

May 2025

Conley's United Methodist Church

# THE CONNECTION

In essentials, unity

In non-essentials, liberty

In all things, charity



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## Special Points of Interest

- Poetry, Prayers, and Words of Wisdom
- Notable Days in May



## The Pastor's Pen

*a word from Pastor Bill Davis*

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### *Praise the Lord!*

*Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him from the highest heights.*

*Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts.*

*Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.*

*Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the clouds.*

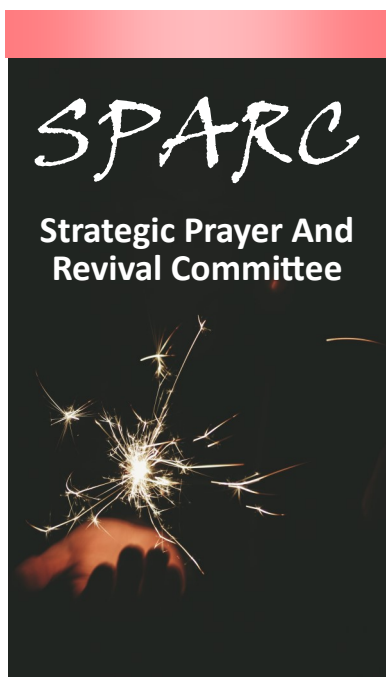
*~ Psalm 148:1-4*

Sometimes when reading Scripture a particular verse jumps out at me. It may be a verse I never noticed before, or it may be a familiar verse that strikes me in a new way. Such was the case recently as I read Psalm 148, our lectionary Psalm for Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. The phrase “shining stars” in verse three struck me as having a dual meaning. The psalmist is referring to the stars in the sky, but I read the words as referring to our faith community here at Conley’s. I was reminded of Paul’s encouragement to “shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life” (Philippians 2:15-16), and the way the members of our church are a blessing to one another and to our community.

Perhaps my favorite story from Jesus’ post-Easter time on earth is his encounter on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). Cleopas and his companion--most likely his wife despite typically being depicted in art as a man--were clinging to hope. Jesus had been murdered, and rumors of his resurrection inspired more confusion than encouragement. What happened? What was going on? What would come next? Then a stranger, a fellow traveler on the road, engaged them in conversation. His words helped them to make sense of it all as gently, step by step, he walked beside them in the truth. When they invited the stranger into their home, he broke bread with them, and “*then their eyes were opened.*” The phrase recalls the story in Genesis 3 where the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened. But where the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened to sin and shame, the eyes of Cleopas and his companion were opened to grace and glory. And they began to shine. They reflected the glory of the one sitting at their table. And, when Jesus disappeared from their sight, they continued to shine, rushing back into the night to bear witness to the Resurrection.

Since then, Christians have walked the same road. Confused and conflicted. Fighting fears and frustrations. Plagued by discouragement and doubt. We worry and fret about many things. But like those first disciples, we have a hope. We know Jesus’ Resurrection has defeated death and we are not left to journey through life alone. The King of kings and Lord of the universe is our friend and companion all the way. We are Easter people. And, like those first disciples, as we walk in Jesus’ resurrected presence, we reflectively shine his light. So praise him, all you shining stars. Christ is risen; he is risen indeed. Hallelujah!





I recently began reading and using the book, "Earth Gospel – A Guide to Prayer for God's Creation"; as part of my prayer time. In the introduction, the author, Sam Hamilton-Poore, talks about the connection between loving God and loving God's creation and how many Christians don't feel that is our job to care for "this world". The biblical texts, prayers and readings in the book call us to embrace and care for God's creation because of our relationship with the Spirit of God in Jesus Christ. Hamilton-Poore says that the creation is suffering a crisis through pollution, erosion, and extinction of species due to habitat destruction.

Conley's Campus and Prayer Garden are places where we can begin to demonstrate our love and caring for a small part of God's magnificent creation.

Join us on May 1 at 3:30 for a time of planting and praying. Signs will be at strategic locations around the campus, each focusing on a specific aspect of our church life. A map will be provided for you to use as you pray around the church property and prayer garden.

A healing service is planned for June 5th.

