

## THE MESSENGER



### A WORD FROM PASTOR GINA: “BLESSINGS FOR PENTECOST”

“Divided Tongues, as a fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.” Acts 2:3

As we move into the warmer days of summer, Pentecost always takes on a greater significance for me. I share with you a powerful reflection on the gift and power of the Holy Spirit that this church season brings.

“Blessings for Pentecost” comes from one of my favorite spiritual authors, Joyce Rupp.

- May the enthusiasm of Spirit leap incessantly within you and help you to live a vibrant life.
- May the warmth of the Spirit’s fire be extended through your concern and care for all those who need your love.
- May the blaze of Spirit’s courage enable you to speak the truth and to stand up for respect, dignity, and justice.
- May the undying embers of Spirit’s faithfulness support you when you feel spiritually dry and empty.
- May the strength of Spirit’s love sustain your hope as you enter into the pain of our world.
- May the clear light of Spirit’s guidance be a source of effective discernment and decision-making for you.
- May Spirit’s patient endurance be yours while you wait for what is unknown to be revealed.
- May the steady flame of Spirit’s goodness within you convince you every day of the power of your presence with others.
- May the joyful fire of Spirit dance within you and set happiness ablaze in your life.
- May the spark of your relationship with Spirit catch fire in the hearts of those with whom you live and work.
- May you be mindful of the Eternal Flame within you.
- May you rely on this Source of Love to be your constant ally and steady guide.

My siblings in Christ may each and every one of us be blessed to be a blessing to all whom we meet throughout these hope-filled, beautiful days of summer.

**Find us at [FMCMoorestown.com](http://FMCMoorestown.com)**

## JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> – YOUTH SUNDAY: “FREEDOM IN THIS HOUSE!”

Get ready for one of the most powerful Sundays of the year — Youth Sunday is back, and it's all led by the next generation! On June 1, our youth will lead the service with passion, purpose, and the power of the Spirit! This isn't just any Sunday — it's a full-on celebration of what it means to find “Freedom in This House” — freedom in God, freedom in worship, and the freedom to be fully ourselves in His presence.

This year's theme was inspired by our unforgettable experience at the Ignite Youth Conference in Wildwood, plus a full year of growing, serving, and learning together. The youth will share powerful testimonies, lead high-energy worship, and offer fresh, heartfelt perspectives on what it means to belong to a community of faith like FMC. Get ready to move with music from their favorite worship artist, Jonathan Traylor — including a closing praise song that's guaranteed to have the whole church on their feet.

You won't want to miss it. Come celebrate our amazing youth and see how God is moving through them. Bring your energy, your spirit, and maybe even your dancing shoes — because freedom looks good on you, too. Let's pack God's house on June 1 — and experience the joy of a youth-led, Spirit-filled worship like no other!



Rediscovering our United Methodist

### JUNE PREACHING SERIES

Sunday Services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Roots give us the stability and nourishment we need to grow and break new ground. As we seek to grow in our faith as individuals and as the church, looking back at the deep roots of the Methodist movement can help us look forward to our future. More than mere traditions or rituals, our Methodist roots are evidence of God's Spirit moving through our history, the same Spirit who is breathing life into us today.

#### **June 8 - Baptism | Mark 1:4-12**

Baptism is God's cleansing of our original sin, initiation into Christ's Holy Church, incorporation into the body of Christ, and empowerment by the Holy Spirit for a lifelong process of discipleship in community.

#### **June 15 - Father's Day: Personal & Social Holiness-Missional Connection | Micah 6:6-8**

John Wesley, said “There is no holiness but social holiness.” Salvation and a full life in Christ are seen in personal and social holiness. This holiness calls us to a missional connection with our communities and the world. Three men will share their faith stories of connecting their faith into action.

#### **June 22: Three Simple Rules: Do No Harm, Do Good, Stay in Love with God | Romans 12: 9-20**

Let's unpack our founding father, John Wesley's practical guidance for living faithfully.

#### **June 29: Grace | Ephesians 2:4-10**

Grace is a gift from God that is given freely to all people—and because of this gift, we are saved. This grace is the spark that makes the Methodist fire burn, the starting point and an essential root of our theology.



