

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 2020 (MARCH & APRIL) NEWSLETTER**  
is Sunday, February 9!!

*Glory* TO THE  
NEWBORN  
*King*

**FIRST CHURCH HERALD**  
Vol. 38, Issue 6      Newsletter of First UCC      Sch. Haven, PA  
**WINTER 2019/2020**  
**DECEMBER 2019, JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2020**



“Then the  
**glory of the LORD**  
shall be revealed,  
and **all people** shall see it together.”

Isaiah 40:5, NSRV

**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](mailto:firstuccschuylkillhaven@verizon.net)

**WEBSITE** – [www.firstucc-haven.org](http://www.firstucc-haven.org)

Find us on Facebook!

*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](mailto:firstuccpastor@verizon.net)    Cell (570) 617-7185

**OTHER STAFF**

**Minister of Music – Chris Evans**

([chrisevans838@gmail.com](mailto:chrisevans838@gmail.com) or 717-329-6904)

**Church Secretary – Jen Semanco**

(also Special Funds Treasurer)

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

**2019 CONSISTORY MEMBERS**

Harris Bradley, Vice President (385-1494); Brian (Fred) Edling, Recording Secretary (385-7343); Keith Edling (385-1199); George Hosler (366-1400); Carrie Ann Klinger, Treasurer (728-0173); Kenny Klinger, President (205-5465); Malaki Nye; George Rondeau; Rusty Searle (385-2533); Cheryl Strunk (610-750-1210), Lora Yoder & Peggy Zechman (366-1400)

**SERVICE CANCELLATIONS**

When it snows we may need to cancel Sunday services. Last winter we used an automated call service. Did you receive a phone call last winter when we had to cancel worship? If you didn't, please call Jen in the church office (385-2049) so that our records can be updated with your current phone number. We will also have cancellation information on the church answering machine and our Facebook page.

**SALUTATIONS FROM SHAWN**

**EXPECTING GLORY**

"Well, woke up this morning with my mind stayin' on Jesus."

The words of this old gospel song have been rattling in my brain. While I usually wake up thinking about God, lately it's Baby Jesus who is in my thoughts. As we pull together this newsletter, details for Christmas Eve, Hanging of the Greens and BCE Advent Worship keep intruding, making it difficult for my mind to stay on one topic for one minute.

You probably know what I mean. Frequently we are asked to multi-task, to make dinner while helping children with homework, to conduct a business meeting while driving in the car, to sit in one class while thinking about (and even studying for) the test coming up in the next class. Sometimes it feels like we're living in past, present and future simultaneously.

The celebration of the birth of Jesus offers us that rare gift of living in the fullness of the time. While all of the expectations of Christmas celebrations pile upon us, even as we check off the items on our to-do list, the presence of God intrudes. Through the birth of Jesus, God speaks to us gently, saying yet again, "I am with you."

Knowing God is with us, we should expect to see the glory of the Lord shining upon us every moment, we should expect to hear the sound of angels singing as our own voices join the heavenly chorus in praise, we should expect to feel the same heart-pounding wonder that overwhelmed Mary as she learned she would carry the Christ Child.

We too carry Christ in our hearts. Jesus was God's love made flesh, pouring down from heaven in glorious light, to fill our hearts, our moments, our lives.

Take a breath: live in this moment. Expect glory. God is with you. Glory be to God in the highest!

Yours in Christ,  
*Pastor Shawn*

While I am on vacation December 26 through January 2, Rev. Kevin Fruchtl at St. Mark's UCC Cressona will provide pastoral care. Please call the church office if someone is ill or enters the hospital. You may reach Rev. Fruchtl at St. Mark's 570-385-0242 or on his cell at 610-334-5130.

## WORSHIP IN ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY

### ADVENT THEME – EXPECTING GLORY

#### December 1

#### Walking in Light and Peace

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent; Hanging of the Greens; Communion; NO Kid's Church  
 Isaiah 2:1-5 The Future House of God  
 Romans 13:11-14 Put on Christ  
 Matthew 24:36-44 Remain Watchful and Ready

#### December 8

#### Rooted in Righteousness and Hope

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent; Angel Tree Gifts; BCE Sunday; NO Children's Church  
 Isaiah 11:1-10 The Peaceful Kingdom  
 Romans 15:4-13 The Gospel for Jews and Gentiles  
 Matthew 3:1-12 John the Baptist Prepares the Way

#### December 15

#### Visions of Patience and Joy

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent; Bell Choir Special Music  
 James 5:7-10 Be Patient in Waiting  
 Luke 1:46b-55 Mary's Song of Praise  
 Matthew 11:2-11 Jesus Eases John's Doubt

