

# Valley Views



VOLUME 24, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2017



Pastor Mike Hill

It's that time of year again. Yellow buses practice their circuitous routes, stores brim with school supplies, and teachers adorn their rooms with inviting bulletin boards and welcoming smiles. Back to school is officially upon us.

**Lord, I pray that my children would understand their need for Jesus and rejoice in the good news of the Gospel.** *Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation. Our God is a God of salvation, and to GOD, the Lord, belong deliverances from death (Psalms 68:19-20).*

**Lord, I pray that my children will love learning; that their hearts would seek to understand the world you have created.** *The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouths of fools feed on folly (Proverbs 15:14).*

**I pray that as they learn about your world, they would behold the majesty of your glory.** *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. (Psalms 19:1)*

**Lord, I pray that you would surround them with friends who make wise choices and encourage their faith.** *Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm (Proverbs 13:20).*

(cont.)



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**I pray that their teachers would be wise and gentle.** *The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit (Proverbs 15:2,4).*

**Lord, I pray that they would work with diligence and put forth their best efforts.** *The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied (Proverbs 13:4).*

**I pray that they would be thoughtful with their words and respectful in their replies.** *The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things (Proverbs 15:28).*

**I pray that you would free them from the pressure of trying to be like everyone else by instilling in them the confidence to know that they are uniquely made by you.** *I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well (Psalms 139:14).*

**I pray that they would receive correction well.** *The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. Whoever ignores instruction despises himself, but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence (Proverbs 15:31-32).*

**I pray that they would be kind to others.** *Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor. (Proverbs 21:21)*

**I pray that you would give them the grace of self-control.** *A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls (Proverbs 25:28).*

**Lord, I pray that your grace would rest upon my children.** *Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands! (Psalms 90:17)*

**I pray that you would protect them from all evil.** *I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life (Psalms 121:1-2,7).*

**More than anything else, may their lives glorify you.** *I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever (Psalms 86:12).*

**O Lord, hear our prayers! Amen.**

## **Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.**

Dear Sojourner Truth Ministries friends and supporters,

Greetings. God's blessings are especially evident during the summer and we sincerely hope this letter finds you enjoying the season. Things at Sojourner Truth Ministries (STM) are certainly busy during the summer months. Those we serve appreciate the cooler comfort of the basement seating where they take a needed breakfast or lunch, and our summer food programs targeting the many school children on break have been quite full. In fact, there never seems to be a "down time" at STM. We are so blessed to be able to serve so many in need. You, of course, are receiving this letter because of your support of STM and missions like ours. Without your assistance, much of our work could not be done. We recognize that you already answer so many appeals, but since you are *our* partners and supporters, we believe you should be aware of our current achievements AND the new financial struggles that threaten their continuation.

STM continues its faith-based services to Williamsport's disadvantaged community. The daily meals we serve feed our clients' hunger for faith, food, community, and self-esteem. When we provide bread and fruit, after-school snacks, a clothes closet, free public health fairs, a friendly gathering place, Sunday church services, and so much welcoming love and respect to all, STM actually nourishes the physical and spiritual needs of our local community who rely on this assistance, unable for various reasons to completely provide for themselves.

Some of these programs are the fruit of assessments made several years ago when STM, with the help of a grant from the United Methodist Church Conference, identified specific areas of hardship where STM could further help. We were able to expand our outreach with social service assistance and referrals to hopefully prevent further impoverishment of fellow citizens. Just two years ago, the Lycoming County United Way recognized STM for how we address the human service needs of our area, and we began a relationship toward partnering with this important organization. STM felt able to plan on meeting the escalating use of our programs. This led the STM board to recognize some specific areas as so imperative to sustaining our mission that two part-time, minimum wage positions were added—filled by two incredibly dedicated individuals who volunteer much more of their own time and effort to other outreach ministries, as well. We give God thanks for the many volunteers (including clients themselves, churches, organizations, and individuals) who allow us to operate with minimal employee expense. Our thanks and praise also for all items given, discounted and grant food from the Central PA Food Bank and area grocery stores, building-type grants from the First Community Foundation, and the generosity of individuals who give consistently as part of our fundraising events, during Raise The Region, annually, and more. We rely on all of these.

Our problem is that while the *need* for our missions continues to grow, our financial resources have been severely reduced. The United Methodist Church Conference grant ended in the first quarter, 2017. Due to unmet fundraising goals within the United Way's Fall 2016 drive, their funding of STM was also reduced, beginning July 2017. We now face a large income hole that will result in the loss of programs and possible staff reductions, necessitating further cuts in services. We are conserving as much as we can (without reducing services), but we are rapidly using up our small financial reserves.

