

## THE MESSENGER



### **A WORD FROM PASTOR GINA: FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

Lent has already begun, and once again we find ourselves invited into this holy season—not as a burden, but as a gift.

Lent is not about trying harder, doing more, or fixing ourselves. It is about slowing down long enough to tell the truth about who we are and where we are—and trusting that God meets us there with grace. From the earliest days of the church, Lent has been a season of honest reflection, repentance, and renewed trust as we walk with Jesus toward the cross and, ultimately, toward resurrection.

This year, our Lenten series, *From the Inside Out: A Journey of Honest Faith*, invites us to go deeper—not by striving for perfection, but by practicing surrender, vulnerability, and courage. Each week, we are encouraged to lay down the masks we wear, to speak the truth of our hearts, to name our thirsts and griefs, and to follow Jesus not just in admiration, but in faithful obedience.

Lent asks us to believe that transformation doesn't begin with changing our circumstances,

but with opening our hearts. It is a season for returning—returning to God, returning to us, and returning to what truly matters. In worship, prayer, silence, confession, and shared communion, we remember that God's work in us is gentle, patient, and deeply loving.

And Lent is never the end of the story. We walk this inward journey knowing it leads somewhere—growing toward a love that does not give up, toward a cross that holds our pain, and ultimately toward resurrection. Easter reminds us that God brings new life not by erasing what has been broken, but by transforming it. What feels weary, unfinished, or lost can still rise.

As Lent unfolds, my hope is that this season—and this series—will give you permission to be honest, to let go of what no longer serves you, and to trust that God is already at work within you. Wherever you are on the journey, you are not alone. Christ walks with us—from the inside out—growing toward healing, hope, and new life.

**Find us at [FMCMoorestown.com](https://www.FMCMoorestown.com)**

# SPRING PREACHING SERIES

## FROM THE INSIDE OUT: A JOURNEY OF HONEST FAITH

Our Lenten journey of surrender, truth-telling, and renewal continues as we open our hearts to God's transforming love.

*Sunday Services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.*

**March 1 – Tell the Truth:** Honest confession opens the door to healing, grace, and renewed life.

**March 8 – Thirsty Souls:** Jesus meets us in our deepest longings, offering living water where we feel most empty.

**March 15 – When We Can't Fix It:** In grief and surrender, God meets us with compassion and a deeper hope.

**March 22 – Choosing the Cross:** Jesus calls us beyond admiration into courageous, obedient discipleship.



## HOLY WEEK

### March 29, Palm & Passion Sunday

**9:00 & 11:00 a.m. – The Unexpected King:** The way of the cross reveals love poured out—not triumph, but sacrificial grace.

**7:00 p.m. – The Youth & Choir Live Passion:** Let our hearts be moved by the powerful telling of the days leading up to the crucifixion of Christ through special readings and powerful music.

### April 2, Maundy Thursday, 7:00 p.m. – Love That Lingers

At the table, Jesus shows that love is humble, embodied, and enduring.

### April 3, Good Friday 7:00 p.m. – Love That Breaks

On the cross, Christ enters our suffering to transform pain with compassion.

### April 5, Easter Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. – Love That Rises

Resurrection brings new life from what felt lost—calling us by name into hope. We joyfully celebrate Easter with our praise and choir worship teams and bells lifting our hallelujahs. We rejoice that God's love rises—transforming what was broken and calling us into hope.

## WALK THIS WAY:

### THE WAY OF JESUS - EVERYDAY DISCIPLESHIP

Easter isn't the finish line - it's the starting point. Beginning April 12 and ending in June, we invite you to Walk This Way: The Way of Jesus - Everyday Discipleship. This is a bold, hope-filled series about what it really looks like to follow Jesus in daily life. Together we'll explore justice and compassion, spiritual practices that shape us, faith lived in community, resilience in hard times, and Spirit-led living for everyday people. This is an empowering, practical, deeply spiritual journey--less about perfection, more about alignment, less about talk, more about walking the way of love. Come ready to take the next step.



## UPCOMING SPECIAL SUNDAYS

### May 10 – Mother’s Day / Festival of the Christian Home: Whose Steps Are You Following?

9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

This Mother’s Day, we celebrate the faith that is handed down through love, presence, and everyday examples. Through scripture and story, three women will reflect on those who walked beside them in life’s valleys—and how their faith made a difference.

