



Palmyra First United Methodist Church

2026

This spring, I am looking at the beauty of nature awakening from its winter sleep. The daffodils arrived just on time, and the tulips followed. The peonies are in bud, and purple flowers have emerged in the grass that is rapidly growing. In the morning, I can hear the birds singing. The pollinating insects are busy.

As I look around, I marvel at the wonders of nature, and I can't help but admire God's handiwork. As I see how every part of nature is interconnected, I am amazed that God cared enough to create such a complex system. What is even more amazing is God's love for us, that he gave us free will, allowing us to disrupt, desecrate, and destroy the creation. Yet, unbelievably, some people don't understand and accept the loving and personal nature of God. Some don't even believe in God's existence!

Thinking about non-believers, I am sad for them. What a missed opportunity to have a personal relationship with the author of life, the creator of all things. How sad not to believe in a being greater than ourselves. How sad to miss out on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to guide us through our lives. How sad to think this life is all there is, that physical death is the end of all things for us.

For those of us who have a belief in and a personal relationship with God, what joy and peace it can bring to our very beings. This happiness, this contentment, is the gift we are to share when we spread the good news of Jesus Christ to others.

Don't be selfish, don't keep the good news to yourself. God intends us to be instruments of his peace – evangelists who share, in our day-to-day lives, the good news of the loving God we worship. Are you willing to share your joy and happiness with others?

Sharing the happiness is as simple as following Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you." The very act of love lets the world know we are Christians – believers in the God of creation, redemption, and new life, and it is exactly what God expects of each and every one of us. By loving others, you are "**Serving Christ, Changing Lives.**"

Grace & Peace,

James D. Anderman



As May begins, we are still in the Easter season. Toward the end of the month, we begin a transition with several special Sundays back-to-back-to-back. They include Ascension Sunday, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday. For four Sundays in a row, we will keep Maryanne busy changing the paraments. We will feature white for Ascension Sunday, red for Pentecost, back to white for Trinity Sunday, and finally green for the season of Kingdomtide.

Our worship themes for May and early June are as follows:

May 3rd - Fifth Sunday of Easter: How was Jesus made known to you? This week, we read about two people who came to know Jesus because of an act of kindness and a shared meal. Our message, based on Luke 24:13-35, will be titled “Communion with God.”

May 10th – Mother’s Day: One of the fastest-growing groups of people is those who claim to be spiritual, but not religious. This week, we will read from Acts 17:22-31 and 1 Peter 3:13-22 and then wrestle with the question: “Which is more important – What We Believe or That We Believe?”

May 17th – Ascension Sunday: Just like the disciples, we are an impatient people, often asking, When? Is now the time? Jesus answered the questions in Acts 1:1-14, but, like the disciples, we don’t always like his answer. Maybe we are asking the wrong question! Maybe the correct question is “Would Paul Give Thanks for Me (and You)?” Our message will be based on both Acts and Ephesians 1:15-23.

May 24th – Pentecost Sunday: The traditional reading for Pentecost Sunday is Acts 2:1-12, which we will read again this year. We will also read 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13. Our message will be “Unwrapping God’s Gift.”

May 31st – Trinity Sunday: Trinity is a very strange concept in Christianity. “One God, Three Persons.” Explaining the concept may be a pastor’s worst nightmare, but every Trinity Sunday we try. This year, our scriptures will be Genesis 1:1-2:4a and 2 Corinthians 13:11-13. Our message will have a simple title, but a complex answer. The message is: “Trinity!”

June 7th – Second Sunday of Kingdomtide: “Faith to Follow” is what Abram and Sarai had, yet at the end of their earthly life, they had not yet seen all God promised. What can we learn from this faithful couple? We will read their story from both the Old and New Testaments using Genesis 12:1-9 and Romans 4:13-25.

Church Picnic

Palmyra First Church is planning to kick off the summer season with a church-wide picnic on Sunday, June 7th at noon. The *Vision Team* has begun planning the event and is hoping we can have a great time of fellowship between the 9:00 AM worshipers and the 10:30 AM worshipers. We will all have a chance to mix and mingle. Hopefully, our 9:00 AM crowd will either participate in the *Wired Word* discussions or help set up for the meal, and then enjoy table fellowship with everyone else. The plan is for a covered dish for sides and deserts with the church supplying hamburgers and hot dogs. Watch the bulletins for further announcements.