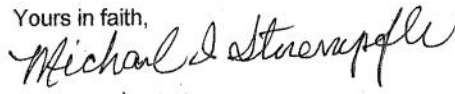
**501 High Street - Williamsport PA 17701 - Telephone: (570) 323-1797**

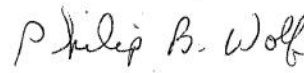
We firmly believe that God provides. We will continue to apply for new grants and funding. Please let us know if you are aware of any further resources for organizations like STM. Competition for such aid is high, and success is uncertain. As previously said, most of you are already donors and we know that there are many worthy charities in need of help. Nonetheless, we ask that you please consider Sojourner Truth Ministries in this current and ongoing appeal.

You can visit our Facebook page and website ([www.stmwilliamsport.org](http://www.stmwilliamsport.org)) for additional updates and information. Please share this letter and information with anyone you feel should know about us.

As always, please keep STM in your prayers as we keep you in ours. God's blessings and praise for all.

Yours in faith,

  
President

  
Treasurer

**Our Vision Statement.....**Sojourner Truth Ministry shall be a loving, spiritual, and inclusive Christian mission.  
**The Mission and Purpose of Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.....**

Sojourner Truth Ministry loves all people, creates community, builds character, and equips us to be faithful disciples of JESUS CHRIST.

Helping Hands is taking orders for apple dumplings for Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. They can be picked up at St. John's after 12:00 noon. Orders must be in by Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. If orders are not in on the 10<sup>th</sup>, we will see you at the Fall Festival, Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Order blanks are on the back tables in both churches.



We are looking for someone to fill the position of outside custodian beginning the end of August. This involves mowing the grass, taking care of the shrubbery beds and parking lots, and keeping the sidewalks clear during the winter. This person is responsible to keep up with the church calendar to make sure things are prepared for Sunday worship and mid-week meetings. We would prefer someone who regularly attends worship on Sunday. If you are interested, please contact Marie Kennedy or Pastor Mike for a form which includes a job description.





We would like to thank everyone for their prayers and cards during JR's stay in the hospital with pneumonia. Thank you for your continuous prayers during his recovery. Also, thank you to Max and Mike for their visits to the hospital.

Janet Eiswerth & JR

Thanks



The Kingdom Kids puppets will be presenting a program in the Fellowship Hall in Elmsport on October 8th at 9:00 am. Invite all who would enjoy the program. A treat will follow the program for the young and young at heart. Regular church services will be held in both churches.



- Items for October's newsletter are due September **20th**.
- Items for the weekly bulletin's need to be to the church office by **Wednesday** morning each week.  
(Items received after these dates are not guaranteed to be printed.)

Council on Ministries will be meeting on Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Elmsport church. All are invited to attend with any new ministry ideas.



Zumba has restarted for the fall with a new time and day. It will be every Tuesday at 6:30 pm at the Elmsport church. There is no fee. Don't forget to invite a friend!

The Fall Festival will be on Saturday, September 16th from 11:00 - 5:00. A parade will start at 11:00 at the Fire Hall.



## Elmsport Volunteers

### Greeters for September

Sept 3	Joann Stainbrook
Sept 10	Christa McCormick
Sept 17	Chris & Jill Ulrich & Family
Sept 24	Sandy Foresman



# JUNE NEWSLETTER

June, 2017  
Issue 1

SOJOURNER TRUTH MINISTRIES INC.



## Volume Two

By Derecia Kelly

Welcome to the first issue of the Sojourner Truth Ministries 2017 Newsletter. This bulletin provides schedule and event information. It contains a "Meet The Team Member" section, as well as a few spiritual articles.

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## What's happening at S.T.M. ?

Here at STM we help people every day. Here are just a few positive events we have to share with you.....

- Every Tuesday we distribute fruits and vegetables
- Every Wednesday we distribute bread and pastries
- Bible Study is held every Wednesday from 6 pm to 7:30 pm.
- Prayer Study is held on every Thursday from 6 pm to 7:30 pm.
- Monday through Friday we distribute kids snacks, both breakfast and after school.
- Sojourner Truth serves a hot meal Monday through Sunday
- Please follow Sojourner Truth Ministries on our website [www.stmwilliamsport.org](http://www.stmwilliamsport.org) and/or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

**Do you know how STM serves your community on a daily basis?**

Workers from the Wake Up House dedicate countless hours every day. Serving meals, cleaning up S.T.M, and sorting through your gracious donations are just a few tasks.

