

Linden Letter

September 2021

Mission Statement: *To be a community of prayer, love, and forgiveness committed to leading persons to a living relationship with Jesus Christ and reaching out in acts of compassion and service.*

A Message from the Pastor

Matthew 11:28-30 (NRSV) ²⁸ “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

I was at the store last week and saw someone wearing a t-shirt that said “No one cares. Work harder.” I was appalled. It seemed to me that, in some important ways, this t-shirt slogan sums up what is wrong with our world today. Too many don’t care, and it is assumed that if you are having a hard time, are unemployed, are homeless, or are struggling that you are lazy and just need to work harder. We are too often judgmental and show little, if any, compassion.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ teaches a different way. Jesus teaches us that we are to love one another the way that Jesus loves us. (John 13:34) Jesus teaches us that we are not supposed to judge one another. (Matthew 7:1) Jesus teaches us that we are to reach out and help others when they have fallen on hard times. (Matthew 25:31-46) In the passage above, Jesus tells us that sometimes we all need a soft place to fall. We all need a safe place to rest. We all need comfort and care. Jesus promises to be that place for us. He invites us to give him our troubles and worries, our fears and our burdens. He will help us carry them. He does not tell us that he doesn’t care. He does not tell us to just work harder. He tells us that he is gentle, humble in heart, and that in him we will find rest for our souls.

We need to be like Jesus. We need to remember that everyone has something going on in their lives. Some are carrying loads that feel impossible to bear. Some are at the brink of breaking. We need to extend the love of Jesus to others. We need to be a safe place for people to fall. We need to listen to the burdens of others with tenderness and respond with compassion. We need to lighten people’s loads, not judge them and add to their loads. May we should get different shirts, ones that say “I care about you. Jesus loves you. How can I help?”

May we all seek Christ when we need to rest. May we all reach out to others with the hand of Christ so that others may know the help and the rest that comes from Jesus.

Blessings of God’s peace to you all,

Pastor Alicia

Children & Youth

Sunday School Service

We will continue to have our 9 am Sunday school service for the next few months. This services is meant to be a cross between Sunday school and worship for our children and their families. I will be making a few modifications to the service in the next few weeks to, hopefully, provide a bit more robust experience for the adults.

VBS Report

This year we tried a new VBS format. We met in the evenings once a week for four weeks. While our numbers were small, we had a powerful experience together! Our children and the adults got to know one another and we all got to know God better. It was a blessing to hear our children testify about God's work in their lives. Many thanks to all who made VBS possible this year.

- *Friday September 10, 2021*
 - *MOVIE NIGHT!!! Cloudy With a chance of Meatballs*
 - *6:30 Linden Heights Parking lot*
 - *Bring -----a Chair -----A drink-- a sweet or salty Tooth!*
 - *We will have -----Smores and Popcorn with toppings*
 - *Come gather with friends and family and have a great time!!*
- Sign up @*
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C4EACA62E5-family>



Chick Fil A Night

Thanks to everyone who came out and supported the youth on their Chick Fil A spirit night! The youth will be using the funds raised to help offset the costs of a weekend retreat.

Youth Group

We will resume our Youth Group gatherings for children in the 6th-12th grades on Sunday, September 12th 6:30 – 8 pm. Since we are not having a “traditional” Sunday school for youth, part of the Sunday evening program will include a Sunday school component. In addition to time spent studying the Bible, youth will have a chance to play games, talk with one another, participate in service activities, and talk about some of the hard things that are a part of life. On the 12th we will also be making some plans for the fall “semester.” Weather permitting we will have a campfire and roast marshmallows as well. For the fall, we will hold most of our youth gatherings outside so that vaccinated youth do not have to be masked. If we need to move inside due to the weather (or when it gets dark), everyone will need to wear a mask.

Making Meals for “The Table” at Towson University

Towson University has an ecumenical group for students called The Table. Leadership is provided by Rev. Laura Sinche, a Lutheran pastor. The group meets every Tuesday night for a meal, fellowship, and study. They also work together to serve others in the community. Local churches provide dinner for the 10-15 students that are a part of this group to help foster a sense of community. The group is looking for other churches willing to provide a dinner or two during the fall semester. If you would be interested in helping make a meal for these students, please reach out to Pastor Alicia.

Young Adult Group

If you, a family member of yours, or someone you know is a young adult in their 20s looking for a Christian group for fellowship, study, and service, please let Pastor Alicia know! We are hoping to form a group that will meet virtually and in person.

Mission

Our Summer School Supply Collection Report:

Thank you from PGES Staff:

Thank you so much for the school supplies! I have already given some out to teachers. We are very grateful and fortunate to have your help.

Stay safe!



During the months of July and August, we collected requested school supplies for Pine Grove Elementary School. Many thanks to all of you for making our monthly mission such a huge success. The items have been delivered and I'm sure many children will be happy to receive fresh school supplies! Below is what was collected.

