



Faith Church

CONNECTIONS

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Doesn't it sometimes feel like life is changing at 'warp speed'? I can't believe I have a 25-yr old son and grandkids! Seems like Lori and I just started this journey together yesterday. I can't believe I can talk in real-time with a friend in Russia as I read an email he sent me 30 seconds ago. Seems like just last year that I was amazed at my father-in-law's 5lb, clothes-iron-sized "mobile" phone, which only worked if you connected it to this huge antenna on top of your car. I can't believe there's such a thing as driverless tractor-trailers or 3D-printed kidney transplants. *What kind of Star Trek world are we living in?!*

Unfortunately, we're also seeing people change rapidly – especially in regard to faith. *Now, about 23% of Americans claim to have no religious affiliation. Over 1/3 of people under 37 yrs old (born after 1980) identify as atheist, agnostic, or no religion. Even out of Christians, only 40% say that Bible reading is important and only 30% say that attending worship services or helping at church is necessary.*

So where does the Church fit into all of this? How will Faith Church survive in a world that's changing so fast?

Most of the 'exodus' from Church is from younger people seeing the church as irrelevant. Christians are perceived as 'religious' only for the sake of religion; following rules so they feel better about themselves, in comparison with those other 'sinners'. Skeptics are most critical about so-called believers who actually live as atheists (with no outward difference in their language, dress, entertainment, or faith-sharing habits) or as reward-driven proselytizers (seeking quick converts to meet a quota rather than out of love). They see very few stand-out, genuine, unashamed Jesus-lovers motivated solely by love and compassion for others. Atheist Penn Jillette (of Penn & Teller fame) said it this way:

"How much do you have to hate someone to believe everlasting life is possible and not tell them that? If I believed, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that a truck was coming at you, and you didn't believe it, that that truck was bearing down on you, there's a certain point that I tackle you, and this [eternity] is more important than that."

He said this after an experience with a genuine Christian who lovingly brought a Bible to his performance and gave it to him afterwards. Jillette was moved with respect for the love this fan showed him. In his own words, sadly, he described it as uncharacteristic of most religious people.

MAY/JUNE 2017

Even with all that is changing, two things haven't – the Word of God and human nature (including a need to hope in something beyond ourselves & a hunger for authentic relationships)

So, consider our new vision statement. As **Faith EC Church**, we want to be focused on three priorities in making genuine disciples (Mt 22 & 28):

*Faith deepening through God's Word
Edifying family as God's people
Contagious freedom in Christ.*

First, we want people to realize that they can have a growing relationship with the living God. Out of this relationship they'll have hope to endure every change life brings. He never changes, always loves, and never leaves. We lead people to know Him because He is what they need more than anything else!

Second, we want to strengthen and support the Bible's design in families, by being a healthy church family that genuinely cares for one another. There's a natural progression – a deepening faith in God changes how we relate to others in our homes, at work, and when we meet together with other believers. No question, healthy relationships do not come easy. But we want to demonstrate how and why this is well worth the effort, and we fully expect that with the Spirit's help God will be honored in the process.

Lastly, we desire to see hearts transformed by Jesus. The best technological advances can't change 'human nature', but Jesus can – and He does! Part of the "good news" of the Gospel, proclaimed by Jesus, is that captives imprisoned in their sin are no longer enslaved (Luke 4:18). Chains of unforgiveness, rejection, fear & condemnation are all broken in Him! As slaves are set free passion is ignited for liberating others, creating a movement that is contagious. I hope that all in our church will be part of such a movement!!

Serving the Lord with you,

Pastor Kyle

FIVE Reasons to CELEBRATE!

NEW MEMBERS! On May 14th, 10 people publicly affirmed their faith commitment to the Lord and to our church. Please join us in welcoming *Morgan, Ben, Elijah, Calah, Jay, Gina, Jack, Login, Robin, & Tom!* Some others hope to join in coming weeks!