We have many workers from Experience Works, STEP Inc, Career Link, and many other community service workers who aid in running S.T.M. We have our Clothes Closet which receives the clothing donations, our pantry in which we receive food donations that helps us to feed the people in our community.

We have two wonderful Social Service Assistants who help service the needs of our patrons, which includes but not limited to, assisting in job applications, searching for housing opportunities, just to name a few.

### DID YOU KNOW ?

Sojourner Truth Ministries has a child snack program that feed over 100 kids a day. S.T.M. Passes out snacks Monday through Friday from 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm.

## Meet [Keith King ]

Mr. Keith King is currently Sojourner Truth Ministries, Head cook. Mr. King prepares the wonderful food everyday except Saturday's and he does a excellent job. Making sure there is enough food made to feed all patrons on a daily basis.

**Q: What do you like the most about working at Sojourner Truth Ministries Inc. ?**

**A:** I love to cook for people and then sit back and watch them enjoy themselves and watching God's hand at work as people sit and fellowship with each other. I am thankful for this opportunity to work at Sojourner's Cafe and meet new people everyday.

**Q: Have you changed since your first day coming to S.T.M. ? If so what has changed the most ?**



**A:** Yes ! My view on people, coming here, I meet so many people and get to see past their circumstances and see the real them. It truly helps my faith in God to see others who may not have a lot give praises in the midst of their problems.

**Q:What is something that is so important to you that, you would want everyone to know?**

**A:** The Lord and all that you can benefit from, by following His example. The Lord has changed my life and I know if He can do it for me, He can and will do it for anyone...

## Meet [ Pastor Derek Smith ]

**Q: What is the most outstanding quality in Sojourner Truth Ministries?**

**A:** Love ! Because it permeates through out the atmosphere in S.T.M.

**Q: What was your first impression of Sojourner Truth Ministries? Have it changed at all from your first time coming here?**

**A:** The quality of the food was remarkable, and the people were friendly. Yes ! Sojourner Truth Ministries has really grown into a wonderful place to be. You always leave better than you came.

**Q: Are there any programs currently provided by STM that you feel are a great benefit to this community?**

**A:** Yes, Sojourner gives away fruit & veggies on



Tuesday and bread & pastries on Wednesdays, they have a clothing ministry that helps people with interview clothing or a clothing for their kids. S.T.M has so many great programs that I can not just list them all...

**Q: What is something so important to you that you would like the world to know?**

**A:** The Love of Jesus ! This is why we at Sojourner Truth Ministries do what we do the way we do it ! The Love of and for Jesus Christ. Now give the Lord some Praise.... :-)

*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*



## GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY !!!!

### Introduction

In Psalm 103, a magnificent hymn of praise, David praises God for His blessings and compassion as a loving and forgiving father for his children (vss. 1-18). He concludes with a universal call for praise (vss. 19-22), but he begins this call with a declaration of God's sovereignty (vs. 19) for it is God's sovereignty that gives Him the absolute freedom to do what He does in His blessings and showing compassion to frail and temporal humanity (vss. 15-16).

Psalm 103:15-19 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. 16 When the wind has passed over it, it is no more; And its place acknowledges it no longer. 17 But the loving kindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, 18 To those who keep His covenant, And who remember His precepts to do them. 19 **The LORD has established His throne in the heavens; And His sovereignty rules over all.** (emphasis mine)

Have you ever thought about how the physical heavens literally rule over the earth? They can ruin us or bless us. Warm us or cool us. Burn us or freeze us. Make our crops productive or destroy them. We have learned that climate and atmospheric conditions affect not only our health, but psychological behavior.

And what are the heavens? They are the creation of God, but they also illustrate God's sovereign majesty over our lives.

Scriptures such as Psalm 103:19 often relate God to the heavens not because He is so far removed from us as to space, but because in His sovereign majesty He is so high above us in power, nature, and sovereignty.

One of our problems today is that we have lost the biblical perspective of the majestic greatness of God, and we have a completely wrong focus on God. As J. B. Phillips points out in his book, *Your God Is Too Small*, people today see God as:

(a) the resident policeman; (b) the grand old man; (c) a parental hangover, or some other short-sighted, twisted view of God.

The sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise of His supremacy, His infinite rule, His authority and power. Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature in authority, nature, and being, He is the Most High Lord of heaven and earth and all creation whether angels or the heavenly hosts.

Basically, God's sovereignty means that He is the Supreme Ruler who immanently and personally rules over all the affairs of the universe—and this includes our personal lives both as individuals and as a local body of believers. God's sovereignty is a place of rest for the child of God, as well as a cause of worship (cf. Psalms 48:1; 95:3, 6).

One particular place of rest and application in relation to God's sovereignty and rule is His guidance and work to accomplish His purposes for our lives individually and corporately. Paul has this in mind, at least in part, in Philippians 1:6 when he says: "I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." (Compare also Ephesians 1:11-12.)

Such actions of God's sovereignty are seen in the life of Naaman the leper as God worked to lead this man to Himself. Of course, men may resist and fail to respond to God's grace, but even then God rules and uses them for His own purposes as He did with Pharaoh (cf. Proverbs 16:5).



## GOD'S GRACE !!!

### What is a definition of God's grace?

#### ANSWER:

To learn the definition of God's grace, it is wise to understand the Greek and Hebrew words behind this term.

A prominent Old Testament word describing God's grace is *chesed*. This word speaks of deliverance from enemies, affliction, or adversity. It also denotes enablement, daily guidance, forgiveness, and preservation.

The New Testament word is *Charis*. It focuses on the provision of salvation.

#### Definition of God's Grace – How do theologians define it?

"What is *grace*? In the New Testament grace means God's love in action towards men who merited the opposite of love. Grace means God moving heaven and earth to save sinners who could not lift a finger to save themselves. Grace means God sending His only Son to descend into hell on the cross so that we guilty ones might be reconciled to God and received into heaven. '(God) hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him'" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

"Grace may be defined as the unmerited or undeserving favor of God to those who are under condemnation."

#### Definition of God's Grace – What does the Bible say?

"This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference

between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:22-24).

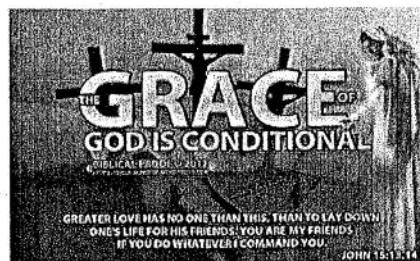
"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:8-10).

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!" (Romans 5:17).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:5-7)



*"Grace isn't just forgiveness, it is forgiveness fueled by surrender."*

## Getting Back To God ....

There are ups, downs, and unexpected turns. Though you may go back along a trail you have been traveling, the one thing you don't want in your Christian walk is to go backwards spiritually.

Backsliding refers to going backwards spiritually and morally. When a believer backslides, he falls back in some way into a less desirable condition. His lapse may be a relatively minor one and unintentional. He may simply fall back through neglect by not praying, reading the Bible, and keeping his focus on living for God.

On the other hand, a believer may backslide by deliberately choosing to indulge in this life's sinful pleasures. This type of backsliding can carry disastrous consequences. It can bring dishonor to the One who laid down His life for us, Jesus Christ. It can also sadden and bring grief to the lives of loved ones. Of course, backsliding can bring turmoil into the believer's own life. He may be plagued by guilt or even a feeling of despair or condemnation. But there is good news for the backslider! God does not condemn him. God's loving concern for the backslider is steadfast and sure. The Lord calls that person back to Himself through the work of the Holy Spirit. We can see this clearly in the parable of the prodigal son. In the parable, the father saw his son returning while he was still far off. But the father did not lock the doors or demand that his son leave. Instead, the father welcomed his return. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. (Luke 15:20)

### Then the son confessed to his father:

Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. (v. 21)

The father's relief and joy at seeing his son was so great that he did not even reprove him or rebuke him. Instead, the father instructed his slaves: Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.

(v. 22-24) The father showed that the son's return was not a time for condemnation, but for celebration. And they began to celebrate. (v. 24)

### If you are backslidden.

Like the parable of the prodigal son, know that the Heavenly Father truly cares about you and wants you to return. He does not post an angelic guard to keep out your prayers and your heart's cry. When the Lord hears you calling out to Him, He will respond positively to you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. (James 4:8)

Do not let anything hold you back from God and His forgiveness and grace. Don't let the pleasures of sin deceive you. In time, sin will bring you pain. Also, do not let doubt or guilt hold you back, for He promises you:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

The Lord's mercies are new every morning, but do not assume that you are promised tomorrow. Pray to the Lord now.