#### December 22

#### Signs of Prophecy and Love

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent; Praise & Healing  
 Isaiah 7:10-16 The Lord Will Give You a Sign  
 Romans 1:1-7 Set Apart for the Gospel  
 Matthew 1:18-25 An Angel Appears to Joseph

#### December 24

#### Expecting Glory

Christmas Eve (4 PM, 7 PM & 11 PM); Candlelight, Carols and Communion  
 Isaiah 9:2-7 Reign of Justice and Righteousness  
 Titus 2:11-14 The Grace of God Appeared  
 Luke 2:1-20 The Birth of Jesus

#### December 29

#### Bringing Glory

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas; NO Children's Church  
 Isaiah 63:7-9 God's Mercy Remembered  
 Hebrews 2:10-18 Tested through Suffering  
 Matthew 2:13-23 The Escape to Egypt



### EPIPHANY THEME – FIRST LIGHT

#### January 5, 2020

#### First Light

Epiphany Sunday; New Year Celebration, Everybody Birthday, Communion;  
 NO Children's Church  
 Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Everything Has Its Time  
 Isaiah 60:1-6 Promises of Glory  
 Matthew 2:1-12 Visitors from the East

## WORSHIP IN EPIPHANY

#### January 12

#### First Waters

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; Baptism of Christ; Renewal of Baptismal Vows  
 Isaiah 42:1-9 Light to the Nations  
 Acts 10:34-43 Gentiles Hear the Good News  
 Matthew 3:13-17 The Baptism of Jesus

#### January 19

#### First Revealed

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; Installation of Consistory; Ecumenical Sunday  
 Isaiah 49:1-7 The Mission of God's Servant  
 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 Enriched in Christ  
 John 1:29-42 John the Baptist Proclaims the Messiah

#### January 26

#### First Named

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany  
 Isaiah 9:1-4 The Former and the Latter  
 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Divisions in the Church  
 Matthew 4:12-23 Jesus Begins His Ministry

#### February 2

#### First Blessed

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; Communion; Souper Bowl of Caring  
 Micah 6:1-8 God Challenges the People  
 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Christ the Power and Wisdom of God  
 Matthew 5:1-12 Jesus Gives the Beatitudes

#### February 9

#### First Known

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany  
 Isaiah 58:1-12 False and True Worship  
 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 The True Wisdom of God  
 Matthew 5:13-20 Jesus Teaches about Salt and Light

#### February 16

#### First God's

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; 2019 Financial Congregational Meeting; Kline Tithe  
 Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Choose Life  
 1 Corinthians 3:1-9 Servants of Christ  
 Matthew 5:21-37 Jesus Teaches about Anger

#### February 23

#### On the Mountain

Transfiguration Sunday; Youth Sunday; NO Children's Church  
 Exodus 24:12-18 On the Mountain with God  
 2 Peter 1:16-21 Witnesses of Christ's Glory  
 Matthew 17:1-9 Jesus is Transfigured on a Mountain



## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

December 1	Hanging of the Greens	No Children's Church
December 8	BCE Advent Worship	No Children's Church
	All teachers needed. Children and youth will lead worship.	
December 15	The Birth of Jesus: Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7)	
December 22	The Birth of Jesus: Shepherds and Angels (Luke 2:8-20)	
December 29	Carols & Scripture Worship	No Children's Church
January 5	Everybody Birthday Party	No Children's Church
January 12	Calling Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-13)	
January 19	Peace on Earth (Isaiah 11:1-9)	
January 26	Christ's Sacrifice Foretold (Is.53:2-12)	
February 2	Jeremiah's Call (Jeremiah 1:1-12)	
February 9	Clay in the Potter's Hand (Jeremiah 18:1-11)	
February 16	Jeremiah's Scroll (Jeremiah 36:1-32)	
February 23	Transfiguration Sunday	No Children's Church

Thank you to our faithful teachers who share God's love with our children:  
Delia Edling, Gavin Fry, Riley Moyer, Malaki Nye, and Cole Paul.

## SPECIAL HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS & PASTORAL CARE

While Pastor Shawn is away on vacation December 26 through January 2, Jen will also be on vacation. The church office will be closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 1. During that time the answering machine will be checked daily. Rev. Kevin Fruchtl at St. Mark's UCC Cressona will provide pastoral care. You may reach Rev. Fruchtl at St. Mark's 570-385-0242 or on his cell at 610-334-5130.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MEETINGS:**

Thursday, December 5, 3:30 PM

January – no meeting

Thursday, February 6, 3:30 PM

Church members are welcome to attend BCE Meetings as we work together to provide Christian nurture to all ages in the congregation. Please join us!



