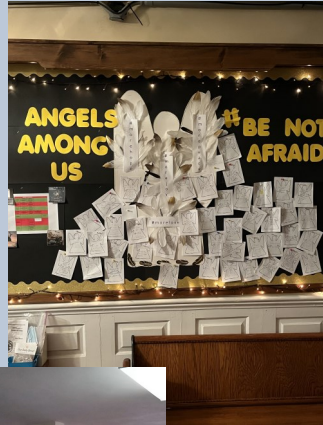


THE VOICE

Yearbook Edition - 2022 at Falkner Swamp UCC

(The life of the church in words and pictures.)



Reflection on 2022 from Rev. Frances

Dear Falkner Swamp Siblings in Christ,

For the third year in a row, 2022 began with COVID-19 ballooning in our midst. After two months we transitioned to optional mask wearing in worship as caseloads dropped. We continue a socially – distanced space in the first five pews, up front and on the left of our sanctuary. As the year skipped along our pews started to fill out. I believe others join me in saying we notice an increase in energy and connectivity in the general life of our church.

Connections were felt strongly in 2022. I think of our Easter Egg hunt, organized by Susan and Becky and assisted by a couple of Confirmands, where fourteen young children turned out to search for brightly colored eggs peeking around tombstones and play structures - a welcome avalanche of youthful energy.

Connections come to mind in the two new ministries hatched: a dinner mission at First Presbyterian Church in Pottstown (part of a larger church network that serves meals) and the PSEC's Climate Justice pollinator garden. See articles in this newsletter about both ministries.

Connections are visible as we gather, once again, for Fellowship Time after worship, in a church that is pumping out more efficient and cost-effective heat. Connections to God and each other are invitations in worship, whether through song, silence, or the word. In Advent we began writing prayers on paper to be brought forward to be shared aloud during our collective prayer time. Connections are threaded into our community as we expand opportunities to serve our neighbors while supporting organizations we've served for some time.

Connections will continue to be a theme as we head into 2023. Connections will be critical as we make plans for a new steeple, funds made possible because of the connections an anonymous donor feels to their church community.

Our connectivity relies on strong communication. Please do share: announcements in worship, a short article you write for our newsletter, a Flocknote (contact Sharon to arrange), and spread the word yourself during Fellowship. Repeat often and loudly! We'll get the message and be stronger for it. See Sharon's article on p. 15 for important tips on newsletter submissions.

The Apostle Paul closed his letters to the early churches he planted with succinct reminders of who they are and to whom they belong. We are, first and foremost, connected to the One who came in human form and desires our *whole* selves.

"Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

- Colossians 3:14-16

With you on the journey, Rev. Frances

Ministry “by the numbers” for 10 months in 2022 (Sept/Oct sabbatical)

| | |
|---|--|
| Worship Services | 39 |
| With Communion | 9 |
| Pastoral Visits (in person) | 27 |
| Newsletter articles | 21 |
| Missions | 14 |
| Faith Formation session (adult/youth) | 19 |
| Funerals/Memorial Services | 3 |
| Graveside Internments | 1 |
| Baptisms/Weddings | 2 (non church member wedding plus pre-meet) |
| Pastoral Care & Counseling (phone, Zoom) | 12 |
| Consistory and Committee Meetings | 24 |
| Clergy Group Meetings (ie., Community of Practice, Pottstown Ministerium) | 28 |
| PSEC Conference/Assoc. meetings | 20 |
| Boundary/Diversity Training/ (req’d by Covenant Assoc.) | 1 3-hr unit, “Supervising Staff” |
| Webinars for ongoing spiritual growth/church management | 4 |
| Education hours (req’d by Covenant Assoc.) | 38 hours, plus 50 hours Gestalt Pastoral Care*, on Sabbatical |
| Other: | 2 Leader’s Retreats |

* **Gestalt Pastoral Care** is a form of care rooted in Jesus’s ministry of healing. It is a combination of Gestalt growth work, spiritual companionship, and prayer for healing. “Gestalt growth work” refers to a psychological theory that each person’s being is constantly stretching for healing and growth. The worker in Gestalt deals with what is present for the person seeking help, not in their past or future, but what is *right now*. I completed 2 Practicums during my Sabbatical to practice this work with others.

