

HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



May 2018

Church Address: 540 Conrad Rd., Alburton, 18011

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

Pastor Home Office: 610-944-5923

Office email: office@huffschurch.com

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 Dates

May 6 9:15-10:15. Final Practice Pantomimes (upstairs chapel)

May 6 6-8:30 p.m. Covered dish meal for families and mentors. Pantomimes performed upstairs in chapel.

May 13 Confirmands meet council and share their statements (Why I want to be confirmed).

May 19, Saturday, Confirmation Day practice: (with a parent or mentor) 10:00 a.m.

May 20. Confirmation Sunday. Be at chapel at 9 a.m.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is quickly approaching. Our theme this year is Rolling River Rampage. Our VBS will be held on July 9-13, 2018, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. for children ages 3 to 12; younger children welcome if with parent. Throughout the week the children will be participating in storytelling, music, science, crafts and games. Each evening the children will receive a light snack before going home. Questions? Please get in contact with Rachel Welch at 484-226-0333. See Registration Form inside the newsletter or on the website (www.huffschurch.com).

VBS Help Needed

VBS is in need of help for the following areas:

Preschool: Several people to help our youngest group. We have had a large turnout the past 2 years and need some extra help in this area.

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

Storyteller: We are in need of someone to tell our stories this year.

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

Pentecost Geraniums

Would you like to give a geranium to help beautify the side of our church building? There is a sign up sheet posted in the lower Narthex which includes the cost of each geranium (deadline May 13). Please sign up for as many geraniums as you wish to donate and pay by placing your money or check into an envelope marked geraniums and placing it in the offering plate (please include your name so we know that you have paid). Your name will be listed in the Pentecost bulletin (May 20) as having donated one or more plants.

Boyertown Multi-Services

Boyertown Multi-Services was so grateful to receive the 181 food items from our pantry at the end of March. Thank you to those caring, sharing members of the congregation who make this mission possible. Thank you, Sue Stockdale & Elvin Keiser.

Acolyte Schedule

- 5/6/18 Reilly Rollman, Brooke Boyer, Riley Miller,
Madelynn Miller and Alex Hersh
- 5/13/18 Spencer Hess, Paige Geist and Luke Geist
- 5/20/18 Maisy Funk, Danielle Bortz, Alex Hersh,
Confirmation Brooke Boyer, Kara Benfield
- 5/27/18 Logan Scott, Reilly Rollman and Billy Geist

QPR: Suicide Prevention Workshop

On Wednesday, May 23, at 7 p.m. upstairs in the chapel, we will repeat the QPR program providing everyday tips about talking to someone who might be feeling despondent, in order to prevent an attempted suicide. QPR is a program created by Dr. Paul Quinett to teach everyday folks, not experts, how to talk about the desire to end one's life, with the goal of encouraging a person to remain alive. Pastor Kropa, a certified QPR instructor, will be the presenter. The presentation lasts approximately one hour.

Special Offering Opportunity

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

Seed Tree

The Seed Tree collected 681 seed packets with a monetary value of \$1,513.86 after tabulations. Seeds were sent by UPS on April 3rd to St. Vincent's Mission in David, Kentucky.

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

Small Group

Small Group meets on May 5 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.

Hearing Assist Devices

Hearing assist devices are available on the table at the back of the Sanctuary. You may use these to hear the worship service anywhere in the building. If you feel you need to sit downstairs because you are coughing, these enable you to hear the service. We are having the broken devices repaired. If you find a device that isn't working, please let someone know so we may have it fixed. Sometimes it just means the batteries need to be replaced.

Local Needy Fund

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

The Jane Kukulka Memorial Scholarship Fund

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

Church Family

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

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

BIRTHDAYS

5/10 - Ruth Crossley 5/27 - Arlene Heffner

5/28 - Lorraine Greiss

ANNIVERSARIES

5/17 - Paul & Jean Adam

5/18 - Harold & Pauline Strunk

St. Peter's Church Offers a Community Supper

St. Peter's offers a Community Supper 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 May 4, 2018**. Please come out to support our sister church and enjoy good food and fellowship.

