

November 16, 2025



The Church and Hitler

While Karl Barth was preparing the first volume of his *Church Dogmatics*, ominous events were taking place in Germany. Hitler and the Nazi party were rising to power. In 1933, the Vatican and the Third Reich signed a concordat (a harmonious agreement). Hitler's own program included the unification of all Protestant churches in Germany, and their use in order to get the message out about German ethical and racial superiority...and that they had a divinely given mission. Thus arose the party of the "German Christians," blending traditional Christian beliefs with notions of German nationalism. Part of their program was to reinterpret Christianity in terms of opposition to Germany's enemies...with a special focus of opposition to Judaism. In 1933, following the directions of the government, a united German Evangelical Church was formed. When its presiding bishop said he was unwilling to obey the Reich in all matters, he was deposed and another named in his place. In 1934, numerous professors of theology, including Karl Barth and Rudolph Bultmann, signed a protest against the directions the church was taking. A few days later, Christian leaders from all across Germany, both Lutheran and Reformed, gathered at Barmen for what they called a "witnessing synod," and issued the *Barmen Declaration*, which became a foundational document for the "confessing church," a body that opposed Hitler in the name of the Gospel.

The Reich's reaction was not slow in coming. Dr. Martin Niemoller, pastor in Berlin and an outspoken critic of the government, was arrested – he would remain in prison without ever being charged for anything for eight years. Almost all the pastors critical of the government were drafted into the army and sent to the front lines. All professors in the German universities were

required to sign a statement of unconditional support for the Reich. Karl Barth refused to sign, and fled to Switzerland, where he taught at Basel until his retirement.

Most notable among those who suffered under Hitler's regime was a young theologian named Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), who was a pastor in London when the Confessing Church invited him to return to Germany and head a clandestine seminary. His friends in England tried to dissuade him. But he felt it was a call he must accept, and returned to Germany knowing that his life would be in danger. In 1937, he published *The Cost of Discipleship*, in which he attempted to show the significance of the Sermon on the Mount for contemporary living. That same year his seminary was disbanded by direct order from the Reich. In spite of the order, Bonhoeffer again gathered two groups of students for continued theological instruction. In 1939, he published *Life Together*. The war was about to explode. Bonhoeffer accepted an invitation to spend a year in the United States, but he had scarcely arrived when he realized he'd made a mistake. His fellow Germans were being forced to choose between patriotism and the truth of the Gospel, and he declared: "I know which of those alternatives I must choose; but I cannot make that choice in the security of another country."

Bonhoeffer returned to Germany and his life was increasingly difficult. In 1938, he was forbidden to leave Berlin. Two years later, his seminary was closed by order of the Gestapo, and he was forbidden to publish or speak in public. During the next three years his "underground" activities increased. Bonhoeffer had always been a pacifist and believed it to be compatible with the Gospel. But feeling desperate to alter the path Germany was traveling, he met with a friend in Sweden, and told him he would join in a conspiracy to assassinate Hitler. This was something he did not want to do, but he felt he had no choice.

The Gestapo arrested him in 1943. While in prison, and later in a concentration camp, Bonhoeffer won the respect of both the guards and his fellow prisoners...he became their chaplain. He continued to respond with friends on the outside through letters. He wrote convincingly that he agreed with Karl Barth that "religion" is a human effort by which we seek to hide

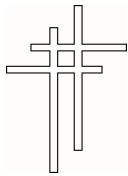
from God, and on this basis Bonhoeffer and Barth spoke of a need for “religionless Christianity” while each groped to discover the future shape of such Christianity.

As the American and Soviet armies advanced, and defeat was unavoidable, the Third Reich moved to eliminate those it considered its worst enemies. Bonhoeffer was among them. After a hasty military court-martial (he was tried not in civil courts but military) he was condemned to death. The prison doctor later told of seeing him kneeling in his cell, praying in preparation for his death. On April 9, 1945, two years and four days after his arrest, Bonhoeffer was hanged. Three days later, the American Army’s 97th Division captured the prison where he had been executed.

*Shalom,
Jim*

Please Celebrate Sunday’s Message

Huguenot United Methodist Church is inviting you to our Sunday Morning Worship Service. This in-person service begins at 11 a.m. Please join us and take part in our worship and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!



Pastor Jim Sprouse
will provide us with the message

“The Helper”

We hope you will join us!

