

HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



JANUARY 2019

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 Classes

January 6 - (with mentors) 9:15 a.m. in chapel basement.

January 13 - 9:15 in chapel basement. Have books of the Old Testament memorized by this date.

January 27 - 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. on street level of church. Bring a sack lunch plus beverage.

Acolyte Schedule

- 1/6/19 Madelynn and Wyatt Miller, Elijah and Bowie Richetti, Logan Scott
- 1/13/19 Austin Hall, Gavin Hess, Chase Longacre
- 1/20/19 Maisy Funk, Brooke Boyer, Kara Benfield
- 1/27/19 Avery Dixon, Alayna Watkins, Alex Hersh

Epiphany Winter Dinner

The Epiphany winter dinner will be held in the basement of the chapel on Saturday, January 5, beginning at 5 p.m. Please sign up so we know what type of dish you will bring and how many to expect. Contact Lea Kline with questions (610-845-8431).

The Langschwammer Nei Yaahrs Wunsch January 13

On Sunday, January 13, as part of the 10:30 worship service, we will have Linda and Michael Hertzog and Ted Fenstermacher to perform the Longswamp New Year's Wish and to 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)

Manna Lunch and Discussion January 20

Join us for Food, Scripture and Song. A different Manna experience, on January 20th. (Spiritual Bread for the Journey) will begin at 11:45 a.m. in the upstairs of the chapel.

For those folks who are trying to fit in the time for Bible Study perhaps you would like to try something new! Parent please note... children are welcome and we provide a safe Pray-ground with quiet toys.

Here is how it works....everyone is invited, after the 10:30 a.m. worship service, to continue with a discussion about that day's sermon. We will meet across the street where music will be playing and tables will be set up. We'll offer a simple lunch (donation) then read key scriptures and have discussions. Videos will be shown and folks can just enjoy music or even sing along (words provided).

Come share the spirit of expectation with us as we celebrate the Epiphany season, which celebrates the story of Jesus as it is told to the ends of the earth, and so the church began to grow.

APPLE DUMPLING SALE

Our next Apple Dumpling sale is Saturday, January 26, 2019. Cost is \$3.50 and orders are due by Sunday, January 20, 2019. Order forms are on the bulletin board in the lower Narthex. Pickup is Saturday, January 26 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Help is needed on Friday evening, January 25 at 6:00 p.m. to prepare the pie dough. On Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m., help is needed to prepare the apple dumpling for baking. For more information or to order call Deb Bortz at 215-679-4383.

Small Group

The small group will meet in the chapel basement on Saturday, January 5 at 10 a.m. Bring your Bible. If you'd like to stay for lunch, bring something to share. We eat from 11:30-12:30.

Miller Keystone Blood Drive

Huff's Union Church hosts the bloodmobile on Monday, January 21 from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. You may schedule your time on the list in the Upper Narthex, or go on-line to <https://donor.giveapint.org/donor/schedules/zip> to schedule your appointment on-line. Walk in's are welcome.

Confirmands and Youth Group Invitation to Movie

Please let Pastor Kropa know if you would like to participate in viewing the movie "Risen" at the Tom Mitchell/Joanne Benfield home on any of the following dates. We will schedule this event and give directions once we have your responses (please let us know by January 20).

- ◆ Saturday, February 2 - 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday, February 2 - 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- ◆ Friday, February 8 - 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday, February 9 - 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday, February 9 - 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- ◆ Sunday, February 10 - 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Winter Weather

We will try to publicize worship cancellations on Channel 69 (if our reporter has electrical power) and also on the web site. You may call a council member to ask about whether we are having worship. 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 8:00 a.m. service is automatically cancelled. If church is cancelled, adult Sunday School and Confirmation classes are also cancelled. If you are unsure whether there is church, you may call Pastor Kropa before 7:15 a.m. to check. (610-944-5923 or 610-781-3187).

Profile Team

The Profile Team has been gathering information to answer some questions about our church, to help us to discern where we believe God is working right now, and what might God be inviting us to do in the future. We have received twenty-four answers. Below are listed some of the answers we have received to the request “Tell a story about Huff’s Church that is meaningful to you.”

- In Confirmation Class we had a lesson on forgiveness. Forgiveness was something I had no desire to achieve for a long time. The lesson seemed to break the barrier of stubbornness I had, and encouraged me to practice forgiveness. Since then, God taught me how to learn to forgive—I’m still learning but I have trust in God that He will help me.
- I loved Maundy Thursday when the church was open. I have a lot of concerns, so I prayed and cried for an hour looking up to Jesus.
- I received a phone call from a man living in Arizona. He thought his great-grandfather lived in our area and attended our church in the 1870’s. I checked our records and he did. I located his tombstone. We arranged a time for his visit. We went to his great-grandfather’s tombstone. First he kneeled, said a prayer, and cried some. He said he finally walked on the ground where his great-grandfather walked.
- Having a secure comfortable feeling from generations of families making us a deep-rooted church family.
- Continual spot-on quality sermons and the testimonies by some of our members.

