

HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



April 2018

Church Address: 540 Conrad Rd., Alburdis, 18011

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

Pastor Home Office: 610-944-5923

Office email: office@huffschurch.com

Website: www.huffschurch.com

Facebook Page: Huff's Union Church, Inc.

Facebook Group: Huff's Union Church

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

April 8 9:15 a.m. Christianity and other religions (with mentor)

April 22 9:15 Final deadline for memory work Books of New Testament and Apostles Creed. (with mentor) Huff's and how it operates (annual reports, etc.)--deadline to memorize Apostles' creed.

April 29 11:30-2 Pantomime practice and final review of materials.

April Easter Worship

Easter Sunday, April 1: worship with pew communion at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Continental breakfast (donation) chapel basement at 9:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School 9:15 a.m. in classroom on street level of church.

Summer Camps

Hartman Center, located in Milroy, PA, is a UCC camp (Penn Central conference) who welcomes campers from Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. Information may be found at www.hartmancenter.com. Information for Bear Creek camp, an ELCA camp in the Poconos is found at bearcreekcamp.org. Also check out the day camps and teen overnight camps at New Goshenhoppen UCC at newgoshucc.org.

Remember that Huff's pays part of the registration fee for Huff's children who attend a UCC or ELCA summer camp.

Children and Holy Communion

In the late summer, we will be holding two Holy Communion instruction sessions for children of elementary school age. If your child has been asking about receiving Holy Communion, and understands that it is a very special meal which connects us to Jesus, please speak with Pastor Kropa about instruction sessions. We will set up two sessions (both are required) based on the availability of participants. A parent/guardian must be present with the child who is receiving communion instruction.

Children's Choir

Mrs. Gloria Adams works with the children's choir, who learn not only songs to sing at church, but information about the church year, the Lord's prayer, and how music is written. If your child is singing around the house, perhaps she/he would enjoy being part of our children's choir. Children's choir meets on Wednesday evenings, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Please talk with Mrs. Adams if you are interested in this church program (no cost to attend) Children in the choir do not need to be church members, so friends who are not from Huff's Church whose parents approve of their participation, may be part of the children's choir.

Acolyte Schedule

- 4/1/18 Logan Scott, Alex Hersh & a Volunteer
8:00
- 4/1/18 Chase, Longacre, Kara Benfield, Brooke Boyer,
10:30 Spencer Hess & Reilly Rollman
- 4/8/18 Logan Watkins, Kane Weller & Maisy Funk
- 4/15/18 Paige Geist, Luke Geist and Billy Geist
- 4/22/18 Spencer Hess, Maisy Funk & Kara Benfield
- 4/29/18 Raegen Pilgert, Chase Longacre & Logan Watkins

Church Envelopes

If you haven't had a chance to pick up your church envelopes, we'll have those which remain un-claimed in the robe room (Sacristy) near the bulletin table as you enter church. If you don't find envelopes with your name on them, please feel free to use a "welcome" envelope, which is in the pew rack at each pew. If you would like to have a box of envelopes made up for you, please leave a message on the office phone (610-845-2626) We have not been preparing envelopes for those who were moved to the inactive list, unless they request them

Automatic Giving Offered at Huff's Church

Did you ever think of having your offering automatically sent monthly from your checking account to Huff's? You may have this done, without charge to you, through the Simply Giving program. This avoids the need for weekly envelopes (though you may want to make a special gift using a "Welcome" envelope at any time) In bad weather, you won't have to worry that your offering reaches Huff's Church. This is also a way to spread your giving out through the year, and helps us with cash flow in the summer months, when many people go on vacation and may forget to send in their offering. Please see Elaine Crump to have the program explained, or call her at 610-966-9552 or [e-mail: elainecrump@ptd.net](mailto:elainecrump@ptd.net)

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has helped make our Lenten/Easter season special with your gifts of music or worship leadership.

Using Welcome Envelopes

If you are a member using a "welcome" envelope, please write the word (member) after your name. This will make it easier for our counters and financial recorder to be sure to record your contribution for membership purposes.

Coin Folders

Please bring your filled coin folders to church anytime by April 8. Thank you to those who chose this as your Lenten practice (giving alms). Money will be put into our general fund for use in our own congregation's mission and ministry. Did you notice that there is a tear-off book mark on this year's coin folders? If you would like to receive credit on your giving statement, please be sure your name is on the coin folder. If you used coins, please put the filled folder into a plastic bread or newspaper bag, and twist tie it shut--this helps with coins falling out--taping coins makes it too hard for our money counters.