HUMC Nursery

Our nursery caregiver, Rosalie Koch, is at church every Sunday and ready to welcome children in the nursery during worship from 10:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. *A nursery assistant is needed this Sunday. Please consider volunteering.*



STEWARDSHIP

I would like to thank all those that have turned in their pledge cards. The response up to this point has been excellent. This is just a

reminder to all that intend to pledge for next year but have not yet done so, it is not too late. We are in the process of wrapping up our campaign for next year’s Stewardship pledges. I am asking, therefore, that if you intend to pledge for 2026, that you please get your pledge cards into the church office at your earliest convenience. As always, we appreciate your support and help with this Stewardship campaign.

-Wayne Taney

Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

Our Adult Bible Study / Sunday School class begins at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

The title of Unit 3 is “Letters for Living.” The title of our lesson for Sunday, November 16, 2025, is “Live Faithfully.” The focal passage is Jude. The background text is the same. The purpose statement is “to recommit ourselves to practices that build up the body of Christ and spur others on the greater love and faith.”

We look forward to your participation in our class. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback regarding our HUMC Adult Bible Study please do not hesitate to contact me.



Gerry Flinchbaugh
804.314.4817 gflinchb@gmail.com

New Bible Study Opportunity



The Women’s Bible Study group has an exciting opportunity for members of our Church community and others. Pastor Jim has agreed to lead a study on the book of Luke, which began on Wed., October 1 and will continue through November 19. We will be moving our meetings to Wednesdays for this study, as that is Jim’s usual day to be in the Church office. The study will be held in the Fellowship Hall, beginning at 10 a.m. Pastor Jim will join us as soon as he is done with Preschool Chapel. He will lead a presentation followed by discussion afterwards. The study will finish up by noon. Pastor Jim brings insight and knowledge to his discussions. This is an opportunity for all that are interested to come join our group to learn more of the book of Luke. We hope to see you for our last session this Wednesday at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

The United Women in Faith

were so thankful to have Jill Gaynor as our speaker at the November meeting. Jill shared her experience as a Virginian Conference Delegate to the 2024 General Conference of the United Methodist Church.



Our December meeting will be held on **December 9, at 11:30 a.m.** at Dolce Vita Restaurant. Dolce Vita is located at 2401 Colony Crossing Place in Midlothian. **We invite all of the women of HUMC to join us for this special time of fellowship.** Please RSVP to Nancy Flinchbaugh or Beth Woodall by December 5, so that they can make a reservation for our group.



Pack A Shoebox

We want every child to know that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Your shoebox will be an expression of God’s love to a child and may be the only gift he or she receives. So, plan to pack quality items that will last. Be sure to make them FUN, adding a “wow” item and new toys, personal care items, school supplies, and more that a child will love; fill with no empty space; and personalized so that each is unique and prayed over and includes a personal note and a photo to delight the heart of a child. Please be sure to read the “Do Not Include” note in the brochure.

Please return filled boxes and the form from the brochure to HUMC THIS Sunday morning. The \$10 shipping and handling cost mentioned in the brochure will be paid from the HUMC Mission Fund.

We hope you will participate in this mission outreach opportunity to bring joy to a child on Christmas. If you have any questions, please contact me.

A volunteer or two to assist with this project would be greatly appreciated. Please let me know if you are interested in doing so.

Gerry Flinchbaugh, Mission and Outreach
804.314.4817 gflinchb@gmail.com



Our next mission project will be the Christmas Angel Tree for the benefit of veterans associated with the Veterans Liberation Service. Details regarding this outreach will be announced soon.



Joy of Crafts

Joy of Crafts has an active partnership with From the Heart to provide comfort items to nursing homes, hospitals and shelters. Our most recent projects: tactile quilts and crinkle toys for blind babies, wheelchair bags for children in a long-term nursing facility, and fidget mats for Alzheimer’s patients. It’s a joy to participate in this vital local ministry. If you have any interest in sewing, knitting or crocheting for this purpose, contact Molly Sprouse at Mollysprouse@gmail.com.



Joy of Crafts Holiday Bazaar starts next Sun., Nov. 23, and runs through Dec. 14, on Sundays after worship in the Fellowship Hall.

