

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
110 ROUTE 61 SOUTH
SCHUYLKILL HAVEN, PA 17972
Rev. Ms. Shawn D. VanDyke, Pastor
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Serving God through Christ; Serving Others with Love

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*Information Deadline for the Spring 2018 (APRIL/MAY) NEWSLETTER
is Sunday, March 11!*

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, March 25
Worship, 9:30 AM

Maundy Thursday, March 29
Communion & Tenebrae
Worship, 7 PM

Easter Sunday, April 1
Communion
Worship, 8 AM & 9:30 AM
Egg Hunt, 9 AM

FIRST CHURCH HERALD

Vol. 37, Issue 1

Newsletter of First UCC

Sch. Haven, PA

LENT 2018 (FEBRUARY & MARCH)

*"If you obey my voice and
keep my covenant,*



*you shall be my
treasured possession
out of all the peoples."*

Exodus 19:5, NRSV

FIRST UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST
Serving God through Christ; Serving Others with Love
110 Route 61 South, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972

PHONE – (570) 385-2049 **FAX #** – (570) 385-3019
OFFICE HOURS – 9 AM - 1 PM (Monday-Friday)
EMAIL – firstuccschuylkillhaven@verizon.net
WEBSITE – www.firstucc-haven.org

If we are not in the office or have stepped away from the phone, please leave a message on the answering machine and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Rev. Ms. Shawn D. VanDyke, Pastor
25 S. Margaretta St., Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972
(570) 385-5425 firstuccpastor@verizon.net Cell 570-617-7185

OTHER STAFF
Minister of Music – Chris Evans
(chrisevans838@gmail.com or 717-329-6904)
Church Secretary – Jen Semanco

WORSHIP – Sundays, 9:30 AM
CHILDREN'S CHURCH – Sundays, 9:30 AM

2018 CONSISTORY MEMBERS
Harris Bradley (385-1494), Brian Edling (385-7343), Keith Edling (385-1199), George Hosler (366-1400), Carrie Ann Klinger (385-5979), Kenny Klinger (385-5979), Malaki Nye, Owen Owens, Kim Quinn (622-8650), Rusty Searle (385-2533), Kris Sonon (294-1243) & Peggy Zechman (366-1400)

2018 CONSISTORY OFFICERS
President – Kenny Klinger **Vice President** – Kim Quinn
Recording Secretary – _____
Treasurer – Carrie Ann Klinger (firstucctreasurer@verizon.net)
Special Funds Treasurer – Jen Semanco

SALUTATIONS FROM SHAWN

Are We Doing Lent Right?

Lent is just a few days away. Ash Wednesday falls on February 14 (yes, Valentine's Day) and Easter falls on April 1. As the 2018 Lent Devotional from the United Church of Christ notes, this Lent is for "Lovers and Fools."

Typically as part of our Lenten discipline we "give up" something. Personally, the habits I need to give up should be put aside permanently. I'm addicted to sugar, short on sleep and exercise, and watch too much TV. A little/a lot of repentance would be good for me.

What if Lent isn't about giving up something in personal sacrifice (which still puts the focus on self and not others)? How does God want us to fast? The prophet Isaiah records God saying,

"Is such the fast that I choose, only a day to humble oneself? Is it only to bow down the head like a reed, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to set the oppressed free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry, and to provide the homeless with shelter; when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?" (Isaiah 58:5-7)

God doesn't desire for us to give up something as much as to give. To give of ourselves, to give to those in need, to give in imitation of Christ who gave his very life that others might live: this is the kind of fasting God wants from us.

So for Lent this year, may we consider adding to our efforts to reflect the light of Christ--even if it seems foolish--by fighting evil, feeding the hungry, helping the afflicted, and restoring what has been torn down. People next door to us are fighting addiction, struggling to make ends meet, suffering from loneliness, and coping with broken relationships. We may not be able to fix their problems but we can share the goodness of God's grace with them.