Contact Information

We are trying to keep our church records as current as possible. To be sure we have the correct phone number, we might be calling you sometime in the next few months.

Please notify Huff's when you change addresses. Whenever a piece of mail is returned to us, we are charged for each returned item. Although this might not sound like much, when we are seeking to be good stewards with our funds, this takes money from mission and ministry.

We are also hoping to update our address lists, especially for young adults who are no longer living at home, and who might want to receive newsletters or other mailings from us. Of course, if they would rather check for information on the web site or through facebook, they do not have to have a paper newsletter, but it would be helpful for us to have an address on record for them for any other mailings. A current phone number would also help us to keep in contact with all our members.

Small Group

Small group meets on April 7 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.. Please bring your Bible. You may bring food to share and stay for lunch from 11:30-12:30.

Remaining a Member in Good Standing

According to Huff's By-laws, the church must have a record that you either communed or contributed within a two year period for you to remain an active member of the congregation. Please fill out a communion card at least once a year, and at least once a year, when you donate, please use either a pew envelope (marked "welcome") and include your name, or use an envelope from your box of envelopes. To follow our by laws, we must send out a reminder letter after year one, if a person is not on record as having contributed or communed. After two years of inactivity, we must send a two year letter, explaining that a person will be moved to the inactive list unless that person contacts us, or communes or contributes (on record). If a person is moved to the inactive list, there will be an increased fee for certain benefits of membership, such a purchase of a cemetery plot, etc.

Of course, there might be a mistake in our records, which is another reason why letters are so important. This gives the person a chance to make corrections. If there are special circumstances that make it impossible for you to either commune (remember the pastor can bring communion to you if you are homebound) or contribute, but you wish to remain active, please talk with our council president, Martin Kriebel (call the office for his contact information.)

Paper Newsletters

If you no longer wish to receive a paper copy of your newsletter, please let the office know. (e-mail: office@huffschurch.com or call 610-845-2626) We use up to 13 reams of paper to create our monthly newsletter, and if you do not care to read it, we will be glad to save paper and toner, as well as being better stewards of our planet by not creating waste. You may always read the newsletter on our website: www.huffschurch.com. You may also check events by using the church calendar on the website.

Valentine Challenge

We received 9 gift cards for our Valentine's Day challenge of gift cards to give to Friend, Inc., who serves those in the Brandywine Heights School District. The gift cards given added up to \$200. Thank you for your generosity.

Pastor's Article

Dear Christian Friends,

Recently I read a book by Barbara Brown Taylor about the need for darkness in our lives ([Learning to Walk in the Dark](#)). Taylor points out that before we had so much light available to us, our ancestors would lie down in the dark, and sleep for a number of hours, waken but continue lying down but musing on things, then fell back into a deep sleep until morning. Modern people condense both periods of sleep into one straight stretch, but lose the musing, half-asleep time that, perhaps, was the time when the Bible tells us God sent certain people significant dream information.

Light pollution makes it nearly impossible for modern people to experience deep darkness. Even in our darkened bedrooms, often a clock, lights from the street lights outside, or nightlights make the room only semi-dark. Are we missing something by not spending time in the dark? I smile to remember a parishioner admitting that, when the power recently went out, he just went to sleep and was surprised at how many hours he actually slept. Are we becoming sleep deprived, and over exposed to light? What gift might a deep dark night bring to us?

Perhaps we would have more time for creative ideas to form; perhaps we would be able to spend more time in prayer—both talking to God, but, also, listening for God to nudge our thoughts in a particular direction. What would it be like to leave behind all the burdens of the day, and allow the healing darkness to soothe our wearied brows and bring us the Holy Spirit's gift of peace? Can the dark teach us how to disengage from the day to day worries many of us bring with us to bed?

I think of Huff's after dark labyrinth walk which we hold in early November—although we have small votive lights to mark the path, we discover we really don't need much light. There is enough light to walk from the not yet dark sky. We hear night sounds, and many of us admit we feel a deep sense of peace. Perhaps modern people need more time away from the electronic gadgets that keep us in constant communication with the outside world, and more time to be at peace and with God.