## OFFERING

**Communion & Food Pantry Donations** ***Dec. 1 & Feb. 2***  
 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.

**Bethany Children's Home** ***December 8***  
 Our gifts support Bethany's ministry to neglected and at-risk teens who can no longer live at home. At Bethany they receive love and education that teaches them to be self-sufficient. Your offerings provide a home for children in need.

**The Compassion Fund** ***Dec. 15, Jan. 19 & Feb. 16***  
 This Special Offering is placed in an emergency fund for church members' use.

**Christmas Fund** ***December 22***  
 The Christmas Fund provides pension and health premium supplementation to lower-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy and lay church employees in need.

**OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)** ***January 26***  
 The OCWM offering is used within the PSEC for local ministries.

**Blanket Sunday** ***February 23***  
 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.

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

**Special Offering Envelopes**  
 The envelope offerings collected for **Christmas Eve** (December 24), **Christmas Day** (December 25), **Epiphany** (January 5), and **Ash Wednesday** (February 26) will be used to support the on-going ministry of First UCC. The envelope offerings collected for **Meat Bingo** (January 12) will be used to help supplement the fundraiser.

**Initial Offering**  
 The money collected for **\$5 Initial Offering** is used to offset the cost of printing the offering envelopes.

**Church Change Special Offering**  
 Our Church Change offering will be donated to the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches Community Ministries.

## ADULT SMALL GROUPS

### **Bible Study**                      **Tuesdays, 2 PM – Weiser Board Room** **December 3, 10, 17**              **NO Bible Study in January or February**

The subtitle of the book, "Fall in Love with the Book That Changed Everything", shares author James Merritt's belief that God's word has penetrated human hearts and transformed lives throughout human history. Yet we often overlook this power as our Bibles collect dust on a shelf. The goal of our study is to gain a big-picture view of God's message, to apply practical life lessons from the Bible, and to discover more about our purpose. We are an informal group and occasionally cancel class at the last moment. If you are joining Bible study for the first time, please call the church office at 570-385-2049 to make sure we are meeting.

**We will take a break for the months of January and February.**

### **The Love Diet**                      **Thursdays, 11 AM – Weiser Board Room** **NO Love Diet in December**                      **Resuming January 9**

Are you interested in taking care of the body God has given to you? Would you like to feel better about yourself? If you're interested in supporting others in a joint venture of healthy living, talk to Pastor Shawn.

If you have an idea for a small group, please talk to Pastor Shawn.

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION

### **EXPECTING GLORY**

**Tuesday, December 24 - THREE Worship Services**  
**\*\*4 PM -- 7 PM -- 11 PM\*\***

The heavens were telling the glory of God. The glory of the Lord shone around the shepherds and they were terrified. The angels sang "Glory to God" in the highest. Those who saw the infant Jesus were convinced they had seen God's glory in the flesh. No longer frightened, as the shepherds returned to their fields they glorified and praised God for all they had heard and seen.

As we gather for worship on Christmas Eve, our expectations will be fulfilled as we too experience the glory of the Lord, as God was revealed through the birth of Jesus. With beloved carols and special music, with communion and candlelight, we will celebrate the life of our Savior with joyful praise! Then inspired by the Holy Spirit, filled with God's glory, we can share with others the Good News that God's love is with us as we go into the world in expectation, where God is revealed again and again in glory.

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MTG REPORT

At the Annual Congregational Meeting held Sunday, November 17, the congregation approved the 2019 reports and budget, reviewed and approved the 2020 proposed budget, approved the actions of Consistory on the congregation's behalf in the previous year, and elected Consistory members. Following the meeting, Penny Shade was appointed by Consistory to fill the deacon's position left open by the resignation of Malaki Nye, who had a work conflict.

Please thank the people who served on Consistory for 2019: Harris Bradley (vice president), Brian/Fred Edling (recording secretary), Keith Edling, George Hosler, Carrie Ann Klinger (treasurer), Kenny Klinger (president), Malaki Nye, George Rondeau, Rusty Searle, Cheryl Strunk, Lora Yoder & Peggy Zechman.

## ANNUAL FINANCIAL CONGREGATIONAL MTG

The vote for the Kline Fund Tithe will take place Sunday, February 16, when the final 2019 YTD Financial Report will be presented for approval. 2019 Financial Reports will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, February 2.

## EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

The following totals are up to and including the end of October 2019 plus a comparison to October 2018 & 2017.