"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; righteousness will go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be behind you. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here am I." (Isaiah 58:8-9)

Yours in Hope for a Lenten Season of Fasting which Pleases God,
Pastor Shawn

Thank you to the congregation for your generous Christmas Gifts. We are humbled and honored to share in Christ's ministry with you. --First UCC Staff

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY: GLORY REVEALED

2/4 **Free of Charge** 5th Sunday after Epiphany, Communion
 Isaiah 40:21-31 The Everlasting God
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 All Things to All People
 Mark 1:29-39 Jesus Heals

2/11 **Blinded by the Light** Transfiguration Sunday
 2 Kings 2:1-12 Elijah and Elisha
 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Knowledge of Glory
 Mark 9:2-9 The Transfiguration

THE SEASON OF LENT: COVENANT PROMISE

2/14 **True Imposters** **7 PM Ash Wednesday**; Communion; Ashes
 Isaiah 58:1-12 Share with the Needy
 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 Day of Salvation
 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Giving, Praying and Fasting

2/18 **The Sign** 1st Sunday in Lent; Financial Congre. Mtg.
 Genesis 9:8-17 The Covenant with Noah
 1 Peter 3:18-22 Saved through Water
 Mark 1:9-15 Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness

2/25 **It Depends** 2nd Sunday in Lent
 Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 The Covenant with Abraham
 Romans 4:13-25 The Faith of Abraham
 Mark 8:31-38 Jesus Predicts His Death

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP EVALUATION

For Christmas Eve, we tried something new: we added a 4 PM worship service, continued the traditional 7 PM service, and dropped the 11 PM service. The 4 PM addition was well-received with good attendance but some people expressed sadness that we dropped the late service. We'd like to know what you thought of the changes. Please send a message on Facebook, send an email or call the church office (570-385-2049) to let us know. Thanks.

SERVICE CANCELLATIONS

When it snows we may need to cancel Sunday services. The church uses an automated call system. If you want to make sure that you are on the call list or would like to be added to the call list, please notify the church office (570-385-2049). Cancellation information will also be on the church's Facebook page.

WORSHIP IN MARCH

3/4 **Foolish Wisdom** 3rd Sunday in Lent; Sacrament of Communion
 Exodus 20:1-17 The Covenant with Israel
 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 Christ Brings Life from God
 John 2:13-22 Jesus Clears the Temple

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME begins!

"Spring" your clock one hour ahead before you jump into bed on Saturday, March 10, so that you will be on time for worship on Sunday, March 11.

3/11 **You Were Dead** 4th Sunday in Lent; One Great Hour of Sharing
 Numbers 21:4-9 The Bronze Serpent
 Ephesians 2:1-10 Spiritually Dead Made Alive
 John 3:14-21 Eternal Life

3/18 **Covenant of the Heart** 5th Sunday in Lent; Rondeau-Shistle Wedding
 Jeremiah 31:31-34 The New Covenant
 Hebrews 5:5-10 Reverent Submission
 John 12:20-26 Jesus Explains His Death

3/25 **Gates of Righteousness** Palm/Passion Sunday
 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 Give Thanks to the Lord
 Philippians 2:5-11 Humble like Christ
 Mark 11:1-11; 14:1-15:15 Holy Week

3/29 **A Day to Remember** Maundy Thursday
 Sacrament of Communion and Tenebrae
 Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14 The First Passover
 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 The Lord's Supper
 John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

3/30 **Covenant Fulfilled** Good Friday Scripture Readings
 Isaiah 52:13-53:12 God's Servant Will Be Despised
 Psalm 22 Why Have You Forsaken Me?
 Hebrews 10:16-25 Living by Faith
 John 18:1-19:42 Jesus is Betrayed and Arrested

THE SEASON OF EASTER: THE FEAST OF LIFE

4/1 **Easter Without End** Easter Sunday
 8 AM and 9:30 AM Sacrament of Communion
 Isaiah 25:6-9 A Feast for All People
 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection of Christ
 Mark 16:1-14 Jesus Rises from the Dead

OFFERINGS

Communion & Food Pantry Donations

Feb. 4 & Mar. 4

As we come to be fed at the Lord's Table, we remember those in our community who have difficulty feeding themselves. Our donations of non-perishable foods to the SH Food Pantry are much needed and appreciated.

