

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

Information Deadline for the
SUMMER (June-July-August) NEWSLETTER
is Sunday, May 14!!



FIRST CHURCH HERALD

Vol. 42, Issue 2

Newsletter of First UCC

Sch. Haven, PA

SPRING 2023 (APRIL & MAY)

I AM

◆ THE RESURRECTION ◆

AND THE LIFE.

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

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

Music Director – Jacqueline Engel

Church Secretary – Jen Semanco (also Special Funds Treasurer)

Church Sexton –

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

2023 CONSISTORY MEMBERS

Harris Bradley, Vice President; Brian Edling, Recording Secretary; Keith Edling; Carrie Ann Klinger, Treasurer; Kenny Klinger, President; Owen Owens; Rusty Searle; Penny Shade; Lora Yoder; & Peggy Zechman.

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.

CHURCH OFFICE DROP BOX

Reminder: a black drop box was installed to the left of the office door. This is a locked/secure box and a safe location and contactless way for you to deliver items outside of (or during) office hours. The box is checked daily.

SALUTATIONS FROM SHAWN

Life and death are intertwined, inseparable. We cling to life when it is threatened by death, suddenly comprehending that each day, each moment is precious. Clearly Jesus felt the same, as he prayed to God in the Garden of Gethsemane to take the sting of impending death away from him. Hanging from the cross in agony, he cried:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27: 46)

Jesus cried again with a loud voice and died, as the ground shook. His disciples had already deserted him, fear driving them into the shadows, wondering how God’s chosen Messiah could have died a criminal.

As the first day
of the week was dawning,
the two Marys went to the tomb.
Suddenly there was another earthquake,
as an angel rolled back the stone from the tomb
“Do not be afraid,” the angel said to the women,
“I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.
He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.
Go quickly and tell the disciples, ‘He has been
Raised from the dead. Go to Galilee;
there you will see him.’”
(Matthew 28:1-7)

The stone containing Jesus’ dead body was rolled away. The tomb was empty. Despite our fear of death, our desire to cling to the life we know, death cannot hold us anymore than the tomb could contain Jesus. Jesus was raised to new life to give us new life, a gift we receive immediately, not simply when we die. Thanks to Jesus’ resurrection, our fear is replaced with great joy, as it was for the women who met their resurrected Savior on that first Easter. Our lives are fuller, as each person and experience becomes more precious, for Jesus is our resurrected Savior as well, who welcomes us to live now and always in the presence of God, the Creator, the Source of all life.

Yours in Jesus Christ,
Pastor Shawn

WORSHIP DURING APRIL

THE SEASON OF LENT – Road to Reward: Daily Blessings

April 2 Palm/Passion Sunday Immediately Turmoil

Sacrament of Communion
 Psalm 118:19-29 The Gates of Righteousness
 Matthew 21:1-11 Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem
 Isaiah 50:4-9a The Obedient Servant

April 6 Maundy Thursday Going to God

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
 Matthew 26-27 Jesus' Final Hours

THE SEASON OF EASTER – Resurrection Life

Just as God created the heavens and the earth, God initiated a new creation through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are blessed with new life each day as we grow in the promise that God is with us always.

April 9 Easter Sunday Scared to Life

8 AM & 9:30 AM Worship; Sacrament of Communion
 9-9:30 AM Fellowship in the Narthex
 9 AM Egg Hunt
 Colossians 3:1-4 Opening Words
 Acts 10:34-43 Communion
 Matthew 28:1-10 The Resurrection of Jesus

April 16 2nd Sunday of Easter Entering Heaven

Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, the Dysfunctional Family
 Philippians 1:3-11, 19-21 Harvest of Righteousness
 Matthew 5:13-20 Salt and Light, Law and Prophets

April 23 3rd Sunday of Easter Foolish Life

Spring Flower Sale Order Deadline
 Jacob and the Twelves Tribes of Israel
 Philippians 1:27; 2:1-11 Imitating Christ
 Matthew 5:21-37 Concerning What Was Said