*"I continue to dream and pray about a revival of Holiness in our day that moves forth in mission and creates authentic community in which each person can be unleashed through the empowerment of the Spirit to fulfill God's creational intentions."*

— — John Wesley



## Greetings from the Missions Team



### Over 50 Years of Repairing And Replacing Homes in Central Appalachia



#### Did you know?

Conley's distributes 10% of all income from church offerings to local, national, and international missions programs.

Our trip this year is July 13-19. Please consider joining the group, to be a blessing to someone in need. We will be going to North Carolina this year to help hurricane victims. Call Marie Van Der Wall, 302-249-7897, or the church office to sign up.

- **More than 25 communities** are served by ASP each year.
- **More than 350 families** are impacted through ASP each year.
- **More than 3,000 repair projects** are completed by volunteers each year.
- **More than 20 new homes** are built and gifted each year.
- **More than 15,000** volunteers serve with ASP each year.
- ASP repairs roofs, walls, floors, foundations, and bathrooms, in addition to making homes accessible through porch and ramp repairs or additions.

## Evangelism Team News

### Utilizing Art To Spread The Gospel

Over the past two years since I joined Conley's Evangelism team I have been trying to develop and use creative approaches to spread the gospel by encouraging Conley's people to share their Christian faith, e.g., through the Lenten Devotional booklet. I greatly appreciate all that have contributed something to the first two Lenten booklets!



You may not realize this but several artistically inclined Conley's people stepped forward and contributed to the 2025 Lenten Devotional booklet. **Can you identify who painted, made or photographed each of the following for their six devotions?** (see answers at end of article):

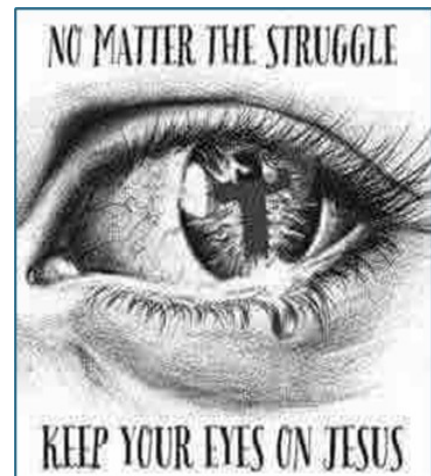
#### A. Precious In His Sight



#### B. A Cross That Fits Right Into The Palm Of Your Hand



#### C. No Matter The Struggle Keep your Eyes On Jesus



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## Evangelism Team News

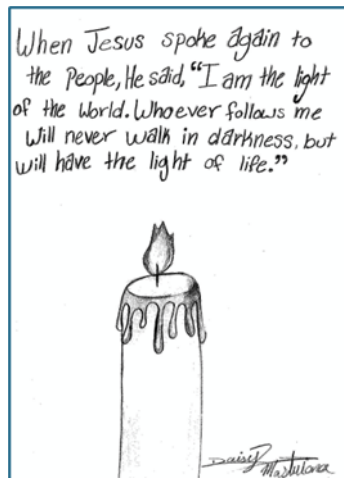
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**D. You May See...But Are You Sometimes Blind?**



**E. He said, "I am the light of the world."**



**F. Let the Light of Jesus Lead You**



We welcome artwork, photos and other original pieces for future Lenten devotionals!

What has been more challenging is developing new approaches to spread the gospel to people outside Conley's. 'Bring a Friend Sundays' that we have had for over a year now has successfully worked in bringing into Conley's more visitors and some new members but we can do a better job retaining visitors. We should look for opportunities to encourage others to come visit Conley's and promote Conley's as a sanctuary of peace and love full of loving and caring people.

**I am now recruiting and trying to build Conley's Evangelism team** with people interested in coming up with creative ways to help spread the gospel both at Conley's and to unchurched in our surrounding community. Please contact me at [gjpawlikowski@verizon.net](mailto:gjpawlikowski@verizon.net) to learn more. Thanks!

**Answers:** A. Sue Greco, B. John Schwartz, C. Will Keyser, D. Jerry Pawlikowski, E. Daisy Mastriana, and F. Bob Marx



## SOCIAL CONCERNS

### The Latest from Conley's Social Concerns Team



#### Soup Kitchen

Soup for the Soul has continued to serve about 30 people per week. Many are people who have been coming to the Wednesday gathering for a number of years and enjoy the social aspects of sharing a meal. There are some new faces scattered among them and the people from KSI are always a welcome edition. Don't forget to sign up in the narthex to bring a soup or dessert.