Profile Team (continued)

- Years ago as a younger man with two small boys I got the unexpected honor of carrying Clark Benfield to his final resting place. I say unexpectedly because Clark died very young and suddenly, but also because I didn't really know him that well. I knew him as a good Christian man with a lovely singing voice and like myself, he had two sons. His wife explained that Clark saw the future of our faith in fathers bringing their children to church on Sundays and that's why I had been asked. So, Clark was also wise. My pallbearer-ship came with a responsibility. I've never forgotten that and have tried to faithfully bring my boys to church.- It helped too that I had strong male role models that were secure and confident in their faiths, in my grandfather, my father and several uncles. You see, I find faith, not like a crutch used by the weak to hobble along but more like a ladder used by the strong to reach higher in life. Faith must be nurtured and cared for in times you may not feel like you need it, if you expect it to be strong when you suddenly and unexpectedly do. When I see fathers of younger kids on Sundays sitting with their families, I remember Clark and think our church and our faith is in good hands and all will be fine.

Help Needed for Snow Removal

We are in need of people who can help shovel the walkways around church. We can use help on Sunday mornings, but also on Saturday and weekdays as well. If you can help during the week, or on weekends, please contact Jimmy Meitzler, Sr. to volunteer. His phone numbers: home phone: 610-845-2581; cell phone: 610-504-1089.

Special January Offering

There is no special denominational offering for the month of January. We would appreciate your continued support of Huff's Union Church's mission and ministry in 2019.

Annual Reports Due

Because we want to have a complete picture of what is happening at Huff's Church each year, we ask each committee team or group to submit a report annually of what they have done in the previous year. 2018 reports are due in the church secretary's mailbox by January 20. Treasurer's reports are an exception; they will be due in the office by early February 2019.

Church Envelopes for 2019 and Updated Contact Lists

The 2019 church envelopes are available in the lower Narthex of the church. Because of postage costs, we do not send out a full box of envelopes. If you would like us to send you a few church envelopes for you to mail in or drop off your contributions, please call our office manager, Edwina Fox, at 610-845-2626.

This year we are working on updating our contacts, including phone numbers, cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses and whether members would like to receive a link to the newsletter on line (rather than a paper copy), and whether members might like to receive a weekly update of events happening at Huff's Church. Please check one of the lists, alphabetical by last name, to be sure we have the most current information for you.

You may also update contact information by contacting us at ministry@huffschurch.com or phoning our ministry assistant, Kelsey Doney, at 610-845-2626. Feel free to leave a message.

Active Membership

Please remember to fill in a communion card for 2019 and place it in the offering plate, and to use your church 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 that would benefit from home communion.

Ladies Aid Society

There will be no meeting for the month of January. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 6. Thank you to everyone for the Redner's and Radcliffe's Tapes. The total for the year 2018 was \$685.68. Please continue to save your Redner's & Radcliffe's receipts and put in the basket on the Food Bank cabinet near the men's room.

Pastor-Led Evening Bible Study

We will meet on Monday, January 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the office. All are welcome. Bring a Bible. You may, but don't have to, read Deuteronomy 7: 1-5 and Numbers 21: 1-3. Our discussion will be about descriptions of violence in the Bible and how Christians respond to this.

All Welcome Lunch

Please join us for the Lunch Bunch to be held on Tuesday, January 15 at noon at the Bower's Hotel in Bowers, PA.

Members and non-members are welcome to this "pay for your own" lunch. Come and share in fellowship and Christian caring. We hope to see you there!

Allentown Rescue Mission

As always, we served 60 plus men a delicious PA Dutch Style Meal on Sunday, November 25, 2018. Many thanks to everyone for donations needed to prepare the meal and later transport and serve.

These are the folks that make the above possible: Minerva Arner, Valerie Arner, Brooke Boyer, Shelly Boyer, Joan Dixon, Gary Moll, Joyce Reinert and William Reinert.

God says thank you for caring for my people.

Also delivered were the 19 blankets co-ordinated by Logan Scott and his group of about 30 Volunteers. This was the second year that Logan ventured into this mission of our church.

The men gave you a **WARM** welcome and **Thank You**.

Serving Christ,
Carl Arner

Pastor's Article: Discernment

Dear Friends,

How do you know the decision you are making is the right one? Is there just one way that God wants you to go?

I remember an article in Christian Century magazine from a few years ago, which attempted to reassure people that God gives free will. This means that God works with the choices we make. Do your best, and know that God goes with you. Martin Luther, acknowledging that we might make the wrong choice, even when we mean to make the best one, said, "Sin boldly, but believe even more boldly in Christ, and rejoice."