April 30 4th Sunday of Easter Uneasy Love

Praise & Healing
 Joseph, Son of Jacob, Second to Pharaoh
 Philippians 2:12-18 Lights in the World
 Matthew 5:38-48 Concerning Retaliation and Enemies

WORSHIP DURING MAY

May 7 5th Sunday of Easter Resisting Forgiving

Sacrament of Communion
 Moses, Pharaoh's Grandson and God's Attorney
 Philippians 3:1-11 Breaking with the Past
 Matthew 6:5-15 Concerning Prayer

May 14 6th Sunday of Easter Holy Hypocrites

Mother's Day; Summer Newsletter Information Deadline; Flower Pick-up
 David, King and Sinner
 Philippians 3:12-4:2 Press toward the Goal
 Matthew 7:1-14 Judging, Seeking, Finding Life

May 21 Ascension Sunday Fruit or Farse

Ezekiel, Persecuted Prophet
 Philippians 4:4-9 Rejoice in the Lord Always
 Matthew 7:15-29 Concerning Listening
 Acts 1:1-11 Jesus Ascends into Heaven

THE SEASON OF PENTECOST

May 28 Pentecost Sunday Given Glory

Communion; Rite of Confirmation
 Acts 2:1-21 The Arrival of the Holy Spirit
 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 Spiritual Gifts
 John 17:20-23 Jesus' Prayer for the Disciples

Call the church office 570-385-2049 when:

- Someone is admitted to the hospital
 (the hospitals don't call us)
 - You plan a meeting
 - You are moving
- A new baby arrives or a death occurs
- Your telephone number or address has changed
 If you get the answering machine, please leave a message.



OFFERING ENVELOPES

Communion & Food Pantry Donations **April 2 & May 7**

As we come to be fed at the Lord's Table, we remember those in our community who have difficulty feeding themselves. As more people seek assistance due to food insecurity, increased donations are needed at the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry, including all non-perishable foods, especially soup, vegetables, fruit; stuffing; cake mix; and juice. Thank you for caring for our neighbors!

The Compassion Fund **April 16 & May 21**

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

OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) **April 30**

The OCWM offering is used within the PSEC for local ministries.

Strengthen the Church **May 28**

All Together: The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the church. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will support leadership development, plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Your gift to "Strengthen the Church" may be offered in worship on May 28 or any time through ucc.org.

Special Offering Envelopes

The envelope offerings collected for **Palm Sunday** (April 2), **Maundy Thursday** (April 6), **Good Friday** (April 7), **Easter Sunday** (April 9), **Anniversary Sunday** (May 14) and **Pentecost Sunday** (May 28) will be used to support the on-going ministry of First UCC. The envelope offerings collected for **Meat Bingo** (March 12) will go to the general budget.

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.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

The totals for February 2023 plus a comparison to 2022 & 2021.

	Feb. 2023	Feb. 2022	Feb. 2021
TOTAL EXPENSES –	\$ 46,020.17	\$ 49,917.85	\$ 47,046.72
REVENUE –	\$ 11,741.89	\$ 12,013.23	\$ 9,584.86
Resources from Kline Fund –	\$ 31,400.00	\$ 28,900.00	\$ 34,300.00
TOTAL REVENUE –	\$ 43,141.89	\$ 40,913.23	\$ 43,884.86
Gain/Loss –	\$ -2,888.28	\$ -9,004.62	\$ -3,161.86

2022 KLINE TITHE RECIPIENTS

At the February 26 Congregational Meeting, five organizations were selected to receive \$3000 each: Bridge 129, Hillside SPCA, Red Creek Wildlife, Schuylkill Haven Fire Houses (\$1000 each), and Servants to All.

CHILDREN

Children's Church, for ages 4 through fifth grade, is offered on request during worship.

Easter Candy **Donation Deadline: Palm Sunday, April 2**

Individually wrapped candy or small toys able to fit in plastic Easter Eggs are needed for the children's Egg Hunt on Easter. Call the church office if you plan to drop off your donations at the door. You may also place your donations in the marked box in the Narthex by Palm Sunday, April 2. Thank you!

