

February 2021

MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER of
HARLEM ROAD UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

HRCUpdate

Message from Pastor Bud

(Reprinted from an online article by Arianna Freelen)

Church is hard. Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgment.

Church is hard for the pastor's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service. (Or during online service)

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

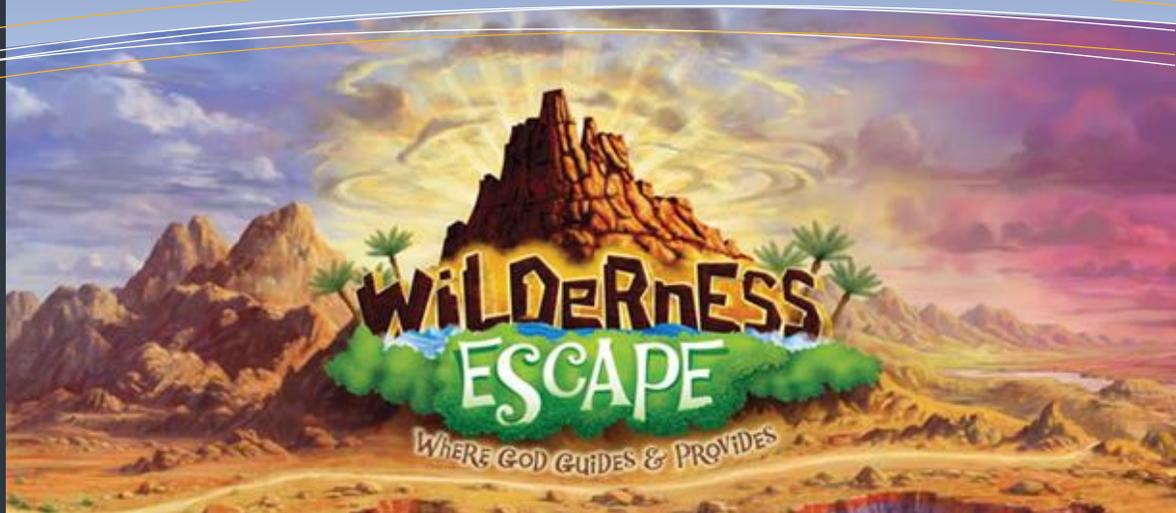
Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the Team Leader with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the person singing worship songs, overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

[See Pastor Bud \(continued\)](#)



Children's ministry news

By Pam Leskovac

During the pandemic, we have been doing our best to keep our children connected to Jesus and the church in a variety of ways. We celebrated "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" as a drive-in movie night for families in early December. We mailed Christmas Advent books to each of our families. We've delivered Sunday school lesson curriculum through Owl boxes and yellow buckets. We recorded Sunday school lessons that are available to be viewed on the church's YouTube page (search for YouTube Harlem Road Church). We've partnered with the youth group for a church-wide Scavenger Hunt, complete with prizes to the top 3 winners (more about this later in the newsletter).

Plans for Easter

We are planning our Easter lessons now, and most likely they will be delivered to our kids. Watch for a blue bag to be delivered to your door the first of March! An Easter Egg hunt may not happen – but there will be Easter Eggs in the blue bag. If anyone would like to donate candy to that effort, you can drop it off in the church office Monday through Thursday!

Summer Nights Live!

We don't know how the Summer will unfold, but plans are underway for Summer Nights Live 2021.

SNL 2021: WILDERNESS ESCAPE

SAVE THE DATE: June 21, 22 & 23 from 6-8pm.

Regardless of whether we are gathering in person or continuing to worship from home, HRC will be hosting Summer Nights Live: Wilderness Escape, where God Guides and Provides!!

Volunteers Needed

We will need volunteers to work with our children once our building is open again. If you're interested in helping with those classes – please email:

pam@harlemroadchurch.org

Most likely, we will hold Toddler and Preschool together in one class, and grades 1-5 together in one class – socially distanced – until we regain our numbers. Your help with this piece of ministry is vital!



Missions news

by Judy Sharpe-Kosmatka

Harlem Road UMC focuses its Mission Outreach efforts in two key areas....our local Big Walnut community, with an emphasis on Westerville Estates....and our global Haitian community in the Imagine Missions orphanage.

Local Outreach

Our Local Outreach is done in partnership with other churches and organizations....and we call our combined group "SidebySide". The other organizations are Church of the Saviour UMC, New Albany UMC, Chapel North Church, and Harlem Twp. Helping Hands.