	<u>Oct 2019</u>	<u>Oct 2018</u>	<u>Oct 2017</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES –	\$194,958.70	\$198,780.34	\$181,784.29
REVENUE –	\$ 59,668.70	\$ 60,241.37	\$ 65,477.84
Resources from Kline Fund –	\$135,290.00	\$131,660.00	\$120,907.85
TOTAL REVENUE –	\$201,488.19	\$191,901.37	\$186,385.69
Gain/Loss –	\$ 6,529.49	\$ -6,878.97	\$ 4,601.40

***2020 Offering Envelopes*** are in the hall next to the Sanctuary. Please pick up your envelopes & those of friends and family. This will save the church mailing expenses. If you do not find envelopes for yourself or someone else who wants envelopes, **PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (385-2049)**. If you are unable to pick up your envelopes by the end of January and wish to have them mailed to you, please call the church office.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Surviving the Holidays Seminar

**Tuesday, November 26, 7-9 PM & Sunday, December 22  
1:30-3:30 PM, Bethesda EC Church, Reedsville**

The seminar is for people facing the holidays after a loved one's death. For more information, call Bethesda EC at 570-739-2241.

### Wreaths Across America

**Thursday, December 12, NOON, St. Ambrose RC Church**

Schuylkill Haven American Legion and Auxiliary Post 38 will welcome the Wreaths Across American Convoy on its way to Arlington Cemetery. Wreaths will be received to be placed at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial for each branch of the military. The community is invited for this ceremony to honor those who serve in the military and veterans.

## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

### LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, known as LIHEAP, helps low-income families pay their heating bills. People may apply online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) for LIHEAP and other services. The Schuylkill County office may also be contacted for an application at [877-306-5439](tel:877-306-5439).

\*\*\*\*\*  
**CONISTORY MEETINGS: 6:30 PM**

Thursday, December 12 – Christmas Dinner @ Hoss's  
Thursday, January 9  
Thursday, February 13

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Call the church office 570-385-2049 when:**

- **Someone is admitted to the hospital**
  - **You plan a meeting**
  - **You are moving**
- **A new baby arrives or a death occurs**
- **Your telephone number or address has changed**

**If you reach the answering machine, please leave a message.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## CONFIRMATION

### CONFIRMATION CHRISTMAS MARKET THRU DECEMBER 15

Before and after worship, the confirmands will have a display of items available for purchase with the proceeds supporting charity. Christmas cards will be available to order a gift in honor of a family member or friend.

### Fudge \$8 per pound – proceeds support My Father's House

Varieties: chocolate, chocolate mint, orange creamsicle, peanut butter  
Orders from 11/17-11/24 will be delivered 12/1.  
Orders from 12/1-12/8 will be delivered 12/15.

### Church World Service

Care for Children; Purchase Animals, Seeds & Tools; Secure Clean Water; Provide Emergency Assistance for People in Need  
Order from the CWS Best Gift Catalog

### Global Ministries

Support a Missionary; Sponsor a Child; Provide Clean Water; Procure Medical Care; Educate a Child; Support a Woman's Small Business; Help Refugees  
Order from the "Life-Changing Gifts" Catalog.

### SERRV

Order chocolates, food, coffee, jewelry, linens and other items from artisans in developing communities to lift them out of poverty.  
Order from the SERRV Catalog.

**Ornaments \$4** – proceeds support Christmas for a local family

**Silly Socks \$5** – proceeds support My Father's House

**CONFIRMATION CLASS** meets in the Weiser Board Room Sundays after worship until noon. Other activities include:

- Hanging of the Greens Lock-in, Fri. 11/29, 7 PM – Sat. 11/30, 9 AM
- BCE Advent Worship, Sunday, December 8, 9 AM Walk-Thru
- NO CLASS – Sunday, December 29. Happy New Year!
- Classes resume SUNDAY, JANUARY 5 after worship.

**See the "Fellowship" and "Teen FORCE" pages for other activities.**

If a confirmand is ill or will be absent from either class or worship, please call Pastor Shawn at 570-385-2049 (church) or 570-617-7185 (cell phone).



## EVANGELISM

### Expecting Guests

While we expect the glory of Christmas to shine in our lives during the Season of Advent, we can also expect guests. As people prepare for parties, wrap gifts, and make travel plans, the story of Jesus' birth seeps through the external trappings, calling people to worship and praise. Those who have not been raised in a church may be curious about the real reason for Christmas celebrations. If you see people at church you don't recognize, simply say hello. As we welcome others with friendly warmth, they will experience the peace, hope, joy and love of Jesus Christ guiding them into God's glory.

## HEALING SERVICE

### Praise & Healing

**Sunday, December 22, 9:30 AM**

The holiday season isn't joyful for everyone. For people who have experienced the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, the pain of illness or a broken relationship, depression is not an uncommon experience and can be heightened over the holidays. During worship on December 22, the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we will offer a healing service for those who struggle to find hope, as we remember that God shines light in darkness.

