



Dear CCUMC Family,

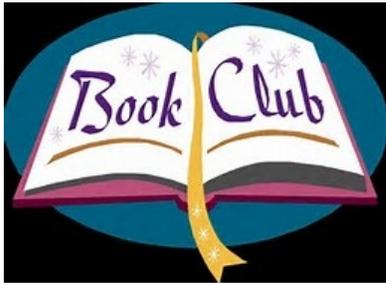
I wanted to write in order to wish all of you a very happy Holiday Season! This year I am so impressed and moved by the kind outpouring of generosity that our church family has provided. Together with our Stay & Play Preschool Families, we have collected enough food to feed over fifty local families in need. My heart rejoices to know that we are doing Christ's work right here in our own neighborhood!

So many of our neighbors are hungry and hurting. We must remember to keep these families in our thoughts and prayers throughout the entire year. One family that I spoke with was particularly grateful. The grandmother shared with me how much of a struggle it was to provide for her grandson who had many special needs. In order to respect her privacy, I cannot disclose more of her story. But please know that she was sincerely grateful and wanted to thank our entire church family. She seemed close to tears when she told me, "You have no idea what difference this makes."

As I took time to speak to each family, I heard stories of loss, sickness, and heartbreak. We must remember not to lose heart when dealing with the grief of this world because "with God, all things are possible (Matthew 19:23). Together, we managed to achieve the daunting goal of feeding fifty families. Thank you for being willing to take a risk and step out on faith!
May Your Holidays Be Blessed,

Thank You for Supporting our Harvest Home Food Drive!

Pastor Rebecca



New Book Club!

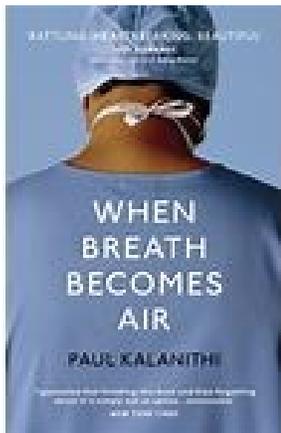
Join us for Coffee and
Books
at the Green Bean!

Christ Community

UMC is excited to

announce our new book club! Starting in 2018 we will hold a book club where we read and discuss books over coffee at the Green Bean coffeehouse on the third Tuesday of every month at 6PM. The books we will discuss engage with complex themes, complicated issues, and deep theological questions. We will explore many different genres, including memoir, nonfiction, fiction, and poetry! Join us at any time. Simply read the book and show up to the Green Bean at 6PM. We look forward to seeing you!

Book Club at 6PM at the Green Bean
(720 6th Ave, Altoona, PA 16602)

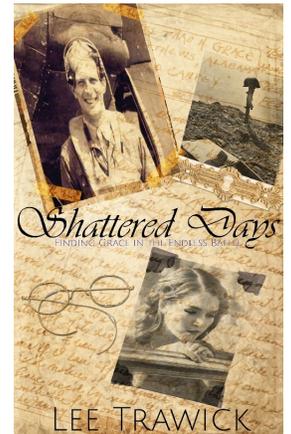


January 16th – *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi (Memoir)

A memoir of a 36 year old neurosurgeon facing a diagnosis of terminal cancer. His story is "inherently sad, but an emotional investment well worth making: a moving and thoughtful memoir of family, medicine and literature. It is, despite its grim undertone, accidentally inspiring (Nora Krug, The Washington Post).

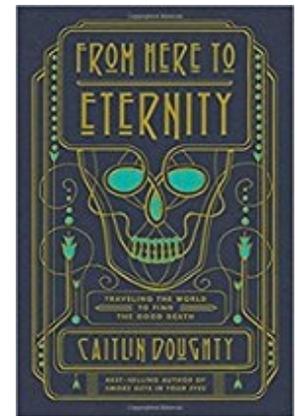
February 20th – *Shattered Days* by Lee Trawick (Historical Fiction- based on a true story)

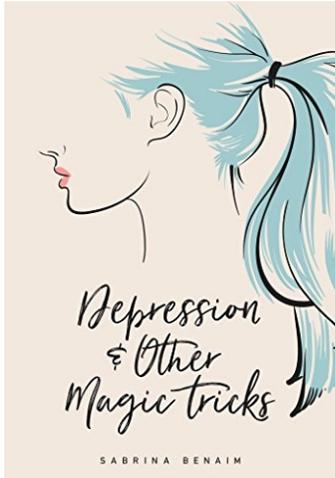
Thaddeus Grace is left for dead by the Germans and presumed dead by the United States. He awakens with no memory of who he is, how he got there, or what he is doing there, armed with only a photograph. He is driven to make a difference and fight his way through the war and find the woman in the photograph, who saved him. Throughout, he is faced with many insurmountable odds. He faced them all while inspiring a nation to rise and defend their homeland (Publisher's Summary).