MEATLOAF DINNER! Thanks to the many people who donated food and helped throughout the day to prepare and serve over two hundred meals! About \$1200 was raised to help with church projects and send kids to summer camp!

NEW REFRIGERATOR(S)! *God provides!* Back in March it became obvious that our refrigerator was not working properly and was beyond repair. Over \$1500 was donated to purchase a new one AND at the same time a friend of our church donated their slightly used fridge. Now, we not only have one refrigerator, but two! Thanks to all who contributed!!

"FEC" MISSION & VISION Back in February our Board voted to use "F.E.C." as a outline to help us focus more intentionally on accomplishing God's mission of making disciples who love God & love others.

PRAYER FOCUS! Our weekly prayer meeting has grown in number since we're now at a new time (1pm on Tuesdays) and we've grown in our prayer life through studying the "Battle Plan for Prayer" based on the movie *War Room*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

YOUTH SERVICE DAY – Monday, June 12

As a "thank you" for all the contributions made toward their missions trip, our youth group would like to serve the older members of our congregation through helping with much needed projects at their homes. *Do you have a need?* Please contact Pastor Tom & Robin (pathwaysym@gmail.com or 717-648-3656).

MISSIONS SUNDAY– Sunday, June 18

Becky Stence – Amazon River Basin in S. America – will be here to share about her experiences. Also, during the service we will be commissioning our young people for their mission trip.

WICONISCO VBS – June 19-21

(Mon-Wed) from 6-8:30pm at the Wiconisco Park. "All God's Creatures" will focus on Creation, Noah's Ark, and Jesus' death on the cross. Each night will end around a campfire (weather permitting). Please talk to Deb Riegel if you can help.

LOCAL YOUTH MISSIONS TRIP -- June 25-July 1

With Herndon Campgrove as a base, our youth will work with various ministries in surrounding areas throughout the week, including some projects right in the Williams Valley. Concluding with a fun day at Knoebels Grove.

HERNDON CAMPMEETING -- July 20-30

This year' theme is "Reboot" with special EC Evangelists, John Friedlund (Boyertown) and Bob Stoner (Millersburg). Our own praise band will be leading worship on Wed & Thurs (July 26-27). And our church will join all others in our district for a combined worship service at the grove on July 23rd (with a picnic following the service)

IMPORTANT NEWS

NEW CHURCH TREASURER – At a special Official Board mtg on April 27th, Jay Reece was elected to the position of church treasurer, following Robin Moulfair's resignation earlier in the month. Robin felt it necessary to resign as several personal struggles were impacting her ability to keep up with responsibilities. Any questions concerning church finances can be directed to Jay at 717-523-1179.

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE CHANGES

Join the "Task Force" – A proposal for a new governance model was put before the congregation on April 30. Since that time we've been receiving much constructive feedback and good questions. As a result, our board decided to assemble a "task force" to work out more of the details over the summer to present a more thorough proposal this Fall. If you would like to be part of the "task force" please talk to Pastor Kyle or other board members. Copies of the current proposal are available at church or on our church website.

LAWN CARE - HELP NEEDED What a blessing God has given us in the beautiful property around our church building!! For April & May we paid someone to care for the lawn & they've done a great job! However, this is an unbudgeted expense, which we can no longer continue to afford. You can help us one of two ways – 1) volunteer to help mow the lawn for a few weeks out of the summer. Talk to Jay Reece for details. 2) We are looking for donations (jar on back table) to help with the cost of the past month and possibly pay for ongoing lawn care. (We would need \$80 every week/\$320 each month).

PRAYER REQUESTS

Darlene Strohecker fell recently and severely broke both arms. Please pray for her recovery and for Mark as he cares for her.

Mary Spardy's husband Jim passed away from a heart attack and other health problems on May 31st. Please pray for Mary and her family through their loss.

Other physical needs:

*Henry & Diane Klinger;
Pastor Samuels; Ed Minnich;
Lois Adams; Ron Keister*