

# HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



May, 2019

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Church Address: 540 Conrad Rd., Alburton, 18011

Church office: 610-845-2626 Church & Chapel: 610-845-2541

Pastor Home Office: 610-944-5923

Office email: [office@huffschurch.com](mailto:office@huffschurch.com)

Website: [www.huffschurch.com](http://www.huffschurch.com)

Facebook Page: Huff's Union Church, Inc.

Facebook Group: Huff's Union Church

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**We, the members of Huff's Union Church, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become evermore the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a ministry which includes increasingly meaningful worship, creative Christian Education, intentional witnessing, dedicated service, and responsible support.**

**Making Disciples: Inside and Out. UCC slogan: God is still speaking. ELCA slogan: God's work, our hands.**

### **Confirmation Dates**

May 5 - 9:15 (Chapel upstairs) Forgiveness (with **mentor**)

May 12 - 9:15 (Chapel) Healthy relationships (Know 10 commandments from memory)

May 26 - Happy Memorial Day Weekend. No class.

### **Manna Contemporary Worship Service**

Manna Contemporary Worship Service will be held on May 19 at 9 a.m. in the upstairs of the Chapel. All are welcome to share reflections about The Lamb of God: the Triumphant Lamb.

## Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is quickly approaching. Our theme this is To Mars and Beyond. Our VBS will be held on July 8-12th, 2019 for children age 3 to 12, younger children welcome if with parent. Throughout the week the children will be participating in storytelling, music, science, crafts and games. Each evening the children will receive a light snack before going home. Questions? Please contact Rachel Welch at 484-226-0333.

See Registration Form inside the newsletter or on the website ([www.huffschurch.com](http://www.huffschurch.com))

## VBS Help Needed

VBS is in need of help for the following areas:

**Science:** Doing some simple experiments (instructions provided) that relate to the year's theme.

**Crafts:** One person to lead crafts and a few extra hands to help the children to create their crafts.

**Second adult helpers:** May be used to assist with music, as guides, or wherever needed.

We also need a few people to help out with children with bathroom breaks through out the night.

If you are interested in any of these areas, please contact Rachel Welch at 484-226-0333. **You must have background checks completed to be a VBS adult volunteer.** Check with Kelsey ([ministry@huffschurch.com](mailto:ministry@huffschurch.com)) if you have questions on need help getting these done.

We would be grateful for **teenagers** as assistants in all areas, as long as there are enough adults with background checks to supervise.

## Seed Tree

The Seed Tree collected 586 seed packets with a monetary value of \$1,699.78. Seeds were sent by UPS on April 2nd to St. Vincent's Mission in David, Kentucky.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this worthy mission of our church. Most of the families have gardens to help supplement their food needs.

## Bible studies

Sunday Bible Study: May 19 meet chapel basement after refreshments in church. Acts 19:21-20:12

Mid-week study: May 22 in office at 6:30 p.m. Joshua chapters 1-12.

## **Acolyte Schedule**

5//5/19	Maisy Funk, Wyatt Miller, Austin Hall, Madelynn Miller and Tucker Ruch
5/12/19	Brooke Boyer and 2 volunteers
5/19/19	Logan Scott, Gavin Hess and Chase Longacre
5/26/19	Alayna Watkins, Logan Watkins and 1 volunteer

## **Pentecost Geraniums**

Would you like to give a geranium to help beautify the side of our church building? There is a sign up sheet posted in the lower Narthex which includes the cost of each geranium (deadline June 2). Please sign up for as many geraniums as you wish to donate and pay by placing your money or check into an envelope, marked geraniums, and placing it in the offering plate (please include your name so we know that you have paid). Your name will be listed in the Pentecost Bulletin (June 9) as having donated one or more plants.

## **Special Offering Opportunity**

The special offering for May is the UCC Strengthen the Church offering. This offering pays to help train lay and ordained church leaders; 25% remains in the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference and 75% is forwarded to the denominational headquarters for national church use. Special offering envelopes are available in the pews, or mark your envelope “Strengthen the Church” and it will go to support this project. (The envelopes are marked “Invest in the Vision”)

## **Lunch Bunch**

Meets Tuesday, May 21, 2019, at noon, at PC’s Pub in Pennsburg.