Easter Egg Hunt **Sunday, April 9, 9 AM**

An Easter Egg Hunt will be held between the 8 AM and 9:30 AM worship services. In case of inclement weather, the hunt will be held indoors. Confirmants and teens are invited to setup for the Egg Hunt at 9 AM or shortly before.

CHRISTIAN PASSAGES / SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Births – **Charlotte Jane Wingle**, daughter of **Kyle & Olivia Wingle**, was born on Tuesday, March 13, 2023. Charlotte is the granddaughter of **Bill & Patsy Wingle**, niece of **Billy Wingle**, and great-granddaughter of **Betty Wingle**.

Baptism – **Madeline Cecelia Spotts**, daughter of **Corey & Allison Spotts**, was baptized on Sunday, March 19, 2023. Cecelia is the granddaughter of **Craig & Lori Spotts**, niece of **Kristen Ludwig**, and great-granddaughter of **Pat Painter**.

Death – **Lee Miller** passed away on Saturday, February 18, 2023 and her services were held on Monday, February 27, 2023.



CHURCH FUND RAISERS

Meat BINGO

Saturday, April 29

Please sign up to donate food items to sell and/or donate your time to help with the event.

Annual Car Show

Saturday, August 5

Planning for the car show will begin soon. Talk to Kenny Klinger if you would like to help organize this fund raiser.

Shank's Vanilla

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

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.

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

Church Office Closed:

Friday, April 7 (Good Friday)
Monday, April 10 (Easter Monday)
Friday, May 12 (Staff Vacation Day)
Monday, May 29 (Memorial Day)

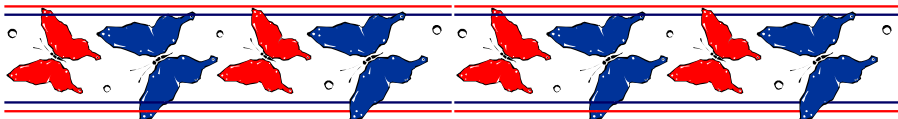
Staff Vacations

Jen will be on vacation Thursday, May 11 & Friday, May 12.

CONSISTORY MEETINGS

6:30 PM, Second Tuesday

Tuesday, April 11 & Tuesday, May 9



CONFIRMATION

Confirmation Class, Sundays until Noon

For the months of April and May, confirmation class will end at noon. The last confirmation class will be May 21 with the Rite of Confirmation on May 28. In April & May the confirmands will assist with special worship services. On **Maundy Thursday, April 6**, please arrive at church at **6:30 PM** to prepare for 7 PM worship. **Easter Sunday, April 9**, confirmands are asked to set up for the Easter Egg Hunt at **9 AM**. If a confirmand is ill or will miss church for any reason, please let Pastor Shawn know. Confirmands are asked to sell Spring Flowers for a fund raiser. Orders forms are in the Narthex and church office, as well as the end of this newsletter.

Spring Flower Sale

Orders Due Sunday April 30

Pick Up Sunday, May 14

Buy flowers for Mother's Day that will last all summer! The confirmands are selling bedding plants and hanging baskets. Order forms in the Narthex and Church Office. The order deadline is Sunday, April 30. Flowers will be available for pick up Mother's Day Sunday, May 14 after worship. If that time does not work for you, please call the church office. Thank you for supporting the confirmands who are raising funds for a gift for the church.

EVANGELISM

Holy Week Invitation

If you have friends who have questions about Jesus and the Christian faith, Holy Week is the perfect time to invite them to attend church with you. Holy Week is a synopsis of Jesus' life, and life in general, moving from the celebration of Palm Sunday to the community of the Lord's Supper, the evil of Good Friday, the silence of Holy Saturday, and then the joy of Easter new life. Extend Jesus' invitation to your friends to know God's love.

GRADUATES

Congratulations to all area Graduates! To our knowledge we do not have any high school or college graduates this year. Please notify the church office if we have overlooked a graduate!



MEAT BINGOS

The profit from the March 11 Meat Bingo was \$4020, plus \$130 collected in offering envelopes. Profits from the bingo are placed in the church's general budget to be used towards everyday expenses.