Neighborhood Bridges

This is a website and a Facebook page for our community. It allows certain persons who have been made aware of a need to post that need. Needs can be seen immediately by actively going into the website. If a need exists longer than 24 hours, emails are sent out to all who have signed up. Please go to www.neighborhoodbridges.org. On that first screen, enter "Big Walnut" in the search bar and then select it when it shows up. Then, on the next screen, you'll have a "Subscribe" space in which to enter your email so that you are notified of upcoming needs. Also on that screen, in the middle of the picture, is a "Donate" button. If you know of a need, please let Judy Sharpe-Kosmatka know so she can post it to the Bridges website.

Bountiful Backpacks

The Bountiful Backpacks program provides food to Big Walnut students who need food over the weekends. Thank you to ALL who have already donated food for this program!!!! Sara Shaw is the leader of this ministry. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Sara at smwolfieie3315@gmail.com.

Kroger Community Rewards

This is a great way to help your church! We have several households who are shopping at Kroger and using their Community Rewards card to bless Harlem Road UMC. YOU CAN ALSO HELP IN THIS WAY! If you've enrolled in the past, your enrollment expired after 12 months and you may need to re-enroll at www.krogercommunityrewards.com

Global Outreach

We got this update recently from Melissa Young, director of Imagine Missions: "So thankful I was able to get a quick trip into Haiti to check on all our kiddos, students and staff at Imagine Missions. My heart was so full seeing how well all of our Imagine kiddos are doing at home with their families and at school ..Got to get my hugs and kisses from the kids and especially my Marvens. Also got to do a fun photo shoot with our dance girls for a special campaign ... through the dance grant Katie (aka "Madame Ballet") received for Imagine Missions Dance Program. I was sad that I had to cut my trip short because of riots starting again today in Haiti. Please be in prayer. There is talk of another lockdown happening. I know it is very hard because we are not able to go to Haiti and visit those we love so much there, but know that each of you continuing to support and pray is making a lasting impact. Everyone in Haiti is prayerfully waiting for the day you can all return to see them. They miss you all very much!"



Health and Wellness

by Sue Wilcox

February is American Heart Month: 10 Tips for a Healthy Heart

Heart disease is the leading killer of Americans, taking the lives of 2,200 people each day. While genetic factors do play a part in cardiovascular disease, the good news is 80 percent of cardiovascular diseases may be preventable with education and action. Simple lifestyle changes make a big impact when it comes to heart health. Show your heart some love with these 10 tips.

1. Stop smoking.

Quitting smoking is the best thing that can be done for the heart and for overall health.

2. Know your numbers.

Maintaining a healthy weight, blood pressure and total cholesterol play a significant role in maintaining a healthy heart.



3. Screen for diabetes

Untreated diabetes can lead to heart disease, among many other complications. Diabetes can be easily detected through a simple blood test and managed a variety of ways under the care of a physician.

4. Get active

Heart pumping physical activity not only helps to prevent cardiovascular disease but can also improve overall mental and physical health. The American Heart Association recommends five 30 minute moderate exercise sessions each week.

5. Build some muscle.

Strength training compliments cardiovascular exercise by toning muscles and burning fat. In addition, proper strength training can improve daily functional movements, decreasing the chance of injury.

6. Eat smart.

A healthy diet full of heart-smart foods is essential to a healthy heart and lifestyle. Salmon, nuts, berries, and oats are just a few of the heart "superfoods" that help reduce risk.

7. Limit junk.

To reap the full benefits of a heart-healthy diet, it's important to limit intake of nutrient-poor junk foods. Added sugars, saturated fat and excessive sodium can all negatively impact heart health, as well as overall physical health.

8. Stress less.

Stress increases cortisol, which leads to weight gain, a key risk factor for heart disease. Stress can also decrease overall happiness and increase the risk for anxiety and depression.

9. Sleep more.

Sleeping restores the body, helps decrease stress and increases overall happiness. To reap the full benefits, clocking seven hours each night is key.

10. Smile.

A happy heart is a healthy heart. Making time for enjoyable activities and hobbies helps relieve stress and improves the overall mood, providing a great foundation for a heart-healthy lifestyle.

Getting to know you Pam Leskovac

Each month, we'll feature one HRC member in this space.

I'm Pastor Bud's wife, mom to 3 adult kids and 3 grafted-in kids (their spouses), and Nana to 5 beautiful grandkids and 5 assorted canines! I work in Children's Ministry here at Harlem Road church.

Bud and I recently built our forever home near Sunbury. It's a cute little blue and white ranch on 3 acres near some of our kids. Some call it the Leskovac Compound – I'm just tickled to call it home and to live near some of my kids and all of my grandkids. My favorite parts of the house: the front porch swing and the fireplace. After 31 years of living in a parsonage we finally have a home of our own. God is good!