Pastor's Article (continued)

"... I think of you on my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; ⁷ for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. ⁸ My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. (Psalm 63: 6-8 NRSV)

In Christian peace,
Pastor Jane Kroppa

Church Family

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

4/8 - Dolores Schmoyer

4/26 - Margaret Weller

4/29 - Jane Geisinger

ANNIVERSARIES

4/6 - Eugene & Sherry Bardo

4/22 - Raymond & Linda Lorish

Allentown Rescue Mission

The next Allentown Rescue Mission meal is scheduled for Sunday, April 8th. Check the Bulletin Board for donations of food needed. Call Carl Arner at 610-841-0639.

Manna Service Discussion

The Manna worship service will continue on the third Sunday of the month at 9:00 for the present time (the exception being May 20, when the service will move to the final Sunday of the month because of Confirmation)

On April 15 we ask that people interested in Manna meet after 10:30 worship in the basement of the chapel, for lunch (provided) and to brainstorm about Manna—do we want to consider some changes, and, if so, what? Please sign up if you'd like to be part of this very important discussion.

Union Council Highlights

Since we are still missing a chairperson for the Building and Grounds Committee, council worked on accomplishing tasks that would normally be handled in a Building and Grounds meeting. If anyone would like to volunteer to head this group, please talk with Martin Kriebel.

LeRoy will investigate what will be necessary to clean the fire alarms and to keep them dust free. Bill Stoudt will install a doorbell at the rear entrance to church, which will be connected to a portable flashing receiver. People who are meeting in church may carry this receiver with them, in order to be able to open the door to anyone who arrives when the door is locked. We will have a new paper towel dispenser installed in the Ladies room in the chapel. We will try to get the newspaper bins, which are overflowing, removed from our property. The Schantz Farm can use newspapers only as animal bedding. They will put up a collection site after the bins have been removed, and will try to take some of the overflowing paper in the meantime. One of the air conditioning units is leaking in the church building, which will require its removal and replacement, including removing the circular window in order to get to this unit. Bill Stoudt is seeking quotes for this expensive work to be done. We are looking for someone who can coordinate cleaning of the carpets in church and polishing the chapel floor with removing and replacing furniture in the areas to be cleaned or buffed. Please talk to Martin Kriebel if you are willing to organize this project.

Elaine Crump will create pew cards to explain electronic giving and how to easily sign up for this.

In order to work to develop a congregational plan that explains our priorities, we will be using the UCC church profile as a way to gather information about ourselves, our community, and scripture in order to try to discern what God is calling Huff's Church to be and to do. Elaine Crump and Ian Richetti will work with Pastor Kropa to begin the process. The congregation's input will be sought as we proceed.

Council voted to purchase a recorder to enable us to record the pastor's sermons which will be made available weekly in a podcast. In this way, people who are not in worship, or who want to hear the sermon a second time, may listen to the podcast

Union Council (continued)

during the week. We will keep a sermon archive, which may be accessed through the website. Conner Isamoyer will work to create a link on the website, and to train some volunteers to record the service when he is not at worship.

Members of council received a handout called “Will your Guests Return After Easter” which listed 8 things to consider to help people who worship on Easter connect with the on-going programs offered by the church. Anyone who wishes to have a copy of this handout, or who has ideas to share around this subject, please talk with Pastor Kropa.

LCD Monitors in the Sanctuary

Reviewing our present bylaws shows that a mistake was made with the congregational vote on October 1, 2017 to authorize the installation of video display monitors in our sanctuary. The vote passed by a narrow margin of 70 yes votes to 62 no votes.

Section 14 from current Huff’s Union Church bylaws reads as follows:

*Section 14. The Union Council shall have the power to authorize expenditures to maintain, repair, and/or restore existing corporate property and equipment. However, the Union Council shall not have the power to authorize corporate funds to alter, modify, or change, nor to build or make additions to or deletions from existing corporate buildings and grounds unless approved by a **two-thirds** vote of the Governing Body.*

Based on this information, Huff’s Union Church **will not proceed** with the installation of permanently mounted LCD monitors in our sanctuary. Union Council will continue to investigate the use of electronic media which are not permanent fixtures.