## **Food Pantry**

At the end of March, Elvin Keiser and Bob and Sue Stockdale emptied the food pantry cabinet, packing an amazing total of 340 items. Boyertown Multi Services was the very grateful recipient. They manage a very efficient, organized pantry in the small space they are allotted. We were asked to convey their thanks to our contributing church members. If any church member wants to participate in one of our deliveries, you are more than welcome.

## **Small Group**

Small group meets on Saturday, May 4 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Please bring your Bible. You may bring food to share and stay for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

## **Hearing Assist Devices**

Hearing assist devices are available on the table at the back of the Sanctuary. You may use these to hear the worship service anywhere in the building. If you feel you need to sit downstairs because you are coughing, these enable you to hear the service. We are having the broken devices repaired. Please let someone know so we may have it fixed. Sometimes it just means the batteries need to be replaced.

## **Local Needy Fund**

If anyone is in financial need, that person should talk with Pastor Kropa. Requests are kept confidential. The officers of Union Council and presidents of the ELCA council and UCC consistory decide how to handle any request (knowing only the circumstances, not the name of the person who requests help). We pay a bill, or part of a bill directly, and do not pay on credit card debt. Our policy is not to help the same families more than once a year. We do recommend that families who seem to be in repeated difficulties seek financial counseling, at the agency that serves their geographical area: Friend, Inc., Boyertown Area Multi Service, or Pennsburg Open Link, all agencies which we support.

## **The Jane Kukulka Memorial Scholarship Fund**

This scholarship fund has helped our children and youth attend special wider-church events that they might not otherwise been able to afford. In the past, this fund has aided in church trips to South Africa, Switzerland, Germany, as well as those attending the Mid-Atlantic Regional Youth Gathering and the National UCC Youth Gathering. The fund monies are assigned based on financial need, and are restricted to those who are still in school. Contributions may be made to this fund in honor of or in memory of a special person, or may be made to the glory of God. Thank you for your support of our children and youth through your contributions. If you are interested in making a gift to this fund, please talk with Elaine Crump.

## Church Family

### FUNERALS

Please pray for the family and friends of David Bittenbender who passed away on March 9, 2019.

Please pray for the family and friends of Benjamin Kriner, Jr. who passed away on April 6, 2019.

### MEMORIALS

To the General Fund in memory of David Bittenbender

Carl & Minerva Arner

John & Jane Leese

Dennis & Bea Miller

Scott & Emelie Swackhammer

### **BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

We are honoring our members who celebrate their 80th birthday or older and also honoring those members who celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary or more. Please let us know if we missed anyone.

#### **BIRTHDAYS**

5/10 - Ruth Crossley

5/28 - Lorraine Greiss

#### **ANNIVERSARIES**

5/17 - Paul & Jean Adam

5/18 - Harold & Pauline Strunk

#### **Noah Musical**

The Children's Choir will present "Noah" at the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, May, 19. Thank you to Mrs. Adams, Joanne Benfield and all the supportive parents.

#### **Thank you**

Thank you for all the prayers and encouragement we received during my husband's knee replacement surgery. Such kind words mean so much.

Pastor Jane Kropa

#### **Thank You Note Received**

From: Friends, Inc.

To: Friends at Huff's Union Church

Thank you for your \$25.44 donation from the Youth Group Souper Bowl Sunday. Because of you, we can continue to serve at-risk families, parents, children, students and seniors. Your support will provide them with nutritious food, emergency assistance, money management education, job placement assistance, winter coats and so much more.

Sandra L. Wise, Executive Director

## *Pastor's Article*

Dear Christian Friends,

Frequently I am humbled by the faith I find in others. In last month's newsletter, you had the opportunity to read prayers crafted by our own confirmation class members. We have been trying to bring to you a faith story, or a reflection on a particular area of faith, the final Sunday of the month in worship (we will skip June, July and August and resume in September) We have heard stories of a little girl who cried the first time she saw a movie about Holy Week, a man who was dropped into the jungle to build a secret airstrip during WWII in the Burma campaign, two woman who, in earlier years, visited our homebound members to take them communion, and a woman who struggled with feeling worthy enough to be part of a congregation. What do they have in common? They were willing to share both their struggles, and their emerging sense of God's loving presence, which can make all things new. They were willing to share their gratitude for a community that accepts and encourages.