Joyful Noise Offering

On May 6 we will receive a joyful noise (coin) offering for the I Hart Potato Project. They are experiencing financial need.

Hunger/Homeless Walk

The Hunger/Homeless Walk will begin at 9 a.m. this year from Huff's Union Church on May 12 and make a loop back to Huff's Church. One rest stop will be provided at the Arndts' house. There will not be a concluding meal.

Pastor's Article

Dear Christian Friends,

Where do we find God? Our first answer might be, the Bible, since the Bible tells us of God's love and promises. However, there are other things in our world that can point us to God that are in addition to the scriptures. For some people, it is the beauty of God's creation. In March, spiritual director Janeen Adil led a workshop at Huff's on looking for God in beautiful things—not just fine art, but in nature, in the structure of buildings, in quilts, in anything that makes us say, "Ah!" We Christians understand that this "Ah" is really a prayer of thank you to God for God's marvelous creation. Growing things can focus Christians on God, the giver of soil, water, and sun, which enables plants to grow.

Christians also can point to the fruit of the spirit, as listed in Galatians 5: 22-23 (NRSV)—*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control.* When we encounter these qualities in other people, it points us to God, who created human beings and gave us God's own son who teaches us to live in a loving manner: to love God first and our neighbors as ourselves.

Another place to find God is at church. Some people tell me that just entering a church building turns them away from the cares of the world, to focusing on God. Here they find uplifting music, an application of scripture to daily life, and the encouragement of a group of people dedicated to serving God. The physical beauty of the church building can help people to lift their hearts to God.

When we set out to look for God, we know, from the Bible, that God has already found us. God knew us from before we were born, and God will go anywhere to be with us (Psalm 136) Why not spend the next few weeks of the Easter season discerning God in your everyday life? Read a devotional and ponder the scripture that inspired it; look around you and take pleasure in God's good gifts, come to church and let the words, artwork and music draw you closer to God, take a walk and thank God as you look at your surroundings, pray for others as you watch the TV news, and know, God loves and cares for you and wants you to live in peace by following the way of Jesus. Where is God? God is everywhere. Jesus promised, "*Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" (Matthew 28:20). Pastor Jane Kropa

Blankets of Hope

Each year we have invited the congregation to honor important women in your life (Sunday School teacher, mother, grandmother, scout leader, etc.) or to give in memory of these women, with a \$10 donation for each name to purchase a Blanket of Hope through Church World Service. These blankets may be used for emergencies in the US, or throughout the world. There is a form included with this newsletter, or pick one up on the bulletin table outside the sanctuary. Filled out forms and donations must be received by May 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.

Tools of Hope for Father's Day

If you would like to honor an important man in your life, or give something in memory, we are sponsors of the Tools of Hope offering through Church World Service. Cost is \$10.00 for each person honored. Please use the form available on the bulletin table in the upper Narthex (after Mother's Day) or the one included with the June newsletter. Place money or check and filled-out form in an envelope and put in the offering plate or office manager Edwina Fox's mailbox downstairs (in the back room between the stair towers) by June 11. We will have the names of those honored in the bulletin on Father's Day,

Manna Contemporary Worship Service

Because of Confirmation, Manna contemporary worship will move to May 27. On April 15 a group met to form a steering committee to work with the Manna service. Watch for news from this meeting.

Lunch Bunch

Meets Tuesday, May 15, 2018, at noon, at the Alburdis Tavern, for our Rejoice, it's Lunch Bunch.

Weather permitting, there will be an optional walk after lunch in the Loch Ridge Park and Furnace Museum grounds.

Union Council Highlights

The work to clean the fire alarms and make them more accessible will be done.

A Knox box will be installed to give emergency access to the fire department in case of emergency.

A garbage shed will be put up to replace the one that was destroyed.

Replacement air conditioning units will be installed; the old ones were leaking and could not be fixed.

A recorder for pod casting pastor's sermons will be installed.

A Sunday School treasurer's book, from 1931-1940, kept by Clinton Moyer, was purchased from an antique dealer and given to the church.

An anonymous donor is willing to have custom-made cabinets made for the niches where the old entryways into the sanctuary were. We are seeking designs before proceeding.