Souper Bowl of Caring

February 4

LET'S #TACKLEHUNGER

When the Super Bowl is played, most of us will gather to watch the game, stuffing our faces with tasty snacks. Many people in our county, however, won't gather for a party or food since they don't have enough food to feed themselves every day. Everyone who attends worship on February 4 is asked to bring a dollar for a special collection for the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry as we strive to feed our neighbors in need. Together we can turn the nation's largest weekend of football into the largest weekend of giving.

The Compassion Fund

February 18 & March 18

This Special Offering is placed in an emergency fund for church members' use.

Blanket Sunday

February 25

Through Church World Service, a gift of just **\$10** will provide a blanket for someone in need. For some people, this blanket may be their only shelter.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)

March 11

One Great Hour of Sharing is a special mission offering which carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. Churches across the USA from a variety of denominations respond to development, disaster, and refugee needs in 138 countries, providing clean water, food, education and health care, disaster recovery, small business micro-credit, and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. Disaster relief and immigration assistance is also provided in the United States. On average, for every dollar given to OGHS, 95 cents is used for mission programming, and 5 cents to create material. Administrative costs are covered by Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support.

Special Envelopes

The envelope offerings collected for **Ash Wednesday** (February 14), **Palm Sunday** (March 25), **Maundy Thursday** (March 29), **Good Friday** (March 30) and **Easter Sunday** (April 1) will be used to support the on-going ministry of First UCC. The envelope offerings collected for **Meat Bingo** (February 11) will be used to help supplement the fundraising efforts of those who spend a lot of time and effort in making each fundraiser a success.

OFFERINGS, cont'd.

20 HOUR FAMINE

Be Hungry...So the World Can Be Hunger Free

Thursday March 29, 7 PM – Friday, March 30, 3 PM

Hunger is increasing in the world. In 2016, there were 38 million more hungry people than in 2015. Please consider sponsoring one of the young people of the church as they raise funds to feed at least one hungry child for a year.

Lent Offering Envelopes

Lent offering envelopes will be sent out as part of a special mailer. The envelope offerings collected for the **Lent Offering** will be used to support the on-going ministry of First UCC.

Church Change Special Offering

During the months of February & March our Church Change offering will be donated to the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches Community Ministries.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY: THE STORIES OF GENESIS

February 4 The Flood and the Rainbow Genesis 5-9

February 11 The Tower of Babel Genesis 10-11

THE SEASON OF LENT: THE STORIES OF GENESIS, CONT'D

February 18 God Calls Abram Genesis 11-12

February 25 God Promises Abram Genesis 15-18

March 4 Abraham and Isaac Genesis 21-22

March 11 Jacob and Esau Genesis 25, 27

March 18 Jacob's Dream Genesis 28

March 25 Palm Sunday Holy Week Review and Activity

April 1 **Easter Sunday; NO Children's Church**



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Annual Reports (Oct. 2016 – Sept. 2017) were approved as well as the 2018 Proposed Budget and Consistory Nominations.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL CONGREGATIONAL MTG

The vote for the Kline Fund Tithe will take place Sunday, February 18, when the final 2017 YTD Financial Report will be presented for approval. 2017 Financial Reports will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, February 4.

BIBLE STUDY

Thursday Mornings, 11 AM, Weiser Board Room

As a group we will determine what we will study for Lent. Bring your suggestions to our gathering on February 1.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

BCE MEETINGS

Tuesday, February 6 & March 6, 6 PM

Church members are welcome to attend BCE Meetings as we work together to provide Christian nurture to all ages in the congregation. At present we are preparing for Vacation Bible School. Christian Education Board members are Delia Edling, Linda Lopez, Linda McDonald, Malaki Nye and Pastor Shawn.

EASTER CANDY DONATIONS

Palm Sunday, March 25

Individually wrapped candy or small toys able to fit in plastic Easter Eggs are needed for the children's Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday. Place your donations in the marked box in the Narthex by Palm Sunday, March 25. Thank you!

