

JUNIATA U.M. CHURCH  
808 North 4th Street  
Altoona, PA 16601

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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2025

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**Mission:**

Knowing, Loving, and Serving Christ in our Community.



**Weekly Sunday Services**  
Contemporary Service at 9am  
Sunday School at 10am  
Traditional Worship at 11am

or

View on You Tube

[Juniata United Methodist Church, Altoona Pa](#)

MINISTERS --- ALL THE MEMBERS

REV. DENISE HASKINS



The past two months have disappeared in the blink of an eye, and we find ourselves at the beginning of a new school year and all the new starts that happen following the Labor Day weekend. While summer isn't officially over, our minds are already looking ahead to the ministries that pick up around this time each year.

This newsletter is full of new and resuming activities taking place here at Juniata, and I hope you will listen to God's call on your heart to take part in, or even help organize, some of them. I'm particularly excited for the learning ministries that are so near and dear to my heart.

- We have a fresh crop of weekly Bible studies on tap, including Seeds, which will be reading *Parables from the Back Side* on Mondays at 6:30pm beginning September 8th. Meanwhile, the In the Word Bible study will pick up on Tuesday mornings at 11am beginning September 2nd. We will start with a look at "How Bible Stories Work" before choosing, as a group, what texts we want to dive into this fall.
- On Sunday mornings, we have three classes being added to our Sunday school line-up. There will be classes available for preschoolers as well as our school-age children, while adults can participate in the class led by Gary Rhodes in the chapel or in The Story class led by me downstairs.

I have been so excited to learn more about Juniata and all of you whether it has been on Sunday mornings before and after worship, during the meal after combined worship at the end of July, or any of the other opportunities scheduled this summer.

At the beginning of August, a small group gathered for a structured question-and-answer event. As not everyone could join us that morning but may be curious to learn some of the same things that were asked of me then, I decided to include some of what came up that day. (I've grouped some of the questions together for the purpose of not repeating myself in my responses.)

- Where did you grow up?

I've moved a lot in my lifetime (this was my 26<sup>th</sup> lifetime move), but not as many of those were the result of growing up as an Army brat as one might imagine. My dad was stationed in Virginia's Tidewater Region at the time, so I was born in Newport News, VA. My parents bought their first home there, and while my dad's commute changed based on different duty assignments, we lived in that house for nine years. When I was ten, we moved to West Germany and lived on military posts before moving back to the States. I went to high school in Newport, PA and then went on to Penn State, University Park for college.

- Do you have any hobbies outside the church? What do you like to read? What are some of your favorites? Do you play an instrument? (We assumed you like to sing.)

I'm a voracious reader, like my dad, and if there's nothing but a cereal box in front of me, I'll still read it. When I don't have my head stuck in the Bible or a textbook, I enjoy cozy mysteries like the

Meg Langslow series by Donna Andrews. I do play piano, poorly. I took lessons for eight years and had at least four different teachers because we moved pretty frequently during that period. Other than that, I like to craft – especially anything related to paper, yarn, or floss. I also love to travel. I'm up to 41 U.S. states and 14 foreign countries.

- Do you have any pets? Do you want a cat?

Thanks for the offer, but I already live with three cats. I belong to a short-haired calico named Chloe whom I adopted from the Humane Society in 2020. I am also the majordomo for a friend's furry kids: a gray tabby named Abby and a ginger boy named Orion.

- Because you're working on your doctorate, do you feel stressed about time? Do you have to travel for school? What are your intentions with your education? When you finish, do you plan to move on?

My parents both encouraged and modeled lifelong learning, and one of my dad's greatest joys was that both my sister and I earned college degrees. When I returned to school for my M.Div., he and I shared a dream that I would eventually earn my doctorate. Last fall, I started the classwork for a D.Min. in Biblical Interpretation and Culture at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, OH. It's an online program, though I've traveled to the campus twice in order to take advantage of the library. Other than that (and my recent trip to Turkey), there are no travel requirements.

School work is just part of my life, and if it weren't this program, I'd likely be doing independent study – that's just who I am. Sometimes, when there's a deadline, I can feel a little stressed. But overall, this is just who I am.

Unlike a Ph.D., a D.Min. degree is intended to enhance your knowledge and skills to work in a clergy setting. I do not envision changing career paths – just sharing more of what I know with you!