I was born and raised in northwestern PA. My dad drove a semi-truck and did diesel mechanic work, and my mom worked in a factory winding electrical coils. I was the third of 4 kids – and the only girl! I grew up as a 'tom boy' who could climb trees with the best of them and hold my own in any kind of fight!

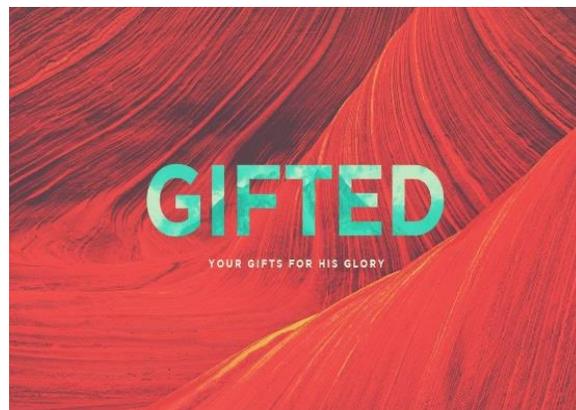
For more about Pam, see [Getting to know you \(continued\)](#)

Finding your purpose

In his message a few weeks back, Bishop Palmer urged us to think about how God is calling us to build God's Kingdom. Here's a link to a spiritual gifts survey that will help us see how God has wired us to be a part of building His Kingdom here on Earth. If you are searching for ways to live out your God-given purpose, this is a great way to get started.

<https://harlemroadchurch.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f8c79c3a44b5c401631785d94&id=d59ee91d9f&e=1cfc108ab6>

The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. Take some time to be still, pray for God to reveal your purpose and gifts to you, and allow the Holy Spirit to work through you. If you feel comfortable doing so, please share with us your results. We would love to hear about your gifts, passions, and ways that we can help you live those out at Harlem Road Church.



Youth ministry news



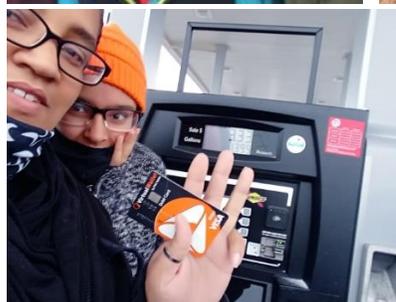
By Lisa Riddle

The game "Among Us" has quickly risen to become one of the most popular games among students. Within the game, there are tasks, principles, and characteristics that students have become very familiar with through playing or watching others play. "Among Us" opens doors for conversations and lessons regarding our lives as part of the Christian community, including our battle against the ultimate Imposter - the devil.

Over the next four weeks, we will be using concepts from the popular game to connect students with important Scriptural truths and challenge them in their everyday lives. We will be meeting virtually Sunday evenings from 7:00-8:00pm. If you have any questions, feel free to email us at harlemroadyouth@gmail.com.

Hope at Harlem and Family Fun scavenger hunt

The Hope at Harlem scavenger hunt ran from January 24-30. Families went out and spread hope in the community, and here are some of the results!



Getting to know you (continued)

Pam Leskovac...

Our favorite forms of family recreation were to camp in the Allegheny mountains and water ski at Tionesta Dam, and a vacation each summer (water skiing) at Weslemkoon Lake in Ontario. I always thought I'd go to Cypress Gardens and water ski as a way of life. Alas, I went to nursing school instead! Both of those vacation spots enhanced my deep fear of rattlesnakes and wolves (thanks to several tricks from my brothers!) But being near the water remains my favorite place to vacation!

I grew up one house down the hill from the Presbyterian church that I attended from my early childhood. My grandmother and a Sunday school teacher were on fire for Jesus – and I caught the flame! I went forward at a Billy Graham crusade at the age of 16 to make a total commitment of my life to Jesus. My Sunday school teacher and her husband took us to Full Gospel fellowship meetings and I received a baptism in the Holy Spirit at the age of 17. I met this cute guy from the rival high school in early February of my senior year, in the parking lot of the local Dairy Queen. We started “going together” on my 18th birthday and I invited him to come with me to the next Full Gospel meeting. He went forward and received Christ as his Savior that night – and the rest is history. We married 3 years later, and we are celebrating our 44th anniversary this April.

My relationship with Jesus is the most important part of me. My relationship with Bud has been an amazing adventure. And being a Mom has been the most important, best and the hardest job of my life! I love my kids (and now my grafted in kids and grandkids) fiercely. My biggest task in raising my own kids was to make sure they had a relationship with Jesus that was their very own. God was so good to meet each one of them and draw them into Himself. I'm sure that's why I have such a passion to bring kids into a relationship with Jesus today.

