

HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



JANUARY 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 Class

Class is cancelled if church is cancelled (check the church web site, call any council member to check, or call Pastor Kropa before 7:15 a.m. (610-944-5923).

Class Dates: January 7 at 9:15, January 14 at 9:15 and January 28 from 11:30-2 p.m.

The new acolyte lists will be handed out in class at the end of January and also e-mailed, If you do not receive yours, please contact Pastor Kropa or the church office. (610-845-2626).

Epiphany Winter Dinner

The Epiphany Winter Dinner will be held in the basement of the chapel on Saturday, January 6, beginning at 5 p.m. Please call Lea Kline (610-845-8431) if you are not able to sign up by December 31 so we know what type of dish you will bring and how many to expect.

Un-decorating of Church

We will need to put away our beautiful church decorations on Saturday, January 6, beginning at 9 a.m. Help from all ages is needed. Thank you to all who helped decorate the church for the Advent/Christmas season.

January's Small Group

The small group will meet on Saturday, January 6, at 10 a.m. Come with your Bible. If you'd like to stay for lunch, please feel free to bring something to share and eat with us from 11:30-12:30.

Blood Drive

Huff's will host a blood drive sponsored by Miller Keystone on Monday, January 15 from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Please sign up on the list placed on the table outside of the Sacristy (robe room). Walk-in's are always welcome.

Installation of New Union Council Members

We will install new Union Council members at either worship service on January 7. To be installed: Danielle Bortz (will begin her second term as Youth member on June 1), John Moll, Rochelle Schantz (second term), Those who will be installed who were appointed by council and who will be voted upon at March's congregational meeting: Jane Arndt, Bill Stout and Sheri Shaner.

Thank You For Your Service

We thank the following members of Huff's Church for their service on Union Council: Paul Ritter, Kerry Meitzler, Donald Heimbach and Scott Swackhamer. We mourn the sudden death of Harry Crossley, who served our congregational faithfully for many years in a wide variety of offices and duties. We have been blessed by each person's service, prayers and advice.

Acolyte Schedule

1/7/18	Logan Scott, Nic Hersh, Alex Hersh, Riley Miller, Maddy Miller
1/14/18	Billy Geist, Maisy Funk, Kara Benfield
1/21/18	Chase Longacre, Logan Watkins, Brooke Boyer

Pew Communion on January 7

We will have pew communion at both services (8:00 and 10:30 a.m.) on this Sunday and install new members of Union Council.

The Langschwammer Nei Yaahrs Wunsch: January 14

On Sunday, January 14, in the 10:30 worship service, we will have Linda & Michael Hertzog and Ted Fenstermacher who will perform the Longswamp New Year's Wish and share some other songs to welcome in the new year. Please invite family and friends to share this special worship service with us. If you can help with refreshments, please contact Shirley Fluck at (610-367-5058)

Committee Chairpersons and Group Leaders Asked to Submit Annual Report by January 15

The annual reports of what each committee and organization of Huff's Church has done in 2017 are due to the office by January 15 for typing. They will be presented to the congregation at our congregational meeting in the spring. When you submit your report, please use this format: Group name; Bible verse, brief description, members, highlights of what your group has done during the past year. If you need copies of any of this information, Pastor Kropa has the list of all committees and groups, Bible quotes, and descriptions.

Prayer Chain

Huff's Church has a prayer chain to pray for special needs during the year. If you have a name for the prayer chain, please contact John Leeser either by e-mail (birdmanjhl@aol.com) Or telephone 610-966-2775. Please be so kind as to notify John when names may be removed from the list.

Would you like to be a part of the prayer chain? Please let John Leeser know (see contact information above) and your name will be added to those who receive names for whom to pray. There is both a monthly print prayer letter (for those without e-mail) and e-mailed requests during the week for those who provide an e-mail address to John.

We thank John for his faithful service on the prayer chain.

Prayer List for Worship

If you would like to submit a name to be prayed for in the worship service and you have that person's permission to be prayed for, please write the name on the list clipped to the clipboard at the back of the sanctuary on the small lectern. This list is brought to the pastor with the offering. Names on the list will be prayed for by the prayer chain in the following week. To respect people's privacy, please do not list anyone's name without their permission. You may list who someone is, in order for us to place them (someone's son-in-law, for example) but we ask that you do not list medical information or conditions. You may update the pastor privately, or write details down on a piece of paper, seal it in an envelope and place it in the pastor's mailbox (materials for notes are always in the Sacristy on the cabinet where the paraments are kept).