## MEAT BINGOS

Thank you to everyone who helped at our September and October Meat Bingos. The profit from the 9/14 Meat Bingo was \$1911.98, plus \$441 collected in offering envelopes. The profit from the 10/12 Meat Bingo was \$2207.59, plus \$76 collected in offering envelopes. Profits from the bingos are placed in the church's general budget to be used towards the everyday expenses. ***Thank you for your support!!***

**Our next Meat BINGO is scheduled for Saturday, January 18.** 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 2020 BINGO dates: Saturday, March 21**

**Other 2020 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.

## FELLOWSHIP

### Annual Christmas Party

**Friday, December 6, 6:30 PM**

**All ages are welcome.** In addition to delicious holiday food, the Bell Choir will play and we will sing Christmas carols. Adults and teens are asked to bring a wrapped gift costing \$5 or less, suitable for a male or female, for a gift exchange. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be our special guests. Parents and grandparents, **SANTA WOULD LIKE TO GIVE A GIFT TO EVERY CHILD BUT THE CHURCH DOES NOT PROVIDE GIFTS:** please call the church office if you have any questions about this. A free will offering will be received to help defray the cost of the meal. Bring a dessert to share if you choose. Please sign up in worship by Sunday, December 1 or call the church office at 570-385-2049 for reservations.

### SOUL (Seniors Out to Lunch)

**Second Tuesday, Noon**

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, December 10, Noon – Hoss's Restaurant, Cressona**

**Tuesday, January 14, Noon – Roman Delight, Orwigsburg**

**Tuesday, February 11, Noon – Country Squire**

### Women's Fellowship

**Second Sunday, 3 PM**

**December 8, January 12 & February 9**

All women in the church are invited to gather for a time of fellowship and food with no agenda: we'll simply enjoy time together as sisters in faith. If you like, bring a snack to share. We will cancel if the weather is bad.

### Second Saturday Cinema

**December 14, January 11 and February 8, 6:30 PM**

Bring your favorite snack to share while we watch a movie about faith and hope, reminding us that God performs miracles every day. For December 14, bring a DVD of your favorite Christmas movie and we'll decide what to watch together. We will select the movie for the next month as a group.

### Christian Rock-N-Bowl

**Sunday, January 26, 2-4 PM** *Reservations needed Sunday, January 19*

**Sunday February 23, 2-4 PM** *Reservations needed Sunday, February 16*

Enjoy bowling with friends and family at the Strike Zone Alleys from 2-4 PM for only \$10 per person. The price includes two hours of bowling, use of balls and shoe rental. Kids under 18 will receive a \$2 arcade card. Reservations are needed so please make a note in worship or call the church office.

## MISSION

### Confirmation Christmas Market

See the Confirmation page for details about their mission project.

### Giving Tuesday

**December 3**

After Thanksgiving Day, "Black Friday", "Small Business Saturday", and "Cyber Monday", "Giving Tuesday" on December 3 is designated as a day to support charities working to feed the hungry, fight disease, support veterans, and more. A contribution to charity could be the perfect gift to honor family or friends. Visit "Charity Navigator" or "giving.org" to verify whether charities are legitimate and how they will use your donations.

### Angel Tree Gifts, Gaudenzia and Family Gifts

Gift cards are hanging on the Angel Tree in the Narthex for children from the Salvation Army, the Gaudenzia Treatment Center and for two local families. The cards note the age and gender of the children along with clothing size and wish list. Gift cards would also be welcomed for the parents. In addition, cards will list food items needed for a Christmas meal. Please return your Salvation Army gifts, unwrapped and with the gift card attached, by Sunday, December 8 so they can be distributed by Christmas. Other gifts may be returned by Sunday, December 15.

### Reverse Advent Calendar

**Sunday, December 15**

The Reverse Advent Calendar reminds us it's better to give than to receive. Set aside a box, adding a non-perishable food item or household paper product each day to donate to the local food pantry. Bring your gathered food to church on Sunday, December 15, so that it can be distributed at the Schuylkill Haven Area Food Pantry on December 20. (If you bring your food to the church after Christmas it will still greatly benefit people in our community over the winter.) Thank you for caring for God's people in need.

### Undie Sunday

**December 15**

The First Church tradition continues of collecting men's, women's and children's NEW underwear still in its packaging, in all sizes, to pass on to Servants to All, a non-profit in Pottsville working with the homeless, and Schuylkill Women in Crisis, which helps individuals leaving abusive situations. Please place your donations in the marked box in the Narthex.

### Winter Clothing Donations Needed

Servants to All, a non-profit for the homeless and poor in Pottsville, is seeking winter coats, gloves, hats and scarves. All sizes are needed: boys, girls, men and women, new and/or gently used (and CLEAN). Donations will be received through December. A list of additional items is in the Narthex.