2022 Report for Consistory

Happy New Year, Falkner Swamp!

2022 was a busy and productive year. Consistory met once each month with the exception of July. We held several leadership retreats for Consistory members and committee chair people to help us all work together and reconnect with each other as we emerge from the pandemic.

One way Falkner Swamp has shown God's love in our community this past year is through various food-related projects including a monetary collection to support The Salvation Army, a food collection for Operation 143, and our dinner mission in Pottstown. It is wonderful to know that we are helping fight hunger in our community in a variety of ways!

The Samaritan Fund, created in 2020 to financially aid those in need in our church family as well as our community, has aided three families this year with rent, mortgage payments, and a UGI deposit. Continued donations to this fund are needed so that we stand ready to assist when future needs arise.

Consistory spent considerable time working on the new Constitution and By-Laws which were adopted at the November congregational meeting. The goal was to make the document easier to read and understand, and I believe we accomplished that. Special thanks to Kim, Sharon, and Lee for all the hard work!

I can't say enough about the work our committees have been doing—thank you! Please be sure to read through all the committee reports to learn about the various projects that have been tackled in the past year as well as our many outreach programs. All of our committees are vital to our church's smooth operation. If you are not currently on a committee and have some time to give, I'm certain we can find the right committee for you—give it a try!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Frances, Erica Creed, and Sharon Sgriccia for all their hard work in 2022. We are very blessed to have such exceptional staff!

In November 2022, Consistory accepted the resignation of Matt Brown as Consistory President. We were sad to see him go and wish the Brown family all the best. I was voted temporary President, and Kim Shaak temporary Vice-President. In January 2023, we welcome Sharon Schnaars and Patty Fritz to Consistory (see full list of Consistory members below).

We are looking forward to more fellowship and missions in 2023!

Yours in Christ,
Karen Miller
Consistory President

| |
|---|
| Consistory Members: Ron Becker, Stacey Brennan, Lee Comer, Patty Fritz, Barb McDonough, Karen Miller, Doris Moser, Sharon Schnaars, Kim Shaak |
|---|

2022 Annual Property Summary for Falkner Swamp UCC



The property committee had a busy year during 2022, there were many projects that have begun or have completed.

List of Projects Completed:

- We've updated our alarm system; and have changed our vendor to Kriebel Security.
- There were trees removed that were in poor shape. The wood was given to a family that was in need of this type of heating source.
- The block house roof was redone and a new garage door was installed.
- Workday at the church and the cemetery was done in October. The boy scouts also participated in this workday activity.
- Throughout the year we have performed many little tasks throughout the church's property in its maintenance and upkeep; such as replacing items, hinges, replacing lights, water softener, call and meet with vendors at the church to coordinate repairs, things like that that cannot be accounted for.
- Maintenance of the parsonage.
- The old heating system and asbestos from the kitchen and various pipes in the Fellowship Hall were removed. A new heating system was installed downstairs and upstairs in the sanctuary. This was performed by Good's Heating & Oil, they will also be maintaining this new heating system for Falkner Swamp. This new system is no longer heating oil but is natural gas which enables the church to save money. The Christian Ed portion of the building is still regulated by the heating oil and is not on the new system; at some point in the future this will also be changed over.
- Electric was completed after the heater was installed; the electrical items were in the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary.
- Many hands make light work – that is the motto that we believe in here at Falkner Swamp UCC. After the many weeks of disarray from the heating system installation there was quite a mess. Through the hard work of many of you; we were able to have everything cleaned up and able to serve snacks again in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you.
- Our big project as you well know is the steeple project. We have removed the steeple in order to stabilize and prevent further damage to the roof and church's facility. The steps and railing, attic door, and we cleaned up the area where there is access to the bell tower. Marcus is working with Bob Schnaars and the Property Committee on the next steps. The next step will include removing the bell tower and plans need to be made on where we will be going from there. The congregation will be informed of what the options are and what is the best choice to be made.

Any questions or if you are aware of any situation that needs to be remedied please contact one of the property members for them to bring that issue to a meeting or so that it can be addressed sooner.