19 Dry Erase Boards	5 packs of dry erase markers
1 bag of dry board erasers	18 Fidgets
39 pocket folders	55 marble notebooks
6 packs of post it notes	21 backpacks
8 packs of pencils	27 packs of colored pencils
13 packs of cap erasers	8 packs of highlighters
41 boxes of crayons	2 packs of magic markers
1 ruler	1 spiral notebook

September Collection

We are collecting supplies for the Eastern Family Resource center in October. They are in need of NEW twin sheets, blankets, towels, and wash clothes. You can bring donations to the church on Sunday mornings up until 12 pm or on Saturday, September 25th from 9:30-11 am.



The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) provides disaster response and help to people around the world. 100% of any money that you donate to UMCOR goes directly to the cause. None of your donations go towards overhead costs. If you would like more information on UMCOR or if you would like to make a donation to support their work in Haiti, those in the south harmed by hurricane Ida, or other relief efforts, you can visit www.umcmission.org/respons-page.

On behalf of our church, our Missions Ministry Team has donated \$100 to the Baltimore County Animal Rescue. They also donated \$400 to Manna House to cover the cost of serving a breakfast the last Saturday of October.

Worship

Worship in September

For the month of September, we will continue our current worship format. We have a 9 am Sunday school service outside in our parking lot for children and their families. We have a hybrid service at 10 am. You can worship with us in person or through zoom! (The zoom link is below. It remains the same week to week.) Over the next few months, we will be praying, visioning, and exploring what worship will look like in the future.

Our next worship series will be “A Disciple’s Path.” It is based on the book “A Disciple’s Path, a Guide for United Methodists” by Jim Harnish. We will be talking about the differences between being a Christian and living as a disciple. If you would like to dive deeper into the topic, you can purchase the daily workbook or the companion reader at www.cokesbury.com

Zoom link for the 10 am service:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83148539664?pwd=ZHhtNGpzNVZ6QjVBb08zeHBONW9EUT09>

Meeting ID: 831 4853 9664

Passcode: 599815

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,83148539664#,,,,*599815# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83148539664?pwd=ZHhtNGpzNVZ6QjVBb08zeHBONW9EUT09>

New Evening worship service on September 28th at 7 pm.

There are times when you can't attend a worship service on Sunday mornings. However, worshiping God together as a community is an important part of our Christian faith. We are going to offer an evening worship service once a month for the next several months. For now, the service will be in person only. This will be a simple service and will include communion. I hope that you will join us for a time of worship, prayer, and fellowship!

Meditation

At the beginning of the pandemic several of us gathered every week for prayer and meditation. We often used a form of art as a meditative tool. We are offering a time of prayer and meditation once again, but this time in person! We will have our first one on September 16th at 7 pm. You do not need to be an artist to participate! I hope that you will join us for a time of prayer, meditation, and contemplation!

Covid-19 Task Force Team Report

Our dedicated task force team met last week to look at the latest information from the CDC and the Baltimore-Washington Conference task force. (On the task force is an immunologist.) These two groups have offered the following suggestions:

The Baltimore-Washington Conference suggests that everyone wear a mask when indoors regardless of vaccination status. Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained and singing is discouraged. Because of the increase of Covid infections due to the Delta Variant, conference staff continues to work remotely instead of re-entering the mission center next month as previously planned. The in-person gathering of the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference scheduled for this October in Baltimore has been moved to a completely virtual format.

As of August 19, 2021, the CDC recommends:

Mask Use: Require masks for all employees and customers, regardless of vaccination status, in areas with substantial or high transmission.

Baltimore County is currently in the “substantial” transmission rate.

After discussing these recommendations, looking at the statistics of covid infections in our zipcode, reviewing information about the transmission rate of the Delta Variant for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, and considering the size of our in-person worshipping congregation, our task force team has made the following decisions:

- * Unvaccinated persons need to be masked at all times when in the building.
- * Vaccinated persons are encouraged to mask, but we are not mandating this.
- * We would really like for vaccinated individuals to wear a mask when entering and leaving the building, when standing closer than 6 feet inside, or when gathering in a group inside.
- * We are reinstating social distancing for everyone worshipping in the sanctuary or gathering for a meeting. Please maintain and distance of 6 feet from others when in the building.
- * Passing the peace will be from our pews and will not include shaking hands, bumping fists, elbows, etc.
- * We will continue to sing. We will continue to serve communion through intinction.
- * When coming forward to receive communion, worshipers should keep a minimum of 2 pews between them and the person in front of them.
- * All individuals, regardless of vaccination status, will wear a mask indoors and outside when working with children.

As your pastor, I ask that everyone remember Jesus' teachings to love one another and to take care of the vulnerable among us. None of this is easy or comfortable and I understand that being asked to wear a mask rubs many the wrong way. However, we are called to be a community of believers that worships, studies, prays, and serves together. It is my prayer that we live into this holy calling in ways that are safe for everyone. Alicia

Ministry Team Reports

New Staff Position

At our August Leadership Team meeting we discussed our need to have administrative help in the office and our desire to have someone help lead us in our community engagement efforts. We decided to hire a part time staff person to fill those roles. On September 1st, Deirdre Duda stepped into that role. We look forward to her ideas and leadership!

Trustee Ministry Team

The trustees have been hard at work taking care of our property. In July we had a minor flood in the parlor and fellowship hall caused by a cracked pipe. The pipe has been repaired and the trustees are working on remediating the damage caused by the water.

