

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  
WINTER 2023/2024 (DEC 23, JAN-FEB 24) NEWSLETTER  
is Sunday, November 12!!



**Fall's Splendor**

## FIRST CHURCH HERALD

Vol. 42, Issue 5

Newsletter of First UCC

Sch. Haven, PA

### FALL (OCTOBER & NOVEMBER) 2023



World Communion  
Sunday, October 1

9:30 AM Worship

All Saints Day  
Totenfest  
Sunday, November 5

9:30 AM Worship



**ALL SAINTS' DAY**



Christ the King  
Sunday

Reign of Christ  
Sunday, November 26

9:30 AM Worship

# 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

**SUMMER OFFICE HOURS** – 9 AM - 1 PM (Monday-Thursday)

**EMAIL** – [firstuccschuylkillhaven@verizon.net](mailto:firstuccschuylkillhaven@verizon.net)

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

## **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**

**Music Director – Jacqueline Engel**

**Church Secretary – Jen Semanco** (also Special Funds Treasurer)

**Church Sexton – Sue McGovern**

**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.

## **SPONSORS NEEDED**

This is a great way to note an important event or honor a loved one. Sponsor the bulletin (\$12), newsletter (\$12), or flowers (\$30). Call Jen to reserve your date (570-385-2049). Order forms are in the Narthex.

## **SALUTATIONS FROM SHAWN**

### **Books to Celebrate Our Wild and Precious Life**

Lately, I’ve been reading a book called, *An Immense World*. Written by Ed Yong, he notes that animal senses reveal the hidden realms around us. “Every kind of animal, including humans, is enclosed within its own unique sensory bubble, perceiving but a tiny sliver of our immense world.” We are invited to imagine beyond the limits of our own senses how other living beings employ scent, electromagnetism, and pressure to “see the world” with new eyes. We encounter sensitive crocodiles, singing bugs, and sparkling whales, reminding us that God has brought into being far more than we can every imagine.

Next on my reading list is *The Covenant of Water*, a historical novel recommended by a friend, written by Abraham Verghese, telling the story of a family in Kerala, India, who suffers the loss of a member to drowning every generation. The family is part of the Indian community converted to Christianity by the Apostle Thomas within years of Jesus’ death and resurrection, long before my ancestors in Europe. While the characters of the book are fictional, their real-life counterparts just happen to be my children’s ancestors. Their paternal great-grandfather was born in Kerala and served in the Church of South India.

The book which teaches us to hold life precious more than all other books is the Bible. Reading from it daily helps us see more clearly. As Frederick Buechner wrote, “It is possible to say the Bible is held together by having a single plot. God creates the world; the world gets lost; God seeks to restore the world to the glory for which he created it. That means that the Bible is a book about you and me, whom God also made and lost and continually seeks, so you might say that what holds it together more than anything else is us. You might argue that it is the book which more than any other also holds us together.”

Every story of the Bible connects us with God, opening our eyes and hearts to see the world with new eyes, to marvel at God’s creativity, to wonder that God continues to be revealed in the world and in our lives in wild and precious ways.

Yours in Christ,  
*Pastor Shawn*

## **CHRISTMAS EVE POINSETTIA PLANTS – 2023**

Unfortunately, the cost of the plants was not available at print time. Please check the Narthex throughout November for an order form. Info will also be available by calling the church office during the month of November. Payment is due with your order.

## WORSHIP IN OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

### A Wild and Precious Life

<p><b>October 1</b> World Communion Sunday; 18<sup>th</sup> Colossians 1:1-2; 2:6-15 Matthew 21:23-32</p> <p><b>October 8</b> 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; Neighbors in Need Offering Colossians 1:1-2; 2:16-23 Matthew 21:33-46</p> <p><b>October 15</b> Children's Sabbath / Teen Sunday; 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost Colossians 1:1-2; 3:1-11 Matthew 22:1-14</p> <p><b>October 22</b> 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost Colossians 1:1-2; 3:12-17 Matthew 22:15-22</p> <p><b>October 29</b> Reformation Sunday; OCWM Offering; Praise &amp; Healing Colossians 1:1-2; 3:18-4:1 Matthew 22:34-46</p> <p><b>November 5</b> Communion; All Saints Sunday; Colossians 1:1-2; 4:2-6 Matthew 23:1-12</p> <p><b>November 12</b> 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; Veterans Recognition; Angel Tree Cards Colossians 1:1-2; 4:7-18 Matthew 25:1-13</p> <p><b>November 19</b> Thanksgiving Sunday; Annual Congregational Meeting 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Matthew 25:14-30</p> <p><b>November 26</b> 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; Reign of Christ Sunday Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46</p>	<p><b>Say or Do</b> Sunday after Pentecost; CROP Walk Fullness of Life in Christ Jesus' Authority Questioned</p> <p><b>Amazing Inheritance</b> Warning against False Teachers Parable of the Wicked Tenants</p> <p><b>Come to the Party</b> New Life in Christ Parable of the Wedding Feast</p> <p><b>Tax Me!</b> God's Chosen Question about Paying Taxes</p> <p><b>Hanging on Everything</b> Christian Relationships The Greatest Commandment</p> <p><b>Woe or One</b> Totenfest; Filling Order Deadline Instructions on Prayer Jesus Warns against Religious Leaders</p> <p><b>Who is Ready?</b> Assured in Everything God Wills Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids</p> <p><b>Trusted with Abundance</b> Concerning the Times and Seasons Parable of the Talents</p> <p><b>Right Welcome</b> Glorious Inheritance The Final Judgment</p>
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## OFFERING ENVELOPES