EASTER EGG HUNT

Sunday, April 1, 9 AM

Children and their accompanying adults are invited to gather in the Kline Room on Easter Sunday for an Easter Egg Hunt.

CONSISTORY MEETINGS: 6:30 PM

Thursday, February 8

Thursday, March 8

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Al-Anon Meetings, Wednesdays and Fridays

Two meetings are offered weekly in Schuylkill Haven for families and friends of alcoholics: Wednesday evenings here at First Church and Friday evenings at Grace EC Church. For info call Sara 570-449-1830 or Tanya 570-497-0356.

Opportunity House

Supportive services are offered for veterans who are homeless or facing homelessness. Services may include: housing/rental expenses; moving expenses; transportation; child care; VA Benefit referrals; education, health care and legal referrals. For more information call 570-604-6948.

Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

On the third Friday of the month, the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches distributes food at their Food Pantry, located on Market Street behind Evans Delivery (the old Walk-In Shoe Factory), and beginning at 1 PM.

www.myfreetaxes.com

The MyFreeTaxes Partnership provides free federal and state preparation and filing assistance for qualified individuals. For more information, please visit myfreetaxes.com or call Schuylkill Community Action at 570-622-1995.

Camp Dragonfly Bereavement Camp for Children

Camp Dragonfly is free of charge and open to any child who has experienced the death of a loved one. The camp is offered June 1-3 and June 8-10 for children ages 6-15. For more information call Hospice of Central PA at 717-732-1000 or visit www.hospiceofcentralpa.org.

EVANGELISM

WELCOMING GOD'S GUESTS

One common discipline of Lent is to renew a commitment to attend church. As a result we may see visitors looking for a church home. If we greet them warmly, hopefully they will return knowing they are welcome. When we have guests in worship, they may sit where you usually sit. If someone takes your spot, please smile and welcome them, finding a new place to sit, thanking God that we have guests who want to worship and praise God with us.

The contents of this newsletter can be found on the church's website, www.firstucc-haven.org, so that you can access it easily on line.

CONFIRMATION

CONFIRMATION CLASS AFTER WORSHIP UNTIL NOON

Our confirmands, Gavin and Riley, are taking an in-depth look at the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. During Lent the confirmands are required to complete worksheets each Sunday to reflect on Sunday worship and their weekly Christian practice.

Required Attendance Dates:

Wed. February 14	6:30 PM Assist with Ash Wednesday Worship
Sunday, March 25	9:30 AM Palm Sunday Worship
Thursday, March 29	6:30 PM Assist with Maundy Thursday Worship
Th. 3/29-Fri. 3/30	20 Hour Famine
Sunday, April 1	8 or 9:30 AM Easter Worship Services
	9 AM Easter Egg Hunt preparations-Kline Room

If confirmands are ill or will miss church for any reason, please leave a message at the church (570-385-2049). Attendance of 80% or more is required of the confirmands for worship and class.

20 HOUR FAMINE

Be Hungry...So the World Can Be Hunger Free Thursday, March 29, 7 PM - Friday, March 30, 3 PM

The Famine gives confirmands and teens a chance to learn about hunger in our area and around the world. The goal of the Famine is to raise awareness and funds to feed the hungry. For details, see the Teen FORCE page.

EASTER EGG HUNT PREPARATIONS, SUNDAY, APRIL 1, 9 AM

Your help is needed to prepare the Egg Hunt for the children of the church. Please come to the Kline Room after the 8 AM worship service. Thanks for sharing Easter joy with the children of the church!

CONFIRMANDS MEET WITH CONSISTORY

Thursday, April 12, 6:30 PM

In one of the final steps toward the rite of confirmation, the confirmands will meet with Consistory for conversation about the church and the confirmation process, seeking approval for the rite of confirmation on Sunday, May 20.

