

The Circuit Rider

MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STAFF

Lay Leaders	Tammy Martone Linda Anderson
Circuit Rider Editor	Lois Whitman
Director of Music	Joe Zelman
Deacon	Rev. Laurie Zelman
Pastor	Donald Kirschner
Youth Leader	Karen Ausland

Things to Remember

Sunday School begins Sept 19th!
Annual Charge Conference October 30th
Trunk or Treat October 30th

Pastor's Message

Forgotten God

While sitting with hands extended on the table during a time of prayer at the end of our Administrative Council meeting this month, I opened my mouth to offer a prayer after a couple minutes of everyone offering silent prayers for the concerns named, which were many. As I did so, I felt a hard to explain sensation in both my palms and head. In a way, I could feel the power in those silent prayers that were just offered before the throne of God. I was moved in an unexpected way, and in a meeting of all places.

As I've grown in my faith and walk with the Lord, I have found that I experience the Spirit in specific ways. I have also learned that each believer experiences the Holy Spirit in different ways that may not be similar to the ways I experience God's Spirit. And I also know that each of us, as believers, need to be willing and open to how the Spirit might work in new or unexpected ways, for God is always doing a new thing and can always surprise us. Do you know how God's Spirit works in and through you? And are you open to the ways in which the Holy Spirit can work in and through you?

As an 18-year-old, I remember being on a two-month mission trip in Australia with, what I later learned, was a more charismatic organization (aka, there was an emphasis on the

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power and presence of the Holy Spirit). One of my team leaders was from Bethel Church in CA, a ministry school that was big on healing ministry and bringing God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Our team leader introduced us to things like prayer walks, healing prayer, and more. And I have to say that it was on this mission trip that I more deeply encountered and came to understand the Holy Spirit's work and power in me. A couple years after that mission trip experience, I remember reading a book by Francis Chan called "Forgotten God." It was a book that spoke to the often neglected and misunderstood aspect of the trinity: the Holy Spirit. We are often familiar with and understand God, the Father, and Jesus, the Son. But the Holy Spirit? What is our conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in our personal faith and in the community of believers? And how does it change and impact us?

Our Faith and Fellowship group is going through a book called "Jesus in Me" on Tuesday mornings for their fall study, and I know that they are excited for all that's ahead. The person who recommended the book said it transformed them in a huge way when they first read it and helped them understand the work of the Holy Spirit in them like never before. I pray it does the same for each of those delving into it.

But what is the Holy Spirit? Well, the Holy Spirit is part of the triune God, and is the primary agent through which God is revealed and made known to us in the world. Even if that revelation may not be as tangible as many of us would like the mystery, wind, and breath that is the Spirit to be, the Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus (John 15:26), continuing to show us who God is and where God is at work, long after Christ's ascension.

But the Holy Spirit is not just alive and active in the world, but within ourselves and the community of believers. In our personal faith, the Holy Spirit serves to reassure and to guide. The Holy Spirit gives people peace and allows

them to discern when the way is not clear. And the Holy Spirit serves as a teacher from which we learn and through which wisdom is gleaned. In the community of believers, the Holy Spirit is the agent through which the variety of gifts that make up the body of Christ are activated and manifested, gifts which can be different and unique from person to person (1 Corinthians 12:6-11), gifts which we are inviting you to discover and consider using, as we look to a new year full of potential with new leadership opportunities and ways to serve.

I believe the Holy Spirit works in and through us as individuals and as a church to accomplish God's purposes on earth. I love what John 15:4-5 says about the Spirit, because it says we can do nothing apart from the work and power of the Spirit, much like a branch cannot do anything apart from the vine. And considering "the same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead is the same Spirit who lives in us" (Romans 8:11), we are invited to walk in the power and authority of that reality, casting out fear and stepping out in boldness, wherever God's Spirit leads. The Holy Spirit is necessary for our mission, for it was not until Pentecost, the receiving of the Holy Spirit, that the disciples were able to fulfill Christ's call to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

But the Holy Spirit also serves to convict us. Whether it is convicting us to a deeper walk with God through sanctification, or a conviction to take action in the world in a certain way (e.g. to stand up for vulnerable and oppressed populations, to be better caretakers of God's creation), the Holy Spirit is always moving in us and prompting us toward that which is the will of God. Additionally, the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth and, aside from being with us as our Advocate in the present world, tells us of what is to come (John 16:13).