**Communion & Food Pantry Donations** **Oct. 1 & Nov. 5**  
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.

**Neighbors in Need (NIN)** **October 8**  
NIN is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Through this offering we express our deep commitment to reach out to our neighbors with justice and compassion.

**The Compassion Fund** **Oct. 15 & Nov. 19**  
This Special Offering is placed in an emergency fund where 90% helps church members in need and 10% may be used for emergency community needs.

**Meat BINGO Offering Envelope** **October 22**  
The envelope offerings collected for the Meat BINGO will go to the general budget and help supplement the fundraisers. The next Meat BINGO is scheduled for November 4.

**OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)** **October 29**  
The OCWM offering is used within the PSEC for local ministries.

**All Saints Offering** **November 12**  
This offering helps to defray medical costs for retired clergy in the PSEC.

**Special Envelopes**  
The envelope offerings collected for **World Communion** (October 1) 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.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

**Bell Choir** practice is held in the music room after worship each Sunday. If you can count to four, if you enjoy being with other people, and if you like to make joyful noise, talk to Jacquie Engel, our music director, about joining Bell Choir.

## ADULT SMALL GROUPS

### "A Full Life in Christ" Bible Study: Thursdays, 4 PM

Join other church members to explore Paul's Letter to the Colossians, as we seek *A Full Life with Christ*. Talk to Pastor Shawn if you have questions.

Contact Pastor Shawn if you are interested in other small groups, like a book study or baking club, noting whether you prefer to gather in person or online with other members of the church in a small group. You can reach her at [firstuccpastor@verizon.net](mailto:firstuccpastor@verizon.net), church (570-385-2049), or home (570-385-5425).

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational meeting to approve the 2024 Proposed Budget, 2023 Committee Reports, and 2024 Consistory members is scheduled for:

**Sunday, November 19, 2023**

Please plan to attend and participate in the important issues to be addressed. Annual Reports will then be available to the congregation on **Sunday, November 5**. (2 weeks before the meeting). If you have any questions, please call the church office (570-385-2049).

## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

*Children's Church* is offered on request Sunday mornings during worship. Please check with the people at the front door. Children's bulletins and crayons are available in the Narthex.

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**Youth Sunday Rehearsal** **Sunday, Oct. 15, 9 AM**  
Youth who are participating in worship are asked to arrive at church half an hour before worship. The confirmands have planned worship with a theme of "Invite Everyone" which all of us can do as we follow Jesus.

## CHURCH OFFICE UPDATES

**Church Office Closed:**  
**Thursday, November 25 & Friday, November 26 (Thanksgiving)**

## CHURCH FUNDRAISERS

### Friends Helping Friends, Boscov's **Wednesday, October 18**

Buy a 25% shopping pass for \$5 to use on most purchases at Boscov's. Contact Carrie Ann Klinger (570-728-0173) to buy your shopping pass ticket or if you would like to help sell the shopping passes for the church.

### Filling Sale **Order Deadline, Sunday November 5**

Do you need filling for your Thanksgiving dinner or do you just need to restock your freezer? Order forms will be available in the Narthex & church office.

### Potato Filling Peeling **Thursday, November 16, 5 PM**

Volunteers are needed to peel potatoes.

**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, have your tag scanned. Boyer's tallies the readings and sends 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.

## CONSISTORY

Consistory has openings for two new members. If you have questions or are interested, talk to Pastor Shawn or Kenny Klinger, President.

## FELLOWSHIP

**Christmas Party** **Friday, December 1, 6:30 PM**  
**Save the Date!** Join us for food, carols, Santa and fellowship.

## MEAT BINGO

**Meat BINGO** **Saturday, November 4**  
Doors open at 11 AM; games begin at 1 PM. The prizes will be packages of meat. There will be 20 games for **\$20**. Specials & Raffles are extra. Food and refreshments will be available.

## COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

### Healthier Living with Pain

Join a free 6-session chronic pain self-management workshop to take charge of your chronic pain for good quality of life. For ages 60+. Good Shepherd Rehabilitation, 2655 Woodglen Road, Pottsville. Wednesdays, 10/26-12/7 (except 11/23), 9:30 am – noon. Register with Diakon Community Services 570-624-3017 by 10/21.

### One Rock One Community FREE Music Festival

Saturday, October 07, 11 AM–6 PM; 1008 Rock Rd. (Rt. 895), Pine Grove  
For everyone who loves gospel, bluegrass, and contemporary Christian music and wants to connect with others. A day of FREE fun for the whole family!

## CONFIRMATION

### Confirmation: Becoming Christ’s Disciples

Three confirmands are returning for their second year, Frank Costenbader, and Matt and Macy Marmas. The congregation will join in covenant with the confirmands on World Communion Sunday, October 1. As they prepare to confirm their baptism in Christ to become full members of the church, the congregation promises to encourage, support, and love them in the process.

### The CROP Walk Challenge

The confirmands are competing against Delia Edling and Pastor Shawn, to see who can raise the most money for the CROP Hunger Walk. The goal is to raise at least \$850 to build a wheel for clean water for an entire village! If you would like to help them, you can donate at church or you can donate online at [www.crophungerwalk.org/schuylkillhavenpa](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/schuylkillhavenpa), enter “First UCC Schuylkill Haven” in the search box to “Register” as a walker or to donate to the First UCC team.

## EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

The following totals are up to and including the end of August 2023  
plus a comparison to August 2022 & 2021.

	<u>Aug 2023</u>	<u>Aug 2022</u>	<u>Aug 2021</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES –	\$163,003.10	\$162,144.43	\$157,438.59
REVENUE –	\$ 47,712.92	\$ 44,938.16	\$ 46,863.19
Resources from Kline Fund –	\$108,760.00	\$114,400.00	\$114,900.00
TOTAL REVENUE –	\$156,472.92	\$159,338.16	\$161,763.19
Gain/Loss –	\$ -6,530.18	\$ -2,806.27	\$ 4,324.60

## HEALTH

### Healthy Steps in Motion

Join a free 4-week exercise program designed for people age 60+ of all fitness levels. 23 Meadowbrook Drive, Schuylkill Haven. Tuesdays and Thursdays: 10/3–31 (no class 10/17). 10–11AM. Register with Diakon Community Services at 570-624-3017 by 9/29.

## SCHUYLKILL HAVEN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### Monthly Food Pantry

**3<sup>rd</sup> Friday, Oct 20 & Nov 17, 1 PM**

Food or monetary donations are needed to feed people in 170-180 households in our area who receive food every month through the Council of Churches Food Pantry. Food is distributed on the third Friday of each month at the Food Pantry, located on Market Street behind Evans Delivery.

### Bloodmobile

**Thursday, November 16, 1-5 PM**

Held at Jerusalem Lutheran Church. Every two seconds someone in America needs blood. You must be at least 17 years of age, weigh at least 110 pounds and be healthy to donate blood. One pint of blood can save up to three lives.

### Council of Churches Meeting

**Tuesday, November 28, 7 PM**

St. Mark’s Brown’s Church, 151 Summer Hill Rd, will host this meeting, open to all church members. 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 supports a bi-monthly blood drive. Talk to Pastor Shawn if you are.

## PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

### PSEC Fall Meeting

**Sunday, November 12, 3 - 5 PM**

Registration opens at 2:30 pm; the meeting begins at 3 pm. This will be a Hybrid Event: online via zoom link or at St. Paul’s UCC, 1979 Weavertown Road, Douglassville. Both options will allow you to vote and participate in the meeting. A zoom link will be available closer to the date.

## SCHUYLKILL ASSOCIATION

### Sch Assoc Fall Meeting

**Sunday, October 15, 3 PM**

St. John’s UCC, 232 E. Market St. Registration opens at 2:30 pm; worship and meeting will begin at 3 pm. Our theme is “Stronger Together in Covenant.” Talk to Pastor Shawn for details. Everyone who is a member at First UCC is a member of the Schuylkill Association and welcome to attend the fall meeting.

## MISSION

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE: OCTOBER, NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

**Meals on Wheels Holiday Donations.** We are looking for small decorative items or greeting cards to include with Meals on Wheels food deliveries to homebound people. For October, Halloween or fall items are needed; for November, Thanksgiving items would be nice; and for December, Christmas items naturally. Place your donations in the designated box in the Narthex.

