

# HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



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Church Address: 540 Conrad Rd., Alburtis, 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 Classes**

January 5 - 9:15 a.m. in chapel basement.

January 12 - 9:15 in chapel basement. With parent or other adult - household economics.

January 19 - 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. on street level of church. Bring a sack lunch plus beverage. Wear stretchy clothes for body movement. No class January 26.

## **Acolyte and Crucifer Schedule**

January 5, 2020	Maisy Funk, Avery Dixon, Chase Longacre, Malachi Estrella & Alex Hersh
January 12, 2020	Tucker Ruch, Gavin Hess & Logan Scott
January 19, 2020	Tucker Ruch, Gavin Hess, Logan Scott
January 26, 2020	Chase Longacre, Bowie Richetti, Elijah Richetti

### **Epiphany Winter Dinner**

**The Epiphany Winter Dinner will be held in the basement of the chapel on Saturday, January 4, beginning at 5:00 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 on January 12**

On Sunday, January 12, as part of the 10:30 worship service, we will have Linda and Mike 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. Pam Meitzler will be in charge of refreshments. We'd appreciate finger foods; please drop off before 10:30 worship.

### **Miller Keystone Blood Drive**

Huff's Union Church hosts the bloodmobile on Monday, January 20 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.

### **Small Group**

The Small Group will meet in the chapel basement on Saturday, January 4, at 10:00 a.m. Bring your Bible. If you'd like to stay for lunch, bring something to share. We eat from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

## **January Game Day for Everyone**

Join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship at our next Family Game Day on January 26, 2020 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 pizza lunch for everyone who signs up, courtesy of the Youth Group treasury. You are welcome to bring sides to accompany the pizza. Beverages will be provided. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the lower Narthex so we will know how many to expect.

## **Pastor-Led Evening Bible Study**

**We will meet on Monday, February 3, at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs of the chapel to watch part one of a 2-part video on violence in the Bible, the topic will be finished after we watch this video and discuss it. All are welcome.**

## **Updating Our List of Homebound Members**

If you know of a church member who is no longer able to get to church, and who would appreciate a home visit, please call the office to have that person added to our Homebound list. They will receive visits from our lay visitors and/or Pastor Kropa.

For the sake of confidentiality, we no longer publicize our homebound list in the newsletter. However, if you'd like to have a copy, please contact our office administrator, Edwina Fox (6100-845-2626) or our Caring and Sharing Committee Chairperson, Sue Stockdale by e-mail ([szq1944@gmail.com](mailto:szq1944@gmail.com)) and you will receive a copy.

## **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.

## **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 if we are having worship. We will decide **before 6:00 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).

## **Help Needed for Snow Removal**

We are in need of people who can help shovel the walkways around the 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 are: home phone: 610-845-2581; cell phone: 610-504-1089.

## **Special January Offering: Huff's Mission Trip**

In June 2020 some of our congregation's members will be traveling for a week to South Dakota to work on an Indian Reservation. In order to help them represent **our** congregation in this important act of outreach, we invite you to donate to travel costs by putting money into our miniature model church bank during the month of January.

If you donate by check, please write the check to Huff's Union Church and on the memo line write: "2020 Mission Trip" If you would like to receive credit on your giving statement, be sure to either use a church envelope (marking 2020 Mission Trip on a blank line on the front), or use a pew envelope or mark a plain envelope with your information (name, address and envelope number) You may place your church envelopes in the offering plate, as usual.

## **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 or special offerings. 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, and, in the month of January, you may give to Huff's Mission Trip..

## **Un-decorating of the Church**

We will need to put away our beautiful church decorations on Saturday, January 11, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Help from all ages is needed. Thank you to all who helped decorate the church for the Advent/Christmas season.

## **Children's Choir**

If your child (age 3 to 12) enjoys singing, why not let them become part of Huff's Children's Choir? Directed by Mrs. Gloria Adams, assisted by Joanne Benfield, Huff's Children's Choir practices Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the worship service, before the Children's Moment, about every six weeks. Questions? Contact Mrs. Adams at 610-914-8116. You may register your child when you come to the first practice. Adults are welcome to stay during practice, or to drop off your children and pick them up by 7:30 p.m. Please come in the back door. For safety reasons, we lock the door when we think most people have arrived. If you need access and the door is locked, please ring the doorbell and someone will let you in.

## **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. 2019 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 2020.

## **Church Envelopes for 2020**

The 2020 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.

Remember, it helps us to have your contact information. If you have changed your phone number, address or e-mail, please update contact information by contacting us at [ministry@huffschurch.com](mailto: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 2020 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 who would benefit from home communion.

## **Lunch Bunch**

Please join us for the Lunch Bunch to be held on Tuesday, January 21, 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!

## **Ladies Aid Society**

There will be no meeting for the month of January. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 5. Thank you to everyone for the Redner's and Radcliffe's Tapes. The total for the year 2019 was \$1,044.76. Please continue to save your Redner's & Radcliffe's receipts and put them in the basket on the Food Bank cabinet near the men's room.

