

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

Non-Profit Organization
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Information Deadline for the
EASTER 2021 (APRIL & MAY 2021) NEWSLETTER
is Sunday, March 14!!



GOD'S PROMISE



*I will be your God and
you will be My People.*

FIRST CHURCH HERALD

Vol. 40, Issue 1

Newsletter of First UCC

Sch. Haven, PA

LENT 2021 (FEBRUARY & MARCH)

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

As the building is not open to the public due to COVID-19, the church office is unable to accept visitors. Please call us so that we may respond to your needs. 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. Please know Pastor Shawn is available for you at any time. If you do need to stop by the office, masks are required.

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 (also Special Funds Treasurer)

Church Sexton – Penny Shade

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

2021 CONSISTORY MEMBERS

Harris Bradley, Vice President (385-1494); Brian Edling, Recording Secretary (385-7343); Keith Edling (385-1199); Carrie Ann Klinger, Treasurer (728-0173); Kenny Klinger, President (205-5465); George Rondeau; Rusty Searle (385-2533); Penny Shade (573-1449); Cheryl Strunk (610-750-1210); Lora Yoder (294-7716); & Peggy Zechman (366-1400).

PHONE & EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

Phone & email are the quickest and easiest ways of getting information to church members. Please notify us of your current phone number and email.

SALUTATIONS FROM SHAWN

Covenant Promise

A covenant is a promise, an agreement between two parties to be bound to one another, to come along with and to be in relationship with one another. In this church Season of Lent, we are invited to examine our covenant with God, our commitment to our relationship with the Holy One as we live in God’s promise of life in Christ.

The concept of covenant fills the Bible. God enters covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jeremiah and the people of Israel. The covenant between God and Israel promised God would be with them if they promised to go with God. They would unite in a relationship of trust and commitment. Yet the Old Testament tells the story of God’s complete faithfulness and the people’s recurring unfaithfulness to the covenant or, more specifically, to God.

The word “testament” actually means “covenant”. The Old Testament is the covenant between God and Israel at Mount Sinai. God promised, “I shall be your God and you shall be my people.” The New Testament is the new covenant in Jesus’ blood: God’s love became sacrificial, giving of its’ very self.

The late biblical scholar, Rachel Held Evans, wrote: “When the people of God abandon the covenant of love and fidelity, drawn as we are by the appeal of shallow, empty pleasures, God removes every possible obstruction to the covenant by being faithful for us, by becoming like us and subjecting Himself to the very worst within us, loving us all the way to the cross and all the way out of the grave.”

Through the cross we are offered the difference between death and life in this present time, at this very moment. Through Jesus we are offered God’s complete covenant. When we love God with all that we are, heart, mind, soul and strength, and when we love our neighbors as we love ourselves, we participate in the new covenant in Christ. For God’s love for us is fully revealed in the life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God’s eternal covenant promise extended to you, to me and to the world.

Yours in Jesus Christ,
Pastor Shawn

Thank you to everyone for your generous Christmas Gifts. We are humbled and honored to share in Christ’s ministry with you. The First UCC Staff

WORSHIP DURING LENT

THE SEASON OF LENT: THE PROMISE

February 17 Ash Wednesday (online only) Restored

Sacrament of Communion; Imposition of Ashes
 Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Repentance and Prayer
 Psalm 51:1-17 Cleansing and Pardon
 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Giving, Praying and Fasting

February 21 1st Sunday in Lent (online only) One for All

Genesis 9:8-17 God's Covenant with Noah
 1 Peter 3:18-22 Christ Suffered Once for All
 Mark 1:9-15 Jesus' Ministry Begins

February 28 2nd Sunday in Lent (online only) All on Earth

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 God's Covenant with Abram
 Romans 4:13-25 The Righteousness of Faith
 Mark 8:31-38 The Suffering Son of Humanity

March 7 3rd Sunday in Lent The Ten

Sacrament of Communion
 Exodus 20:1-17 God's Covenant with Israel
 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 The Cross is Foolishness
 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 13, so we won't miss you at 9:30 AM worship on Sunday, March 14.