Mobility Aids and Donated Items

We are glad to have a wheel chair, walker with a seat, a cane, and crutches at church (near our handicapped ramp). If you would need to borrow these for a short period of time, please talk with the pastor, secretary or council president, so we know where these items are.

Winter Weather

We will try to publicize worship cancellations on WFMZ, Channel 69 (if our reporter has electrical power), on our web site, and on both of our Facebook pages. We will decide before 6 a.m. on a Sunday morning whether worship will be held. If there are more than two inches of snow Saturday night or Sunday morning, the 8 a.m. service is automatically canceled. If church is canceled, adult Sunday School and Confirmation classes are also canceled. If you are unsure whether there are worship services that morning, you may call Pastor Kropa before 7:15 a.m. to check. (610-944-5923 or 610-781-3187)

Please consider helping with shoveling the walkways in wintry weather. If you can help on a Sunday morning, be at church by 6:30 a.m. with your snow shovel. We would appreciate a few youth volunteering to clear a path to the recycling bins. Please let Pastor Kropa know if you will accept this responsibility.

The pathway alongside the church building will not be shoveled for fear of cascading ice or snow. We will have the church building front doors open and sides doors open, and ask that you use these doors for entering and exiting during snowy or icy weather. Cones will be put up to remind people not to use this path.

If we are experiencing bad weather, the office may open late or be closed for the day. Please leave a message, and we will respond as soon as we are back at work.

Most weekday activities will be canceled if weather is bad. If you are unsure about the weather, please call the person responsible for the church event to see if it will be held. Music Director Gloria Adams' phone number is: 610-914-8116. Pastor Kropa's phone number is: 610-944-5923.

If You Are Hospitalized

Please remember that most hospitals do not notify congregations if their members are in the hospital. Even though the hospital might ask you if you have a home congregation, this information goes into the hospital computer, and is available only if the pastor stops by the hospital to check the computer. If you would like a visit and prayer, please call the church office with this information or the pastor's home phone

Pastor's Article

Dear Friends,

The calendars say January, but the church calendar reads: Epiphany. What is this season and why do we celebrate it? Epiphany, from the Greek language, means an appearance. In Christian usage, it means the first appearance of Christ to the non-Jews, the magi who traveled from the east in order to meet the Christ-child. January 6 is the Feast of the Epiphany. The Epiphany season lasts from January 6 until Ash Wednesday, which begins the season of Lent.

Why does the church feel the need to celebrate Epiphany for so many weeks? After all, we only celebrate Christmas for 12 days. For the church, Christmas was the beginning, God's incarnation (God's in-fleshment as one of us) but Epiphany gives this incarnation meaning—now God is available, not just to a chosen group of people, but to everyone, from every nation, tribe, or locality. After Jesus' resurrection, the early church struggled with whether the Gospel was to be preached to non-Jews, or whether someone who wished to be a Christ-follower must first become Jewish to be Christian. After some revelations by God's Holy Spirit (see the Book of Acts for more details) the church discerned that God indeed wanted all people to know of God's love as shown in Jesus, and people need not become Jewish first in order to worship Christ. Baptism was enough to bring people into a relationship with Christ.

This good news was so incredibly wonderful, the church decided to assign a number of weeks to celebrate. During Epiphany, the church reads from the Old Testament, stories of all people being brought to salvation through God's chosen people, the Jews, from Paul's letters (Paul is often thought of as the apostle to the non-Jews, the Gentiles), and stories of Jesus' early years of ministry.

In this season of Epiphany, as we watch Jesus grow in maturity and stature as a new preacher and worker of healing miracles, we also watch the early church grow beyond Jerusalem into surrounding countries. How does that translate for us today? Epiphany is a good time to take stock of where our own lives are going. Are we growing in faith? Are we growing in our ability to love

Pastor's Article (continued)

creation, our neighbors and the children in our communities (the three great loves in the new UCC campaign)? Are we growing wiser as well as chronologically older? Are we growing in our ability to forgive, in our joy as we live out our faith, in our invitations to others to learn about Jesus and the difference he has made in our lives? Epiphany isn't just the journey of the magi to the baby Jesus; it is also our own journeys into a closer relationship to Jesus, and to becoming more Christ-like in our daily lives.