#### Feeding the Flock

We are so excited to, once again be receiving produce, meat and dairy from the Historic Lewes Farmer's Market. We know that this will be available through mid-July. After that we are not sure what will happen. As reported in last months' newsletter, funding for the grant program that provided the Farm to Community program will be discontinued in July. They are exploring other options for funding. We also received "Easter" boxes from Mountaire. We were able to distribute 35 boxes to our lunch clients. We are seeing many different needs from these clients aside from food. Although, management prevents us from "openly evangelizing", we find many ways to share our love of Jesus with these people.

#### Food Pantry

Our pantry is well stocked with most non-perishable items. We do need shelf stable milk, like Parmalat. In the freezers, we have chickens, turkeys, ground beef and some pork products. Sandy sees a steady stream of people needing food help.

**Solitary religion is not to be found . . . The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social religion; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection.**

*(From John Wesley's intro to "Hymns and Sacred Poems.")*

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## **NEWS from CONLEY'S THRIFT SHOP**

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Well spring weather finally showed up and brought along lots and lots of the green pollen. It's everywhere!!! Hopefully you don't suffer with allergies.

The thrift shop is seeing a lot of new visitors and we're getting lots and lots of nice complements about how well the shop is organized, how clean it is and what a great assortment of items that we have. Thanks to our staff and all of our great volunteers for keeping us on top.

Donations continue to be strong and of really nice quality. If you are considering redecorating any room in your home, you might want to check out our great selection of furniture and home décor before shopping the local retail stores. You really can save a lot of money.

We have had several opportunities this past month to assist people in and around our area who are in need with furniture and household items. The shop also donates approximately 400 bags of clothing each month to the Phoenix Clothing Co. in Wilmington. They support a large contingency of homeless families by letting them come shop for clothing and needed items for free. We are so blessed to receive such a large amount of donations that we can share and bless others.

With it getting near vacation times, we will need a few additional volunteers. (especially a couple of cashiers). Please consider donating 1 day a week of a 3 hour shift. Male or female, must be able to make change, like people and like to talk. Stop by and talk with Pat or Sally at the Thrift Shop for additional information.

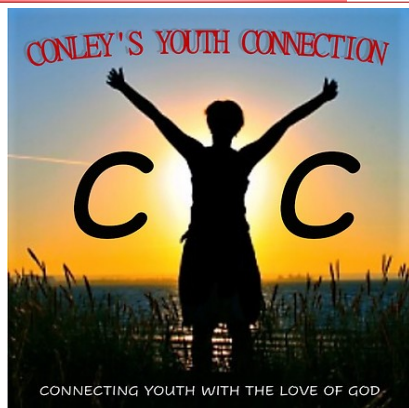
Hope to see you soon!!! Keep us in your prayers.

### **Did you know?**

Conley's Thrift Shop donates 10% of all income to local charities.







Providing a safe and fun environment  
where young people can  
learn about God,  
build their faith,  
and form friendships.

As May begins, I am still reflecting on the many feelings that the Easter season brought. Basking in the warmth and light of the presence of His “Son-Shine”. I am grateful for the opportunities I was able to be a part of during Holy Week. Being involved in the Women Who Knew Jesus presentation as the Bleeding Woman, alongside my other wonderful cast mates, on Maundy Thursday and a scripture reader during the Tenebrae service on Good Friday really drew me closer to Jesus leading up to Resurrection Sunday. Lent tends to empty us of our shortcomings and burdens while the Resurrection fills us with His hope and joy! Alleluia!!

I love that the National Day of Prayer is being held this year on May 1st (always the 1st Thursday in May). What a beautiful way to begin a new month. Praising God for our many blessings, asking Him for guidance, grace, forgiveness, peace, comfort and healing, as well as, for His protection over the world in which we live seems like a great way to begin the month after celebrating Easter. As May begins with prayer, I would like to be more intentional and aware of the important role prayer should play in my life. Having a powerful prayer connection with our Papa God strengthens our growing relationship. We can come to Him at any time and He always welcomes us with open arms—our words need not be eloquent, just from our hearts.