After you have called upon the Lord and asked for His forgiveness, believe His promise to forgive you. He will surely cleanse you of your sins and restore you to fellowship with Him. Let His Spirit touch your heart and bring healing to your soul.

If you hurt people while you were backslidden, then ask them for forgiveness. Do what you can to repair any damage you may have caused in other people's lives. Seek healing and reconciliation of broken or injured relationships.

Learn from the mistakes you made that led to backsliding, and determine to not repeat those mistakes. Ask the Lord for wisdom in how to live faithfully as an overcomer. Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. (Proverbs 4:23, NIV)

Beware of the enemy's schemes. Flee from situations that tempt you. Rebuke Satan when he attacks you. Have a trusted prayer partner that you can share your personal struggles with. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (2 Timothy 2:22) Finally, let the Holy Spirit lead you, fill you, encourage you, and empower you as you go through the day. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:25)

### Do You Want a Relationship with God?

If you want this kind of relationship with God, pray this prayer right now:

Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you took the pain of the cross to give me new life. I ask you to come into my life and to give me your peace and joy. I confess that I am a sinner -- that I have gone my own way and have done wrong. Please forgive me for my sins. I receive you now as my Lord and Savior. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit. Help me to follow you and to serve you all my life. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.

**If you prayed that prayer, you are now a child of God. The things of your old life have passed away and He has made all things new.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Men's Night Out June 16, 2017 at 5:00 pm



2. Sojourner Truth Ministries Annual Block Party September 2, 2017 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. All are welcome !!!

## SPECIAL THANKS.....

1. We would like to thank Heshbon Park UMC, Penn College, First UMC- Williamsport, Hope Community Church, Quiggleville UMC, Ball Mills UMC, Gap Fellowship, Unityville UMC, Pine Run UMC, South Williamsport UMC, St. Paul Liberty UMC and First Church of Christ, for volunteering their time at our Saturday Cafe in February, March, April and May.
2. We also would like to thank Heilman UMC, St Johns Newberry, Avis UMC, New Covenant CC, Faxon-Kenmar UMC, Hope Community Church, Gap Fellowship and First UMC- Williamsport, for their upcoming support in Sojourner Truth Ministries Saturday Cafe...
3. We would like to also send a special THANK YOU to AmeriHealth Northeast and Mrs. Melissa Farenish, for all your hard work, dedication and generous support in S.T.M. Health Fair....
4. Thank you to Insurance Services LLC., AIDS Resource, River Valley Health and Dental, UPMC Susquehanna Health Nurse, Expectations Women's Center, Special Kids Network, Lycoming Co. State Health Ctr-Pa DOH, and Community Service Group for your participation in Sojourner Truth Annual Health Fair...
5. Thank you to all our generous donors who participated in the Raise the Region event that went on in March 2017
6. To the Lycoming Law Association we thank you for all that you do for our community and support you have shown Sojourner Truth Ministries....

To all the gracious volunteers who comes out and donate their time and effort, in assisting Sojourner Truth Ministries to help our community.

# Kid's Corner





# **ELIMSPORT VALLEY UNITED METHODIST PARISH**

## **Worship Schedule:**

### **Elimsport UMC**

Worship 9:00 am  
Sunday School 10:30 am

### **St. John's UMC**

Sunday School 9:15 am  
Worship 10:30 am

### **Parish Youth Group**

Check weekly Bulletin for current schedule and events  
(at Elimsport)

### **Parish Bible Study**

Varies according to the season.

### **Parish Office:**

16145S. RT 44 HWY  
Allenwood, PA 17810

### **Parsonage Phone:**

(570) 547-1386

### **Pastor Mike's Cell:**

(570) 974-8590

### **Parish Website:**

[www.evpumc.org](http://www.evpumc.org)

### **Parish email:**

[elimsportumc@gmail.com](mailto:elimsportumc@gmail.com)

[www.evpumc.org](http://www.evpumc.org)



### **Our Mission Statement at Elimsport UMC**



We gather together as a community of Christian believers to worship, fellowship, and to learn more about God. By the unity of the Spirit and the support of each other, we are able to reach out to the community and the world.

### **Our Mission Statement at St. John's UMC**



The purpose of St. John's is to both evangelize and nurture. We are called to show God's love in our world by giving aid and by spreading the Good News of Christ. We in turn provide an atmosphere for nurturing where Biblical truths are shared enabling people to become spiritually enriched. By providing this, people will learn and through learning, become more effective witnesses.