

Come to **Visioning Day**  
Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup>

9:30 AM– 12:30 PM

**Summit Church**  
*The Flash*

February 9, 2023

Worship Sundays at 9:30  
This Week...*Rock or Not*

What should we as a congregation do in the midst of turmoil and storms around us?  
How should we respond? Our response is to refocus ourselves on God's mission for the church.

Please join us for a conversation about how we can reshape ourselves and refocus on God's mission for Summit Church.

Everyone is welcome to join the conversation and fun activities as we vision together. Even if you haven't signed up, please join us. There is always room for you!



Bring your neighbor, friend, or  
sweetie for our Café Day...

**open 9-12**

serving coffee, tea, or punch  
and sweet treats!

**Our Neighbors Place** mission opportunity will be Sunday February 19th. We have three shifts 7-11, 11-3, and 3-7. We will be packing sack suppers to be given out. They will include a sandwich, snack, sweet, and a breakfast bar. Plus something extra. We need at least 3 workers per shift and people to help make the sandwiches and put together the sack suppers. Please call or text Jenny Cornwell at 814-528-2910 if you would like to volunteer. Thank you so much for letting our homeless neighbors see Gods love in action ♥◻♥◻

Also save the date for **Our Annual Easter Egg Hunt** set for Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>.

**HELP NEEDED...**we are in need of Communion Stewards to help prepare for our communion...please contact Pastor Connie if you would be interested.

**Confirmation** is an integral part of an individual's life and the church. When a young person is confirmed, they proclaim faith publicly. "Confirmation is the continuation of one's faith journey and the beginning of one's covenant relationship with the church – not an end unto itself" (*Credo*)

Beginning February 26, and continuing through May 14, the Sunday morning "youth small group" curriculum will be dedicated to confirmation preparation. Topics include the Bible, the Apostles Creed, the Church and the United Methodist Church, worship and sacraments, and spiritual disciplines. A break is scheduled for Easter and the Sunday after Easter. Confirmation Sunday is scheduled for May 21.

All youth in sixth grade and older, whether intending to be confirmed at Summit church or not, are invited to participate in this Sunday morning small group from 10:30 to 11:30. We hope you can attend. We will meet in the Youth Room downstairs and at the end of the hallway to the right of the stairs. I look forward to working with your youth as we begin this confirmation journey and grow in our faith together. **Please let the church office know by February 19<sup>th</sup> if you plan to participate.**

## Upcoming Church Meetings

February 11<sup>th</sup>

- Visioning Day- 9:30-12:30

February 21<sup>st</sup>

- Stephen Ministry at 10 AM

Summit  
Church  
Chili Cookoff



Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

following Visioning Day

See Barb Walker for more information!

**Spring Cleaning**.....if you have any items that may have been left at the church (nativity sets, dishes, etc.) please check for them and take them home,(we have quite a collection)... if you have a church mailbox please check and clean it out



## Burying the Alleluia

by Rev. Erik Hoeke, ordained elder in WPAUMC and writer at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

One of the Lenten rituals I love most is burying the “Alleluia.” Originating in the Middle Ages, it began as a practice in mass, or worship, of removing from the liturgy the “Alleluia” that is traditionally sung prior to the Gospel reading (known as the Gospel Acclamation). It became commonly known as “burying the Alleluia” and was done in penitential times during the church year—most prominently during Lent. Burying the Alleluia in Lent was a form of delayed gratification, heightening the celebration of Easter mass when the Alleluia could again be sung after a nearly two-month absence. As it developed, the practice included the avoidance of singing the word alleluia at any point in worship, including in other hymns.

Through the liturgical renewal of recent decades, many Protestants began adopting worship practices of the pre-Reformation Christian Church, including the burial of the Alleluia during Lent. Most Methodist churches don't sing a Gospel Acclamation, but they do sing hymns and responses that include the word alleluia. When I served in local churches, one way I used to bury the alleluia in Lent was to switch from using #94 in the United Methodist Hymnal as our Doxology to using #95, which has no “Alleluia!” refrain. While people may not notice careful selection of hymns without the word alleluia, a change in the weekly Doxology always draws attention.

It feels like we have been in a prolonged period of buried alleluias. The word alleluia loosely means “praise God,” and it's been increasingly difficult to find the strength to praise God amid political division, pandemic, denominational infighting...stop me if you've heard this litany before. We're not only sick of these things, but we're sick of talking about them and their negative impact. It goes without saying that our Easter celebrations have been muted for several years now. Do we even remember the last Easter that was entirely free of these things? Where we could literally and figuratively “pull out all the stops” of the organ and celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, in a full sanctuary, with unrestrained joy?

It sounds counter-intuitive, but the practice of burying the Alleluia gives me hope. That's because, in the context of the Christian belief in resurrection and new life, this ritual practice is not an act of finality. This burial—like the burial of a Christian who has died—occurs with belief in a resurrection and new life to follow. We bury the Alleluia with sure and certain hope that we will sing “Alleluia!” on Easter with maximum frequency, volume, and energy.



This gets at the heart of what it means to be a Christian. The author of 1 Peter proclaims that God “has given us new birth” and that we “have been born anew into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (v 3, CEB). A few verses later the author encourages the reader to “rejoice in this hope, even if it's necessary for you to be distressed for a short time by various trials” (v 6, CEB).

Another Lent feels like the last thing we need these days. Haven't we been in a Lent-like state for years now, distressed by various trials? What we need is Easter. We need resurrection and its accompanying promises and joyful songs of praise. But Easter is still so far away.

Whatever grief, pain, or suffering you feel today, think of it as a temporary burying of the Alleluia. You're finding it hard to sing praise to God when everything is dark and broken. Resentment against siblings in Christ has built up, COVID fatigue has set in, and the news of war, gun violence, refugee crises, and famine is so unrelenting that we've grown calloused and numb to human suffering.

We may not all be able to pull out all the stops this year on Easter. It may be yet another muted celebration in the face of various trials. But perhaps that's what Christian hope really is. Maybe it's the promise of resurrection while we're still buried under piles of dirt and grime. Maybe it's believing in the living hope even when we feel anything but hopeful. And who knows? One day we might look back at these days and years—when the “Alleluias” were buried and we could not summon strength to sing praise—and be grateful that we made it to a day when we can again praise God and sing “Alleluia!” May we all find the strength to persist until that day comes. Alleluia. Amen.