

Funeral Meal Policy

A long time outreach ministry of Swamp Mennonite Church has been to offer its facilities and kitchen services to those who have lost loved ones. And who wish to celebrate together, after funeral services, by having a meal, in Swamp's fellowship hall. Our kitchen committee and volunteers from Swamp have offered their time and resources to provide this service for many years.

In recent times, it has become more difficult to find volunteers available to offer their time to provide this ministry. The main reason contributing to this fact is availability of persons, on short notice. In this day and age, more individuals are working or have other obligations that do not allow them to, on short notice, change their schedules for this service.

What we have been doing recently, and plan on continuing to do, is to provide a **catering list** to those wishing to use our facility for meals after the funeral service. We presently have a list of local caterers and could use any other suggestions for additions to this list. The list will be offered, by our church office or pastor, at the time the family of the deceased notifies the office of its

desire to have a meal here after the services. It will be the responsibility of that family to notify the caterer, and the caterer to notify the church of its plans. Swamp would continue to be responsible to have individuals available to move walls, set up and take down tables and for hall clean up.

Using catering services could also affect how funeral viewing may need to be set up in our facility.

Unless there is a group of individuals interested in forming another team available to be "on call" and carry out the responsibilities to offer kitchen services for a funeral meal, **we will continue to move forward with offering a catering list.** A small group, or Sunday School class or group of friends from Swamp, are always welcome to carry out serving a funeral meal. If anyone is interested in forming a group to cater a funeral meal, a list of step by step responsibilities is available.

This letter is to inform the Swamp congregation of the planned change and why. Any further comments, concerns or questions can be addressed to any member of the Ministry Team.

This 'n' That

by Arlene Yothers

Next big event at the Souderton Mennonite Homes put on by the auxiliary will be the Holiday Bazaar. It will be Friday and Saturday, November 9 and 10. Please see details on paper that was in your mail box or the flier on the bulletin board. We are in need of baked goods. Please consider making something for this event. It can be brought to the main desk at the Home or contact me about pick up. Remember, you can get the oyster stew at the Cafe on these days.

Consider doing some of your Christmas shopping at the Care and Share Shoppes. Come to the various stores at Souderton and be surprised at what you might find. It might be almost brand new. The donation area in the back of the store would be willing to take your unwanted items as well. Do you have time to volunteer? Help out MCC and give of your time locally, please see me for more details.

If you want to give a donation to the Worm Project instead of giving a

Trustees

The folding door in the Fellowship Hall has been replaced with a door that more closely matches the color of the movable walls. In addition, we have finished the kitchen project, with a new floor being installed, wallpaper removed and repainting of the walls, and replacing all of the electrical outlets with white switches, outlets and cover plates.

We are also in the process of replacing the back counter in the nursery. This should be completed in the next couple weeks. Finally, the copier in the office will be replaced in December.

As always, if you see something that needs trustee attention, please either fill out a blue slip that is located on Carl's desk and put it in one of the Trustee's mailbox, or let one of us know. (Ken Longacre, Terry Landis, Will Sadler, Linda Martin)

Trustee Committee



gift to someone who has everything, it's a great gift giving alternative. You will be helping children to grow and stay healthy while they are trying to learn the important things that children need to learn.



From Pastor Nathan

In November our sermons will return to the book of Matthew as we enter chapter 19 and look at "Family as God Intended It?" We find Jesus answering difficult questions that will cause us to look closely at our beliefs and practices relating to marriage, divorce, singleness, and children.

Given the nature of these topics, and some of the ideas that might need to be addressed, these sermons may contain more sensitive content than normal in relation to sexuality. Our culture tends to overemphasize our sexuality as human beings, and especially in conversations about marriage, divorce, and the single life, so it will be important to address these ideas in this series. Everything should be appropriate for the children present in the sanctuary during sermons, but if as I prepare for any of these sermons I realize that I will need to be more explicit I will provide a warning ahead of time through our calling system, through an announcement in the bulletin, and through a verbal announcement in the service.

However, contrary to the messages we often hear from our culture, the important message that we will find in this section of Matthew 19 is that we are more than our sexuality. The decisions we make in our families impact ourselves and those closest to us. Most trauma and pain comes from our relationships with our parents, children, siblings, or spouses. So

Jesus shows us that how we interact within our family is directly connected to how we treat our neighbor, and even more, to how we interact with God.

Paul picks up on this in Ephesians 5:22-33 where he ties the relationship of Christ and the Church so closely to the relationship of a husband and wife that he cannot talk about one without talking about the other. However, this does not make marriage the ideal for Christians. In fact, Jesus and Paul both seem to encourage singleness for anyone interested and able. In fact, for the Christian as important as our family relationships and commitments are, the New Testament regularly tells us that our relationship to the church is more important.

For those of us who are in Christ, the church is our new family. This does not negate our family relationships, instead it enlarges them. Family is no longer just those persons you are related to through birth, it is those you are related to through blood, the blood of your parents and the blood of Jesus. So even those who are single, widowed, divorced, orphaned, or abandoned have a home and a family in Christ.

So in the midst of this series we will hold our Thanksgiving Eve Service where we will share thanks for people who have been family to us over the past year. This could be your blood related family, it

might be your church family, or it might be others who have cared for you as family over the year. We thank God for the people he has placed in our lives to carry us, to care for us, and ultimately to point us back to him.

May God use this time of reflecting on family and his intentions for families to strengthen our relationships and fill us with more of his love.