Poinsettias Inspire the Christmas Spirit

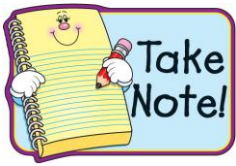
This Christmas it will be lovely to decorate the sanctuary with red poinsettias. There is a beautiful old Mexican legend about the poinsettia and it talks about a Mexican girl who did not have a present to give to the baby Jesus on Christmas Eve service. She was very sad as she walked to the chapel, so her cousin tried to cheer her up. He told her that he was sure that even the smallest gift given by someone who loved Him would make Jesus happy. Not knowing what to do, she gathered some weeds from the roadside and made them into a small bouquet. She was embarrassed because she only had these few flowers to give to Jesus. As she approached the altar in the chapel, she remembered what her cousin had said. She began to feel better, knelt down and put the bouquet at the bottom of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into bright red flowers and as people saw the miracle, they began to call the weeds poinsettias, also called "Flowers of the Holy Night."



Order forms will be shared with the bulletins on Sun., Nov. 30, and Dec. 7. If you would like to donate one in honor or in memory of a loved one, please fill out the form. The cost of each poinsettia is \$13 each and you can put your check made out to HUMC and order form in the offering plate or in the church office. **The cutoff date for ordering is December 7.**



Please contact Pastor Jim if you are interested in joining the Usher Team.



The Nursery is now a PEANUT-FREE Zone! The criteria for the nursery being peanut-free, is that no products containing peanuts can be brought into the nursery. (If the item was produced in a facility that also handles peanuts, that's okay.)

Thank you,
Rosalie Koch



Nursery Volunteers

There is a sign-up sheet for nursery volunteers on the church bulletin board across from the Fellowship Hall.

The protocol for volunteers: Arrive around 10:45 a.m. and let Rosalie know you are present. You may join the worship service sitting in the back of the sanctuary. If no children arrive for care, remain in the sanctuary. Rosalie will retrieve the volunteer when children are present. This follows our Child Protection Policy requiring two people caring for children.



Please support us as we strive to offer a nursery while being fiscally responsible with our resources. Please consider volunteering for an occasional Sunday if you are able.



Thank you Huguenot Family for the cards, phone calls, kind words, and prayers on the passing of Gerry's sister, Phyllis Mary Martin. They were much appreciated.

-Nancy and Gerry Flinchbaugh



Happy Birthday to
Bella Beasley (Nov. 16)
Carol Ames (Nov. 17)
Judge Cardwell (Nov. 22)

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please call, leave a note or send an email to Elaine so she can include you!



John and Betty Clatterbaugh
John S. Currie
Peggy Harris
LaVerne Jones
Judy King
Family of Phyllis Martin
Amy Mateer
Steve Peretzman and Family
DeDe Ross
Jon Smith
Judith Westerhouse

In an effort to keep the prayer requests current, names posted will be removed after 30 days unless requested otherwise.



THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Where the World Meets to Pray

Copies of the **November and December** edition of The Upper Room are now available on the greeting table at the front entrance. Please consider making a donation in the labeled box.



Sunday, November 16 – 23rd Sunday After Pentecost

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study (FH)

11 a.m...Worship

***** Pack a Shoebox due today! *****

Tuesday, November 18

7 p.m...Handbell Rehearsal (S)

Wednesday, November 19

10 a.m...Preschool Chapel Time with Pastor Jim (S)

10 a.m...Bible Study (FH) *All are welcome!*

7 p.m...Choir Practice (CR)

Friday, November 21

10 a.m...Library Work Session (L)

Sunday, November 23 – 24th Sunday After Pentecost

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study (FH)

11 a.m...Worship

12 p.m...**Joy of Crafts Holiday Bazaar** (FH)

CR – Choir Room FH – Fellowship Hall
K – Kitchen L – Library PR – Puppet Room



- Sun., Nov. 30 – Joy of Crafts Holiday Bazaar continues through Sun., Dec. 14
- Sun., Dec. 7 - Poinsettia order forms due.
- Tues., Dec. 9 – United Women in Faith – Dolce Vita Restaurant at 11:30 a.m.

Newsletter News

If you have an article for the next *pulse* newsletter, please email it to Elaine by *Wednesday at 10 a.m.*

Please know that submitted articles may be edited to provide clarity and increased inclusion. This newsletter and the Sunday Bulletin are posted on the church website by Friday evening.

Church Office Hours:

Pastor Jim is in the office on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Elaine is in the office every Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. These hours are subject to change on occasion.

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