Our next Meat BINGO is scheduled for Saturday, April 29. Doors open at 11 AM; games begin at 1 PM. The prizes will be packages of meat. Admission is \$20 which includes a game packet for the regular 20 games. Extra game packets, 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.

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

Pottsville Soup Kitchen Emergency Help Needed April 13-23
Due to COVID, the Soup Kitchen lost many volunteers. Now Terry Alexander, soup kitchen coordinator, shops, cooks, and serves most of the meals for as many as 100 people. She needs help while she has a knee replaced. Food is available to prepare meals. If you can help, text, or call her at 570-617-2957.

Diakon Community Services Volunteer Opportunity
Meals on Wheels is the driving force behind nutritional and wellness support for older adults in Schuylkill County. The program helps participants remain independent in their homes, enables conversation between the participants and volunteers, lovingly fosters participants' well-being and safety, and provides essential nutritional support. Meals on Wheels is driven by volunteers who deliver meals to 350 county residents. Meals are delivered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 10 AM and 1 PM. Most delivery routes take one hour or less. For more information, please call Kathi at 570-624-3013 or 800-621-MEAL.

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.



MUSIC MINISTRY

BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
Begins April 16, Sundays after Worship for 45 Minutes
Bell choir practice will resume the Sunday after Easter, April 16. New members are always welcome. If you have questions about the music program, contact Jacquie Engle, our Music Director, 570-971-4195 or email her at jengel800@gmail.com.

PENNSYLVANIA SE CONFERENCE

2023 PSEC ANNUAL SPRING MEETING Unleashing the Spirit!
Friday, June 2 – Saturday, June 3, West Chester University
The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ invites you to enter a time of oasis, where you can take a deep breath, commune with the Spirit, find renewal, and know that you are not alone in the struggle. We invite you to be open to the Spirit's leading as we re-imagine what it means to be the Body of Christ in this place and time. Ask Pastor Shawn for details.

SCHUYLKILL ASSOCIATION

Schuylkill Association Spring Meeting, May 7, 3-5 PM
St. Paul's UCC, 100 E. Main St, Ringtown, in person and on Zoom. Registration and fellowship begin at 2:30 PM. Ask Pastor Shawn for details.

Camping at Locust Lake State Park
The Schuylkill Association supports a summer chaplain at Locust Lake. Church members are always welcome to attend the 9:30 AM worship service!

SOUL (Seniors Out to Lunch)

All adults are welcome to join SOUL for lunch on the second Tuesday of the month at local restaurants. **The time has changed to 1 PM.** Call Iris Weller at 570-366-0897 if you would like to attend.

April 11 – Mustard Seed Café, 110 E. Market St., Orwigsburg
May 11 – Perry Restaurant, Shoemakersville



SCHUYLKILL HAVEN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Monthly Food Pantry

3rd Friday, 1 PM

April 21 & May 19

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.

Summer Clothing Giveaway

Saturday, April 29

St. John's UCC, 121 E. Main Street, Schuylkill Haven, is offering FREE summer clothing to the community on Saturday, April 29 (rain date: Saturday, May 6) from 9 AM to Noon. If you would like to donate clean, gently used clothing for the clothing giveaway, drop off times are Tuesdays and Thursday, 10 AM-3 PM, April 1-20, and Tuesday, April 18 and Thursday, April 20, 5-7 PM. Thank you from the St. John's Mission Committee.

Bloodmobile

Thursday, May 11, 1-6 PM

Jerusalem Lutheran Evangelical Church, 252 Dock St.

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 save up to three lives.

Council of Churches Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 7 PM

St. James Episcopal Church

The Council provides emergency housing for homeless people, assists with utilities for families in need on a one time basis, and organizes a monthly food pantry for our community, as well as supporting a bi-monthly blood drive. First Church is in need of lay representatives to serve on the Council. Talk to Pastor Shawn if you are interested in community ministry.

THANK YOU NOTES

Notes expressing thanks to the church for a variety of generous gifts have been received from church members, the recipients of the Kline Tithe, and Seeds to Grow Mission gifts. They are posted on the bulletin board near the church office.



STEWARDSHIP

Gardening with God

When you walk by a flower bed on your way to worship, please take a minute to pull a weed as we care for God's church entrusted to us.