Donated Items

On April 1 we have some donated items like hearing aid batteries, 3 mens wallets, etc. that we will put on a table in the chapel during the Easter breakfast (9:15 a.m.) for you to pick up if you like. Items not taken will be donated or discarded, depending on their value.

PSEC NEWS

Prepare the Way of the Lord!

I often thought as a child that the reason my parents had me was to be their slave. I came to that conclusion because I was always the gopher— Sharon, go for this or Sharon, go for that. I wonder if the two disciples that Jesus sent into Jerusalem to fetch the donkey were thinking the same thing. They had just had a big discussion about who would be the greatest disciple and be granted the seat next to Jesus.

Why did Mark think it was so important to add this information about getting a donkey for Jesus' entry into Jerusalem into the story? It is at this point that Mark says, "Prepare the way for the Lord." And Mark does this not by giving some grandiose and elite group to join, but Mark gives a rather mundane, ordinary task to do in order to prepare the way for the Lord. He gives them the task of fetching a donkey. Whatever Jesus may have said to them in the beginning, "Come follow me," has turned into the nitty, gritty details of life.

Isn't that ministry? Isn't that what we are called to do? Doesn't Jesus call us to Come, follow me? Doesn't Jesus ask us to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry and yes, it is Jesus' ministry not ours. In the aspect of Jesus' ministry, we are nothing more than donkey fetchers. However, as the donkey fetchers, often doing mundane, ordinary, everyday stuff, we become part of the larger picture, the ministry of Jesus Christ.

In Mark's gospel the disciples are sent out to heal the sick, cast out demons, and exercise authority. But what Mark wants us to remember is that sometimes this might be in very small, insignificant actions. Maybe it is giving someone a hug when they need it, maybe it is sending a card to let someone know you are thinking of them, maybe it is emptying a bedpan at the hospital, maybe it is serving someone at McDonald's with a smile.

Just like the disciples who were called to prepare the way of the Lord, we too are called to prepare the way of the Lord. And sometimes preparing the way for the Lord means standing knee deep in manure in a stable looking for a donkey for Jesus. Let us be donkey fetchers, preparing the way of the Lord as we live and move in our everyday worlds.

- Rev. Sharon Morris Associate Conference Minister

Oyster Pie Making Dates, Friday and Saturday, April 13 and 14

We can always use some help for making oyster pies. Come cut potatoes on Friday at 9:00 a.m. (This is a sit down job). Come help preparing crusts for the dough on Friday at 6 p.m. Help assemble pies, bag them, etc. on Saturday beginning at 7 a.m. Come for all the time or part of the time. Confirmation credit given (1 credit for 2 hours work) If you like, bring a snack to share. If you are new to Huff's, or want to bring a friend, this is a great way to get to know our folks at play while they work on one of our big fund raising projects.

Pies can be picked up on Saturday, April 14 between 9:00 and 12:00. Shoo-Fly Pies can also be picked up on the same date.

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 (forms available April 8). Filled out forms and donations must be received by May 6 to be listed in May 13 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) mailbox, or mail it to the church.

Pied Piper

We have received our first check of \$30 from the Pied Piper restaurant in Bally, which is donating a small portion of your food bill to Huff's Church when you show your Huff's Church Pied Piper card. Thank you to those who have eaten at this restaurant and used your Huff's Church Pied Piper card. There are cards available on the bulletin table if you'd like to pick one up. The program will be run indefinitely.

IHartHarvest Project

Several years ago, Walt Zawaski, of IHartHarvest, watched a TV show about a farming couple in Denver who had an overabundance of crops and had invited the public to come harvest this surplus. Walt was inspired to start his own potato crop for the hungry which has grown over a ten year period into the IHartHarvest The Potato Project. Please join other volunteers on April 21st and 22nd from 1pm to 4pm to begin this year's season by cutting seed potatoes . All it requires is you, your knife and cutting board. Becker's St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 265 Maiden creek Rd. , Fleetwood (Molltown) PA 19522.

Sports Day Event

Huff's Church Youth Group will be sponsoring a Sports Day for children, teens, and adults age 10 and over. The event will be held at Huff's Church on Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 1pm - 3pm. Join us for Gaga ball, relay races, and other fun sports games. The event will be held outside, weather permitting. Parents of children under 18 will need to complete a permission slip, which is available on the church website or Sunday School bulletin board.