March 20th- *From Here to Eternity: Traveling the World to Find the Good Death* by Caitlin Doughty (Nonfiction)

Fascinated by our pervasive terror of dead bodies, mortician Caitlin Doughty set out to discover how other cultures care for their dead. With curiosity and morbid humor, Doughty encounters vividly decomposed bodies and participates in compelling, powerful death practices almost entirely unknown in America (Good Reads summary).



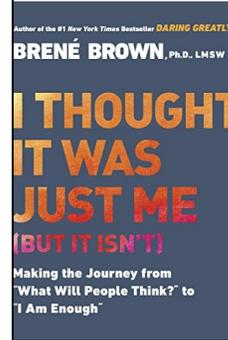


April 16th- *Depression & Other Magic Tricks* by Sabrina Benaim (Poetry)

Depression & Other Magic Tricks is the debut book by Sabrina Benaim, one of the most-viewed performance poets of all time, whose poem

"Explaining My

Depression to My Mother" has become a cultural phenomenon with over 50,000,000 views. *Depression & Other Magic Tricks* explores themes of mental health, love, and family. It is a documentation of struggle and triumph, a celebration of daily life and of living. Benaim's wit, empathy, and gift for language produce a work of endless wonder (Amazon.com).



May 21st -*I Thought It Was Just Me (but it isn't): Making the Journey from "What Will People Think?" to "I Am Enough"* by Brené Brown (Nonfiction, Self-Help)

Dr. Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW, is the leading

authority on the power of vulnerability, and has inspired thousands through her top-selling books. Based on seven years of her ground-breaking research and hundreds of interviews, *I Thought It Was Just Me* shines a long-overdue light on an important truth: Our imperfections are what connect us to each other and to our humanity. Our vulnerabilities are not weaknesses; they are powerful reminders to keep our hearts and minds open to the reality that we're all in this together (Amazon.com).

Do you have suggestions for a book that we could discuss during the second half of 2018? Send your suggestions for books for future discussion to: ccumc@outlook.com !

Stewardship Campaign & All Church Meeting

Christ reminds us that "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me (Matthew 25:40)." It is our goal to be able to continue to do God's work for many years to come. For that reason, we will be launching a four week Stewardship Campaign starting in January.

On January 14th we will hold a Covenant Renewal Service at 9AM and 11AM. During both services, we will take time honor all of our church leaders who volunteer their time and talents so that our church can continue to serve Christ throughout the New Year in new and exciting ways. Then, at 10:00AM on January 14th we will have an All Church Meeting in order to discuss our current financial situation. Then, during the next

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Stewardship from p 3

four weeks we will embark on our Stewardship Campaign. During the next four weeks we will talk about how to be good stewards of our Prayers, Witness, Talents, and Gifts.

Make certain not to miss this special season of Stewardship!

Service of Healing – December 6th at 6PM

Many people feel depressed, lonely, and isolated during the Christmas Season. It is a sad statistic that during the holidays, instances of depression increase.

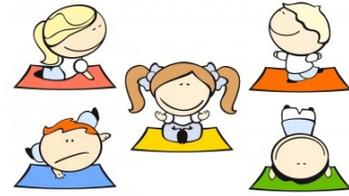
We know that we live in a broken world and that many people are hurting. In response, we have put together a special healing service of anointing and prayer. Come join us as we come together to ask God heal our hearts, souls, and bodies. Everyone is invited.

Advent Bible Study The Christmas Story in Luke & Matthew

November 27th and
December 4, 11, & 18th

This advent, we will be exploring the stories about the Birth of Jesus Christ in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. How are they different? How are they similar? Join us as we learn more about the greatest story ever told! Dinner will be served at 6PM and the Bible Study will begin at 6:30PM.

Yoga Church *NEW* Church Service!



Starting in January, we will be launching a New Wednesday evening worship service! Join us on Wednesdays at 7PM while we worship God through movement.

The word "yoga," comes from the Sanskrit word meaning, "to yoke." In modern times, especially in our Western culture, yoga has become popular because of its many health benefits; however, the original purpose of Yoga was to connect with God by mastering one's body and breathing.