Member Meeting
Tuesday,
December 4
7:00 PM

Swamp Mennonite Church
2125 Rosedale Road
Quakertown, PA
18951-4013
Email: info@justswamp.com
www.facebook.com
Phone: (215) 536-7928

Bucket Filler or Dipper?

by Pastor Tami

Do you know where the friendliest place on earth is? Believe it or not... It's Wawa! The other day I was having a very bad day. Nothing seemed to be going right. So, I stopped in at our local Wawa to grab a cup of coffee. Coffee always makes me feel better. ☺ As I approached the door, a gentleman greeted me with a smile, opened the door and said, "After you." While preparing my cup of coffee, another gentleman asked what I was pouring into my cup. When he realized it was almond milk, he responded with joy! "Oh boy! I didn't know they had that! Thanks for making my day." Finally, as I paid for my coffee, the woman behind the counter told me to have a "Nice day!" and to "Come back real soon!" The grump inside me couldn't help but leave the store a little bit happier.

A few weeks ago, I had the privilege to be the Spiritual Life Week Speaker at Dock Mennonite Academy for the middle schoolers. Throughout the week we asked ourselves, "Are you a bucket filler (using positive actions/words to encourage others) or a bucket dipper (using negative actions/words to discourage others)?" Each day the

students were reminded that their words and actions matter. Even those things we think are insignificant can have a major impact in another's life. We looked at different stories of people who, on the surface, might seem unimportant: Mary washing Jesus' feet with perfume (*John 12: 1-8*), the young boy who gave his 2 fish and 5 loaves to feed thousands (*John 6: 1-15*), the Samaritan woman by the well (*John 4: 1-42*) and Ananias as he prayed for the healing of Saul's eyes (*Acts 9: 10-18*). Each of these individuals would have been seen as "nobodies" by the world around them. Those with power would have never thought that a woman, an old man, or a young child could bring about change. However, in God's eyes they were "somebodies". Their words and actions played a huge role in showing others who Jesus was and their faithfulness brought about miracles. God used their actions, talents, stories, and prayers to bless and encourage those around them. Lives were healed, bodies were fed, and God's love was poured out generously.

That week left me with a challenge and a question. First it reminded me that my actions towards others do make a difference. We forget that

sometimes, even as adults. That week with the students made me pause and reevaluate how I was interacting with those around me. Each day I asked myself, "Are you being a bucket filler or a bucket dipper with this person? Are they leaving me more encouraged or have I just drained them with my words?" When we take time to think about our encounters with others in that light, it certainly makes you more aware of how you are walking through life.

This time with the students also left me with some questions: Who am I overlooking simply because I can't see them as God sees them? Are there people I don't interact with because we don't see the world through the same lenses? What blessings am I missing? Just as I challenged myself, I challenge you as well. Take time to ask yourself, "How can God use me to bless others? What miracles am I missing because I've overlooked another? Will I be someone's bucket filler or bucket dipper today?" When we clothe ourselves in God's compassion, kindness, humility, and strength and when we wear His love, then every detail of our lives-in words and actions-can be done in the name of Jesus, thanking God each step of the way. (*Colossians 3: 12-17*)

Fall Youth Events

Wednesday, November 7
Wednesday Evening Clubs
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Saturday, November 10
Barn Party
Time: 6:30 pm-9:00 pm
The Gehman Farm

Wednesday, November 14
Youth Group
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Wednesday, November 28
Wednesday Evening Clubs
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Wednesday, December 5
Wednesday Evening Clubs
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Saturday, December 8
Gargoyles
Time: TBA
Boyertown Mennonite Church

Wednesday, December 12
Youth Group
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Wednesday, December 19
Wednesday Evening Clubs
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

Wednesday, December 26
Youth Group
Time: 6:30 pm-8:15 pm

For more information, please contact one of the youth sponsors.

Church Board Summary

While the weather did not cooperate for any of the planned outdoor services this year, the idea of holding an Easter Sunrise Service outside in the future was mentioned.

However, member giving has continued to be very "sunny" in 2018. The annual budget process for next year is underway.

Under the Trustees, Ken noted that repair work to the one folding door in the fellowship hall would take place; kitchen project is under way with painting and new flooring; the office copier is slated for replacement in December.

The Board was advised that Cliff Mease would be filling in for Vanessa Troyer as a delegate to Franconia Conference Assembly.

Ministry Team Highlights

A decision was made to review and update the list of rotating announcements that appear in the bulletin. Ministers were asked to make recommendations.

There has been some renewed interest in the church cookbooks published in 2006. Libby Geissinger had asked to be removed as the contact person. It was decided to place the book sales under Community Life. The price of the Cookbook was changed to \$10.00.

A letter regarding changes to the Funeral Meal Policy was presented (see article on page 4). In addition, a new catering letter was created listing options for families.

Brent Gehman announced that the annual youth Christmas Caroling would not occur this year. It was suggested to replace the visits with an event to be held here at Swamp.

A committee was formed to look into the possibility of constructing a Columbarium in the Cemetery for cremated remains. Plans include presenting a letter to the congregation explaining what a Columbarium is and completing a questionnaire to help guide the committee's planning. A Cemetery Layout chart would be placed on an easel in the foyer.

Pastor Nathan encouraged Church Board members to consider preaching, offering their interpretation of various scriptures during future worship services.

The number of recent long-term rental proposals that were received in the office was raised. The question was raised if we have a process or policy regarding this type of a rental and the logistics that might be

involved. It was suggested that this type of decision should not be made by the Trustees and that it may affect our insurance. It was decided that for the time being, any inquiries received by the Church Secretary will be forwarded to the Head Trustee for presentation to the Church Board.

Pastor Nathan distributed copies of the Membership List for 2019, which was already approved by the Ministry Team. He explained the process of how the list is created and the criteria involved.



Associate Pastor
Feedback Surveys
are due by Sunday,
November 18.

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Please complete a  
form and place it in  
the big wood box on  
the glass table.