- Will you be involved in church activities – women's group, teacher breakfast, yard sale, etc.? Do you teach Bible study, VBS, Sunday school?

I so admire all the ministries Juniata carries out in the community. While I cannot possibly be involved in all of them, I will try to be present where I can and to help where I am able. I had a great time participating in the skits at VBS this past month and was able to witness the great work of Angel Feet one Saturday. I got to hang out with the women's group for lunch and led grief group.

My particular gifts and joys are in teaching ministry. You're welcome to join me on Sunday and Tuesday mornings for our weekly study opportunities, and I hope to schedule some special one-offs through the year. After all, I still have to show off some of those 1700 photos I took while in Turkey earlier this summer!

- What are your interests outside the church regarding outreach and community involvement?

This is still a work-in-progress. Each appointment brings different opportunities. In the past I've been involved in Girl Scouts (lifetime member!) as well as Kappa Phi, a college women's Christian sorority. I've also organized diaper drives, coordinated Christmas gift collections, and participated in food ministries. We'll see what springs up here in Altoona!

Thank you for the warm welcome I have received these past two months. I look forward to being a part of your lives (and having you as part of mine) in the months and years to come.

*Pastor Denise*



## **Ministry**

**You are encouraged to send a card or a note and lift them up in your prayers.**

Sept. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Lois Barr 509 N. 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Altoona, PA 16601
Sept. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Darlene Rose Concordia at Villa St. Joseph Room 2216 1030 W. State Street Baden, PA 15005
Sept. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Betty Burket 1490 Yardal Road State College, PA 16801
Sept. 28 <sup>th</sup>	Richard D. Robertson Jr. Maybrook Hills D-1 Room 114 301 Valley View Blvd. Altoona, PA 16602



## **WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

Our group will be meeting on Thursday September 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm in the church gathering room. We will be having devotions, biblical games and discuss the upcoming book that we will be reading. Our meetings will continue to be held on the first Thursday of each month.

We will also be having a bake sale fundraiser following the 9am and 11am services on September 28<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to donate baked goods, please bring to the church on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> between 1pm & 4pm or early on Sunday before the 9am service. If you have questions, please contact Rosemary McCurdy. These funds will go towards a special project, if needed, or towards current expenses.





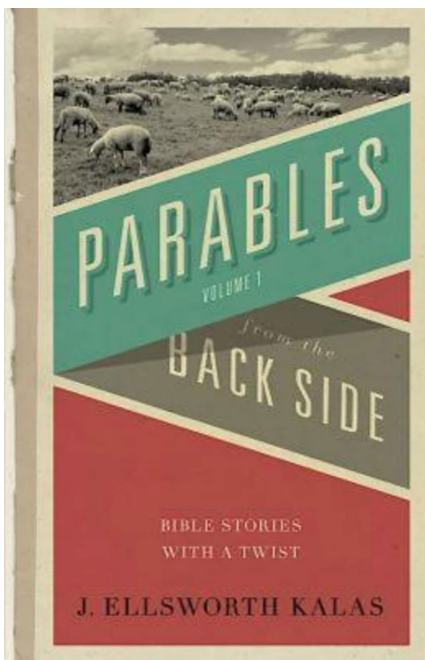
**\*ALTOONA FOOD BANK\***

For the month of September, please donate jars of Peanut Butter and Jelly

Thank you to all who have provided these monthly food donations to help feed those in our community through the Altoona Food Bank program. Our organization depends on these donations to provide food for all who come through our doors. Thank you for giving back as you have been given to!

Thank you  
Doug Buchanan

**Seeds: Short Term Study**

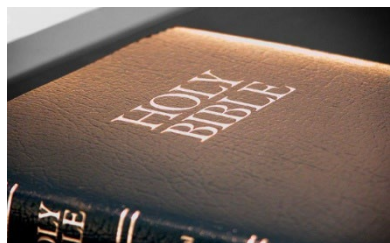


Our next seeds study will be: Parables from the Back Side by J. Ellsworth Kalas

This book offers a new understanding of twelve of Jesus' parables by viewing them through the eyes of a minor or unsympathetic character. Chapter titles: When the Good Samaritan Is Bad News; God Called a Party, but Nobody Came; The Timid Soul; The Seasons of the Soil; The Sad Story of the Embarrassed Farmers; Love Always Wins...Sometimes; Why Doesn't God Like Religious People?; Pardon My Insistence; The Prodigal Who Stayed at Home; A Case for the Un-hired Hand; Moses and the Fig Tree; I Wish I Could Sell You More

Our study begins on Monday, September 8th @6:30pm. The book can be ordered through Amazon. ISBN 0-687-05697-7 Please join us!!