One With You on our Christian Pilgrimage,
Pastor Jane Kropa

Active Membership

Please remember to fill in a communion card for 2018 and place it in the offering plate, and to use your envelopes, or a Welcome envelope and indicate your name. To be an active member of Huff's Church, our constitutions state that you must either contribute or commune at least once every two years. Please contact Pastor Kropa if you wish to remain a member, but have a special circumstance of which we should be aware.

Please remember that Pastor Kropa and our lay visitors are available to bring communion to your home if you are unable to attend worship due to limitations of mobility or health. We would appreciate being informed of anyone who would benefit from home communion.

St. John's ELCA, Boyertown Women's Retreat

St. John's Women of the ELCA (WELCA) invites Huff's women to a retreat held at the Lutheran Home in Topton, Deibert Conference Room, on Saturday, January 20, "Let's Explore the Book of Acts" led by Pastor Jennifer Ollikainen. Doors open at 8:45 a.m. Program runs from 9-3. Cost \$20 which includes breakfast snacks and a light lunch. Don't forget to bring your Bibles. Send check (made out to St. John's ELCA with WELCA on the memo line) to St. John's ELCA, 45 South Reading Ave., Boyertown, PA 19512. Registration forms are hanging on the bulletin board on the street level of church. Deadline to register is January 8.

FUNERALS

Please pray for the family and friends of Harry Crossley who died on November 25.

Church Family

Memorials:

To Endowment Fund in memory of Harry Crossley
Ray & Linda Lorish

To General Fund in memory of Harry Crossley

Charles & Carol Zwoyer

Jane & Aurel Arndt

Martin & Kay Kriebel

Donald & Linda Zentner

Howard & Elaine Crump

Joe & Connie Szilli

Melvin & Norma Greiss

Bob & Sue Stockdale

Ray G. Funk

George Bayer

Lucy Grampp

Carl & Carolyn Drasher

Pearl Hoffman

Bruce & Shirley Cressman

Marvin & Audrey Diehl

Willard & Kathy Strunk

Robert & Christine Bolen

Dennis & Bea Miller

Carl & Minerva Arner

John & Jane Leeser

Robert Knowles

To CIF Fund in memory of David Crum

Marvin & Audrey Diehl

To Endowment Fund in memory of David Crum

Ray & Linda Lorish

Deborah Schott

To General Fund in memory of David Crum

Ray G. Funk

Carl & Minerva Arner

Carl & Carolyn Drasher

Pearl Hoffman

Dennis & Bea Miller

Donald & Linda Zentner

Charles & Carol Zwoyer

To Endowment Fund in memory of Doris Leshner

Ray & Linda Lorish

To General Fund in memory of Doris Leshner

Huff's Church Fersommling

Marion & Ernest Tokay

Ray G. Funk

Ted & Kathy Nace

Church Family

Memorials (continued)

To CIF Fund in memory of Olivia Schoenly
Huff's Church Dutch Players

To Endowment Fund in memory of David Shaner
Ray & Linda Lorish

To Endowment Fund in memory of Dolores Funk
Ray & Linda Lorish

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

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

BIRTHDAYS

1/4 - Audrey Diehl

1/5 - Elizabeth Heimbach

1/12 - Paul Ritter

1/19 - Calvin Mengel

1/19 - Grace Miller

1/23 - Milton Kerchner

123 - Erma Sheetz

WEDDINGS

1/7 - Earl & Teresa Derr

1/7 - Ernest & Dolores Haas

1/22 - Robert & Pauline Reinhard

1/26 - Dennis & Bea Miller

Apple Dumpling Fundraiser (proceeds go to the General Fund)

Our next Apple Dumpling Sale is Saturday, January 20. Cost is \$3.50 per dumpling and orders are due by Sunday, January 14. Order forms will be on the downstairs bulletin board where you can sign up or call Deb Bortz at (215) 679-4383. Pick up is on January 20 in the chapel between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Anyone interested in helping to make dumplings, look for sign-up sheets in church. Spare an hour or more. No experience necessary. Will train. Help is needed Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Union Council Highlights

Union Council met on December 11 and has approved a 10-hour per week position, beginning in January 2018, for a "media specialist" who will develop the media we will show in worship.

Scott Swackhamer will make contact with Scott Marshall about playing at the August 2018 picnic.