So, as you can see, the Holy Spirit does a lot, doesn't it? The Spirit plays a vital and important role in our lives, church, and world. But how

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might you invite the Holy Spirit into your personal life more? How might you listen and be attentive for how the Holy Spirit works in and through you, as well as in our church? Know that I will be praying for each of you this month, praying that God's Spirit would encounter you in new, fresh, and unexpected ways, and that you might learn more and more about how the Spirit moves and works in you. To close, I offer words from the song "Holy Spirit You are Welcome Here" by Jesus Culture:

*Holy Spirit, you are welcome here.
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere.
Your glory God is what our hearts long for,
To be overwhelmed by your presence, Lord.*

And I also offer the words from one of our hymns (UMH #393) as a prayer for you to pray each day as you invite the Holy Spirit into your life and into our midst at church:

*Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me,
Fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God,
Fall afresh on me.*

Sunday School is Starting

Our Children & Youth Sunday School is officially launching Sunday, September 19th! We can't wait for all that's ahead this fall! By the way, are you interested in being a volunteer Sunday School teacher for our elementary school children once every other month? We are looking to support our Children/Youth Ministry to a greater extent with 6-8 people who are willing to invest in the next generation of disciples. Lessons will be prepared in advance for volunteers, and we are merely asking for volunteers to be present and lead

what is given them on the Sunday they volunteer for. See Pastor Donald or Karen Ausland if interested in serving in this meaningful way.

Faith & Fellowship began meeting again on Tuesday, September 14th. For the next 7 weeks we will be reading and discussing the book, Jesus in Me – Experiencing the Holy Spirit as a Constant Companion by Anne Graham Lotz.

It is not too late to join us! We meet every Tuesday morning at 10 am in Fellowship Hall. If interested, please contact Linda at 973-632-5509 or ljanderson07082@aol.com.

Hungry to Whole/Dinner Church Initiative

Join us every Wednesday night at Montville UMC for our newest initiative! We'll be having "Wholly Club" gatherings from 6:30-8 pm each Wednesday with dinner starting at 6:30 pm. All are welcome!

The Staff Parish Relations team would like to make you aware that Joe and Laurie Zelman will be resigning from their current roles in the church. October 3rd will be their last official Sunday.

For the interim, we will have substitute musicians for October and November. During that time, we'll be actively seeking someone on a permanent basis. If you know of any potential candidates, please do not hesitate to let Pastor Donald or any member of the SPRC know.

Both Joe and Laurie will be greatly missed and their service has been instrumental in the life of our church. We wish them all the success and happiness with their future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Church Conference

Our annual church conference this year will be held on Zoom on Saturday, October 30th at 12 noon. All are welcome from the church to join us for this important meeting where lots will be discussed and voted on together as we look to the year ahead!

Our first ever **Trunk or Treat** will be held on Saturday, October 30th beginning at 3 pm. Please see enclosed flyers for details and join us for this exciting event!!

Coming in November: Craft Fair & Bake Sale

On Saturday, November 13th, we invite you to join us for an Open House with lovingly made crafts and baked goods for sale. Free coffee and tea will be served. If interested in helping or for more information, call Debbie Stoeckel at 973-214-7315!

ShopRite Gift Cards – Ongoing Fundraiser

An easy choice! Buy a ShopRite gift card, use it to buy groceries, and support the ministries of MUMC!

Here's how it works:

You order your Shop Rite gift cards from us at the regular price. The church purchases the cards from ShopRite at a 5% discount. Card orders & payments are taken on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Your cards are delivered to you at church on the 3rd Sunday. Cards are available in denominations of \$25, \$50 and \$100 and can be used at any Shop Rite. Checks should be made payable to Montville UMW. (Cards are usually available for purchase even if you don't order ahead). For further information, contact Linda at 973-632-5509 or ljanderson07082@aol.com.

Some Highlights from August

Aside from a delicious and colorful Chalk Art and Watermelon Day in mid-August (with both red AND yellow watermelon), we had an out-of-this world Vacation Bible School on August 27th with 12 kids! Our intergalactic voyagers blasted off to Mars and beyond to learn about the God of hope who can do far beyond all that we could ever ask or imagine by his power at work within us (Ephesians 3:20). We were so grateful for their participation and for all our volunteers who helped to make this special day possible!

We also hosted our first ever International Overdose Awareness Day Vigil on August 31st, in partnership with The Hazel Project. Montville's Chief of Police, Andrew Caggiano, as well as Sheriff Gannon were present. We were grateful to have the Hope One vehicle with us in our parking lot, which trained several people on how to use Narcan in a crisis situation. We were also grateful for the brave testimonies of those who spoke during our gathering, people whose lives and families have been devastated by the opioid epidemic. It was a meaningful evening filled with hope, healing, and light at our church as we remembered those who have lost their lives to overdose, and as we helped to serve as a resource for those in our community who are hurting most. This is something we hope to be an annual event that we host, for the stigma free message continues to be an important one for our church, whether related to substance use disorders and the opioid epidemic, mental health disorders, or other.

Invitation to Celebrate Joe and Laurie Zelman!