No dogs will be allowed at picnics held in the park, except for service animals. This will be posted on all park advertisements and posters.

If you wish to reserve both the park and chapel, you must pay a non-refundable usage fee for both venues.

The Endowment Committee has around \$4000 to distribute this year. They will give \$100 to Liberty Ministries and \$25 to Boyertown Multi Service. Additional distributions may be requested. Requests will be overseen by the committee and finalized by council.

We put a special Easter page on our web site, and have had a request to put the "what to expect" information in a prominent place, to make it accessible year round.

The Meditate, Pray and Commune service that was held on Maundy Thursday brought in 38 people from our congregation. Those who experienced it gave positive feedback and asked if we might have a one-hour meditation period before the Maundy Thursday dramatized Lord's Supper next year.

Council heard a presentation on the need for a part time Ministerial Assistant, to take over some of the advertising, statistics keeping, organizing, office manual writing, background check keeping, membership list oversight, and other administrative duties that are now shared by the pastor and office manager.

Ladies Aid Society

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

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.

Thank You Notes Received

From Friends, Inc.

Dear Friends at Huffs Union Church,

First let me just say, thank you for becoming a Neighbor with your gift in the amount of \$71.76 to Friend, Inc. Community Services.

Your recent donation tells us that you agree that no one in Northeast Berks County should go hungry or cold...not at the holidays...not this winter...not ever.

Sandra L. Wise
Executive Director

From Boyertown Area Multi-Service, Inc.

Dear Huffs Church Youth Group,

Thank you for your contribution 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 in Southeastern Berks and Northern Montgomery Counties.

Your gift will make a difference by helping Boyertown Area Multi-Service fund the many programs and services that ensure better lives for all those who live in our community.

Steven McEwan
Executive Director

Pennsylvania Southeast Conference United Church of Christ

The PSEC has a variety of groups that work with a variety of issues. The Ministry of Spiritual Nurture seeks to assist pastors, individuals and congregations in all areas of spiritual growth and development. The work of this ministry is especially focused on prayer, discernment, forgiveness, spiritual direction and formation, healing and wholeness, aspects of life-long spiritual growth, Christian education in small groups, worship, and the awareness and integration of one's faith journey with all of life.

Events: Visit the PSEC conference events page for dates and locations as these annual events are scheduled.

Quiet Days: Members of the Spiritual Life Mission Team invite all who desire a 'time apart' to join them for Quiet Days at New Goshenhoppen UCC, 1070 Church Road, East Greenville, PA 18041. Quiet Days are held on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30 am-1:00 pm, as a time for spiritual retreat, reflection and renewal. The day begins gently with food for thought shared by a member of the Spiritual Life Mission Team. This is followed by a time for individual reflection and solitude. Participants have the opportunity to re-gather around the lunch table for fellowship, sharing and prayer. Quiet Days are designed to open new avenues of communing with God, and to give opportunity for sharing faith journeys and stories. They allow for Sabbath time in the midst of our busy world. Some come to Quiet Days as a regular discipline of renewal and stress reduction. Others come just to enjoy the peace and beauty of nature in all its seasons. Why not set aside one weekday a month to regroup with God. Each participant is asked to bring a Bible, journal, pen and bag lunch. No formal registration is necessary; just come and see what God has in store for you!

Walking with God: Among the most popular of the spirituality events is the annual Walking with God retreat, a two-day event held each fall. It features well-known speakers and retreat leaders in the field of spirituality and prayer. There are workshops on various spiritual practices and diverse activities which in the past have included: yoga, massage, hiking, walking the labyrinth, prayerful art expressions, and more.

March 2018 Treasury Report

	March	YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Monthly Income	\$25,236.53	\$75,206.13	\$308,189.00
Monthly Expense	\$34,521.32	\$75,344.04	\$307,843.00
Balance	-\$9,284.79	-\$137.91	\$346.00
40101 - Pass thru Income Account	\$3,513.86		
60100 - Pass thru Expense Account	\$2,960.01		
Account Balances	March 31		
Designated Fund	\$73,789.08		
General Fund	\$2,637.77		
UCC One Great Hour of Sharing	\$142.00		

**Blankets of Hope
Mother's Day - May 13, 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!