## MISSION, cont'd

### Rosewood Caroling

**Sunday, December 15**

Meet in the Narthex after worship to organize a carpool up the hill to take a few gifts and offer a few carols to the residents.

### Souper Bowl of Caring

**Sunday, February 2**

Most of us will gather on Super Bowl Sunday to watch the game and stuff our faces with tasty snacks. Many people in our area are unable to feed themselves, so we are asking everyone who attends worship on February 2 to bring a dollar for a special collection for the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry as we strive to feed our neighbors in need.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

The Bell Choir has planned special music the month of December. The Bell Choir will play at the Church Christmas Party on Friday, December 6, in worship on December 15, and on Christmas Eve at the 4 PM worship service. The Bell Choir will not practice on December 29, January 5 or January 19. They'll meet to mark music and clean bells on January 12, 8:15 AM. Weekly practices will resume on Sunday, January 26, 8:15 AM.

Thank you, Bell Choir, for sharing the joy of the Lord with the church!

## PROPERTY UPDATES

When cold weather arrived in October, we discovered the boiler wouldn't start. SLJ, the company which services our heating and cooling system, found several problems with the boiler. They recommended replacing it; Consistory concurred. At a special Congregational Meeting on October 20, the congregation approved the expense of \$36,000 to replace the old boiler with two new boilers. In addition, the congregation adopted a three year plan to replace the \$36,000 borrowed from the Kline Fund. If 50 people pay an extra \$20/month or if 100 people pay an extra \$10/month, the cost will be covered in three years' time. "Boiler Donation" envelopes are in the Narthex. *At the time this newsletter was printed, nearly \$2000 had been donated to the fund already.* (The North Manheim Township charged an additional \$1000 in fees to replace the boiler so total cost is now \$37,000.)





## PSEC-UCC

### **PSEC Fall Meeting Report from Sunday, November 17**

The Pennsylvania SE Conference gathered at Ursinus College for worship, prayer, and to share visions about ministry in service to Christ. A 2020 budget was approved. Good news was shared that churches have raised \$50,000 for the Pension Board "Generations of Service Campaign" in 18 months rather than the five year plan. A vote passed to explore the idea of a mobile conference office. The meeting adopted two social justice issues to address: addiction and climate change. Visit psec.org for more information.

## SCHUYLKILL ASSOCIATION

### **Fall Meeting Report from Sunday, October 21**

At the fall meeting of the Schuylkill Association held at St. Mark's UCC, Cressona, reports were received from the Committee on Ministry, Communications Committee, Disaster Relief Ministry, Clergy Ministerium, Health Ministry, and Locust Lake Ministry. The impact of addiction on the community was also discussed as we explored ways the church can help to reduce stigma and see that people receive help.

## SCHUYLKILL HAVEN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### **Monthly Food Pantry 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, 1 PM December 20, January 17 & February 21**

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). Doors open at 1 PM.

### **Bi-Monthly Council Meeting Tuesday, January 28, 7 PM**

Our church will host the Council of Churches as members meet to ensure that the food pantry, blood drive, and other community ministries continue to meet local needs. If you are interested in learning more about Council or serving on the Council, please talk to Pastor Shawn.

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### **Hospitalization**

**When someone in your home is hospitalized, please call the church office to let us know. Most hospitals DO NOT call the church office when members are admitted.**

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## STEWARDSHIP

### **OUR LIFE IS STEWARDSHIP: FINDING OURSELVES**

#### ***Why are you living? What is keeping you from fully living?***

As a new year approaches, God is at work to remind us that our Creator is always offering new beginnings. Christian spiritualist Thomas Merton noted: "You think you can identify a person by giving date of birth, address, height, eye color and even fingerprints. Such information...doesn't say anything about the person. If you want to know me, ask me what I think I am living for and ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully." This is where the church, the community of faith, can help us discover our God-giftedness and to live fully for what we are created to do.

## STEWARDSHIP – CHURCH FUNDRAISERS

**Meat BINGO, Saturday, January 18.** Please sign up to donate food items to sell and/or donate your time to help with the event.

**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. (Don't hand in 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.

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

### **Help Erase Medical Debt Giving Tuesday, December 3**

The United Church of Christ has launched a campaign to help people eradicate medical debt. Local churches and the national church wiped out \$5.3 million of medical debt for almost 6000 families in the Chicago area. Medical debt contributes to more than 60% of bankruptcies. Yet almost 75% of people with medical debt have health insurance. On Giving Tuesday, December 3, you can visit ucc.org to donate to erase medical debt. \$50,000 donated by the UCC will absolve \$5 million in medical debt. For more information, visit ucc.org.