March 14 4th Sunday in Lent Lifted to Life

One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering
 Numbers 21:4-9 Speaking against God
 Ephesians 2:1-10 Dead through Sin
 John 3:14-21 The Son of Humanity Lifted Up

March 21 5th Sunday in Lent Troubled Soul

Jeremiah 31:31-34 A New Covenant
 Hebrews 5:5-10 Christ the High Priest
 John 12:20-33 The Hour has Come

March 28 Palm/Passion Sunday Open the Gates

Jeremiah 31:31-34 A New Covenant
 Hebrews 5:5-10 Christ the High Priest
 John 12:20-33 The Hour has Come

WORSHIP DURING LENT & EASTER

April 1 Maundy Thursday Passover Sacrifice

7 PM Worship; Sacrament of Communion and Tenebrae
 Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14 The First Passover
 John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Jesus' New Commandment
 John 18:1-19:42 The Last Days of Life

THE SEASON OF EASTER: THE PROMISE FULFILLED

April 4 Easter Sunday Grace Appeared

8 AM & 9:30 AM Worship; Sacrament of Communion
 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Good News Proclaimed
 John 20:1-18 The Resurrection of Jesus



CHILDREN'S CHURCH

THE SEASON OF LENT – GOD'S PROMISE IN JESUS

- 2/21 God's Covenant with Noah-Genesis 5; Jesus' Ministry Begins-Mark 4
- 2/28 God's Covenant with Abraham-Genesis 15; Jesus Feeds 4000-Mark 8
- 3/7 The Ten Commandments-Exodus 20; Jesus Cleans the Temple-John 2
- 3/14 The Bronze Serpent-Numbers 21; Jesus and Nicodemus-John 3
- 3/21 God's New Covenant-Jeremiah 31; Bearing Fruit-John 12
- 3/28 Palm Sunday: Jesus Enters Jerusalem-Mark 11; Last Supper-Luke 22; Jesus is Crucified-John 19; Jesus is Risen-John 20
- 4/4 Easter Sunday Worship at 8 and 9:30 AM; Egg Hunt at 9 AM

Fun Facts about Lent

- ✓ Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter.
- ✓ Lent is forty days long since Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness after his baptism, preparing to serve God.
- ✓ Lent is a time when Christians prepare themselves for Easter. They [pray](#), [help](#) others, and give up some things they really like. We give up things we enjoy as Lenten discipline, to remember that Jesus gave up his life for us.
- ✓ Lent ends at Easter, a time of great celebration as we think of how [Jesus](#) died on the [cross](#) but rose again from the dead. Jesus' resurrection showed God's love for us. God promises to be with us always.

OFFERING

Communion & Food Pantry Donations **March 7**

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.

The Compassion Fund **February 21 & March 21**

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

Blanket Sunday **February 28**

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 **March 14**

Provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for displaced persons, emergency relief and rehabilitation. On average, of every dollar given to OGHS, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming and 5 cents for interpretation materials. The associated administrative costs are paid by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission National Basic Support.

Special Offering Envelopes

The envelope offerings collected for **Ash Wednesday** (February 17), **Palm Sunday** (March 28), **Maundy Thursday** (April 1), **Good Friday** (April 2), and **Easter Sunday** (April 4) will be used to support the on-going ministry of First UCC. The envelope offerings collected for **Meat Bingo** (March 14) will go to the general budget. (Unfortunately due to COVID restrictions we are still unable to host Meat BINGO fundraisers.)

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.

If you are unable to join us for worship, please mail your offering envelopes to First UCC, 110 Route 61 South, Schuylkill Haven PA 17972; or if you do online banking arrange to send a check to the church.



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

ANNUAL FINANCIAL CONGREGATIONAL MTG

As this newsletter was printed, the 2020 Financial Report and 2020 Special Funds Report had been mailed to church members. Ballots were included with the reports to determine whether they would be approved and to select charitable recipients for the 2020 Kline Tithe. Results of the vote will be shared in announcements and the May newsletter.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Easter Candy **Donation Deadline: Palm Sunday, March 28**

Individually wrapped candy or small toys able to fit in plastic Easter Eggs are needed for the children's Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday. Call the church office if you plan to drop off your donations at the door. If we resume worship in the sanctuary before Palm Sunday, you may also place your donations in the marked box in the Narthex by Palm Sunday, March 28. Thank you!

Easter Egg Hunt (tentative) **Sunday, April 4, 9 AM**

Pending a return to in-person worship by Easter, we hope to hold an Easter Egg Hunt. If the hunt is held indoors, masks will be needed. Please follow the church's Facebook page and worship announcements for more detailed information as we near Easter.

CHRISTIAN PASSAGES / SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Deaths – **George Hosler** passed away on January 13, 2021. **George** is survived by **Peggy Zechman**, daughter **Jen Hosler** & extended family.

New Members – **David & Sharon Helman** and **Mike Sheriff** were welcomed into membership on Sunday, November 15, 2020.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

The year-end totals for December 2020 and totals for January 2021.