It was discovered that the exterior wall of the little storage room off of the fellowship hall on the driveway side is collapsing. Work to repair the wall will begin the week of September 6th.

The trustees are also replacing several doors in the fellowship hall that no longer work properly. We give thanks for all of their work and dedication making sure that our building and grounds are kept in great shape!

Flea Market October 2, 2021 At Linden Heights United Methodist Church

Dear church family;

We are going to have a flea market on Saturday 10/2/2021 from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm. We will be selling donated items from our church family. If you have any items to donate, please drop them off at Linden Heights on Sundays starting on September 12, 2021 between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. If this time is not good for you, please call me at 443-845-3375 and we will make arrangements for another date and time. Please call me if you are unable to drop the items off at church and we will make other arrangements to pick your items up. Please do not donate anything that is broken or dirty. Also, please no clothes or T.V's.

If you would like to set up your own table to sell your items, you are welcome to do so. There will be no charge for the church family. It will be nice to have you there.

We are asking for some volunteers to help set up tables and bring the items to the tables and to clean up when we are finished. We also need some help selling the items at the tables. You do not need to be there the whole time. If you wish to help please give me a call. We thank you in advance for donated items and any help you can provide. This is my first year at this, so please pray for good weather and everyone involved.

God Bless John Smell

New Family Council Forming

All parents of school aged children are invited to join the family council. We will meet several times throughout the year to prayerfully consider how we can better meet the needs of the families in our church and in our community. The family council will be a part of the leadership of the church. We will be generating ideas for Sunday school, worship, mission, study, fellowship, and outreach opportunities for families.

Did You Know??

We have a medical supply lending closet!! Do you, or someone that you know, have a temporary (or even long term) need for medical equipment? We have a lot of equipment to loan out! We have wheel chairs, walkers, bedside commodes, shower seats, toilet seats, walkers, and bed pads. Please call the office if you, or someone that you know, is in need of these items!

We are still collecting tabs from metal cans! The tabs get donated to the Ronald McDonald House. When recycled, the money from these tabs helps support the work that the Ronald McDonald House does caring for the families of sick and hospitalized children. You can drop tabs off at the church on Sunday mornings. If that is not convenient, call the office to arrange for a different drop off time.

We have a jig saw puzzle exchange going at the church! If you would like to do a puzzle, feel free to stop by and borrow a puzzle. Return it when you are finished. If you have a puzzle in good condition with no missing pieces that you would like to contribute, bring it to the church.

Mark Your Calendars!! Times will be determined a little later in the fall

Trunk or Treat- Saturday, October 30th.

Breakfast with Santa- Saturday, December 4th

Living Nativity- Saturday, December 18th

Opportunities to Serve at Linden Heights

We all have talents, gifts, and abilities that we can share for the work of God in our world and the work of God that is done through our church. Here is a BRIEF description of some of the opportunities to serve that are happening in the near future. Please give them some prayerful thought. When you know where you would like to serve, contact Pastor Alicia

Flea Market

- * We need help with set up and clean up
- * People are needed to sell items

Trunk or Treat

- * We need someone to coordinate this event.
- * People will be needed to set up the event and clean up
- * People are needed to decorate a car and participate in the event

Breakfast with Santa

- * We need a team of people to plan and execute this event
- * We will need help with set up, serving, and clean up the day of the event.

Living Nativity

- * A team leader is needed for this event
- * Help is needed planning this event
- * We will need lots of people to help set up, clean up, and serve as the “cast of characters”!

Prayer chain

Would you be willing to pray for others in need? Contact JoAnn Eisner or call the church office to join our prayer team.

Card Ministry Team

There are times when it is nice to know that someone is thinking about you and praying for you. If you would be willing to send cards to people in our congregation and community that could use a friendly word or some encouragement, this ministry is for you! Contact Pastor Alicia for more information.

Technology

We would like to train some more people to help run the technology for our hybrid service. You do NOT have to know how to use the equipment, we can train you! We would ideally like to have 3-4 more individuals trained.

Commitment to Serve at Linden Heights

Please prayerfully consider how you can offer yourself and your gifts to God through the ministries at our church. You can serve for one event, like the Living Nativity, or you can serve on a ministry team such as the Trustees, Mission, or Family Council. I invite you to fill this form out and return it through email or through the postal service. If you have questions or would like to talk about other ways that you may want to serve, please let me know! Email me at alicia@lhucm@verizon.net or call me at the church 410-668-6181 or on my cell phone 410-206-4826. Pastor Alicia

Name:

Best way to contact you:

I would like to serve at:

Flea Market

Set up

Pricing items

Selling items

Clean up

Trunk or Treat

Coordinate the event

Set up

Decorate a car & participate

Breakfast with Santa

Be a part of the planning team

Set up

Prepare food

Serve Food

Help at the event

Clean up

Living Nativity

Coordinate the event

Be a part of the planning team

Set up

Be a character

Clean up

Prayer Chain

Card Ministry Team

Family Council

Worship Technology

Trustee Ministry Team

Mission Ministry Team

Other