Summer Food Service Program for Upper Perk

Open Link is running this program in Hereford township (park near Hereford Estates) and another as yet to be determined site in the East Greenville/Pennsburg area. The goal is to get healthy lunches to children, many of whom receive free or reduced price lunch during the school year.

Volunteers are needed. A Site Supervision oversees the distribution of meals to children following the Summer Food Service Program (SFPS) guidelines and helps to coordinate and implement the educational and recreational programs associated with the SFSP. This involves 2-4 days per week through the summer around 2 hours per day, at lunch time. Site supervisors are assisted by 1-2 site helpers.

If you would like to volunteer to be one of the site supervisors or site helpers (you do not need to be at every session, and vacations will be taken into account) please contact The Open Link at 215-679-4112 and ask for Lynn Brearey or go online at volunteers@theopenlink.org.

Square Your Sets In 2018!!

Attention all you square dancers and those just wanting to have fun. There's going to be two **square dances at Huff's** this year! Our two last year were so well attended that we decided to do some again this year!

The date of the first one is **Saturday, April 28th** from **6:30 to 8:30** pm in the upstairs of the chapel. This will be the same format as before, with Paul Adam once again "calling" while the "Days of Old" band keeps the beat. There's no charge to get in, and we even offer free snacks and drinks. How can you go wrong?

If you've never tried square dancing before or haven't done it in a while, don't worry about not knowing what to do. Other people are prepared to help you! It's all about moving and having fun together. And if you don't have a partner, that's okay – there are often other singles looking for someone to partner with to fill a square.

Why not invite someone else to come along with you!? We love to welcome new people from the community, or to invite back inactive members. Let's hope for a good, fun crowd like before!

Thank You Notes Received From Boyertown Area Multi-Service

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$448.33 to Boyertown Area Multi-Service. We are grateful for your unrestricted support of our efforts to provide services and valuable resources to meet human and community needs to Southeastern Berks and Northern Montgomery Counties.

Karen L. Youse, Executive Director

From The Open Link

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the board and staff of the Open Link, I extend our sincere thanks for your donation of \$71.75 from your church collection and the Youth Group Souper Bowl Sunday.

Stuart Bush, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Ladies Aid Society

The next meeting of the Ladies Aid Society will be on Wednesday, April 4, 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.

Lunch Bunch

All are welcome to the Lunch Bunch Gathering. Enjoy Spring Lunch, Tuesday, April 17, 2018, Noon, at Pizza Como & PC Pub, 468 Pottstown Ave., Pennsburg, Pa. (in the Weis Market shopping center). PC's offers a \$5 weekday lunch special as well as a full lunch menu. Choose and pay for your own meal. Please join us as we

St. Peter's Church Offers a Community Supper

St. Peter's offers a Community Supper on the on the first Friday of each month, from 5PM to 7PM. The meal is served in St. Peter's Place, next door to St. Peter's Church. All are welcome. There is no charge for this meal. A free will offering can be made to help offset costs. The men of Huffs Church are invited to help prepare and serve this meal. Typically, around 100 people enjoy this supper each month. The next Community Supper is **Friday April 6, 2018**. Please come out to support our sister church and enjoy good food and fellowship.

Men's Group

Beef & Beer Night, Thursday, May 17, 2018, 6PM, at the Main Street Pub & Restaurant, Route 100, Bally.

The men from Huffs Church and St. Peters Church invite the guys to join in for an evening of fellowship and consideration of how we can serve others and how we can serve Jesus.

February 2018 Treasury Report

	February	YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Monthly Income	\$16,097.73	\$50,069.60	\$308,189.00
Monthly Expense	\$18,605.69	\$40,922.72	\$307,843.00
Balance	-\$2,507.96	\$9,146.88	\$346.00
40101 - Pass thru Income Account	\$50.00		
60100 - Pass thru Expense Account	\$1,835.96		
Account Balances	February 28		
Designated Fund	\$75,847.95		
General Fund	\$10,062.73		
ELCA World Hunger	\$176.00		

**Blankets of Hope
Mother's Day - May 13th 2018
\$10.00 each**

In Memory of: _____

By: _____

In Honor of: _____

By: _____

**Examples: In Memory of Our Mother, Betty Smith by Sally, Joey and Bobby Smith.
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, 2018.

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

Thank You!