When we connect to our breath we connect with the Holy Spirit. We will seek to make this connection of mind, body, and spirit each week during Yoga Chapel. Each service will include breathing exercises, guided meditation, relaxation, gentle yoga flows, and the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Whether you are an experienced yogi or don't know your vinyasa from your elbow, there is something for everyone! This service will focus on connecting to God through movement, prayer, and meditation. It is gentle and appropriate for all ages and ability levels. Join us as we grow closer to God and to one another!

A Thanksgiving Letter

by Richard VanScoyoc



November is a dreary month. The glorious colored leaves of autumn have fallen, the limbs of the trees are bare, the frosts have killed the flowers, and all we have to look forward to is the bleak winter ahead.

But Americans have set aside one day in late November as a day of Thanksgiving to God for the blessings we have received from him. I would like to add that we should also thank those who have blessed our lives in the past and are blessing us today. They will never know we are thankful if we don't tell them. We could write letters of thanksgiving to them, send e-mails, telephone them, visit them, and pray for them.

I read an old story of several men talking about their school years, and one man remembered a teacher who meant so much to him. Another of the men asked, "Did you ever tell her so?" and he answered, "No," but when he got home he wrote her a letter telling her what she had meant to him. Weeks later, he got a return letter from her in which she said, "What a joy it was to hear from you. I am an old lady, living alone in my small apartment with many lonely days. Yours is the only letter I ever received that thanked me. Your letter meant so much to me."

"we should also thank those who have blessed our lives in the past and are blessing us today"

As I was writing this devotion, I received a letter from a student I had taught. When he heard I was 100 years old, he wrote me "I would like to tell you of the profound influence you had on me as your student in Sunday School at the 58th St. Methodist Church and as your student in trigonometry class at Altoona High School. So much so that at 77, I am still teaching mathematics at the York campus of Penn State." That letter meant a lot to me.

One of our former church members, who now lives in Eastern Pennsylvania and who receives our church newsletter, called me and told me how much she likes the devotions I have written for the newsletter. That call cheered a 100-year-old man. Take time to write a long-delayed letter to support someone who needs encouragement; or to congratulate someone for their accomplishments, their marriage, the birth of a child; or to sympathize with those who are sorrowing or ill. Thank those who helped you in the past. A letter can mean so much to them.

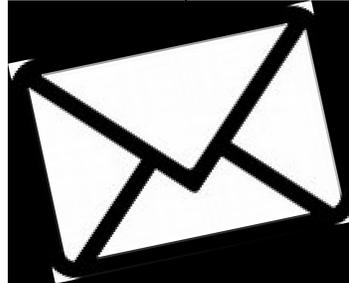
A great part of the New Testament consists of letters Paul wrote, many of them from prison, to the churches he started. He wrote to encourage them and to instruct them, and what a great loss it would be to us if he had never written them. Someone saved Paul's letters for us. I wonder with what kind of paper and pen he wrote. How were they delivered? There was no postal service; letters were carried by travelers to

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Thanksgiving continued from p. 5

be received by the one addressed to. Paul's letters were hand-written. In Galatians 6:11, he says, "You see how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand." In II Thessalonians 3:17, he wrote, "The salutation of Paul in my own hand."

My mother wrote to me faithfully (in pencil) for nearly five years I was serving in World War II. I could not keep



such a large number of letters (what a loss!), but she kept every letter I sent home and now I have all those letters from more than 70 years ago in a big box. This Thanksgiving, write a kind letter to others, for whenever you write a kind letter to others, you write it unto Jesus. II

Corinthians 3:2 says "You are epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

What could be written in your heart better than a letter that others may be able to read?

November – January Events

Monday, November 20-

- ❖ Come join us as we pack boxes at 7PM for those families who will receive a Harvest Home Gift Box!

Sunday, November 26 -

- ❖ Hanging of the Greens at 12:15PM . Come join us after our 11AM service for a light lunch and to decorate the church for Christmas!

Sunday, December 6- at 7PM

- ❖ Healing Service: A Service of Healing. All are welcome and encouraged to join us as we partake in a service of anointing and healing

Sunday, January 7- at 9AM:

- ❖ Hymn Sing There will only be ONE SERVICE on January 7. Come join us for a time of singing all your favorite carols!

Sunday, January 7 at 7PM-

- ❖ First Yoga Chapel Service! After this join us on Wednesdays at 7PM as we worship through movement!

Sunday, January 14-

- ❖ Covenant Renewal Service and Honoring of Church Leaders at 9AM & 11AM
- ❖ All Church Meeting at 10AM"