

# September 2020 Newsletter

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## A Message from Pastor Luke

So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthais. Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry in apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they cast lots for them, and a lot fell on Matthais; and he was added to the eleven apostles. *Acts 1:23-26*

Over the last several weeks our Friday Bible study has been exploring the topic of discernment. There's a necessity of becoming familiar with the voice of God so that we can identify it when we hear it. We must put ourselves in environments and situations that foster opportunities to hearing and sensing the movement of the Spirit, and then we must come to terms with the uncomfortable calls or even if we mishear God; but it's this next part of the discussion, this question, that I find most fascinating and is the one which holds the most weight for our congregations today. How do we discern *together* where God is leading us?

As easy as it is to let one person make decisions (even if we're going to grumble about which decisions were made later), or to hide through abstention when a vote is cast, I believe something very profound happens when we engage in decision-making together. Let's take this example from the first chapter of Acts when the 11 apostles are deciding who must replace Judas. Obviously this is a charged topic, everyone's going to have an opinion and it will be a rather difficult discussion, so what do they do? Interesting that first they talk, they debate, and they nominate two people, Joseph and Matthias, to be chosen from. Of course they pray, placing their choice in the

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hands of God, and they do something rather strange; they cast lots. Now, I don't know if you're familiar with what casting lots is, but it amounts to leading things up to chance. Imagine, if you will, after praying the apostles decide to draw straws, flipped a coin, or pick a name out of a hat. It has to be an incredibly old practice when the stakes are high and the decision is unclear, but it's fascinating that even in this moment the 11 are willing to surrender to something so random. So Matthias is chosen and that settles it, sort of. There are two developments later on that should give us more reason to pause and ponder.

The first is that the apostle Paul is often times counted among the 12. As the argument goes, humans may choose who they choose, but God has the final say. So, Paul was the one that should have been chosen and who had favor and honor rest upon him which is evident by his writings, his ministry, and his impact on the faith. The second instance we need to wrestle with comes from Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit comes down. Who is gathered in that upper room? Everyone, all 12, Matthias included. And who received the Holy Spirit? Everyone, all 12, Matthias included. So what should we make of the decision of the apostles that was made by the drawing of a name out of the hat? Is it valid, should it have stood, did God overrule it?

At the end of the day what we can take from this, I believe, is both comforting and encouraging/convicting (in a good way). As the apostle Paul writes in Romans 8:28, "We know that God makes all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." Matthias was still used, God's choice in Paul was still achieved, and the most important thing was that the apostles didn't get bogged down in bureaucracy, they weren't paralyzed by fear or uncertainty, and they weren't divided by opinion or dissension. They did the best they could, with what they had, and went together as the faithful children of God. May it be so for us as we discern where we are headed in Hamburg as two congregations learning how to work alongside each other, to pray with each other, and worship one God together for the glory of him and his Kingdom.

*Amen.*

# SEPTEMBER 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Giving Wednesday B&G 8-10am at UMC	3	4	5
6 *Communion* Coffee Fellowship 10:00am UMC Sunday Worship 11:00am UMC	7 Labor Day	8	9 Giving Wednesday UTC Board Meeting 6:30pm	10	11	12
13 Coffee Fellowship 10:00am UMC Sunday Worship 11:00am UMC	14	15	16 Giving Wednesday	17 Food Pantry	18	19 Biscuits & Gravy 8-10am at UMC
20 Coffee Fellowship 10:00am UMC Sunday Worship 11:00am UMC	21 ICC Meeting	22	23 Giving Wednesday	24	25	26
27 Coffee Fellowship 10:00am UMC Sunday Worship 11:00am UMC	28	29	30 Giving Wednesday			

**Giving Wednesday Schedule:** Drop off at UMC on Sundays or Wednesdays 8:00am-4:00pm

**September 2nd-** hot dogs, cereal, mustard, ketchup

**September 9th-** pasta, spaghetti sauce, salad dressing like miracle whip (small ones needed also)

**September 16th-** canned meat: tuna, chicken, turkey, roast beef

**September 23rd-** macaroni & cheese, hot dogs, mustard ketchup

**September 30th-** jelly, peanut butter, canned fruit

## **Biscuits and Gravy:**

-Wednesday, Sept. 2nd 8am-10am at UMC

-Saturday, Sept. 19th 8am-10am at UMC

## **UTC Board Meeting**

Wednesday, Sept. 9th at 6:30pm

# Announcements



**Sunday Service will be held at United Methodist Church during the month of September!**

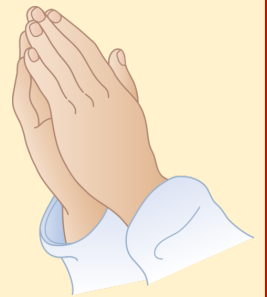
**There is a new YouTube channel dedicated to UTC and UMC. It is called “Hamburg United Churches”. This is where you can find all videos including Wednesday’s Weekly Updates and Sunday Service. You can subscribe to the YouTube channel if you make a YouTube account and you will be notified when new videos are posted.**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN3BVdB8P1qp1S\\_ZLStDQRw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN3BVdB8P1qp1S_ZLStDQRw)

**All videos can also be viewed on Shenandoah’s Facebook account:**

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>

Prayer requests: Anna Weber, Zayne Osborne, John Ferguson, Carol Barrett, Ron Brumley, Jack Meek, Gail Woods, Donna Woods, Gene Kirk, Sally Brumley, Levi Lucas, Sherrill Lowman Bryant, baby Arthur Zahn, Reggie Koop, Dillion Light, Karen Borrego, Linda Hendrickson, Sharan Woltemath, Ivan Woltemath, Teresa Sloop Spidell, Molly Spiegel and Family



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