## 2025 SUMMER PREACHING SERIES JULY - AUGUST

**One 10:00 a.m. service on Sundays in July and August**

**T-Shirt Theology** is a fresh and relatable approach to sharing faith and growing in discipleship. Inspired by the simple yet powerful messages found on T-shirts, this series unpacks everyday slogans to reveal deep spiritual truths about who we are, what we're called to, and how we can live with purpose. Each week, we'll explore how these bite-sized, uplifting phrases can connect us to God's love, inspire hope, and challenge us to live out our faith in practical, transformational ways. It's faith made approachable, fun, and meaningful—just like your favorite tee!



### COMING THIS SUMMER IN JULY TO AUGUST: "BE THE SPARK" PODCAST SERIES

We know life can feel heavy, messy, and uncertain—but what if *you* could be the spark that brings hope, healing, and change to the world around you? This summer, we're launching a brand-new podcast series called *Be the Spark*—designed for everyday people (yes, that means you!) who want to live with more purpose, compassion, and courage. Each week features real stories, honest conversations, and one simple "Spark Challenge" to put love into action. Whether you're full of faith, full of questions, or somewhere in between—this is for you. Listen on your own or with a group, and let's spark something powerful together. Coming July 9 on all podcast platforms and our website!



### NO VACATION FOR ADVOCATES OF EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Mary Starn, E&SJ Committee Chair, [starred5@comcast.net](mailto:starred5@comcast.net)

Thanks to all who have attended the Equity & Social Justice Speaker Series! It has been educational and motivating to hear from our various guests. The list of speakers since the new year began has included Jessica Shoffner from Kensington, Professor Richard Gray regarding the West End Community Center, Gary Ell from the Moorestown Historical Society, Matt Peace from Churches of Welcome, Rabbi Eron from the JCC, Mike Zuber discussing Master Gardeners, and Drew Dyson on the United Methodist Social Principles. June begins with a fun opportunity to march in the Gay Pride Parade in Haddon Township on June 5. Join the Reconciling Committee and the E&SJ committee in representing our church in the parade! (For further details contact Lisa Kulp at [trklkk@comcast.net](mailto:trklkk@comcast.net).)

On June 7 and 8, consider attending the 2025 Nanticoke Leni Lenape Tribal Nation Pow Wow at the Cumberland County Fairgrounds. St. John's United Methodist Church from Bridgeton will have a table at this event selling desserts to benefit their VBS.

On June 8, our speaker will be Nurse Practitioner Kelly LaRocca, who will focus on mental health and depression. Don't miss this very timely discussion between services in the Heritage Room.

Please keep **TAKING ACTION** on important legislative priorities by going to [UMCJUSTICE.org](http://UMCJUSTICE.org) and contacting your senators and representatives about upcoming congressional actions. Letters to our congresspeople do really matter! Keep informed about civic actions and take part to let your voice be heard!



## FIRST LIGHT NEWS

*Devika Gill, First Light Director, [firstlight@fmcmoorestown.com](mailto:firstlight@fmcmoorestown.com)*

Some people may think summer is a quiet time at First Light Early Learning Center. The opposite is true! Last year, we started our first extended school year, "Summer Camp," and over 100 students participated in the six-week session. Most were First Light students, but other children from the community also joined us for part or all of the session.

We love to learn through play, and that was evident last summer! Each week was a different theme with coordinating daily activities, including:

- A hands-on science program, including making slime, volcanoes, and bee pollen
- Painting, mixing colors, and lots of messy crafts
- Water play and playground fun

Even our snacks and Miss Donna's music lessons followed our themes! Between all the fun and activities, we reinforced age-appropriate academics, so our children were ready for school in the fall. We reviewed letters and letter sounds, practiced our handwriting and fine and gross motor skills, and worked on our pre-reading and reading skills.

Due to the positive response last summer, we're offering camp again this year, extending the session to 7 weeks from June 16 through August 1. Each week will be filled with both academics and lots of play! As always, we feel blessed to be part of our students' first educational experience and to share our love of learning with our students!