Thank you to all of the members of the Property Committee for all of your hard work this year.

Members include Bob Erb, Lee Hefner, Ron Becker, Rob and Cameron Krause, Bob & Sharon Schnaars, Jim Kooser and Kim Shaak.

Respectfully Submitted, Robin Zerr Chair

2022 Cemetery Committee Report – Falkner Swamp UCC



The mowing season for Falkner Swamp Cemetery, [by the fire company] was handled by Corrie Shaak. This was Corrie's first season mowing the cemetery and he did an admirable job. The Hollowbush Cemetery and the 'yard' around the church itself, and all trimming were done by Ivy League Landscaping, a professional landscaping company near Fleetwood. We are thankful for the work done on both of our cemeteries.

The Cemetery Committee received the resignation of Bob Schnaars from the position of President of the Cemetery Committee, and from the Committee itself. Bob has taken on the position of Livestreaming and Sound Technician for Falkner Swamp in addition to the other positions he capably handles and he finds himself "in a room full of hungry alligators." We will definitely miss his leadership.

The Cemetery Committee has taken on two new members:

Corrie Shaak – Corrie has mowed the cemetery this past year as mentioned above and has agreed to mow for the 2023 mowing season. We are pleased that he also accepted a role on the committee. The 2022-23 school term is Corrie's Senior Year.

Cameron Krause – Cameron has asked to join the committee to give himself a background in the caretaking and running of a cemetery. Cameron is interested in studying as an undertaker after graduation.

Both **Corrie** and **Cameron** have joined the committee as Lot Managers.

Ed Thierolf has agreed to help with the marking of the grave sites as needed. The job of marking is an important one and complicated by the "less than perfectly straight" rows in our cemeteries. Some years, such as 2022 when we only interred one person, it's easy to forget what you've learned so diligently. We are thankful to Ed for his willingness to share this chore.

In early November we held a clean-up/repair day jointly with the Property Committee. We were extremely fortunate to have the help of Kevin Downe (a neighbor) and his Scout Troop #73 from St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Obelisk, PA, and some of the Scout's parents. The addition of Kevin and the Scout's group more than doubled our work crew and an amazing amount of work was able to be completed. We are very grateful to everyone, members, and neighbors, who generously share their talents and their time to help us keep our cemeteries and church property in good shape. A picture of Scout Troop #73 is at the right below.

In the early fall a computerized list of the burials from the present year, 2022, back to the year 2000 was made with the name of the deceased, their birth and death dates, the date they were interred, the funeral home, whether it was a full burial or a cremation and the veteran status. A copy is in the church office. Also, during the same time frame, a computerized copy of all the Lot and Plot Numbers was made with the names of those buried, their age at death, their birth and death dates. A copy of this is also in the church office.

Respectfully submitted, *Mary Ann Erb*

Cemetery Committee:

Trustees:

Kevin Brennan

Sue Dickey

Mary Ann Erb, Secretary/Treasurer

Sharon Schnaars

Lot Managers:

Bob Erb, Sr.

Rob Erb, Jr.

Cameron Krause

Corrie Shaak

Ed Thierolf



In closing I would like to repeat part of a poster published by the 120-year-old Barre Granite Association in Barre, Vermont:
"...A Cemetery exists because every life is worth loving and remembering—always."

Music and Worship Report for 2022



Music & Worship Committee for 2022 was made up of Bob Schnaars (Chairman), Sharon Schnaars, Fran Berkowitz, Arlene Butts Umstead, James Kooser, Karen Miller, Brenda Becker, Erica Creed (Choir Director), and Rev Frances Chester.

The beginning of 2022 was relatively quiet, in that our meetings were held via ZOOM. There was still some concern over our "friend" Mr. Covid. We agreed to designate the first 5 pews on one side of the church as "social distancing pews" for those who are still uncomfortable being too close to one another. Masking was still required during the first two months of 2022. In March of 2022 we changed this to optional following the county guidelines.

During the Lenten Season, we had the opportunity to read and discuss the book by Kate Bowler & Jessica Richie called "Good Enough". This book study was done via ZOOM. The book was 40ish devotionals for the imperfect life, led by Rev Frances Chester with Laura Brown joining in for discussion.