May is also the month we honor all of the Mothers in our lives. My Mom and her mom—my Mommom—laid the path from the beginning of my faith journey. They truly exemplified selfless love that still inspires me to this day. I always feel so blessed that God chose them for me. I know through their endless prayers for me, as a child, teenager, young adult and now a mother myself, God has always been with me as a protector and guide—whether I was aware of Him or not at the time. I am in awe of His goodness! I am also forever grateful to have a few other ‘Mama’ figures in my life here at Conley’s! Your love, patience, selflessness, listening ears, hugs, advice, faith and encouragement are priceless gifts that will always be treasured and carried close to my heart! Happy Mother’s Day, Mamas! You are true blessings in my life!

Peace be with you!

-Jess



## Gearing Up for Season Four!

As Camp Hope prepares for its fourth summer (yes, fourth!), our volunteers and counselors are busy making plans, thinking through details, crossing every T, and dotting every I. This takes lots of time, manpower, and resources. We've been so blessed to have expanded the number of local churches offering to support Camp Hope in some way – it really does make all the difference!

In the meanwhile, **Bible Buddies**, our Saturday morning program, has helped us maintain contact with some of our younger campers. This reinforces their Jesus experience and prepares them to better understand and remember the Bible lessons we have lined up for them this Summer.



*These pictures show the kids making their lions, based on the Bible story of Daniel.*



*P. S. Don't forget! Join us at the **Nicola's Pizza** fundraiser on **Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>** between 5:00 and 9:00 PM. Lots of friends – old and new – will be there. No coupon required.*

As always, thank you for your ongoing prayers and other forms of encouragement!

Karen Lessey, Camp Hope Director  
***All praise and glory to God!***

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH



Under the direction of Alyce, our Maundy Thursday Service celebrated the “Women Who Knew Jesus”. It was awesome to hear their stories and learn how their lives were interwoven, which was depicted in the weaving of their head scarves. Thank you ladies for a meaningful time of worship.

Participants: Alyce, Elaine, Laura, Connie, Ann, Judy, Betty, Sandy, Tina, Susan, Marguerite, Jean, Jess and Mia.

The UWF were recently approached by the Quilters group that meets at Conley’s. They learned that the Foster Care program’s children, when making moves, often carry belongings in plastic bags. The Quilters group have taken on the project of making duffle bags for the children. In turn, they approached us about providing items of need for those children. We have received from The Foster Care program a list of toiletry items that are most needed. We are going to run this campaign from May 11 through June 8. The list, along with a collection box, will be available in the vestibule. The Lord truly blesses the goals of the UWF when they reach out to different organizations in our community to help where it is most needed. We thank you in advance for your support of this project.

### FOSTER CARE TOILETRY CAMPAIGN MAY 11 TO JUNE 8



**Please bring NEW, FULL SIZED ONLY:**

3 in 1 body wash (for teenage boys)  
Body Wash  
Shampoo  
Conditioner  
Body lotion

Roll-on deodorant  
Toothpaste  
Feminine pads and tampons  
Gift cards to CVS or Walmart to  
purchase products



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## A Mother's Day Reminder

*For you formed my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* —Psalm 139:13-14

There is no handbook that comes with the birth of your child.

This tiny being looking up at you is a forever gift from God. It's really a scary thought. Can I do this? What if I make a mistake? Will this little "bundle of joy" in my arms love me?

The eternal journey of motherhood begins. You have loved and nurtured this gift in your womb for nine months.

Help me, God! It will be a lifetime of learning, not just for your child, but for you too. It will be a lifetime of sacrifice from you for your child.

But, through it all, Mom will be there to teach you, to comfort you, even to love on you when you act unlovable towards her.

Mom, will be your teacher, your confident, your cheerleader, your first love all of your life. A godly mother never gives up on her child.

There will be situations in your life, where she wonders if she can make it through the bad decisions you are making. But, she does not give up on you—ever. It may even break her heart to watch you make serious mistakes she can't fix. But, she's still there to lean on.

God, in His wisdom, created the heart of this woman he called "Mother". A heart that can be broken and still be repaired by a mother's never-ending love for the child He entrusted to her care.

Children are not perfect and neither are mothers. We are all a work in progress learning to live life.

Give Mom, the love she needs when she makes a mistake, when she may hurt your feelings. I'm sure you have hurt her feelings many times more than you would care to admit.

God gave you to her for a particular reason. He knew what kind of mother you would need to become His child.

A mother who would be an example of the love He gives to His children.