Ian Richetti will make contact with CSI about new estimates for the LED monitors and system we will need to purchase to make the sanctuary media compatible.

Pied Piper restaurant has a 10% cash back program they have invited us to join. Pastor Kropa will talk to Pied Piper about our participation and members will be informed.

Elaine Crump will design a pew card that explains electronic giving, and will make herself available to answer any questions about this way to give to Huff's Church.

We are waiting for more information about our air conditioner, which is not functioning to capacity.

Kerry Meitzler sent a report from the Endowment Committee with the request, which council approved, to give the final distribution for 2017 to Liberty Ministries (\$184.25) and to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital (\$184.25). In 2017, \$4080.43 was disbursed to a variety of non-profit organizations doing good in our community and world (see the annual report for full details).

Tom Mitchell explained the UCC insurance for property and liability to council.

We will be keeping the back door locked, and locking the side doors after the bell is rung for worship to begin. The front door will remain open. If anyone notices anything out of the ordinary, please talk with LeRoy or any council member so we may investigate. Often new people are uncertain where the sanctuary is, etc. and we want to be friendly and inviting, as well as monitor any out-of-the-ordinary activity in the parking lot, etc.

We still need one more council member for 2018.

The following are officers of each denomination: ELCA president - Theresa Woloszanski; ELCA vice president - LeRoy Leibensperger; ELCA treasurer - Lucille Grampp; ELCA secretary - Ann Taylor. The following are officers of the UCC: Duane Bortz - president; UCC vice president - Michele Boyer; UCC treasurer - Jon Benfield; UCC secretary - Jimmy Meitzler, Jr.

Spirit on Tap
Meets at Doubletree Hotel by Hilton
701 Penn St., Reading, PA
at 7:00 p.m. on the evenings listed below:
(You may order food or beverages.)

January 23, 2018 - *Religious Tyranny* - Dr. Stephen Ohnsman

February 20, 2018 - "Faithful Presence: How People of Faith Can Make a Difference in Today's World" - Dale Davis

For more information contact:

Dr. Harry L. Serio - HLSerio@aol.com - 610-944-7032

Dr. Robert A. Stewart - rastheo1951@msn.com - 610-775-2836

Dr. Stephen Ohnsman - ohnsman@comcast.net

Spirit on Tap is sponsored in part by the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton and by individuals.

Jean Reinert Memorial Scholarship Forms

For any graduating senior from high school who is an active Huff's Union Church member (communed and/or contributed on record in the past two years) we will have posted the Jean Reinert Memorial Scholarship forms on the downstairs (Sunday School) bulletin board by mid-January. There is a limited amount of funding available for youth who have remained active participants at Huff's Union Church after confirmation. If you think you might qualify, please pick up a form and check the requirements. Forms must be turned into Michele Boyer's mailbox by the spring deadline listed on the application. Awards will be evaluated by the scholarship team: Kerry Meitzler, Michele Boyer and Gary Moll, and a recommendation made to Union Council.

Thank You Notes Received
From the United Church of Christ

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$500.00 in support of of the United Church of Christ's Emergency USA Fund. We are deeply grateful for your donation.

Mary A. Paxton
Director, Office of Philanthropy & Stewardship

From Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$500.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response. With this gift you are providing emotional and spiritual care, supplying emergency relief, and addressing long-term recovery.

The Rev. Daniel Rift
Director, ELCA World Hunger & Disaster Appeal

From Brandywine Heights Community Task Force

Dear Huff's Union Church,

Thank you for your generous support of our 3rd annual Red Ribbon Run. We truly appreciate your support. Community members of all ages came together and the event was a great success!

Very Sincerely,
Brandywine Heights Community Task Force

From Phoebe Ministries

Dear Pastor Jane & Congregation

Thank you for your congregation's gift of \$95.00 to Phoebe Ministries. With your support, Phoebe is able to provide the highest level of care to our residents.

Adam Marles
Senior Vice President
Advancement & Strategic Initiatives

Supporting Our Congregation

Just like household expenses rise yearly, our congregation's expenses do this as well. As you prepare your household budget for 2018, please consider how you might help our congregation. We give thanks for all you already are doing to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. (We are presently experiencing a budget shortfall in 2017.)