On February 27, 2022 we welcomed new members: Barry Chester, Peg Heffner, Debbie Lord...and reaffirmation of Patty Fritz. Wonderful to have new folks joining our little church!

Ash Wednesday, March 2, 2022, we had a service in the Fellowship Room, and it turned out to be one of the best services. Volunteers brought in table and floor lamps and the service was held in a low-light setting. It felt warm and personal for those who attended the service. We also set up Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services joining together with the congregation of Good Shepherd, Boyertown, PA. Our Maundy Thursday service was on April 14 @ 7:00 p.m. and Good Shepherd's congregation was invited to Falkner Swamp. Our Good Friday service was held at Good Shepherd with our congregation being invited to join them. Our choirs joined forces for both services.

We also decided to re-start our annual prayer vigil. Due to Covid, this practice was discontinued in 2020 and 2021. We started again on April 14, 2022 from noon on Maundy Thursday to noon on Good Friday. We had a complete 24 hour schedule filled!!! Obviously, our prayer vigil was missed. Our Easter Sunday service - we held two services for Easter - the "sunrise service" was held outside at 8:00AM. Our regular 10:00AM service was held in the sanctuary.

At our May and June Music & Worship meetings we met in person at church (a wonderful way to get together again instead of via ZOOM). We discussed communion and returning to receiving the elements up front in the sanctuary. We decided to start in July and we provided the following options: The members/friends of Falkner Swamp UCC could (1) take a pre-packaged wine/bread cup and receive communion in their seat in the pew; or (2) go up front in the sanctuary and receive communion from Rev Frances.

Our August 2022 M&W meeting centered mostly in making sure we were covered for services, interim pastors, music, etc while Rev Frances Chester took her sabbatical during the time of September 1st - returning November 6th. Rev Frances lined up interim pastors during this time period, including Rev Ann Few, Pastor Paul Jones, Rev Kevin McLemore, Liz Brunton.

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Music and Worship Report for 2022

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In the Fall of 2022 we celebrated Faith Formation Sunday in September; Brenda Semach began a Coffee Hour discussion period on Sunday morning at 8:30AM before church service; and we celebrated our Anniversary Sunday in October.

Rev Frances Chester returned to Falkner Swamp UCC on November 6, 2022. Welcome back!!! We missed you! We jumped right in with her return to begin discussions for the Advent and Christmas season. Our theme for Advent was "Angels Among Us". On December 11th we welcomed new members Fred and Rene Laquinta. We decided to have our Christmas Eve service at 7:00PM and it would be a candlelight service. Only one service was held on Christmas Eve which was on a Saturday (December 24). Since we were having a later service on Christmas Eve it was decided that we would not have an "in-person service" on Christmas Day. Instead, we would record a Christmas service and post to the internet for Christmas morning. That way folks could stay home Sunday morning and view the service with family and friends. This entailed a lot of work for all involved (Rev Frances, Bob Schnaars, Erica Creed and choir, etc). Overall, it was a success! New Year's Day - Sunday, January 1, 2023 - was held as a normal 10:00AM service.

We are happy to welcome Peg Heffner to our committee for 2023 (thank you, Peg for joining us). We are losing Karen Miller for 2023, as she has other obligations within the church that she feels the need to give her full attention. Thank you, Karen, for the time you were with us on this committee. You will be missed.

In conclusion, 2022 was a good year. We took in new members, Covid is mostly in the rearview mirror, Rev Frances had time to rejuvenate herself during her sabbatical and returned to us. We are looking forward to 2023 in working for our church, our congregation and friends, our community, and our God!!!

Respectfully submitted,
Robert (Bob) Schnaars, Chairman of Music & Worship Committee





THE MUSIC & WORSHIP COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ASKED TO CONSIDER CHANGING CHURCH SERVICE IN THE SUMMER TO 9:00AM. THIS WAS DONE MANY, MANY YEARS AGO AND WE WERE ASKED TO RE-VISIT THE POSSIBILITY. THE M&W COMMITTEE DECIDED THIS WAS SOMETHING WE SHOULD ASK THE OVERALL CONGREGATION TO SEE IF THERE IS A MAJORITY INTEREST IN DOING SO FOR THE 2023 SUMMER SEASON. WE HAVE PLACED A BOX IN THE VESTIBULE FOR YOUR VOTE. ONE VOTE PER PERSON PLEASE.