### May 17 – Confirmation Sunday: Eight Voices. One Faith.

Combined Worship at 10:00 a.m.

A Bold Yes to Christ: Confirmation is a celebration you won’t want to miss as eight incredible students step forward to share their faith stories and publicly commit their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ. This is a powerful, Spirit-filled moment for our whole church—a reminder that faith is alive, growing, and boldly claimed by the next generation. Come celebrate, pray, and cheer them on as they say YES to following Christ.



### June 7 – Youth Sunday: Walk the Talk: Everyday Integrity

Combined Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Led by our youth, this joyful and challenging service invites us to reflect on how faith shows up in real life. Are our words and actions aligned with the way of Jesus? Youth Sunday celebrates honest faith, growing courage, and the call to live what we believe—at school, at work, at home, and in the world. Come ready to be inspired, encouraged, and maybe lovingly challenged by the next generation.

## YOUTH UPDATE

Jeremiah Appleton, [jeremiah@fmcmoorestown.com](mailto:jeremiah@fmcmoorestown.com)

### 2026 Mission Trip with Appalachia Service Project (ASP)



If you haven’t heard, FMC will be heading back to Appalachia this summer for another mission trip with ASP! High schoolers, young adults, and adult leaders are all welcome and encouraged to attend this fulfilling trip. We’ll experience life-changing moments as we help make homes warmer, safer, and drier for families unable to do so for themselves. Trip dates are August 2 – 9, 2026. We must confirm final attendance numbers in early March, so please reach out to Jeremiah with questions or to lock in registration for you or your children as soon as possible.



## Live Passion

On Palm Sunday (March 29), the FMC Youth Group will collaborate with our Adult Choir to put on a Live Passion at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Come hear the powerful retelling of Jesus' journey to the cross through narration and tableau scenes of the Ten Stations, interspersed with moving song selections. We hope everyone will have the chance to experience this annual FMC tradition this year.

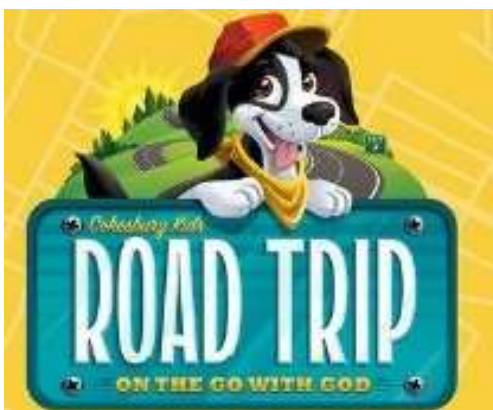
## Mid-Winter Advance Recap

Braving the cold and snow, a fearless group of FMC Youth and Youth Leaders set out for this annual retreat weekend on Friday, January 23. Although snow shortened this retreat, no smaller was the amount of fun and meaningful connection had by our participants. Joining together with youth and leaders from more than fifteen churches, we engaged in three different worship sessions focused on Campfire Tales from the Bible, had fun sledding on a dirt hill and playing



dodgeball, and made some new friends in the Reptile House on site. Most important was the time following each worship session when we gathered uniquely as an FMC group to share, reflect, and pray with each other.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Calling all children in grades K-5 to join FMC's Vacation Bible School in Summer 2026 as we set out on a Road Trip: On the Go with God! From August 10-14, we will meet from 9:00 a.m. to noon and embrace what it means for our young followers to travel with God. Each day will include classroom lessons, games and activities, music, snacks, and tons of fun!

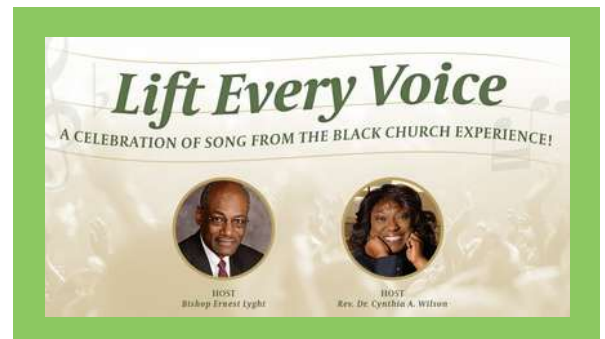
Mark your calendars: registration will open in April and extend through the end of June. We hope you will plan to have your children join us for an incredible VBS experience--and tell your friends and neighbors too!