## YOUTH & TEENS (Grades 5-12)

### Youth & Teen Lock-In and Service Project

**Friday, November 29, 7 PM – Saturday, November 30, 9 AM**

Youth in sixth grade and older are invited to bring a sleeping bag and change of clothes along with a snack to share to the lock-in. We'll set up for Hanging of the Greens, make fudge, enjoy games and activities, maybe watch a Christmas movie, and more. We'll wrap up with breakfast, ready to head out the door at 9 AM Saturday morning. Parent permission slips and medical forms must be provided for young people to participate. Talk to Pastor Shawn or Delia Edling if you have questions.

### Church Christmas Party **Friday, December 6, 6:30 PM**

This party is for all ages! Invite your friends to come for good food, carols and a gift exchange. Teens and adults are asked to bring a wrapped gift suitable for either a female or male, costing less than \$5 to exchange with other teens and/or adults. See details on the "Fellowship" page.

### BCE Advent Worship **Sunday, December 8, 9 AM**

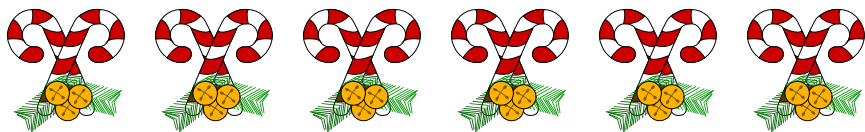
Walk through the worship service before you lead worship at 9:30 AM.

### Enough For All – 30 Hour Famine **Friday, February 21, 6 PM – Saturday, February 22, 6 PM**

In January, pick up a packet to begin gathering funds for the 30 Hour Famine. One in nine people in the world don't get enough to eat. Many poor farmers can't grow enough food to feed their own families, much less sell to get income for essentials like education and healthcare. That's why we partner with World Vision to address immediate food needs — but also to equip people to thrive for the long term. REGISTRATION IS NEEDED BY SUNDAY, February 16. Talk to Pastor Shawn or Delia Edling if you have questions.

**See the FELLOWSHIP and MISSION pages for other activities.**

Message suggestions for activities for March and April to the church FB page.



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

## DECEMBER-JANUARY-FEBRUARY VOLUNTEERS

### Communion Prep/Cleanup

12/1- *Penny Shade*

12/24- \_\_\_\_\_

1/5- *George H & Peggy Z*

2/3- *Lora Yoder*

2/26 (Ash Wed) – *Peggy Zechman*

### Care Cards

December- *Lora Yoder*

January- *Christina Gibbons*

February- \_\_\_\_\_

### First Sunday Fellowship

12/1- *Edling Family*

1/5- *Donati Family*

2/2- *Sonon Family*

### Liturgist

12/1- *Hanging of the Greens*

12/8- *BCE Advent*

12/15- *Cheryl Strunk*

12/22- *Rich Rohrer*

12/24 (4 PM) – *Delia Edling*

12/24 (7 PM) - \_\_\_\_\_

12/24 (11 PM) - \_\_\_\_\_

12/29- *Delia Edling*

1/5- *Bobbie Donati*

1/12- \_\_\_\_\_

1/19- \_\_\_\_\_

1/26- \_\_\_\_\_

2/2- \_\_\_\_\_

2/9- \_\_\_\_\_

2/16- *Cheryl Strunk*

2/23- *Transfiguration*

2/26 (Ash Wed) – *Various Readers*

### Acolyte

12/1- *Zack Sloskey*

12/8- *Cole Fry*

12/15- *Jara Strunk*

12/22- *Frank Sloskey*

12/24 (4 PM) – *Lilly Edling*

12/24 (7 PM) - *Cole Paul*

12/24 (11 PM) - *Cole Fry*

12/29- \_\_\_\_\_

1/5- *Katie Miholics*

1/12- *Lilly Edling*

1/19- *Cole Paul*

1/26- *Frank Sloskey*

2/2- *Cole Fry*

2/9- *Zack Sloskey*

2/16- *Jara Strunk*

2/23- *Katie Miholics*

2/26 (Ash Wed) – *Confirmands*

### Children's Church

12/1- *NO Children's Church*

12/8- *All Teachers @ 8:30 AM*

12/15- *Delia & Cole Paul*

12/22- *Delia & Gavin Fry*

12/29- *NO Children's Church*

1/5- *NO Children's Church*

1/12- *Delia & Riley Moyer*

1/19- *Delia & Malaki Nye*

1/26- *Delia & Cole Paul*

2/2- *Delia & Gavin Fry*

2/9- *Delia & Riley Moyer*

2/16- *Delia & Malaki Nye*

2/23- *NO Children's Church*

If you cannot serve on the date listed above, please find a replacement and call the church office @ 385-2049 with the change. Also, please call the church office if you are able to cover any of the open dates.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