SPRING FLOWER SALE FUNDRAISER

Just in time for Mother's Day and spring planting, the confirmands are selling bedding plants and hanging baskets from Martin's Farm Market. Order forms will be available in the Narthex in March. The order deadline is Sunday, April 29. Flowers will be available for pick up Saturday, May 12 from 10-11 AM and Sunday, May 13 after worship. Thank you for supporting the confirmands who are raising funds for a gift for the church.

Update: EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

The following totals are up to and including the end of December 2017 plus a comparison to December 2016 & 2015.

	<u>Dec. 2017</u>	<u>Dec. 2016</u>	<u>Dec. 2015</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES –	\$218,184.15	\$210,778.94	\$222,801.36
REVENUE –	\$ 85,009.50	\$ 80,975.29	\$ 84,672.41
Resources from Kline Fund –	\$140,207.85	\$134,291.00	\$138,650.00
TOTAL REVENUE –	\$225,217.35	\$215,266.29	\$223,322.41
Gain/Loss –	\$ 7,033.20	\$ 4,487.35	\$ 521.05

MEAT BINGOS

The profit from the November 11 Meat Bingo was \$3,287.09, plus \$164 collected in offering envelopes. Profits from the bingos are placed in the church's general budget to be used towards everyday expenses. **Thank you for your support!!**

Our next Meat BINGO is scheduled for Saturday, February 17. Doors open at 11 AM; games begin at 1 PM. The prizes will be packages of meat. There will be 20 games for \$15. Specials & Raffles are extra. Food and refreshments will be available. We are also looking for helpers age 13 and older. Please call the church office if you are able to volunteer.

Other 2018 BINGO dates: April 21

Fall 2018 BINGO dates will be announced over the summer.

PARKING: When parking for our fundraisers, we ask that all workers park in the upper lot so the spots in the lower lot are available for our patrons.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

SCHUYLKILL WOMEN IN CRISIS WISH LIST

Items of greatest need include: brooms, mops, buckets, baby wipes, disposable gloves, new socks and lotion. Bring your donations to church and they will be delivered to SWiC. Thank you!

USED STAMPS STILL HAVE A PURPOSE

Eastern Star collects used, cancelled stamps as a fund raiser for charity. Please keep at least one quarter inch of envelope surrounding the stamp or turn in the entire envelope. Place the stamps in the large manila envelope on the bulletin board in the hall next to the sanctuary.

FELLOWSHIP

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP Sunday, Feb. 11 & March 11, 3:30 PM
Gather in the Weiser Board Room with other women of faith to share our Christian journey as we join in conversation and support. Bring a snack to share if you choose.

SOUL (Seniors Out to Lunch)

SOUL consists of senior members of the congregation who like to get together at local restaurants. If you would like to join SOUL for any of their upcoming luncheons, call Iris Weller (366-0897) so that they can save a seat for you!

Tuesday, February 13, Noon – Friedensburg Country Restaurant
Tuesday, March 13, Noon – Roman Delight, Orwigsburg

BOWLING, SUNDAY March 18, 2-4 PM
\$10 Adults; FREE for High School Age and Younger
Strike Zone Alleys, Pottsville

The Board of Christian Education will sponsor high school age and younger so that they can bowl for free for the last bowling event this spring. **Please register with the church office by Sunday, March 11**, so adequate lanes can be reserved. Bring money if you want to buy beverages or snacks.

EASTER FELLOWSHIP Sunday, April 1, 9 AM

Between the 8 AM and 9:30 AM Worship Services on Easter Sunday, pastries, fresh fruit and beverage will be available in the Narthex. Please invite your family and friends to join us for Easter worship!

LENT: A SEASON FOR THE BROKEN-HEARTED

Most of us have experienced more than one **Season of Lent**. We know Lent is the season of the church between Ash Wednesday and Easter which lasts for 40 days, excluding Sundays, in imitation of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert where he endured and overcame three temptations.

As we begin Lent, Ash Wednesday reminds us of our mortality, for death precedes resurrection. But as Richard Floyd points out, literal death is not all there is to death. Lent "invites us to consider the spaces and places in our lives that are dead. What is dead in our relationships, in our church, in our society? To see the dead places within and without can break our hearts."