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. To date, the church has received \$9,602 toward our goal. Mark your gift "Boiler Donation" when you submit it to the church or look for specially marked envelopes in the Narthex.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)! We appreciate your commitment to stand with our local and international partners as they care for people fleeing their countries due to wars and other conflicts, provide food and water to poverty-stricken communities, provide emergency relief to communities rebuilding after disasters, and empower women with resources for their families. You responded to "It's Time to Share" with compassion, hearing Jesus' commandment to love your neighbor as yourself.



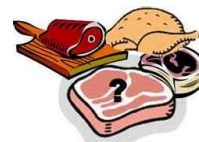
MEAT BINGO

Saturday, April 29, 1 PM

Doors open at 11 AM

Admission - \$20

Raffles & Specials are extra; Food & Drinks are available



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

- | | |
|--|---|
| 4/1- Lynn Moyer (1955)
4/4- Kaede Fessler (2003)
Reese Frushon (2020)
4/10- Iris Weller (1941)
4/11- Michael McCormick (2001)
Robyn Porter (1967)
4/15- Corey Spotts (1991)
4/17- Corin Paul (1980)
4/19- Daniel Devlin (2020)
Shawn Pritiskutch (2000)
Macy Marmas (2012)
4/20- Jake Haeseler (2000)
4/23- Emerson Spotts (2007)
4/28- Melissa Fox (1975)
5/1- Bobbie Donati (1961)
5/4- Megan Moyer (2000)
Richard Scott III (1999)
5/5- Wally Foose (1940) | 5/6- Steven Spotts (1982)
5/7- Kim Quinn (1970)
5/8- Brendan Fox (2001)
5/12- Claire Frushon (2017)
5/15- Misty Bressler (1963)
5/16- Rachel Sonnon (2001)
5/17- Anna (Fultz) Haller (1975)
5/18- Riley Bradley (2010)
Mary Alice Ross (1932)
5/19- Linda Spotts (1956)
5/20- Jacob Kluge (2000)
Pat Sprague (1936)
5/22- Ali Marmas (1984)
5/24- Maleca Tuite
5/25- Diane Newswanger (1959)
5/28- Brian Moyer (1968)
Briar Uniman (2020) |
|--|---|

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4/7- Don & Deb McCormick (1973)
4/15- Dwayne & Treasure Reichert (00)
4/20- Kris & Pam Sonon (2013)
4/27- Brad & Angela Moyer (1997)
5/3- Bill & Mandy Coffey (1986)
5/3- Ed & Ruth Ann Deschler (1997)
5/6- Dave & Linda Williams (1972) | 5/10- Ernie & Lynn Moyer (1975)
5/10- Jack & Corin Paul (2003)
5/19- Craig & Terri Luckenbill (1979)
5/22- Kevin & Ali Marmas (2010)
5/22- Tom & Mary Stewart (1999)
5/24- Tim & Cathy Burian (1997) |
|---|---|

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.



2023 SPRING FLOWER SALE

Orders are due by Sunday, April 30. Payment is due with the order.
 All flowers can be picked up on Sunday, May 14, after worship,
 OR by other arrangement with the church office.
 Call 570-385-2049 Monday-Friday 9 AM-1 PM.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please specify your color choice.
 We cannot guarantee your color choice, but we will do our best to match it.

	Color Choice	Amt. Ordered	Total Cost
11" Hanging Baskets -- \$15			
Nonstop Begonia			
Petunia – Trailing Type			
Sun Patiens			
Fuchsia			
Geranium			
5" Zonal Geraniums -- \$5			
5" Gerbera Daisies -- \$5			
5" Dahlia -- \$5			
Bedding Plants Flat=\$15 Half Flat=\$8 (smallest order allowed = ½ flat)			
Ageratum			
Alyssum			
Begonia			
Impatiens			
Marigold			
Petunia			
Salvia			
Snapdragon			
Vinca			
Zinnia			
Grand Total:			

The proceeds will benefit the Confirmation Class of 2023. Please give your order & payment to a Confirmand, Pastor Shawn or the Office.