WE KNOW IT IS A BIT EARLY TO BE CONSIDERING THIS CHANGE FOR THE SUMMER, BUT AS WE ALL KNOW, TIME CAN PASS QUICKLY AND WE WOULD LIKE TO BE PRO-ACTIVE IN OUR PLANNING. THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR YOUR HELP...

MUSIC & WORSHIP COMMITTEE



HELP WANTED – NEED A VOLUNTEER: We need a volunteer to take over working with the acolytes for lighting candles for church services, along with setting up candles for special services such as Christmas Eve. It would involve training acolytes and/or lay leaders who light altar candles and preparing for special services during the year (ie, Easter, Christmas). Becky Comer has been doing this for many years (THANK YOU SOOOO MUCH, BECKY!!) - and she has decided to step down and pass this along to a new volunteer. She will provide information and she will answer any questions to help the transition along. Please – Please ... we need a volunteer as soon as possible. Won't Y-O-U help? Let any Music & Worship committee member know...

Thank you! Music & Worship Committee (Bob Schnaars, Sharon Schnaars, Brenda Becker, Fran Berkowitz, Arlene (Butts) Umstead, Karen Miller, Erica Creed, Jim Kooser, Rev Frances Chester)

Join Us For The

Fastnacht Social

Falkner Swamp UCC
Fellowship Room

FRIDAY

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

7 PM

Old Favorites

Soon to become Favorites

Lots of Laughs

Donuts and Light Refreshments

Faith Formation Committee

Members: Rev. Frances Chester, Becky Comer, Susan Mercer

The Children: Starting in September, the children's lessons surround monthly themes based on several editions of Tales That Tell the Truth. Also, included were special lessons on Baptism and Martin Luther King Jr.



During Advent Season, the children's lessons and activities dovetailed with the adult theme, *Angels Among Us*. Angel cookies baked by Becky and a personalized angel tree ornament were given out to each child.

We collected a wonderful amount of gift cards in December in support of the children at Bethany Children's Home. Blessings to all of you!

Looking forward to the Lenten Season, we will again coordinate lessons with the pastor's lessons. The Children will hear the Easter story and act out parts of it using puppets, stick figure puppets, and other materials.

There will be an Easter Egg Hunt held on Saturday, April 1, 2023. Last year, the hunt was well attended, with 14 children searching high and low for treasured eggs out on the side lawn and in the cemetery. We hope for another good turn-out this year.

Joyful Noise was reinstated starting in November. We are sending those collection cans out among the congregation the first Sunday of each month. The monies will be split 50/50 between The Mustard Seed and Operation 143. So far, we are close to \$170. Thank you all!

The Adults have been strengthening and sharing our relationship and understanding of God's plan through Book talks- one during Advent (*Angels Among Us*) and currently (*Mission Possible: Create a Life that Counts*, Tim Tebow) every Tuesday/Thursday. Daytime gatherings and evening gatherings are offered in order to accommodate as many who wish to attend.

We look forward to continuing our efforts in supporting our members, friends and neighbors as our faith continues to grow and expand.

In God's Love,

Rev. Frances, Becky, and Susan



2022 provided our church with an opportunity to feed the hungry at First Presbyterian Church in Pottstown as part of a program from the Cluster of Pottstown. Every other month on the fourth Thursday a team of amazing people cooked and served a meal to some very appreciative people. The team consisted of Rev Frances, Becky and Lee Comer, Karen Miller, Bob and Sharon Schnaars, Susan Mercer, Brenda Becker and Stacey Brennan. We will again be providing meals in 2023 with the addition of some new members! We may not be able to solve world hunger, but our small contribution to it sure will make a difference in some lives. ~ Stacey Brennan



Women's Ministries

Women's Ministries Yearbook 2022

Women's Ministries meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 10 am. All women of the church are welcome to join.