That being said, how do Christians make big decisions in our lives? The Christian practice that relates to decision making is called Discernment. Some guidelines for discernment are found in the next paragraph.

- ◆ Take your time, don't rush the decision.
- ◆ Get as many facts as you can before you decide.
- ◆ Read what the Bible has to say. (some biblical citations are listed in the next paragraph)
- ◆ Ask trusted people in your life, who know you well, what they think.
- ◆ Pray and be sure to listen afterwards to try to sense God's answer to you.
- ◆ Think how you might explain your decision to Jesus.
- ◆ Listen to your body—does one option make you tense, does the other make you feel relaxed?
- ◆ List reasons for and against this decision.
- ◆ Think about whom this decision might hurt.
- ◆ Think what you would say to someone else, if that person asked your advice.
- ◆ Using discernment in making your big decisions can become a habit, and it will get easier.

Here are some biblical places to turn for advice:

Proverbs 3: 5-6

Matthew 5: 33-37

I John 4:1-3

John 5: 30

Luke 6:37-42

I Thessalonians 5: 14-21

Matthew 22:36-40

1 Peter 3:10-11

Exodus 20: 1-17

Romans 6:3-6, 21-23

2 Timothy 1:8-14

Psalms 139 (reassures us that God is always with us).

May God bless all your decisions, Pastor Jane Kropa

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 to receive a monthly printed list of people for whom to pray, and/or periodic e-mailed notifications of those for whom to pray? Please let John Leeser know (see contact information above) and your name will be added to those who receive names for whom to pray.

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 the member's relationship to the person we pray about, for example, this is Ms. Jones' brother-in-law, 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. Paper for notes is in the Sacristy (robe room) in the box on the cabinet where the paraments are kept).

ruOKberks

This is a texting service for people in Berks county who feel depressed or hopeless. The service provides help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Text ruOK to 484-816-7865 or visit txtaboutit.net/sam. Anyone in need of immediate help can call 610-236-0530. Please share this information. All information is kept confidential.

If You Are Hospitalized

If you are hospitalized, would like a visit and prayer, please call the church office (610-845-2626) or ask someone to call for you (hospital chaplains are willing to do this.) Please let us know if we might put your name on our prayer list for prayers in worship and from the people who have signed up to pray for our congregation at home. Please let us know when you are discharged.

Confirmation Statement

We are proud of the seven new members who joined Huff's Union Church through Confirmation on May 20, 2018. They have each written a statement explaining why they wish to be congregational members. We will be printing their statements in the next several newsletters.

Spencer Hess

I was baptized at Huff's Church and my parents are members here. My family influenced me to go through the confirmation program. I decided that Huff's church is right for me because of the generous and friendly atmosphere among the church members.

Confirmation class has helped me learn more about our church's history and the history of the Christian religion. After being in the confirmation program, and working to complete the participation credits, I feel like I belong more to the congregation. My mentor, Lisa Kauffman, my parents and many more congregation members helped me to find my way to faith.

My future at Huff's Church consists of attending worship one or two times a month, helping at picnics and helping to acolyte when possible.

The Bible verse I have chosen is "Faith Can Move Mountains", Matthew 17:20. This Bible verse shows that your faith towards God or your other beliefs could do great thing if you just have strong faith.

Un-decorating of Church

We will need to put away our beautiful church decorations on Saturday, January 12, 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.

Thank You For Your Service

We thank Martin Kriebel and Barbara Kreiser for their service on Union Council: Danielle Bortz will serve as our Youth Member through May 31, 2019. We have been blessed by each person's service, prayers and advice.

Installation of New Union Council Members

We will install new Union Council members at worship services on January 6. To be installed: Michael Diehl, and Raymond Lorish for a three-year term, Kay Kriebel and Gary Fogel for a two-year term, and Michele Boyer, Elaine Crump, and Tess Woloszanski, who have been elected to serve a second three-year term. We will also install Jane Arndt, Ann Taylor, Lisa Kauffman and Tom Mitchell as new officers for the ELCA.

New ELCA and UCC Officers for 2019

The ELCA Officers for 2019 are: President: Jane Arndt, Vice-President: Ann Taylor, Secretary: Lisa Kauffman and Treasurer: Tom Mitchell

The UCC Officers for 2019 are: President: Duane Bortz, Vice-President: Michele Boyer, Secretary: Jim Meitzler, Jr. and Treasurer: Jon Benfield.

What is the blank line on my church envelopes?