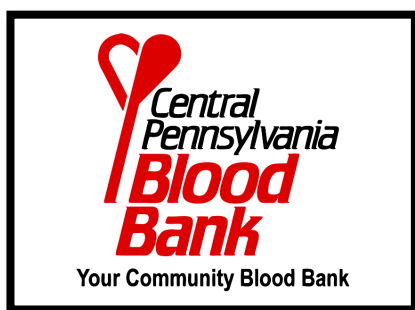


HUB News

Exciting news for the HUB! We are very happy to announce that the HUB here at *First United Methodist Church* has been rewarded a \$5000 grant to aid in the purchase of supplies for cleaning buckets and hygiene kits. This grant has been given to us from the Mount Gretna *United Methodist Church William Drendall Endowment*. The grant will allow us to have a much greater impact in providing needed materials to the *United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR)*. While this does seem like a huge amount of money, this will most likely purchase supplies for approximately 75 cleaning buckets and 150 hygiene kits. We are extremely grateful to the *William Drendall Endowment* for this grant!

Our next *HUB* packing event is scheduled for May 26th at 6:30 PM in the *Fellowship Hall* at *Palmyra First*.

A list of items needed for the *HUB* is located in the *Fellowship Hall*. For the month of May, we are specifically in need of clotheslines (50-100 ft. cotton or plastic only).



Donate Blood!

Saturday, May 30th, *Palmyra First United Methodist Church* is having another blood drive. It will be located in the *Fellowship Hall* from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM. Each donor will receive a \$15 Entrée certificate to *The Texas Roadhouse* in Palmyra. An appointment is recommended, but not required to donate. Please visit the *Central PA Blood Bank* to schedule for donation at 717giveblood.org or call 1-800-771-0059.

Dinner and a Movie

Date: **Sunday, May 3**

Location: **Palmyra First UMC**

Dinner: **4:30 PM-5:30 PM** Movie: **5:30 PM**

"*Ordinary Angels*"

Doors open at 4:15 PM. Dinner (spaghetti and meatballs) will be served in the *Fellowship Hall* and the movie will be viewed in the *Sanctuary*.

"*Ordinary Angels*" tells the inspiring true story of a small-town Kentucky hairdresser who rallies her community to help a widowed father save his critically ill daughter. Blending themes of faith, perseverance, and compassion, the film is anchored by heartfelt performances from Hilary Swank and Alan Ritchson. With emotional depth and uplifting messages, it's a well-acted, feel-good drama worth watching—especially for those who enjoy tearjerkers based on real events.



Changes to Email Notifications

We will be using a new platform for sending out email notifications from *Palmyra First* church. If you would like to receive email notifications for our weekly news, monthly newsletters, or special events, opt in on the *Connect Cards* (don't forget to leave an email address), or visit our website at www.palmyrafirst.org, scroll to the bottom of the homepage, and click on any of the subscribe options.



Small Group Studies

The Blessed Misfits

The Blessed Misfits is beginning a new study of Adam Hamilton's book "Why" (Making Sense of God's Will). Now is a perfect time to join the group. The study is just 4 weeks long and happens each Wednesday evening at 6:30 PM. Top of Form

The group meets in the South Wing and via Zoom, so you have options. If you would like to give the group a try, let Pastor Jim know, or just stop by on Wednesday evening. If you want to join by Zoom, please let us know so we can send you the link.

Sunday with the Wired Word

What should a Christian think about the news of the day? The *Wired Word* discusses the news from a biblical perspective. The group meets in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM. Lessons are emailed to participants on the Thursday before Sunday to give you a chance to think ahead. The material provides background information, links to the relevant stories, and ideas as to how some Christians are reacting.

Feel free to check out the group on any Sunday morning at 10:30 AM. Better yet, let Lee Smedley know you are interested so he can add you to his distribution list, giving you a heads-up on the topic of the week. Because the topic changes each week, this is an ideal study for those who can't commit to a weekly study.

Managing Our Physical Resources

As busy as our church facilities have become, it is critical that everyone check with Heidi when you want to use a room or equipment. She is the official "keeper of the calendar" for all things related to building usage. Remember, our public calendar does not list everything going on at *Palmyra First*. It leaves out events that are not open to the public, and it does not include the preparation time, which is often reserved for a special event. These times are listed on a separate "Facilities Usage" calendar that is not published.

Heidi, as the keeper of the calendar, is the person to ask to reserve both a room and church equipment such as projectors, tables, chairs, etc. She also schedules the Zoom account. Don't assume she understands your needs. She may have never seen your ministry action and may have no clue what you need. So don't be disappointed when you arrive at an event and discover that what you need is already reserved for another group. Ask first!

If you would like access to the full calendar of facilities usage, again, contact Heidi. It is kept in the form of a Google Calendar. And remember, even if you have access to the calendar, you still need to reserve through Heidi, as she is the only one to make the reservations.