Service to our church and community

- Sent monthly birthday cards to our members
- Sent Valentine cards to various members
- Made Birthday bags twice for BAMS
- Served cake/drinks for Confirmation Class
- Visited various members and sent get well cards
- Donated items and baked goods for Evelyn Schwenk yard sale
- Sponsored "Operation 143" mission food project
- Made \$150 donation for Thanksgiving to BAMS

Social

- Lunch and meeting held in June at Copperfield
- Breakfast at Sunflower Café in December attended by women of church

Fundraiser

- Sold 4 Christmas logs which were donated to us

Members: Carol Stevens, Olga Rees, Eleanor Specht, Linda Sell, Judy Miller, Linda Rennard, Doris Moser, Ellen Whitfield Joanne Lewis, Beth Reese, Susan Mercer, Barbara Geary-Secretary, Arlene Umstead-Chairperson, Sharon Sgriccia- Treasurer



Ladies Night

May 9, 2023

Look for more details soon.

Russell Miller - Chariman

| Members | Appointed | 3 year term | Expires |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| Lee Heffner | 2020 | 1st | 2022 |
| Karen Miller | 2021 | 1st | 2023 |
| Russell Miller | 2022 | 1st | 2024 |
| Ken Berkowitz | 2021 | 2nd | 2023 |
| Becky Comer | 2021 | 1st | 2023 |

Rev. Frances Chester - Pastor
 Defacto Consistory President - Karen Miller
 Defacto Treasurer of Falkner Swamp - Vivian Wentzel

| Category A (Unrestricted Principal/Income) |
|---|
| Account #1 - \$62,582.18 CD @ Citadel Credit Union |
| Rate 2.15% - Matures 2/19/23 |
| Balance 12/31/22 - \$66,521.72 (+\$5.00 Savings Acct.) |
| Signers- Lee Heffner & Ken Berkowitz |
| Account #4 |
| Statement Savings Account #20280 @ Ambler Savings Bank |
| Balance as of 12/1/2022 - \$41,734.42 (.47% interst rate) |
| Total A - \$108,261.14 on 12/31/2022 |

| Category B (Restricted Principal/Unrestricted Income) |
|--|
| Account #1 - \$28,502.91 - CD @ Citadel Credit Union |
| Rate - 3.15% - matures 3/23/24 |
| Balance 12/31/2022 - \$28,746.53 |
| Signers - Lee Heffner & Ken Berkowitz |
| Interst to go to general fund annually & principal to be reinvested. |

| Category C (Restrictd Principal/Restrictd Income) |
|--|
| Account #1 - \$2400.12 - CD @ Citadel Credit Union |
| Rate - 3.15% - matures 3/23/24 |
| Balance 12/31/22 - \$2,420.65 |
| Signers - Lee Heffner & Ken Berkowitz |

| Category A | Weibel - \$108,261.14 Accounts #1 & #4 - Total A |
|------------|--|
|------------|--|

| Category B | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--|
| Mildred Heinly | \$10,000.00 | |
| Arthur Landis | \$2,500.00 | |
| Robert Burns | \$3,656.47 | |
| Herbert Wagner | \$1,000.00 | |
| Ralph Geisler | \$2,000.00 | |
| Sarah Jane Boyer | \$845.00 | |
| Wallace Leidy | \$3,000.00 | |
| Washington Leidy | \$600.00 | |
| Living Memorial Fund | \$4,900.00 | |
| Interest Adjustment | \$245.06 | |
| Total B | \$28,746.53 | |

| Category C | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--|
| William Werner | \$1,000.00 | |
| Herbert Wagner | \$1,000.00 | |
| Washington Leidy | \$400.00 | |
| Interst Adjustment | \$20.65 | |
| Total C | \$2,420.65 | |

Falkner Swamp Pollinator Garden 2022

Falkner Swamp UCC committed to the UCC 50-50 challenge to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Our church goal was to plant pollinator friendly plants. Stacey secured a grant from the UCC Climate Justice fund and the required matching funds were provided by generous church members. The Covid-19 pandemic stalled us for a year but we were able to start the project in 2022.