The blank line is on your offering envelope so you may make special gifts to church-related agencies. You may give to any of the special denominational offerings mentioned throughout the year, using this line, or using the special envelope provided in the pew. You may also give to the following denominationally related agencies: Bethany Children's Home (troubled youth), Topton Lutheran Home (elder care), Bear Creek Lutheran Camp (Christian camping program), Phoebe Home (elder care), Lancaster Theological Seminary (pastoral training), United Lutheran Seminary (pastoral training). You may also give for special disaster relief efforts, as mentioned in church.

Souper Bowl of Caring

The first Sunday of February is the day for our Souper Bowl of Caring offering, which will go to support the four agencies who feed the hungry in our area (Pennsburg Open Link, Boyertown Multi Service, Friend, Inc. and the Allentown Rescue Mission) We will accept monetary donations, cans of soup and/or boxes of crackers.

January Youth Group Event

Join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship at our next Family Game Day event on January 6, 2019 after the 10:30 worship service. All ages welcome. We will have plenty of games or bring one of your own favorites to share. We will have a covered dish luncheon – please bring a dish to share. Beverages will be provided. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the lower Narthex.

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 anniversary or more. Please let us know if we missed anyone.

BIRTHDAYS

Audrey Diehl - 1/4	Elizabeth Heimbach - 1/5
Calvin Mengel - 1/19	Grace Miller - 1/19
Milton Kerchner - 1/23	Erma Sheetz - 1/23

ANNIVERSARIES

Earl & Teresa Derr - 1/7
Ernest & Dolores Haas - 1/7
Robert & Pauline Reinhard - 1/22

Pennsylvania Southeast Conference News

10 Characteristics of Growing Congregations

1. They have leaders that lead! “For God so loved the world that He did not send a committee!” Not sure where I heard that...but it’s true!
2. A desperation for God’s power! Prayer isn’t a good luck charm that is attached at the beginning or at the end of something –people are legitimately desperate for the power of God. They pray Habakkuk 3:2 prayers every day and...
3. They believe that greater things are in store. They don’t just pray big prayers, but they have a sense of anticipation that is contagious! They don’t read Acts 2 and think “those were the good ol’ days” but rather they think, “That’s where God STARTED this thing...we should be WAY ahead of this!”
4. They are full of ordinary people. God always uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. Jesus didn’t choose one scribe or Pharisee when He launched the church, and Acts 4:13 talks about how He used ordinary people to absolutely turn the world upside down. The staff LOVES the church so much so that they would actually attend there even if they were not on staff!
5. They leverage technology. They don’t view technology as of the devil but rather as a tool given by God to reach as many people as possible for Jesus. By the way, isn’t it funny that some churches are against the use of technology, yet all of them rode to their church in a car, and their church building has air conditioner?
6. The church is full of passion. People in the church actually LOVE the church and do not attend because they feel like they have to! The only reason people get angry with the fact that you love your church is probably because they have no idea what it is like to actually love their church.
7. They take ownership of the Great Commission. They REFUSE to be “keepers of the aquarium” and instead embrace the COMMAND of Jesus to reach the world for Him.
8. There is a willingness to change and adapt... ..even when it means they have to go against the very “innovative” ideas that they themselves once established! Anyone can change the traditions of the past, but true innovation occurs when we’re willing to change the ideas that we once thought were innovative and groundbreaking.

Pennsylvania Southeast Conference News (continued)

9. Generosity is embraced. The world has never been impacted in a positive way by people that were greedy.

10. The people in the church are OWNERS, not merely “members.” Members have rights; owners have responsibilities. The people in these churches understand that it is not the pastor’s job to minister to the people but rather the body’s job to minister to the body! And as a result, people serve Jesus by serving others instead of sitting on their “blessed assurance” and expecting to be waited on hand and foot.

Article from Outreach Magazine

Church Family

FUNERALS

Please pray for the family and friends of Ethel Boyer who died on November 15, 2018.

Please pray for the family and friends of Arlene Heffner who died on November 19, 2018.

Memorials:

To the General Fund in memory of Ethel Boyer

Carl & Minerva Arner

Rebecca Riter

Leanna Reiss & Sons

Robert Reiss

To the Jane Kukulka Scholarship Fund in memory of Arlene Heffner:

Glenn & Karin Reinert

Arlene Rothenberger & Family

Scott D. Moyer & A. D. Moyer Employees

Bally Ribbon Mills

November 2018 Treasury Report

	November	YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Monthly Income	\$20,336.93	\$298,610.52	\$308,189.00
Monthly Expense	\$30,498.18	\$311,252.45	\$307,843.00
Balance	-\$10,161.25	-\$12,641.93	\$346.00
40101 - Pass thru Income Account	\$1,210.00		
60100 - Pass thru Expense Account	\$3,747.28		
Account Balances	November 30		
Designated Fund	\$76,608.70		
General Fund	-\$9,891.12		
ELCA Disaster Relief Fund	\$66.00		