	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021
TOTAL EXPENSES –	\$225,720.80	\$ 26,200.48
REVENUE –	\$ 66,428.97	\$ 5,919.09
Resources from Kline Fund –	\$164,900.00	\$ 16,100.00
TOTAL REVENUE –	\$231,328.97	\$ 22,019.09
Gain/Loss –	\$ 5,608.17	\$ -4,181.39

CHURCH FUND RAISERS

As the pandemic prevents the church from holding Meat BINGO presently, we are looking for new ideas for safe fund raisers. Talk to a Consistory member or Pastor Shawn if you have suggestions for new fund raisers.

Spring Soup Sale **Orders due Friday, February 26**

Soup choices are Chicken noodle, chili, clam chowder, or vegetable beef. Cost is \$7/quart. Call or message the church office to order. Pick up your order Saturday, March 6, 9 AM-Noon. Order form in back of newsletter. If you would like to donate funds to defray the cost of the soup components, please note your gift is for "soup initial cost" on your check or envelope

Filling Sale **Orders due Sunday, March 14**

Do you need filling for Easter dinner or do you just need to restock your freezer? Filling can be picked up Saturday, March 27, 9 AM – 12 PM. Cost is \$8 per container. Each container holds 2 pounds, so that's only \$4 per pound.

Shank's Vanilla

8 oz. bottles of vanilla are being sold for \$7 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.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Living a Healthy Life **for ages 50+**

Join our *free* 6-session chronic disease self-management workshop on how to lessen pain, fatigue and live a good quality of life while dealing with an on-going health condition. Spouses and caregivers welcome.

Location: 23 Meadowbrook Drive, Rt. 183, Schuylkill Haven, PA

Dates: Mondays, March 1 through April 5, 2021

Time: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

**COVID-19 safety precautions will be practiced.*

To register, please contact Diakon Community Services at 570-624-3017 by 2/22.

CONFIRMATION

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Presently, confirmation is offered online Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM. If and when worship returns to the sanctuary, confirmation will be offered after worship until noon. The confirmands are learning about key Old Testament characters and their influence on Jesus' teachings. During Lent the confirmands are required to complete worksheets each Sunday to reflect on this essential Christian practice.

Required Attendance Dates:

Wednesday, Feb. 17	7 PM Ash Wednesday Worship online
Sunday, March 28	9:30 AM Palm Sunday Worship
Thursday, April 1	6:30 PM Assist with Maundy Thursday Worship
Sunday, April 12	8 or 9:30 AM Easter Worship Services
	9 AM Easter Egg Hunt set-up

If confirmands are ill or will miss worship or class 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.

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

Currently, Jen and Pastor Shawn are limiting the amount of time that they are in the office together. Most days Pastor Shawn works from home. Jen is in the office Monday-Friday, 9 AM – 1 PM.

Church Office Closed:

Friday, March 19 -- Good Friday, April 2 -- Easter Monday, April 5

Office Drop Box

Recently a black drop box was installed to the left of the office door. This is a locked box and a safe location and contactless way for you to deliver items outside of (or during) office hours. Jen will check the box in the morning when she arrives at the office and also a few minutes before she leaves the office for the day.



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Lebanon VA Hospital Volunteer Drivers

The Lebanon Veterans' Administration Hospital is seeking volunteer drivers to take Schuylkill county veterans to their appointments in Lebanon. If you are interested, talk to Pastor Shawn.

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. Place the stamps in the large manila envelope on the bulletin board in the hall next to the sanctuary.

Disaster Ministries from a Distance

As people recover from disasters throughout the world, the present pandemic makes it difficult to address their needs personally. Through Church World Service, however, it is possible to make emergency cleanup buckets, hygiene, and school kits to offer help. Visit www.cwskits.org for details. If you have questions, please talk to Pastor Shawn.

SCHUYLKILL HAVEN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Monthly Food Pantry

February 19 & March 19

3rd Friday, 1 PM

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.

Bloodmobile

Thursday, March 11, 12:30-5:30 PM

Every two seconds someone in America needs blood. Council holds a Bloodmobile for the American Red Cross every other month at Jerusalem Lutheran Church. You must be at least 17 years of age, weigh at least 110 pounds and be healthy in order to be able to donate blood.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Online Worship Invitations

Inviting people to join us for worship can sometimes feel awkward, even with close friends. Our present circumstances requiring online worship make it easier to extend an invitation through Facebook or other social media for people to join First UCC for worship at a time convenient to them. Doing so we share the good news of the gospel that the time is now and God is here!

2020 SEEDS TO GROW GIVING

Seeds to Grow is the church's mission committee. Committee members are Linda Deatrich, chairperson; Roger Hubert and Mary Alice Ross. The money they allotted for 2020 Giving is as follows.