**Bible Study**



Our "In The Word" Bible Study will resume September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00am. We will start with a look at "How Bible Stories Work" before choosing, as a group, what texts we want to dive into this fall. Please join us as we study and discuss God's word!



Our VBS “Camp Firelight” was held August 10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>. The children enjoyed songs, story time, crafts, science, games and of course snack time! As well, they along with the congregation raised \$440 which will go to the teen shelter in Altoona along with various items which were collected. Snacks, Craft Supplies, Combs, Brushes, Sheets were all items collected which the shelter requested. Thank you to all those who helped with VBS and all those who so generously donated to Teen Shelter!!



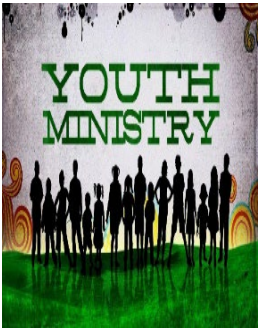
## Mountain Lion BACKPACK PROGRAM



The Mountain Lion Backpack program serves Altoona Area Elementary Students with food items for the weekend during the school year. Each week, staff and volunteers pack an average of \$1,100 backpacks for children experiencing food insecurity.

This year, we start back up on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Please consider either donating your time, food items or financially to this worthwhile program that helps the children in our community.

- Volunteer to help pack items weekly to ensure these essential items can make it home each weekend.
- Sponsor a child! Just \$6 feeds one child per week, and a generous donation of \$210 can feed a child all school year!
- Be a Mountain Lion Backpack Hunger Hero: Stay alert for MLBP food drives across our community to donate necessary food items to our program!
- You can go on line at [mountainlionbackpackprogram.org](http://mountainlionbackpackprogram.org) and donate financially as well.
- The item of the month for September is Ramen Noodles. Please drop off in the gathering room and they will be delivered. You can also drop off your donations at the office location at 2301 Beale Avenue, Altoona, from 8am – 3pm.



Greenwood UMC Leadership Team unanimously approved hosting our Altoona Area Cluster Youth Group for the 2025-2026 School Year. We will meet the 2nd and 4th Sundays, 3:00pm - 4:30pm, beginning in September through May, and will include 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

Our kickoff event will be on September 14<sup>th</sup> and we have approval (from Greenwood UMC and Logan Township) to have a campfire across the street from the church. If we have bad weather, we'll move it in the fellowship hall (not the campfire, just the gathering 😊).

September 28th we will have a game night. Fred Hickok will have October 12<sup>th</sup> lesson and Randy Willis will have the October 26<sup>th</sup> lesson. We met to discuss other activities/possibilities (bowling, hiking, YMCA volleyball and basketball, art nights, etc. All input/ideas are welcome!

Please share this information with any youth you may be associated with or aware of.



Sunday school will continue/resume at 10am on Sunday, September 7th!

We have classes for all ages: nursery (new!), school-age, and adults!



**Juniata United Methodist will be hosting The Internationally Acclaimed African Children's Choir  
Sunday, October 19, 2025 at 6:00 pm**

The African Children's Choir is marking over four decades of transforming lives through the power of music, education and hope. As they embark on a tour of more than 100 cities, the Choir will continue to captivate audiences with their heartwarming performances with a show that blends traditional hymns and African cultural sounds, while sharing stories of God's faithfulness through joyful worship.

Comprised of children ages 9 to 12, all from vulnerable backgrounds across Africa, the African Children's Choir serves as a powerful testament to the resilience and potential of Africa's future leaders. Each child in the Choir has faced significant hardship, often with limited access to education. Yet, through the Choir, these children gain life-changing opportunities for education and personal growth, becoming beacons of hope for their communities.

"The African Children's Choir proves just how powerful music can be," says Choir Manager, Tina Sipp. "These concerts not only provide hope and encouragement to our audiences, but they offer the children life-changing experiences that help shape them into future leaders."