## **Church Family**

### **Memorials:**

**To the CIF Fund in memory of Ruth Crossley**

Marie Bower

**To the General Fund in memory of Elton Brensinger**

Randy Brensinger

## **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**

Audrey Diehl - 1/4

Janice Rauch - 1/4

Elizabeth Heimbach - 1/5

Minerva Arner - 1/17

Grace Miller - 1/19

Milton Kerchner - 1/23

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

Earl & Teresa Derr - 1/7

Ernest & Dolores Haas - 1/7

Robert & Pauline Reinhard - 1/22

Dennis & Bea Miller - 1/26

## Pastor's Article

Dear Friends,

It is a new year, one that some of you will be glad to begin, and one that others might be feeling reluctant to enter. Isn't life always this way—sometimes you want to prolong every moment, and other times you can't wait for a stage of your life to be over.

Sometimes, we want to drop the past, like a hot potato. Perhaps we're living with the consequences of a bad decision. Perhaps we are tortured with the "what if's" and "why not's" of life. As we consider the new year, why not take a moment to remember that our faith promises second chances. Even when we've messed up royally, God offers us forgiveness, and a new way forward. Of course, we still need to do our best to make amends and to try to correct whatever problems we might have caused by our actions, but the ultimate answer always is, "You are my beloved children; I forgive you."

Some folks think Christians dwell too much on forgiveness. It's as if they think we make up ways to feel guilty, then put each other and ourselves down. Actually, life does a great job at making us feel insignificant, wrong, not good enough. The church exists to give us God's antidote to these negative messages. We proclaim it is possible to teach an old dog new tricks; to change one's heart as well as one's behaviors. How do we know? Because our Bible tells us again and again of God's forgiveness.

God's forgiveness extends to things we've done by mistake, not just deliberate wrong-doing. Sometimes, we never saw that what we did, or didn't do, could cause harm or hurt feelings. I think of children playing near the big plate of glass, stumbling, and one getting hurt by falling against the glass. No one deliberately caused this accident, but everyone felt horrible. God's forgiveness extends to unintentional consequences, and does not assign blame.

This January, why not remember your baptism, and the waters washing away everything that separates you from God? Perhaps you might want to incorporate water in a ritual—when you wash your face, you remember God's washing you with love, and Jesus' promise that he would become living water to all who thirst.

Happy New Year! May this year bring you ever closer to the love of God through Christ Jesus, Our Savior.

In Christian love, 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 Leaser 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 Leaser 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](http://txtaboutit.net/sam). Anyone in need of immediate help can call 610-236-0530. Please share this information. All information is kept confidential.

## **Thank You For Your Service**

We thank Duane Bortz, Kay Kriebel, LeRoy Leibensperger, Raymond Lorish, and Emily Ziegenfuse for their service on Union Council.

Madelynn Miller and Logan Scott will serve as our Youth voices (voice but no vote) through May 31, 2020. 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 5. To be installed: Elaine Witman, Martin Kriebel, Lisa Kauffman, Rachel Welch, Tom Mitchell. Ian Richetti and Conner Isamoyer, who have been elected to serve a second three-year term, will also be installed.

## **ELCA and UCC Officers for 2020**

The ELCA Officers for 2020 are: President - Jane Arndt; Vice-President - Ann Taylor; Secretary - Lisa Kauffman; and Treasurer - Tom Mitchell

The UCC Officers for 2020 are: President - Rachel Welch; Vice President - Michele Boyer; Secretary - Jim Meitzler, Jr.; and Treasurer - Jon Benfield.

## **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.

## Thank You Notes

**From: Allentown Rescue Mission**

**To: Huff's Church Congregation**

We would like to extend our most heartfelt gratitude for all that you have done to help us achieve our mission. Among your accomplishments for 2019 include: Dinners for the men in April and October and blankets given to the men.

Thank You,

Rosaria Stoops

**From: The Lehigh Conference of Churches**

**To: Huff's Church Congregation**

On behalf of the Lehigh Conference of Churches, thank you for your recent contribution of \$1,000.00 to support our neighbors who are in need.

Thank You,

Pastor Genie Watson  
Ecumenical Associate

**From: The Pension Board**

**To: Huff's Union Church**

The United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance presents this certificate with sincere thanksgiving to Huff's Union Church. Thank you for your generous and faithful support of the 2018 Christmas Fund in the amount of \$250.00.

Thank You,

Brian R. Bodager, President & CEO  
The Rev. Krista L. Betz, Director, Ministerial Assistant

**From: Pastor Elizabeth Haines & Mrs. Marcia Stough**

**To: Friends of Huff's UCC**

Thank you for inviting my family to the 275th Anniversary of Huff's UCC Congregation. It was a beautiful service and my mother and I enjoyed seeing everyone.

Continued blessings be with you all,

Pastor Elizabeth Haines & Mrs. Marcia Stough

## **Thank You Notes** (continued)

**From: Ted & Kathy Nace**

**To: Huff's Church Congregation**

Thank you to Carl and Minerva Arner & his 275th UCC Anniversary Celebration for a job well done.

We had a day to be remembered through and through. We are truly grateful to Huff's Church for their warm welcome and hospitality. Time may have passed but memories remain strong.