- 12/3- Herm Morgan, Jr. (1949)  
 12/8- Ronnie Alexander (1977)  
 Lilly Edling (2006)  
 12/10- Kali Sonon (2015)  
 12/11- Treasure Reichert (1972)  
 12/13- Ewen Dougherty (2007)  
 12/15- Russ Coover (1961)  
 12/16- Olivia Lang (2003)  
 Katie Miholics (2008)  
 Tim McCord (1969)  
 12/18- Donna Spotts (1959)  
 12/20- Doug Stewart (1984)  
 12/21- Bobby Riegel (1959)  
 12/22- William Spotts (1985)  
 12/23- Mary Cramer (1963)  
 John Donati (1947)  
 Michael Madenfort (1963)  
 12/24- Joseph Mattera Jr. (1979)  
 12/26- Sierra Pritiskutch (1993)  
 12/27- Adriana Darcangelo (2006)  
 Austin Keller (1993)  
 Angela Moyer (1974)  
 12/28- Bill Coffey  
 Jacob Moyer (1995)  
 Kelly Schaeffer (1968)  
 Shirley Wildermuth (1946)  
 12/29- Molly Marmas (2016)  
 Carrie Ann Klinger (1952)  
 Greg Semanco (1969)  
 12/31- Emily Reichert (2002)  
 1/1- Elizabeth Reichert (2001)  
 Lisa Edling (1964)  
 1/2- Cindy Brozana (1968)  
 Bud Lopez (1950)  
 1/4- Carol Donati (1949)  
 1/5- Casey Moyer (1976)  
 1/6- Mary Achenbach (1936)  
 1/7- Cole Paul (2006)  
 1/8- Gil Beury (1957)  
 Russell Coover III (1987)
- 1/11- Gary Keller (1964)  
 1/13- Patsy Wingle (1973)  
 1/14- Scott Lopez (1970)  
 Renee Mohl (1970)  
 1/16- Jon Spotts  
 1/17- Matthew Madenfort  
 1/18- Elizabeth Harner (2002)  
 Dale Mordosky (1942)  
 1/19- Kath Owens (1949)  
 1/21- Richard Rohrer (1958)  
 1/22- Mae Deatrich (1928)  
 Joe Mattera, Sr. (1955)  
 Rich Scott (1966)  
 1/23- Cindy Fisher (1957)  
 1/24- Michelle Dougherty (1980)  
 1/26- Norah Dougherty (2009)  
 1/27- Agnes Masler (1931)  
 1/28- Tina Kluge (1972)  
 1/29- Harold Schrader (1942)  
 1/30- Tom Stewart, Sr. (1954)  
 Pam Swirsky (1974)  
 Robbie Wensel (1991)  
 1/31- Tricia (Moyer) Mentzer (1981)  
 2/1- Julia Kluge (2003)  
 Kristen Ludwig (1987)  
 2/2- Don McCormick (1951)  
 Bill Schaeffer, Jr. (1969)  
 2/3- Peg Spotts (1940)  
 2/5- Becky Devlin (1990)  
 2/9- Kyle Wingle (1995)  
 2/11- Megan Ditzler (1998)  
 2/13- Mary Ann Gable  
 Deb McCormick (1952)  
 2/17- Keith Edling (1958)  
 2/18- Tim Burian (1957)  
 Bev Scott (1967)  
 2/20- Tracy Lang (1974)  
 2/22- Gary Ebling (1952)  
 2/23- Ann Risser (1942)  
 2/26- Jack Fultz (2001)

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!



- 12/17- Tim & Robin Bayliff (1983)  
 12/22- Jay & Diane Newswanger (2001)

1/14- Scott Lopez & Melissa Fox (2012)

- 2/02- Dave & Janene Ditzler (1991)  
 2/12- Kenny & Carrie Ann Klinger (1999)  
 2/18- Mike & Bobbie Donati (2006)  
 2/24- Glenn & Deb Spotts (1979)

*If we missed a birthday, 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.*

## Church Christmas Party

*For All Ages*



Friday, December 6, 6:30 PM

Gather together for a great meal, some Christmas carols and everyone's special guests...Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. Consistory asks that you register by calling the church office (385-2049) or signing up in Worship by December 1. A free will offering will be taken to help defray the cost of the meal. Bring your favorite dessert to share.

## MEAT BINGO

Saturday, January 18, 1 PM

Doors open at 11 AM

Tickets - \$15

Raffles & Specials are extra  
 Food & Drinks are available