Bud and I began our “church life” in a large non-denominational church in Greenville PA. Ten years into our marriage, with 3 small children ranging from age 3-7, God called us into pastoral ministry. That's a great story for another time! From PA we landed in Ashville Ohio where a young pastor and his wife asked us to consider serving in the United Methodist denomination. We could not deny that the Methodist denomination was a direction from God – and we have served in His churches since then, some 31+ years. It has been our greatest privilege to be a part of Harlem Road Church since 2000. We never thought we'd be given the opportunity to stay in one place so long and grow such deep roots. HRC, you've wrapped all of us up in your arms and loved us all these years. We've never a part of such a loving church before. Thank you for loving us. We absolutely love all of you.



Pastor Bud (continued)

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behavior and dress. However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church—Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation. Church is a body. Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love. Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace. Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors. Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation. Where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust. Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope. Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories. Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where He resides, and if we ask, He is faithful to come.

So even on the hard days at church—The days when I am at odds with a friend, When I've fought with my husband because we're late once again. When I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. When I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope. When I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung. When I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away.

I'll remember, He has never failed to meet me there. Church is a body, a family, a place to love God and love others through our struggles!

Prayer Requests

Requests:

Jim Bernhardt, Jenny Fravel, Donna Evans, Dwayne Piper, Tony Hamilton, Drew Davidson, Eli Wolfe, Petra Hinterscheid, Gerry Duncan, Ruby Passen, Roger Davis, Missy Sandy, Teresa Wilke, Dennis, Dittiacier, Tim Saksa, Mary Reed, Dave Straiko, Mary Rogers, Yvonne Lake, George Pollock, people with Covid-19

Military Service & First Responders:

Lisa Riddle, Michael Morales, Codey Falk, Gage Duncan, Trace Troendly, Kyle Disbennett, Jacob Hutchinson, Logan Booty, Ethan Mosely, Jakeb Cokeril, Michael Albaugh, Joe Pasqua, Jeremy Ragan, Christina Hahn, Chad Cunningham, Scott Crowell, Sean Hatch, John Smock, Stuart David, Nathan Brumbaugh, James Martin, David Gish, Nathan Bertram, Tyler Albaugh, Chaplain David Hogg, Alex Hussey, Kevin Miller, Spencer Morris, Mike Neely, Justin Pickworth, Josh Ripley, Matt Robertson, Eric Roddy, Rob Sagle, Dave Wheeler, David White, Brian Williams, Lucas and Conner.

Community connection groups



Thinking about joining a small group, but not sure which one might be right for you? Contact the leaders to find out more about the people in the group and what they do!

- **Men's Bible Study:** We meet virtually on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Contact Jim Bernhardt with your email to get on the mailing list for study notes and other advisories.
Leader: Jim Bernhardt (bernhari@gmail.com)
- **Women's Tuesday Night Bible Study:** Ellen Jacobs' small group has temporarily stopped meeting together in her home, but we are connecting through other means. Ellen will notify the church office, and those who regularly attend, once we believe it is safe to convene in person meetings. This will be based on guidance from the state and medical entities.
Leader: Ellen Jacobs (jacobsellen53@gmail.com or 614-406-4337)
- **Women's Wednesday Night Bible Study:** We will be meeting virtually (through zoom) at 6:30 pm one Wednesday each month. Leader: Diana Robertson (office@harlemroadchurch.org or 614-882-9487)
- **Women's Lunch Bunch:** Sad to say – no lunches yet.
Leader: Bobbi Pollock (bobbi10820@gmail.com or 614 496 7405)
- **Saturday Couples' Group:** Current studies, occasional dinner out. We take turns hosting. Please contact Lisa Danne for the latest information.
Leaders: Ron and Lisa Danne (lisad@columbus.rr.com or 740-244-7223)
- **Ayers' Group:** Holding virtual meetings on the 3rd Tuesday at 7 pm.
Current leader: Barb Bright. Contact Karen Benton (kabee115@aol.com) for more information.

HRC Zoom Account

Thanks to the gift of a generous donor, Harlem Road Church is now able to host your team or small group's meeting. With a second licensed seat under the church's account, this will leave room for any team or group that needs a virtual meeting space. This licensed seat allows any group to host up to 100 participants and have unlimited time for their meeting.

In order to reserve your time, please call Diana in the office at (740) 965-4543. Diana will schedule your zoom meeting and send you a link with the proper sign in username and password. We hope this additional seat allows any group in the church to continue to meet and connect with God and one another. If you have any questions, please let us know.