**Both during and after our 9:30am worship service on
Sunday, October 3rd – World Communion Sunday**



Although it is with great difficulty that we announce Joe and Laurie will be stepping away and transitioning from Montville UMC after 33 years of ministry, our hearts are, at the same time, filled with immense gratitude for them and for the blessed gift their presence has brought to us these last few decades. When we think of the history of Montville UMC, I imagine it will be hard to look back on our history without testifying to the faithful witness of these servants of God, for they have had such a profound impact on our church and community, perhaps in ways we may not even fully realize. Both Joe and Laurie are rare gems in their own special way and are going to be deeply missed by all.

It's hard to believe they've been at Montville UMC longer than I, as your current pastor, have been alive! And in the time they've served as music minister and deacon, Joe and Laurie have seen countless other pastors come through, have witnessed many-a-transitions, and have brought life and joy to our midst with every passing year, as they've helped us each Sunday to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, as they've aided in our service to God to a greater extent, and grown us deeper in our love of God and each other.

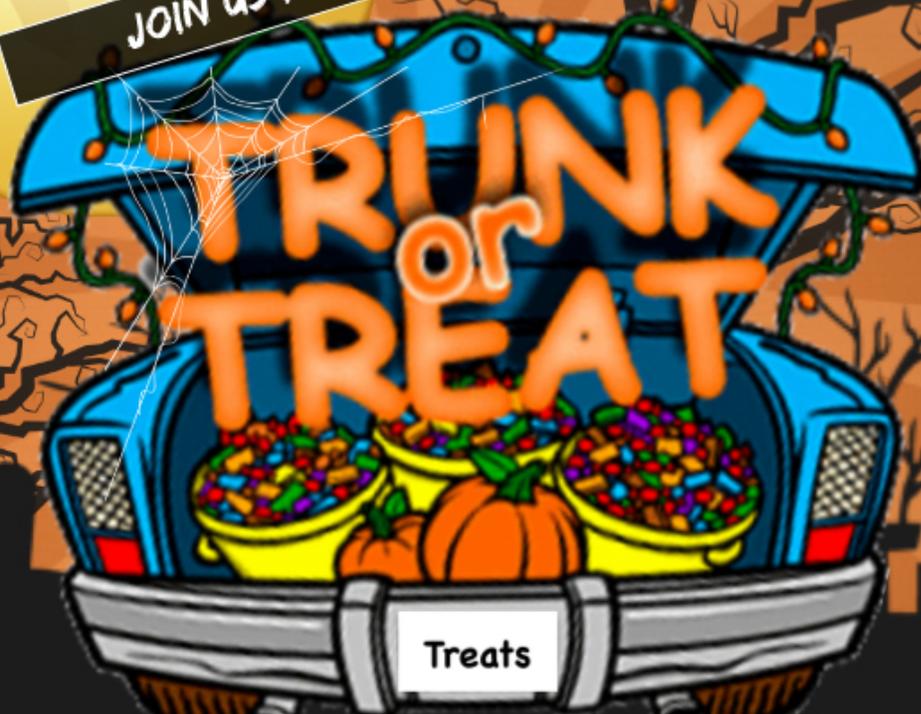
Many positive things and stories could be shared about Joe and Laurie, enough to fill a whole hymnal! And although no amount of testimonies or stories can fully encapsulate our love and gratitude for them, we want to invite you to celebrate with us in several special ways. You can **1) give a written testimonial** that speaks to what you love about Joe and Laurie, what you will miss most about them, or a memorable and meaningful story, emailing it to Pastor Donald at pastordonaldk44@gmail.com. You can also **2) share pictures** or give a **video testimonial** that tells the same to help celebrate them with us. We will be using Memento, a special program to put together a special photo and video tribute for Joe and Laurie. Those sending photos or a video can upload them directly to the following link: <https://app.memento.com/celebration-of-joe-and-laurie/9sN8nltTk/record>. Pastor Donald is also happy to record something for anyone, whether on Zoom or in-person at the church. We ask all testimonials to be submitted by October 1st. We will also **3) be taking up a love offering** for Joe and Laurie to bless them on their way and let them know how much we appreciate them. Donations can be given to Linda Anderson or Tammy Martone. Call Linda at (973) 632-5509 or Tammy at (201) 410-7862 if you have questions about how best to get your donation to them. But we look forward to having you join us for the celebration of Joe and Laurie on Sunday, October 3rd!

-Pastor Donald

**FREE
EVENT**

PRESENTED BY
MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST



FUN GAMES & PRIZES!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30

AT 3:00PM TILL 5:00PM

MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

29 WHITEHALL RD, TOWACO, NJ 07082

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT SUSIE AT 714-814-4655

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Montville United Methodist Church



Car Registration Form

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Vehicle Plate #: _____ Make/Model: _____

Guidelines:

- * Only pre-packaged candy or treats are approved.
- * All car trunks MUST be registered.
- * No electricity will be provided, but you can provide your own.
- * No super scary decorations due to little children.
- * An adult and/or parent must be with their vehicle at all times during the trunk or treat event for safety reasons.
- * All participants will receive a confirmation e-mail with instructions prior to the event.