Thank You,

Ted & Kathy Nace  
Ecumenical Associate

**From: Phoebe Ministries**

**To: Huff's Union Church Congregation**

Your congregation's gift to Phoebe in the amount of \$20.00 is greatly appreciated.

Thank You,

Stacey J. Prohaska  
Executive Director of Philanthropy

**From: Lancaster Theological Seminary**

**To: Friends of Huff's UCC**

Thank you for your gift of \$10 in support of the ministry of theological education at Lancaster Seminary.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Bennett  
Vice President of Operations and Finance

**From: Holy Joe's Cafe**

**To: Friends of Huff's Union Church**

Thank you so much for your support of Holy Joe's Café throughout the years! As Chaplain Keith says, "The coffee is a force multiplier for the Chaplain Corps. Every time they have a cup of coffee, they are reminded that somebody cares about them.

Thank You,

Tom

**Thank You Notes** (continued)

**From: The Crossley Family**

**To: Pastor & Staff of Huff's Union Church**

We would like to thank you for all of the prayers, kindness and hard work in helping us celebrate Ruth's life. She truly loved her Church and her "Church Family". \

We sincerely appreciate the efforts you took to make her memorial services special.

Thank You,

The Crossley Family

**From: Bishop Samuel Zeiser**

**To: Pastor Kropa & Huff's UCC Members**

I had a wonderful time celebrating with you and the members of Huff's UCC at their 275th Anniversary of the congregation.

Thank you for inviting me to be part of your celebration and for all you did to make my participation so easy. It was an honor to be present.

Please convey my gratitude to the members of the congregation for all the kind experience of welcome and hospitality throughout my visit. There were so many folks who took time to talk with me! It was especially fun to take part in the meal and fellowship after the worship service. The food was delicious and the conversations were pleasant and relaxing.

The spirit of the celebration was positive and uplifting and it served as a meaningful source of encouragement to me as I carry out my ministry as Synod Bishop.

God Bless you and the members of Huff's Church as you carry out ministry in Jesus' name.

With gratitude

Bishop Sam Zeiser,  
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

## **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference News**

### **An Epiphany Reflection from the Conference Minister**

Tony Robinson reminded me several years ago that the name of this month, "January," comes from the ancient Roman deity, Janus - a lesser god but one who has always made sense to seekers after the heart of the Divine. Janus was the god of gates and doorways. He had two faces, one looking forward, another looking backward. So there is only a little surprise and much gratitude that in Psalm 121 God keeps a particular vigilant watch at our times of "going out and coming in," our times of ending and beginning, and all that is between the two.

Sometimes January, and the beginning of a new year, feels like that. I look back over the year now past. And I peer into the new one just underway. Sometimes I'm not quite sure if I'm coming or going -- which gets reinforced in the New Year every time I write the previous year in the date space on any form I have to sign.

Transitions -- whether of the calendar or in the seasons of our lives -- are crazy-making times. They can be confusing and exhilarating; chaotic and creative. That certainly has been true of our conference life. That's true of our congregational lives where all of us worship in "the church that has been" feeling anxious about "the church that will be." And it's true of our personal lives where change (those we make happen and those that happen to us) is the only constant.

But that is NOT the only constant. When everything else may seem up for grabs or in flux, one thing is not: God's abiding light and love. "I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me..."

This I know to be true. And it is my prayer for you and all our brothers and sisters in Christ that we move confidently into this New Year holding fast to that which has been good ready to receive what is going to be even better.

God bless your New Year with the Light of this Epiphany Season,

Bill Worley, PSEC Conference Minister (article from 2019)

## **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference News**

Yesterday, [November 19, 2019] I received and presented to Conference Consistory and the Conference Personnel Team, a letter of resignation from Rev. Sharon Morris from her position as Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call.

With much sadness, reluctance and deep gratitude, Conference Consistory received Sharon's resignation effective February 29, 2020 (making her last day a leap year day). The Consistory, working in conjunction with the Conference Personnel Team, will guide us through this time of transition. We ask for your prayers for Sharon, the staff and for our Conference.

Bill Worley, PSEC Conference Minister

## **275th UCC Anniversary T-Shirts**

We will have some 275th anniversary T-shirts available for purchase at a cost of \$10.00 on December 22 through January 5. If you are interested, please purchase your shirt from the back table in the Upper Narthex. You are welcome to take a 275th anniversary glow-in-the-dark bracelet, also on the table, if you do not yet have one, as our gift.

# November 2019 Treasury Report

	November	Full Year Actual	Annual Budget
Monthly Income	\$33,107.69	\$343,130.13	\$319,352.00
Monthly Expense	\$43,678.73	\$381,079.15	\$318,885.00
<b>Balance</b>	<b>-\$10,571.04</b>	<b>-\$37,949.02</b>	<b>\$467.00</b>

40101 - Pass thru Income Account \$5,851.51  
 60100 · Pass thru Expense Account \$14,457.83

	November 30
<b>Account Balances</b>	
Designated Fund	\$56,243.42
General Fund	-\$18,200.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$38,042.97</b>