our neighbors to encounter God, grow in faith and serve in Christ's love*



**May**

5<sup>th</sup> Tim Berkley  
8<sup>th</sup> Bonnie Courtney  
8<sup>th</sup> JW Courtney  
12<sup>th</sup> Kayla Berkley  
18<sup>th</sup> Dixie Ellis  
24<sup>th</sup> Abby Garner  
27<sup>th</sup> Nellie Johnston



**Anniversaries**

**May**

2<sup>nd</sup> Pat & Red Reese  
17<sup>th</sup> Matt & Dixie Ellis  
26<sup>th</sup> Ethan & Tabitha Houdeshell

## Church Calendar

Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>

7:00 p.m. Adult Study

Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil

Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>

Mother's Day



Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Adult Study

Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Congregational Meeting

Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil

Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>

1:00 p.m. Pack food for the Inn

7:00 p.m. Adult Study

Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>

6:30 p.m. Leadership Team Meeting

Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil

Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>

6:00 p.m. Snack Station for PMI Walk for Life

Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

Time TBA – Adult Fellowship Family Event

Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>

11:45 a.m. Outreach to deliver food to State Line Inn

Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>

7:00 p.m. Adult Study

Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>

7:00 p.m. Prayer Vigil

Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>

Memorial Day





## Outreach Pantry Needs for May

Please bring in donations by Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Peanut Butter, Jelly, cereal, applesauce and pop tarts**



1:00 p.m. – Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>

Join the Outreach Team to help pack food for delivery. No stairs or heavy lifting required.

11:45 a.m. – Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>

Help take the food down the ramp from the front door and deliver to the Inn's parking lot.

## Mother's Day

### Proverbs 31:24-28

<sup>24</sup> She makes linen garments and sells them;  
she delivers sashes to the merchant.

<sup>25</sup> Strength and dignity are her clothing,  
and she laughs at the time to come.

<sup>26</sup> She opens her mouth with wisdom,  
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

<sup>27</sup> She looks well to the ways of her household  
and does not eat the bread of idleness.

<sup>28</sup> Her children rise up and call her blessed;  
her husband also, and he praises her:



### Tithes & Offerings

Week of April 3 <sup>rd</sup> :	\$2117.00
Week of April 10 <sup>th</sup> :	\$1191.00
Week of April 17 <sup>th</sup> :	\$1209.00
Week of April 24 <sup>th</sup> :	\$1061.00



State Line United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 277

State Line, PA 1726

~ OR ~

Mail slot at back door

~ OR ~

ONLINE GIVING on the website

### Serving in Worship

#### Ushers

May 1	Dixie E. / Rodger K.
May 8	Bonnie C. / Gary R.
May 15	Tim B. / Rodger K.
May 22	Dixie E. / Ellen A.
May 29	Tim B. / Gary R.

#### Worship Asst.

Matt Ellis
Ellen Avey
Terry Berkley
Matt Ellis
Ellen Kennedy

#### Nursery

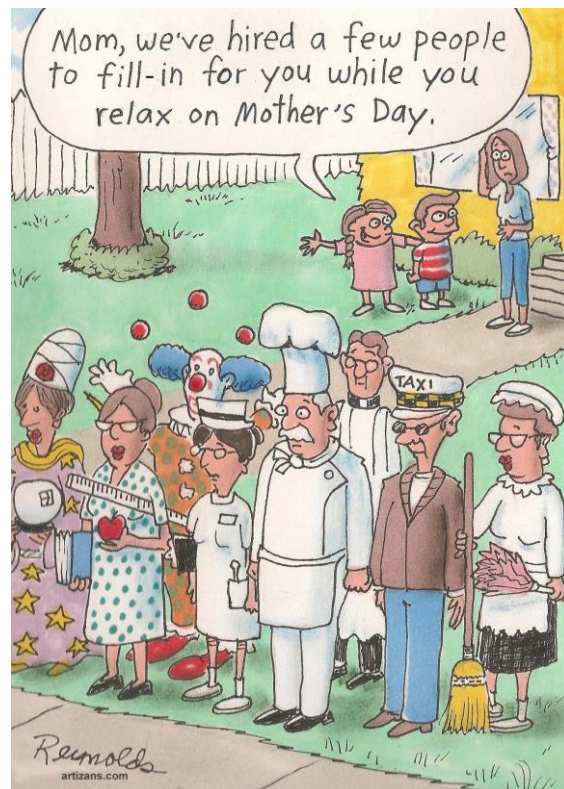
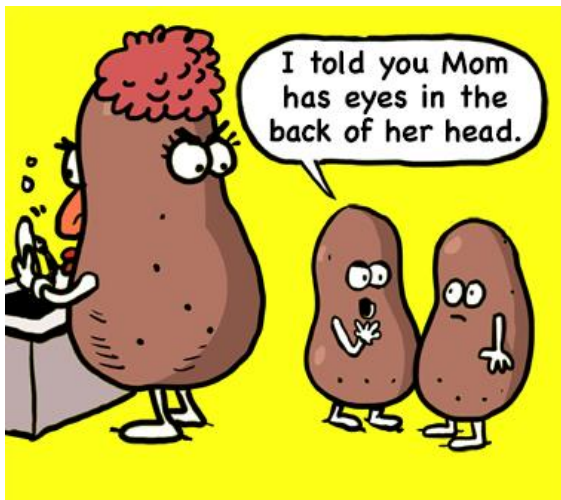
Gwenelle / Tabitha
Dixie / Gwenelle
Tabitha / Bonnie
Gwenelle / Bonnie
Terry / Tabitha

## APRIL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Leadership team met April 19 for a regularly scheduled meeting. Discussion included the following topics:

- Sunday school: Easter adult series and Monday evening class was well-received; combined Sunday/Monday attendance approximately 10. 8-week Forgiveness study to commence.
- Outreach: Day/time change appears to be positive; more people came out to receive food bags in March.
- Pastor Ruth suggested prayer meetings for the congregation to pray for discernment of God's will for State Line UMC

Report submitted by Terry Berkley, Leadership Team Chair



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