## FMC APPLE FESTIVAL

*Friday, September 19*

Mark your calendars! FMC's second annual Apple Festival will take place on Friday, September 19 (rain date September 20). In 2024, our inaugural Apple Festival impacted over 1,000 people in our community. The event team is busy planning an exciting follow-up this year with even more attractions and fun.

**Interested in helping at the event?**  
**Please contact Nicole McGough at**  
**[snmcgough@verizon.net](mailto:snmcgough@verizon.net).**





## YOUTH UPDATE

*Jeremiah Appleton, jeremiah@fmcmoorestown.com*

### End-of-Year Family BBQ + Slime Wars/Messtival

On June 8, we will host a Family BBQ in the FMC parking lot from 5:00-7:30 p.m. Youth group students, parents, siblings, and friends are all invited to share in a time of fellowship and games. Additionally, families of rising Youth Group students (those who will be in 6<sup>th</sup> grade next September) are invited to join the fun to see what FMC Youth Group is all about. Each family is asked to contribute a side dish or dessert to the meal. After a break for Father's Day on June 15, we will conclude the Youth Group year on June 22 with one of our favorite events—the Slime Wars/Messtival in the area by the firepit behind Pastor Gina's house. Upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders are again invited to this wacky, wild event, where slime and other gooey substances will be generously dispersed.



### 2025 Appalachia Service Project (ASP) Trip

At 5:30 a.m. on August 3, 29 youth and adult volunteers representing FMC Moorestown will set out on a 9.5-hour drive to the ASP center in Jonesville, VA. The following week, we will serve local residents through construction ministry—working on projects ranging from roof repair or replacement to ramp construction to floor repair or replacement and beyond. ASP exists to make homes warmer, safer, and drier for homeowners who don't have the means to do so for themselves, and our group is blessed to participate in this mission. We ask for prayers

from the congregation during our trip for safety and lasting impacts. On Sunday, July 27, the Mission Team will be commissioned during our 10:00 a.m. service. Please attend this service to participate in sending the Team forward!

### 2025-2026 Confirmation Class + Call for Mentors

We will host Confirmation Class during the next school year following a model similar to what Pastor Jess ran during the 2023-2024 school year. Confirmation is for any student who will be in 8<sup>th</sup> grade (or older) this September and who has not previously been confirmed. A full schedule will be created and distributed before we resume Youth Group activities with a kick-off meeting in late September.

We will also be looking for mentors for each of our Confirmation students. Mentors will participate in classes and join field trips throughout the school year, walking alongside our students and ultimately helping them create their Statement of Faith to share with the congregation.

If you would like your student(s) to participate in Confirmation Class or if you are interested in being a mentor, please email Jeremiah by the end of August.



# GET READY FOR THE SIZZLE — OUR 3RD ANNUAL FMC CHURCHWIDE BBQ! SUNDAY, JULY 13 AT 11:00 AM (RIGHT AFTER WORSHIP!)



It's back and better than ever! Join us for an afternoon of great food, good friends, and summer fun at our Third Annual FMC BBQ — a tradition worth tasting!

We're firing up the grills for a BBQ feast featuring:

- Pulled pork
- Pulled beef
- Hot dogs for all ages
- Plus: Delicious sides, with vegan and gluten-free options too!



Bring your favorite dessert to share and help us create the ultimate sweet table — from brownies to pies, we want to try them all! We'll have a craft table for kids, plenty of time to laugh, connect, and make new friends, and a whole lot of summer joy to go around.

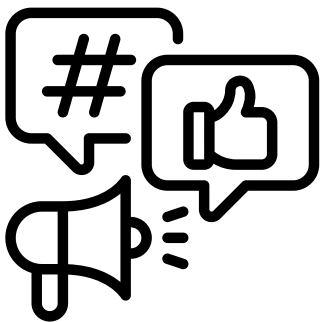


## SILENT AUCTION

Be ready to check out our awesome Silent Auction benefiting the Fall Apple Festival! Bid on fun getaways, themed gift baskets, and other exciting items. It's shopping that gives back!

**Bring your appetite. Bring your people. Bring the fun. We can't wait to see you there!**

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