The Psalmist knew that God understands heartbreak. "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." (Psalm 51:17) When we open our eyes and hearts to see the power of sin and death over us, God is with us to free us in preparation for new life.

STEWARDSHIP – CHURCH FUNDRAISERS

Filling Sale. Do you need filling for Easter dinner or do you just need to restock your freezer? Order forms are in the Narthex. Orders are being taken for the Spring filling sale. Orders & money are due **Sunday, March 4**. Filling can be picked up Saturday, March 24, 9-11 AM. Cost is \$7 per container. Each container holds 2 pounds, so that's only \$3.50 per pound.

Potato Peelers Needed! Thursday, March 22, 5 PM. Our annual Palm Sunday Potato Filling Sale will be held Saturday, March 24, with pick up from 9-11 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Volunteers are needed to peel potatoes Thursday evening, March 22, beginning at 5 PM.

Shank's Vanilla. 8 oz. bottles of vanilla are being sold for \$6 per bottle. The vanilla is a great ingredient for baking.

Boyer's Tag. Boyer's SKU Tags are available in the Narthex. When you purchase groceries at Boyer's, ask to have your tag read. Periodically, Boyer's will tally the readings and send a check to the church. (No need to hand in Boyer's receipts.)

Redner's Save-A-Tape. Pick up a Save-A-Tape card at Redner's and use it whenever you buy groceries. Hand in your Redner's receipts by placing them in the box in the Narthex. Totals of the tapes will be submitted to Redner's who will then provide the church with a check.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

New members will be welcomed in worship on Sunday, March 11. If you are interested in membership or would like more information, please talk to Pastor Shawn.



MEAT BINGO
Saturday, February 17, 1 PM
Doors open at 11 AM
Tickets - \$15

Raffles & Specials are extra; Food & Drinks are available

PENNSYLVANIA SE CONFERENCE

HEALTHCARE: EDUCATION AND ACTION

Saturday, February 10, 9 AM – Noon

Reformed Church of the Ascension, Norristown

Through worship, speakers, and shared healthcare experiences, participants will learn what churches can do to organize around healthcare issues. There is no need to register. For more information, talk to Pastor Shawn.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL: WHAT IS COVENANT?

Through Noah, Abraham, David, Jeremiah and Jesus, God entered in covenant with people to establish a relationship of love and commitment. Download the study at psec.org for your personal devotions in Lent.

DISCIPLESHIP WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 14, Trinity UCC, Mt. Penn

As followers of Jesus, we have promised to share God's good news with the world. This workshop will equip us with the tools of discipleship. The workshop is free but registration is required. Register online at psec.org

EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF A PENN EAST CONFERENCE

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the PNEC and the 2017 Spring Meeting of the PSEC approved the creation of the Joint Conference Vision and Development Team to vision and develop a model of a new conference in Eastern PA. This vision is to be completed by this fall so that it can be voted on by both conferences at a joint meeting. Should the new conference be approved it will be presented to General Synod 2019 for approval. This timeline is a guide and may change. For more information talk to Pastor Shawn.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The United Church of Christ has a vision of a world where all are welcomed, everyone is loved and justice is inherent. "3 Great Loves" is the denomination's project to express how Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation work together to address the needs in our world. The Office of General Minister and President has initiated a campaign to improve the church's technological capacity and the development of leadership skills. The United Church Board of Ministerial Assistance is addressing the needs of clergy and lay workers. The mission and identity of the UCC are being shaped by the "Three Great Loves" in response to Jesus' Great Commandments to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves. For details, visit ucc.org.

SCHUYLKILL HAVEN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Monthly Food Pantry, 3rd Friday, 1 PM **Feb. 16 & Mar. 16**

About 170 households in our area receive food every month through the Council of Churches Food Pantry. Food donations are needed to restock the Pantry shelves. The Food Pantry is located on Market Street, behind Evans Delivery on Columbia Street (the old Walkin Shoe Factory).