Recently, in a Lutheran pastors' group in which I participate, we talked about people's difficulty in talking about faith. No one wants to sound "preachy" or "offensive", but we do have some great stories to tell. The hindrance is learning how to talk about our faith. At our All Church Retreat, we told some stories to one another—stories about a worship service that moved us, stories about a faith practice we'd like to try. There is such power in stories! Think of it—our Bible is full of stories of people encountering God, and what happened next.

I'd like to again offer my services in interviewing anyone who might like to talk about either a faith practice that is meaningful, or their life's faith journey, including the downs as well as the up moments. I'll write it up, let you read it through, then perhaps you'd allow us to have someone read it in worship. You may also volunteer to read it yourself. Such stories are so powerful! They take us from the Bible stories, into our own stories. We continue to "write" the Bible with our lives, because we believe God is still speaking, to us, right now, here in our own corner of Pennsylvania.

In Christian testimony,  
Pastor Jane Kropa

## **Blankets of Hope**

Each year we have invited the congregation to honor important women in your life (Sunday School teacher, mother, grandmother, scout leader, etc.) or giving in memory of these women, with a \$10 donation for each name to purchase a Blanket of Hope through Church World Service. These blankets may be used for emergencies in the US, or throughout the world. There is a form included with this newsletter, or pick one up on the bulletin table outside the sanctuary. Filled out forms and donations must be received by May 5 to be listed in May 12 bulletin. Place your donation and the filled out form in an envelope marked "Blankets of Hope" and place it in the offering plate or in the office manager's (Edwina Fox's) mailbox, or mail it to the church.

## **Tools of Hope for Father's Day**

If you would like to honor an important man in your life, or give something in memory, we are sponsors of the Tools of Hope offering through Church World Service. Cost is \$10.00 for each person honored. Please use the form available on the bulletin table in the upper Narthex (**after** Mother's Day) or the one included with the June newsletter. Place money or check and filled our form in an envelope and put in the offering plate or office manager Edwina Fox's mailbox downstairs (in the back room between the stair towers) by June 9. We will have the names of those honored in the bulletin on Father's Day, June 16.

## **Thank you to Huff's Church Members,**

As a result of your generous giving, St. Vincent's Mission in David, Kentucky added almost 100 personal care items to their food pantry shelf. Families in need shop once a month at the St. Vincent food pantry and each family can select up to 3 personal care items. Thank you for supporting the mission which celebrated its 50th anniversary in July 2018! We also delivered over 100 pounds of dog and cat food to the local animal shelter and several boxes of art supplies to the local elementary school. Our vehicle was packed full! We were blessed to have been able to spend 2 weeks living and working on projects for St. Vincent. Your donations make it possible for this mission to support families and community projects in one of the poorest counties in the US!

Thank you, Maisy Funk and Dena Lebo-Funk

## **Ladies Aid Society**

The next meeting of the Ladies Aid Society will be on Wednesday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel. All ladies are invited to attend. Please continue to save your Redner's & Radcliffe's receipts. There is a basket for these on the Food Bank cabinet near the men's room.

## **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, UCC**

Remembering that the Easter season extends from April 21 and ends on June 9 (Pentecost Sunday) in 2019,

We bring you this story.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in Jerusalem, is built on the site of both the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus. Above one of the church's many altars is an ancient painting of Mary Magdalene holding an egg. Somehow, in my UCC journey, I made it from confirmation to Conference Ministry without learning the story of Mary and the egg. According to church tradition, Mary brought white boiled eggs to the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning. Why eggs? Perhaps as a fast food on the way to waiting for the tomb stone to be rolled aside. When she arrived at the site of the Resurrection, finding the stone already moved, she also found that the eggs in her basket had turned bright red.

After Jesus' Ascension, Mary found herself in front of Emperor Tiberius Caesar in Rome – yep, carrying an egg. Holding the egg out to him, she declared, as many of us will this Sunday, “Christ is risen!” The emperor, mocking her, said that Jesus had no more risen from the grave than would a chicken come from the egg in her hand. Immediately, the egg turned red. The Emperor, at Mary's request, removed Pilate from his post in Jerusalem. Ever since, we have been hunting the egg that would set us free from tyranny, terror and even terra firma.