The Choir invites communities to experience their performances and be part of their mission to bring hope through music. No tickets are required, though donations are appreciated to continue the Choir's impactful work



September 2025

**John 13:34:** "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, you must love one another."

JUMC Angel Feet provided sneakers, socks, and books to 36 children the week of August 9<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to the Angel Feet Volunteers for the weekend: Sherrie, Doug, Connie, Vicky, Dave, Michelle, and Bill. The back-to-school rush is on! **Upcoming Angel Feet dates:** August 23<sup>rd</sup> (at least 35 scheduled) and September 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Upcoming in October** - The church will be sponsoring the **African Children's Choir**. Angel Feet will be providing sneakers, socks, and other items to the children in the choir. Donations of brand sneakers and socks will be accepted. We will be asking those in charge of the choir for approximate sizes to assist us in preparation for their arrival. More to come on this in the October Newsletter.

**Donations Received** - We are grateful for the continued support of JUMC Angel Feet. Thank you all!



Many **THANKS** to the *AASD Adult Education Program*. A birthday surprise party for Dee was given with the party attendees providing wrapped gifts of sneakers and socks for JUMC Angel Feet. How special and of course there were tears of joy. *The small pillow was added for a touch of expression as it reads, "A pair of shoes made all the difference for Cinderella."*

- A donation in honor of Dee's birthday for books and diaries from her dear friend, Deb.
- Martinsburg Booster Association
- Church Members
- Donations of small and medium socks and sneakers in a variety of sizes, along with size 12 women's sneakers. Yes, we must size up to size 12.

Blessings to you all and thank you for sharing your blessings and praying for our Angel Feet families. Please feel free to let us know if you have any needs, have questions, or need our business cards to share with families. Our Giving Tree is in the Gathering Room should you have donations of brand-new sneakers, socks, or brand-new books for Angel Feet or the Little Children's Library. We appreciate the donations! Appointments for Angel Feet are called to 814-799-5053. Please continue your prayers for God's ministry in this church. If you would like to visit JUMC Angel Feet, please just let us know.

God Bless and have a safe fall and enjoy the colors of the season!

*Dee Martin-Spallone*





## September Birthdays at JUMC

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mackenzie Wilt
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Gracie Schroth
4 <sup>th</sup>	Pam Kauffman
5 <sup>th</sup>	Shaun D'Angelo
7 <sup>th</sup>	Wendy Holliday Nancy Pressler Jake Schaffer
8 <sup>th</sup>	Donna McConnell
12 <sup>th</sup>	Paula Filer
13 <sup>th</sup>	Peggy Shriner Cecelia Mccurdy
15 <sup>th</sup>	Bob Bardine Mike Rhone
16 <sup>th</sup>	Carole Rhodes
17 <sup>th</sup>	Janet Bumbarger
18 <sup>th</sup>	Noah Ott
21 <sup>st</sup>	Scott Grace, Jr. Jamen McCabe
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Donna Focht Ken Robison Sr.
24 <sup>th</sup>	Paula Peterman
25 <sup>th</sup>	Vicki Fasick Liam McDowell Debby Robinson
28 <sup>th</sup>	Gladis Brawdy
29 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff Barr Darren Focht
30 <sup>th</sup>	Benjamin McKee

\*\*If we missed anyone or have a wrong date, please call the church office at 814-942-6065



# SEPTEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>SUNDAY WORSHIP</b> 9:00am Contemporary Svc 10:00am Sunday School 11:00am Traditional Svc		<u>Altoona Food Bank</u> Jars of Peanut Butter & Jelly				
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		11am In The Word Bible Study	11am Chair Dancing  7pm Prayer Group	5:30pm Back Packs  6pm Choir Rehearsal Wehnwood Covered Dish		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	6:30pm Seeds Study	*Cakes Saint Vincent DePaul*  11am In The Word Bible Study	11am Chair Dancing  7pm Prayer Group	11am SPRC  5:30pm Back Packs  6:30pm Choir Rehearsal		10am Finance
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	6:30pm Seeds Study	11am In The Word Bible Study	**NEWSLETTER** DUE  11am Chair Dancing  7pm Prayer Group	5:30pm Back Packs  6:30pm Choir Rehearsal  7pm Grief Group		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	6:30pm Seeds Study	11am In The Word Bible Study	**FOLDERS** 9am  11am Chair Dancing  ** 5:30pm Back Packs**  7pm Prayer Group	6:30pm Choir Rehearsal		
28	29	30				
	6:30pm Seeds Study	11am In The Word Bible Study				