Bloodmobile **Thursday, March 15, 12:30-5:30 PM**

Every two seconds someone in the USA needs blood. A person can donate blood every 56 days. The donor's body replenishes the fluid lost from donation in about 24 hours. Anyone 17 years or older and in good health is eligible to donate. One pint of blood can help save up to three lives.

Bi-Monthly Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 20 at 7 PM, Grace EC Church, Stoyer's Dam

The Council provides a monthly food pantry to community members in need, sponsors a bi-monthly bloodmobile, and offers community worship services. Presently, the Council is coordinating with other organizations to seek solutions for people in the county who are homeless or facing homelessness. If you would like to attend a Council meeting, you are most welcome! For more information, please talk to Pastor Shawn.

THANK YOU!!

"Thank You" notes were received over the last couple of months. All of the notes/letters are posted on the bulletin board by the offices. Messages of thanks were received from: Annie Eckert; Gaudenzia; Harry Chapin Food Bank (Florida); Hillside SPCA; Orwigsburg Area Food Pantry; Schuylkill Women in Crisis; Servants to All; Vietnam Vets Post #29 and American Legion Post #38.

THANK YOU FOR CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

Thank you for your generosity as you offered Christmas gifts to the church staff and for your kindness toward people in need at Christmas. In addition to gifts for children through the Salvation Army, Gaudenzia, and Bethany Children's Home, and in addition to Christmas gifts and dinner for two families, you provided 59 items of new underwear to Schuylkill Women in Crisis and 51 items of new underwear to Servants to All, as well as 147 toiletry items.

Seeds to Grow allocated \$250 to provide Christmas joy for the two local families; \$500 for Bethany Children's Home; \$1000 to the Pottsville Salvation Army; \$1000 to Toys for Toys; and \$500 to Schuylkill Women in Crisis.

TEEN F.O.R.C.E.

CHRISTIAN ROCK AND BOWL

Sunday, March 18, 2 - 4 PM

\$10 Adults; FREE for High School Age and Younger

See the "FELLOWSHIP" page for details.

20 HOUR FAMINE

Be Hungry...So the World Can Be Hunger Free

Thursday, March 29, 7 PM - Friday, March 30, 3 PM

The world may ignore the homeless and hungry, but scripture reveals God's care for those in need. For the first time in decades, the number of hungry people in the world is rising. One in nine people does not have enough to eat. In 2016, there were 38 million more hungry people than in 2015. Famine, war, and persecution have forced people from their homes into a cycle of poverty and hunger. The best way to fight hunger is to equip families with the tools they need to feed themselves: teaching improved farming techniques; improving access to clean water; offering basic medical care; and providing emergency food to people who've been forced from their homes.

Through games, videos, conversation, and Bible study we can learn about hunger and ways to eradicate it. Rather than fasting completely, we will eat the kind of food available to people who live in poverty. Those who wish can abstain from food, drinking only clear liquids. We'll end the event with communion as we remember that we are fed physically and spiritually by God.

Youth will need to register for the event, providing a parental permission slip with medical insurance information. Advanced registration is required by Sunday, March 25. Check Sunday bulletins for additional information.

Each participant is asked to raise at least \$40, enough to feed a child for one month and just \$2 for every hour of the famine. \$480 is needed to feed and care for one child for a year. See Pastor Shawn for fund raising kits.

MESSY FAITH: PENN NE YOUTH RETREAT

Spruce Lake, Canadensis, PA, May 4-6

Registration and a \$50 deposit are due by February 11. Visit pnecc.org for more information and/or talk to Pastor Shawn.