We also give thanks for all the volunteer hours you have shared with Huff's Church in 2017, and hope you will consider things you could do in 2018 - snow shoveling, grounds clean up, light maintenance, teaching Sunday School children, folding and stapling bulletins, assisting with counting the offering, assisting to plan and supervise youth events, singing in the choir, playing in the bell choir, offering solo music (instrumental or vocal), assisting the Renaissance Team to plan and host invitational events, being a greeter, etc.

CKC for January 2018

Christian Kids Club has been limping along due to other activities that conflict with this group, so we will no longer have Christian Kids Club as a regularly scheduled Wednesday evening event. We will still invite CKC aged children to attend our CKC/Youth activities, which we plan for once a month. In January, CKC kids are invited to help with the apple dumplings and to have a pizza lunch and go bowling at Jordan Lanes, Quakertown (sign up please).

CKC/Youth /Family January Event

On January 14 you are invited to go bowling at Jordan Lanes, Quakertown. Members and friends of Huff's Union Church at any age are welcome. Huff's Church children (age up to 18) will have 50% of their admission fee paid. If they are involved in at least one church activity, such as confirmation, youth group, Sunday School, helping at a picnic, helping at apple dumpling making, etc.--they will have 80% of their admission fee paid. Please sign up on the Sunday School bulletin board if you plan to meet for a free pizza lunch after worship, and let us know if you are under age 18, and if you are active in a church group. Watch for more information in bulletins and on Huff's Church Facebook Group and Business pages.

PSEC Conference: A Look at Emerging Christianity

I am a big fan of Catholic Theologian Fr. Richard Rohr. His daily emailed meditations help me start my day in a good frame of heart. (I am still working to end my day there. Prayers appreciated). You can subscribe here: <https://cac.org/>. Last week he shared this reflection-- words I wish I had written. In this season of Advent practices and Christmas preparation, they seemed particularly meaningful.

Practical, practice-based Christianity has been avoided, denied, minimized, ignored, delayed, and sidelined for too many centuries, by too many Christians who were never told Christianity was anything more than a belonging or belief system. Now we know that there is no Methodist or Catholic way of loving. There is no Orthodox or Presbyterian way of living a simple and nonviolent life. There is no Lutheran or Evangelical way of showing mercy. There is no Baptist or Episcopalian way of visiting the imprisoned. If there is, we are invariably emphasizing the accidentals, which distract us from the very “marrow of the Gospel,” as St. Francis called it. We have made this mistake for too long. We cannot keep avoiding what Jesus actually emphasized and mandated. In this most urgent time, “it is the very love of Christ that now urges us” (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Quaker pastor Philip Gulley superbly summarizes how we must rebuild spirituality from the bottom up in his book, *If the Church Were Christian*. Here I take the liberty of using my own words to restate his message, which offers a rather excellent description of Emerging Christianity:

- Jesus is a model for living more than an object of worship.
- Affirming people’s potential is more important than reminding them of their brokenness.
- The work of reconciliation should be valued over making judgments.
- Gracious behavior is more important than right belief.
- Inviting questions is more valuable than supplying answers.
- Encouraging the personal search is more important than group uniformity.

PSEC Conference: A Look at Emerging Christianity

(continued)

- Meeting actual needs is more important than maintaining institutions.
- Peacemaking is more important than power.
- We should care more about love and less about sex.
- Life in this world is more important than the afterlife (eternity is God's work anyway).

If this makes sense to you, you are already inside of Emerging Christianity.

Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister

Prayer Presence Group

Prayerful Presence Group meets on the fourth Sunday, January 28, at 9:15AM in the worship area upstairs balcony. The Prayerful Presence Group is open to anyone who wishes to pray for others and grow closer to God. We share confidentiality with each other and pray for one another and for the pain in the world to be healed by God's love. All are welcome. Please talk with Tom Mitchell or Pastor Kropa if you have questions.

PROJECT BACKPACK

During the months of January and February 2018 donations will be accepted for the Brandywine Heights Area School District Project Backpack. This program provides identified children with food items for the weekend to ensure that they have food they may be need. The children's backpacks are filled on Friday with healthy snacks that the children can eat during the weekend when they do not receive school lunches.

A basket will be placed outside the doors to the sanctuary for collection of the snacks. Sticky notes will be placed on poster board at the basket noting what food items are being collected Please take one or more sticky notes and place the item(s) in the basket. The donated items then will be delivered to the elementary school for filling the backpacks.

Thank you for helping to meet this local community need and demonstrating Christian love in action.