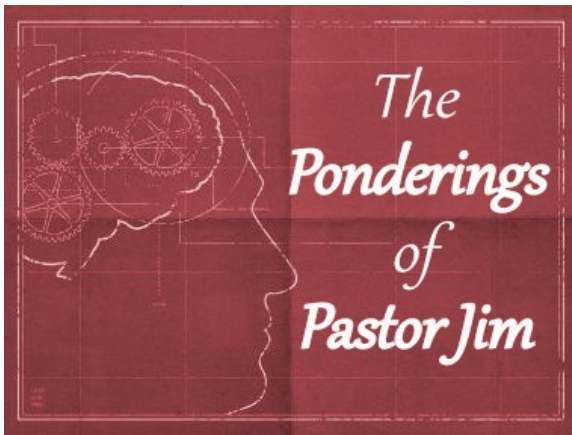
Our God, who forgives us through His son, Jesus Christ.

Thank you, Father God, for your son, Jesus.

Thank you, Father God, for my Mom.

*As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.* —Isaiah 66:3

By: Sandie Wysocki



Being the middle child of five siblings, I frequently felt less noticed compared to my brothers and sisters. It's true what they say about the overlooked, middle child. The oldest are listened to and used for household tasks because they are the elders. The youngest are watched over and babied. The middle one – overlooked. Growing up, the seven of us (two parents, five children) filled the pew at First Baptist Church in Paterson,

New Jersey. It was a large urban church. I was often restless during the service, as kids were, and my mother would say to me – “Be quiet, listen to him,” pointing to the pastor. For overlooked middle-child Jimmy – a light bulb went off - that's who I wanted to be. The one who stood in the pulpit. The one people were expected to listen to. Even in my young mind, I understood prevenient grace. I have attended church since birth. I felt loved and wooed by my family, by the church people, and by God. Later on, I had a sense of justifying grace – I felt that believing in God and in his son Jesus, who died on the cross for us, created a bond of love and forgiveness. But sanctifying grace. I wasn't quite mature enough to allow God to work through me and guide my actions. [In the theological sense, things are sanctified when they are used for the purpose God intends.](#)

I have always been drawn to pastoral ministry. My family encouraged that call, the church people encouraged that call, my friends knew me to be a person who should enter the pastoral ministry. And the call was real and genuine – not just a child wanting to be a policeman. My relationship with God was calling me to a lifetime of service to Christ's church.

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### **EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW**

I learned from Noah's Ark:

- ◆ Make sure you don't miss the boat.
- ◆ Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
- ◆ Stay fit. When you're sixty years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- ◆ Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- ◆ Build your future on high ground.
- ◆ For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- ◆ Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
- ◆ When you're stressed, float awhile.
- ◆ Remember, the ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
- ◆ No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

——Source: The Fishwrapper, East Berks Edition, Little Mountain Printing.

(Sipping my coffee on my patio one quiet morn, (anywhere along Rt. 24), naught but an *eternal peace* - and then - I heard **THEM**, the Agents of Progress! Join me, won't you?)

### THE LUNCHMEN

*"sounds...clamor through the Eleven Fifty-Eight"*

(by Ron Starich, from his book: *A Fall of Words*)

Hammers bang,  
pound 'n clamor;  
lumber is rolled 'n rumbled,  
dented steel dump trucks and colossal earth graders:  
**"BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP"** signals their reverse;  
high-torque engines rev with abandon, leveling all in their path,  
a lions' drawl of visceral fortitude bellows;  
plumes of hot diesel shimmer,  
choking charcoal exhaust spews  
'fire-working' into resigned film-less blue sky.

An accidental tumble clatters:  
**"HEY, WATCH OUT THERE!"**  
grinding, sawing, **"BEEP-BEEP"**, tapping...  
distant voices ascend 'n decline in sync to gusts of the wind,  
'construction' sounds spike 'n chatter  
clamor, clamor...clamor up through  
the **Eleven Fifty-Eight**  
hot, thirst 'n sweaty, noon day airs.

**Then -**  
dead calm;  
the roaring spigot -  
'MEN WORKING',  
turns **OFF!**

Birds who were chirping...  
now are heard,  
a distant dogs' faint bark...  
now recognized,  
a fanning breeze...  
now, actually felt;  
its whirl of 'white noise'  
soothes like a balm as it feathers past,

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fielding through intentioned, 'architecturally-remaining' standing trees  
and dust-chunked saw-grass bushes.