### Thanksgiving Food Offering, Sunday, November 12

During the holidays, the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches Food Pantry sees increased need for food donations. Bring your favorite non-perishable holiday food to worship, sharing with people in need in our community.

### Thanksgiving Food Baskets, Donations Needed November 19

Please sign up to provide food items for Thanksgiving baskets for two families, one in the Blue Mountain School District and the other in the Schuylkill Haven Area School District. Donations are needed by Sunday, November 10.

### Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week November 12-19

The struggle to fulfill basic needs can be difficult for many Americans who live paycheck-to-paycheck. An illness, injury, or job loss can easily lead to poverty, hunger, and homelessness. Data shows that about 43 million Americans live below the poverty level and one in five children is afflicted by poverty. Approximately half a million Americans are without a home. **How can we help?** Donate to the SH Council of Churches Food Pantry, PO Box 303, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972. Give to Servants to All, 4 S. Center St., Pottsville, which offers services to help people find jobs, permanent homes, and medical care.

## SOUL (Seniors Out to Lunch)

All adults are welcome to join SOUL for lunch on the second Tuesday of the month, typically at Perry Restaurant, 11 Bellevue St., Shoemakersville, 1 PM. Check Sunday worship bulletins and the church's online information for changes.

## THANK YOU

**Meat BINGO Volunteers**, who raised \$1,436 in a single day to support the ministry of Jesus Christ at First UCC. The next Meat BINGO is Saturday, Nov 4.  
**Borough Day Volunteers**, who sold food and visited with people on Borough Day, to support the church's ministry.  
**Jen Semanco**, who celebrated her twentieth anniversary as church secretary!

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 10/2- Matthew Marmas (2010)    | 10/28- Jay Newswanger (1955)     |
| 10/4- Lexi Baver (2007)        | 10/30- Linda McDonald (1948)     |
| Amanda Coffey (1961)           | 10/31- Frank Sloskey (2004)      |
| Collin Devlin (2022)           | 11/2- Zach Sloskey (2002)        |
| Linda Williams (1949)          | 11/3- Glenn Spotts (1955)        |
| 10/8- Roger Kramer             | 11/4- Brian (Fred) Edling (1969) |
| 10/9- Darrell Spotts (1958)    | 11/5- Bob Wensel (1967)          |
| 10/11- Craig Luckenbill (1954) | 11/7- Sara Keller (1990)         |
| Lora Yoder (1959)              | Adelynn Klimas (2013)            |
| 10/13- Jess Schrader (1976)    | 11/8- Dwayne Reichert (1964)     |
| 10/16- Cole Fry (2007)         | 11/9- Sarah Bressler (1996)      |
| Linda Pritiskutch (1966)       | 11/11- Brandon Donati (1996)     |
| John Shive (1959)              | Roger Hubert, Sr.                |
| 10/18- Jen Semanco (1972)      | Mel Wensel (1968)                |
| 10/19- Bob Lee (1947)          | 11/12- Killian Skocik (2004)     |
| Charles Marx (1945)            | 11/15- Jack Fisher (1934)        |
| 10/21- Helen Gasparetti (1934) | 11/18- Alycia Semanco (2000)     |
| Riley Moyer (2003)             | 11/22- Jim Harner                |
| 10/24- Elizabeth Corby (2014)  | 11/25- Owen Owens (1949)         |
| Linda Marx (1947)              | 11/27- Audrey Hummel (1949)      |
| 10/25- Shirley Riegel (1937)   | Nicholas Semanco (1995)          |
| Mark Spotts (1966)             | 11/28- Linda Deatrich (1960)     |
| 10/28- Ed Deschler (1970)      | 11/30- Justin Cramer (1985)      |
| Ruth Ann Deschler (1960)       | John Pettit, Sr. (1956)          |
| Linda Lopez (1950)             |                                  |

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 10/13- Nick & Cheryl Stripe (2018) | 11/19- Jim & Leanne Haeseler (1994)  |
| 10/18- Randy & Linda Spotts (1975) | 11/21- Robin & Alex Alexander (1987) |
| 10/21- Kim & Robert Quinn (2005)   | 11/23- Frank & Cyndi Miholics        |
| 10/26- Bill & Patsy Wingle (1991)  | 11/29- Owen & Kath Owens (1975)      |
| 11/07- Charles & Linda Marx (1992) | 11/30- Ann & Larry Risser (2001)     |
| 11/10- Billy & Mindi Wingle (2018) |                                      |

*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.*