We first determined a suitable location for the garden. The South side of the church had abundant sunlight so we located the garden outside the back door and underneath the windows of Reverend Frances' office.

Many hands helped with the project. The Montgomery County Master Gardeners gave us valuable suggestions about soil testing and the best plants for pollinators. We sent a soil sample to the Penn State Lab and received a detailed report with recommendations for soil amendments. Jim Kooser rototilled the garden area so that we could work in the fertilizers and lime. We received a donation of seeds and seedlings from a friend of the church and purchased or transplanted the rest of the plants. Seeds from the Confirmation Class were planted and they sprouted in the front right corner of the garden. Kevin Brennan installed a fence around the garden during clean-up day.

Our first documented butterfly visitor to the garden was a Question Mark butterfly. It lives in wooded areas and has camouflage on the underside of its wings that resemble a dead leaf. Other visitors included finches, Skippers, and some unwanted rabbits and the resident groundhog.

This was a foundation year for the garden. Most perennial plants start to bloom in their second year, so we anticipate great things for 2023. We learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. The perennial plants did far better than expected for the first year so now we know that we can space out the plants more and that we don't need as many annuals in 2023.

The garden is currently wintering over. Bees sometimes spend the winter in the dead stalks of perennials, so we won't cut back the stalks until spring.

In 2023, we hope to have a faucet installed above the garden area so that we can attach a sprinkler on a timer for the hot dry days of summer.

Respectfully submitted,

The Green Team

Stacey and Debbie





The end of year financials from our treasurer, Vivian Wentzel, will be provided separate from this newsletter. A few hard copies will be available at the church.

From the Church Office: Falkner Swamp membership statistics for 2022 [2021 in brackets]

Total Additions: 11 (6 new members & 5 confirmands) [0]

Total Losses: 2 (1 death & 1 transfer) [4]

Total Membership as of 12/31/2022: 172 [163]

Total Baptisms: 0 [0]

Average Weekly Worship Attendance: 41 (50 in person Sunday worships in 2022)

[38 (39 in person Sunday worships in 2021)]



As you can see from the length of this annual yearbook, the life of Falkner Swamp is blossoming. Communication is key to keep us all engaged, connected, involved, and informed. Most of our communication is now by email and Flocknote. We currently email our newsletter to 92 recipients and 64 people receive our Flocknotes. Some near and far. It isn't unusual for the office to hear from someone who doesn't attend regularly but comments on the happenings at Falkner Swamp. You never know what is going to speak to someone. Therefore, I would encourage you to get information to me in a timely manner.

Please get any information to the church office by the last Tuesday before the final Sunday of the month in order to be included in the newsletter for the next month. I would ask that you provide the content and I am happy to format and add graphics, if needed. If you happen to miss a deadline, it is always possible to send a separate email and/or Flocknote at another time.

I come into the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to work with Rev. Frances, print worship orders/newsletters, etc. I assist the counters on Wednesday mornings, serve as treasurer of Women's Ministries and recording secretary of Consistory. It is truly my pleasure to help further the ministries of this church.

Thank you all, *Sharon*

Spring 2023 Calendar

- February 22 —Ash Wednesday, 6:30pm Worship (CWS special offering)
- February 24—Fastnacht Social
- February 26 —1st Sunday in Lent (Church World Service special offering)
- March 4 —Community Breakfasts resume (also April 1 & May 6)
- April 1—Easter Egg Hunt
- April 2 —Palm Sunday (One Great Hour of Sharing special offering)
- April 6 —Maundy Thursday (Church World Service special offering)
- April 9 —Easter Sunday
- April 30 —5th Sunday (Future of Falkner Swamp special offering)
- May 28 —Pentecost (Strengthen the Church special offering)

OUR CHURCH'S MISSION STATEMENT (adopted 11/13/2022)

as printed in the Constitution & By-laws

We, the Congregation of Falkner Swamp United Church of Christ offer this mission to all members, friends, and neighbors near and far:

1. To be a place of welcome and a peaceful spiritual retreat for all of God's children.
2. To strengthen and share our relationship with God through the Holy Word, prayer, music, worship, and service to others.
3. To spread God's love by modeling our daily lives as examples set before us by Jesus Christ.