Crop Walk	\$ 400.00
SH Food Pantry	\$1,100.00
Orwigsburg Food Pantry	\$1,000.00
2 SH Fire Co (Liberty & Schuylkill)	\$1,000.00
Salvation Army	\$1,100.00
Toys for Tots	\$1,000.00
Gaudenzia	\$ 600.00
Bethany Children's Home	\$ 500.00
Servants to All	\$ 500.00
SH Fire Police	\$ 500.00
St. Joe's Learning – Pottsville	\$ 500.00
Amer. Cancer Society (Schuylkill County)	\$ 500.00
BM & SH Family (gift cards)	\$ 100.00
Total	\$8,800.00

SPRING FLOWER SALE FUNDRAISER

Just in time for Mother's Day and spring planting, the confirmands are selling bedding plants and hanging baskets. Order forms will be available in the Narthex in late March (or early April). The order deadline is Sunday, April 25. Flowers will be available for pick up Sunday, May 9 after worship. If that time doesn't work for you please call the church office. Thank you for supporting the confirmands who are raising funds for a gift for the church.

STEWARDSHIP – BOILER REPLACEMENT

The congregation adopted a three year plan in 2019 to replace \$37,000 borrowed from the Kline Fund for our new boilers. Thank you for your continued contributions to pay back this expense. Mark your gift "Boiler Donation" when you submit it to the church or look for specially marked envelopes in the Narthex after we return to worship in the sanctuary.

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you to: the congregation for your generous Christmas gifts to the church staff and for your kindness toward people in need at Christmas. You provided gifts for children through the Salvation Army and Bethany Children's Home, and Christmas gifts and dinner for two families.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!



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)

3/1- Bill & Rhonda Thompson (1996)
 3/8- Al & Linda Deatrich (1986)
 3/13- Dennis & Renee Mohl (2009)
 3/15- Michael & Sharon Wagner (2003)
 3/16- Harold & Suzanne Schrader (1963))
 3/18- George & Tracey Rondeau (2018)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

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)
 3/1- Gail Kerschner (1957)
 3/2- Justene Frushon (1987)
 Jeniva Unger (1975)
 Andrew Wagner (2015)
 3/3- Danielle Guldin (1985)
 Peggy Zechman (1945)

3/5- Craig Spotts (1964)
 Matt Unger (1973)
 3/6- Leo Houck (1937)
 3/8- Theresa Luckenbill
 Pat Painter (1938)
 3/10- Kadence Sonon (2014)
 Rhonda Thompson (1965)
 3/11- Allen Ebling (1972)
 3/12- Deb Mattera (1956)
 Abigail Schrader (2009)
 3/13- Brad Moyer (1971)
 3/14- Dave Schrader (1971)
 3/17- Cheryl Stripe (1988)
 Landon Stripe (2020)
 3/18- Carole Lee (1947)
 3/23- Austin Boyer (1999)
 3/24- Carla Keller (1967)
 Rachel Crumrine (1984)
 Billy Wingle, Jr. (1992)
 3/29- Lew Hummel (1947)
 3/30- Jeff Spotts (1959)
 3/31- Adam Mattera (1985)

If we missed an anniversary or 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.

SPRING 2021 SOUP SALE

Sponsored by:

**First United Church of Christ
 110 Route 61 South; Schuylkill Haven
 (570) 385-2049**

Order Deadline: **Friday, February 26, 2021**

Pickup: **Saturday, March 6, 2021
 9 AM – 12 PM**

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

Quart of Soup = \$7

<u>Soup</u>	<u># of Quarts</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Chicken Noodle		
Chili		
Clam Chowder		
Vegetable Beef		
Total:		

PAYMENT IS DUE AT PICK UP.

EASTER FLOWERS – 2021

The season of Lent is here. Orders are now being taken for Easter Flowers that will adorn the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 4.

Please return this form, **along with payment**, to the church office.

Additional forms are available in the Narthex.

Deadline – Sunday, March 14

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH ORDER.

Name _____

Phone # _____

TYPE OF FLOWER

LILIES _____ **TULIPS** _____

In **HONOR** of _____

In **MEMORY** of _____

BY: _____

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

COST: \$12/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.

SPRING POTATO FILLING SALE

Sponsored by:

First United Church of Christ

110 Route 61 South

Schuykill Haven

385-2049

Order Deadline: **Sunday, March 14, 2021**

Pickup: **Saturday, March 27, 9 AM – 12 PM**

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

_____ Containers @ \$8 each = \$ _____

Each Container holds 2 pounds of filling.

That’s \$4 per pound.

PAYMENT IS DUE WITH YOUR ORDER FORM