Facebook

If you are a Facebook user, please "LIKE" the church's Facebook page. This will allow you to receive regular updates and messages from the church office.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2/01- Julia Kluge (2003)
Kristen Ludwig (1987) | 3/06- Leo Houck (1937) |
| 2/02- Don McCormick
Bill Schaeffer, Jr. (1969) | 3/08- Theresa Luckenbill
Robert McCord, Jr.
Pat Painter (1938) |
| 2/03- Peg Spotts (1940) | 3/10- Bob Gordon, Sr.
Kadence Sonon (2014)
Rhonda Thompson (1965) |
| 2/05- Becky (Deatrich) Devlin (1990) | 3/11- Emily Daniels (1996)
Allen Ebling (1972) |
| 2/09- Kyle Wingle (1995) | 3/12- Deb Mattera (1956)
Abigail Schrader (2009) |
| 2/11- Rebecca Andrefski (1950)
Megan Ditzler (1998)
Irene Mordosky (1943) | 3/13- Brad Moyer (1971) |
| 2/13- Mary Ann Gable
Deb McCormick (1952) | 3/14- Carson Pritiskutch (2000)
David Shaup
Dave Schrader (1971) |
| 2/17- Keith Edling (1958) | 3/17- Cheryl Morgan (1988)
Jesse Skrobak (2004) |
| 2/18- Kaden Bayliff (2005)
Tim Burian (1957)
Bev Scott (1967) | 3/18- Carole Lee (1947) |
| 2/20- Tracy Lang (1974) | 3/23- Austin Boyer (1999)
Calandra Henninger (1993) |
| 2/22- Charles Shappell, III (1987)
Gary Ebling (1952) | 3/24- Carla Keller (1967)
Wayne Renninger
Rachel Skocik (1984)
Billy Wingle, Jr. (1992) |
| 2/23- Ann Risser (1942) | 3/29- Lew Hummel (1947) |
| 2/24- Ashley Shappell (1988) | 3/30- Robert Shaup
Jeff Spotts (1959) |
| 2/26- Jack Fultz (2001) | 3/31- Adam Mattera (1985) |
| 2/27- Addison Watkins (2009) | |
| 3/01- Gail Kerschner (1957) | |
| 3/02- Justene Frushon (1987)
Jeniva Unger (1975) | |
| 3/03- Danielle Guldin (1985) | |
| 3/05- Craig Spotts (1964)
Matt Unger (1973) | |

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2/02- Dave & Janene Ditzler (1991) | 3/08- Al & Linda Deatrich (1986) |
| 2/12- Kenny & Carrie Ann Klinger (1999) | 3/13- Dennis & Renee Mohl (2009) |
| 2/18- Mike & Bobbie Donati (2006) | 3/15- Michael & Sharon Wagner ('03) |
| 2/24- Glenn & Deb Spotts (1979) | 3/16- Harold & Suzanne Schrader ('63) |
| 3/01- Russ & Sammy Krobert (1969) | 3/16- Tom & Sue Stewart (1974) |
| 3/01- Bill & Rhonda Thompson (1996) | |

If we missed a birthday or anniversary, listed an incorrect date or do not have the year, please call the church office so that we are able to correct and/or update our records.

SPRING POTATO FILLING SALE

Sponsored by:
First United Church of Christ
110 Route 61 South
Schuylkill Haven
385-2049

Order Deadline: **Sunday, March 4**

Pickup: **Saturday, March 24, 9-11 AM**

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

_____ Containers @ \$7 each = \$ _____
Each Container holds 2 pounds of filling.
That's \$3.50 per pound.

PAYMENT IS DUE WITH YOUR ORDER FORM

EASTER FLOWERS – 2018

The season of Lent is almost here. Orders are now being taken for Easter Flowers that will adorn the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 1. Please return this form, **along with payment**, to the church office. Additional forms are available in the Narthex.

Deadline – Sunday, March 4

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH ORDER.

Name _____

Phone # _____

TYPE OF FLOWER

LILIES ____ **TULIPS** ____ **DAFFODILS** ____

In **HONOR** of _____

In **MEMORY** of _____

BY: _____

Please use the exact wording you want to appear in the Flower Bulletin.

COST: \$7/plant & PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER!!!

Please return your order and payment to the church office by mail or place the order and payment in the Church Secretary's mailbox located by the offices or in the offering plate.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I will take my flowers home.
_____ I do not want my flowers. The church can use them.

If you cannot pick up your flowers, the flowers will be kept in the church for 1 week. Flowers can then be picked up during the regular office hours (Weekdays, 9 AM – 1 PM).

Any flowers that have not been claimed will be given away.