We're also calling all FMC adults to help us make Vacation Bible School a success by volunteering in a variety of ways – from teaching to music to leading games and so much more. If you are available and willing to help with this very important ministry, please contact Devika Gill ([firstlight@fmcmoorestown.com](mailto:firstlight@fmcmoorestown.com)) or Jeremiah Appleton ([jeremiah@fmcmoorestown.com](mailto:jeremiah@fmcmoorestown.com)) as soon as possible.

## EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE NEWS

Mary Starn, [starred5@comcast.net](mailto:starred5@comcast.net)

E&SJ finished up our winter schedule with the month-long video series, “Lift Every Voice: A Celebration of Song from the Black Church Experience.” Just a reminder that you can now find most presenters in the E&SJ Speaker’s Series on the FMC Facebook page, accessible through the weekly Eblasts or the FMC Website. Please take advantage of this resource.



March brings two more interesting speakers to our church. Dr. Vinita Ganju from the India Temple Association will provide insight into the Hindu faith tradition and the programs they offer within the community. Master’s Graduate Tim Woody will be in the house on March 22 to speak on the topic “A Deeper Understanding of First Responder Mental Health.” We call them for help, but who is there to help them?



Look for further details on an exciting program from Mural Arts Philadelphia on April 21 at the Moorestown Library at 7:00 p.m. This is an opportunity for FMC to reach the broader community and to learn more about this internationally acclaimed program. A sign-up for a guided walking tour (date TBD) will be available that night.

May 17 brings us Erin Talbot, M.S., who will speak about her work within the judicial system. Her topic explores the theme “Redemption over Punishment: a Faithful Look at Recovery Court.”

Get your wardrobe ready for Wear Orange Sunday on June 7 to support National Gun Violence Prevention Month!



The theme for our committee this year has been “Justice Takes Courage.” Please join us now more than ever in speaking up for equity & social justice wherever your circle of influence may be!

## MIND AND SPIRIT SEMINARS

We have enjoyed our times together on the third Monday of each month in the Heritage Room at 6:30. Our topics are wide-ranging, but we have found them to be very meaningful and impactful. Our February meeting dealt with general anxiety and how to challenge anxious thoughts. In March, we will discuss “The health triangle: social, physical, and mental well-being.” Please join us in April for “Mood and emotions: navigating your inner landscape.” In May, we will talk about the community support for mental health awareness.



We have been benefiting from much sharing from the group with yoga, ideas for finding joy, book and podcast recommendations, as well as learning breathing techniques and the benefits of taking a break from social media. Please join us! Don’t hesitate to contact Nadine Mack, [nadinemack@icloud.com](mailto:nadinemack@icloud.com) or Lisa Kulp, [trklkk@comcast.net](mailto:trklkk@comcast.net) with any questions.

## TRIVIA NIGHT!

Join your church family for a fun, new experience on Saturday, March 7, in Fellowship Hall! All ages are encouraged to come for a potluck dinner and trivia game geared for the whole family. A sign-up sheet for food to share will be posted in the Narthex and we encourage you to arrive at 5:30 for dinner with the trivia game beginning around 6:15-6:30. Come with a team or create one when you arrive—we'll help you out with that, too! Test your knowledge on a variety of topics, with guidance from our trivia emcee, Joel Bewley. Get ready for prizes and guaranteed fun for all!



## HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR

FMC's fourth annual Health & Wellness Fair drew over 125 attendees and presenters on February 21. The event kicked off with an invigorating and interactive presentation by keynote speakers Karen Reiner and Ali Wederich, whose nonprofit organizations MooreUnity and GiveMoore help build community and connection. Participants then attended up to three sessions featuring a wide variety of topics, including healthy cooking, yoga, spiritual health, Christian meditation, music therapy, the psychological framework of happiness, the Enneagram for personal and spiritual growth, and much more. During the break, vendors showcasing health and wellness-based products and services filled Fellowship Hall. Many thanks to event chair Mary Keppel and her team for organizing the fair, which exemplifies FMC's mission in action.