Lunchboxes are opened,  
their contents now to savor...

it is **TWELVE NOON!**

And for the next thirty tick-tick minutes -  
a whole one half of one of eight hours -  
*all* the workers,  
have *no* job,  
*have no* debt,  
*have no* toil to do,  
for they are...

**The Lunchmen!**



*Then it dawned on me  
that this is good and proper:  
to eat and drink and find the good in all the toil  
that we undertake under the sun  
during the few days God has given,  
for this is our lot in life.  
Ecclesiastes 5:18 (VOICE)*

## Worship With Us This Month

Worship with us on Sundays at 10am. You may join us either in-person or online. Our worship service is livestreamed on Vimeo and Facebook; links are provided on our website.

**When joining us online, please check-in using the “Connect Card” located under the worship tab at the upper left corner of our homepage — we want to know you’re worshipping with us!**

The “Connect Card” may also be used to submit prayer requests and/or praise reports during our worship service or any time.

**You may give your tithes and offerings to the Lord through the church via the “donate” button at the lower right corner of our homepage.**

**Thank you for your faithfulness in giving — we believe God is doing great things through the ministry of his church!**

## What’s Happening

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### On-Going Weekly Events

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#### Sunday

**Adult Bible Study** taught by Rev. Jim Van der wall in the Library, 8:30-9:30am.

**Youth Bible Study** taught by Jess Mastriana, 9am in the youth room.

#### Monday

**Choir practice** in the Choir Room, 6-7:15 pm.

**Bell Ringers practice** in the Fellowship Hall, 7:15-8:15pm.

#### Tuesday

**Over 50 Yoga** in the Fellowship Hall, 10:30—11:45am. Bring your own mat and bottled water. Cost is \$10 per session, cash only.

#### Wednesday

**Soup for the Soul** provides free lunch and fellowship in the Fellowship Hall, 11am-1pm. Contributions are welcome; sign-up sheets are in the narthex.

**Adult Bible Study** led by Pastor Bill Davis in the Missions Room, 6:30pm. On hiatus until the summer series.

#### Thursday

**Adult Bible Study** led by Louise Finn & Karen Lessey in the missions room, 10-11:30am.

**Praise Team practice** in the Sanctuary, 5:30-6:30pm.

### Happening This Month

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**Camp Hope Fundraiser-Monday**, May 5th, 5-9pm, Nicola Pizza.

**Trustees Meeting**—Tuesday, May 6th, 6:30pm in the Library.

**Church Council**— Thursday, **May 15th, 6:30pm** in the Library.

**Women’s Fellowship**—Tuesday, May 27th, 6:30pm, in the Missions room.

# Opportunities to Be a Blessing

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## NEW OPPORTUNITIES

### Join Conley's Sight and Sound Team!

We are in need of people on Sunday mornings to operate the soundboard, screen projection computer, and livestream computer. Are you computer literate; are you willing to learn? Our friendly Sight and Sound Team will train you so that you can take a turn in this ministry that supports Sunday worship.

### Treasurer needed

Consider being the volunteer treasurer backup while learning the job to eventually become the paid Church Treasurer. Contact Sandy if interested.



## ON-GOING OPPORTUNITIES

### Greeters

A friendly welcome at the door makes a great first impression—both for new comers and regular attenders. Help get people ready for worship with a warm welcome to all and helpful directions to visitors.

### Ushers

You can help worshipers by directing them to open seats and bringing a microphone for prayers and praises, and providing helpful directions as needed.

**Contact the church office if you would like to serve your Conley's Church family in any of these capacities; 302-945-1881**

**Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.**

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.

If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith;

if it is serving, then serve;

if it is teaching, then teach;

if it is to encourage, then give encouragement;

if it is giving, then give generously;

if it is to lead, do it diligently;

if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

## ROMANS 12:4-8



## Conley's United Methodist Church

began as a Methodist society in 1800 and was incorporated as a Methodist church in 1838.

### Our Mission:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ.

## Notable Days in May\_\_\_\_\_

1st	National Day of Prayer
11th	Mother's Day
26th	Memorial Day
29th	Ascension Day

## Conley's United Methodist Church

33106 Jolyns Way  
Lewes, Delaware 19958

302-945-1881  
conleysumc@gmail.com

[www.conleysumc.org](http://www.conleysumc.org)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