Two-thousand years of Christian tradition have given us amazing stories and myths. Some, like transformed red eggs, strain the capacity for sense or reason. Others have clearly co-opted stories of earlier faith traditions. And I am okay with that. There are fundamental truths about the nature of God that flow across time and space binding us with all people who seek the Holy and Divine. The entirety of the gospel strains our capacity for sense and reason. As, of course, it should. It's not about us or what we did in the world. It's about who God is and what God is doing in the world. Fortunately, God's capacity for creativity, transformation, miracles and resurrection is infinite.



## **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, UCC** (continued)

So, for this year's Holy Triduum [three days—Maundy Thursday through Holy Saturday] I've decided to carry a white, hard boiled with me. It may or may not spontaneously change colors. But it will be a helpful reminder of the resurrected spirit God has instilled in me and in you-- the one constantly trying to break out into the world.

May it be so.

Pastor Bill Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister

*God is still speaking,*  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



## **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ**

Who is the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference? What do they do for us?

The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference is the link that connects our church's various and diverse ministries both locally and globally. Together, we provide our churches, pastors and congregations with the training and inspiration they need to carry out our church's wider mission. We are stronger together; therefore, we embrace diversity, and above all, we spread God's love!

Training comes via the many training sessions: secretary training, treasurer and bookkeeper training, stewardship training, ALICE training, pastor and lay boundary training, church development training and even church closure training to name some of the many training sessions that are available. Inspiration can be found in the training sessions as well as the Annual and Fall meetings and the numerous retreats offered through-out the year.

Mark your calendars for the following events coming in the next few months:

May 1—Secretary Training,  
<https://psecsecretary19.eventbrite.com>

May 24-26—Post High School Event,  
<https://psecafteryouth.eventbrite.com>

May 31—June 1—PSEC Annual Meeting,  
<https://psecannual19.eventbrite.com>

June 21-25—General Synod in Milwaukee WI,  
<https://www.synod2019.org>

## **Thank You Notes Received**

### **From: The Open Link**

To: Huff's Union Church Members

Thank you for your generosity of \$295 in gift cards to our organization. Your support to help build and strengthen programs and services that truly make a difference to our neighbors in the Upper Perkiomen Valley.

Stuart Bush, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

### **From: Phoebe Ministries**

To: Huff's UCC

Thank you for your congregation's gift in the amount of \$10. Because of your generosity, Phoebe is able to meet the needs of older adults through diverse residential options, comprehensive care and exceptional educational program.

Stacey L. Prohaska  
Executive Director  
Office of Philanthropy

### **From: Lancaster Theological Seminary**

To: Friends

Thank you for your gift of \$10 in support of the ministry of theological education at Lancaster Seminary. The support you provide with your prayers and your gifts opens the doors for our students' education.

Rev. Dr. Carolyn call  
Executive Director of Development & Communications

### **From: St. Vincent Mission, Inc.**

To: Friends of Huff's Union Church

Thank you so very much for your recent donation of gardening seeds. So much life and nutrition in 2 big boxes! We truly appreciate your love and support to the families in our region. Everyone is excitedly digging into the dirt and dreaming of warmer weather and dryer days. Last year we were able to supply seeds to over 30 families and 4 community gardens in the low income & senior citizen complexes in our area.

Lori Gearheart  
Garden coordinator

## March 2019 Treasury Report

	March	Full Year Actual	Annual Budget
Monthly Income	\$18,966.52	\$66,475.34	\$319,352.00
Monthly Expense	\$28,279.34	\$85,918.02	\$318,885.00
<b>Balance</b>	<b>-\$9,312.82</b>	<b>-\$19,442.68</b>	<b>\$467.00</b>
40101 - Pass thru Income Account	\$80.00		
60100 - Pass thru Expense Account	\$3,325.08		
<b>Account Balances</b>	<b>March 31</b>		
Designated Fund	\$69,029.85		
General Fund	-\$11,610.40		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$57,419.45</b>		
UCC One Great Hour of Sharing	\$145.00		

**Blankets of Hope  
Mother's Day - May 12, 2019  
\$10.00 each**

**In Memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**In Honor of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Examples: In Memory of Our Mother, Celeste Ingram by Sally, Joey and Bobby Ingram.  
In Honor of Barbara Smith by children Kelly, Mark and Johnny Smith.**

**Deadline: In order to appear in the bulletin for Mother's Day your request must be received by May 6, 2019.**

**Please make your checks payable to Huff's Union Church  
Your kind donation will be sent to the Church World Service.**

**Thank You!**