

This is a combined June/July issue. The August issue will be out July 31 on email/website.

NEWSLETTER

FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF FALKNER SWAMP UCC

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.

See inside for:

~Our High School graduates

~ 300th Anniversary events/schedule

~Summer Movie Series

CHURCH PICNIC & TAILGATING EVENT - JUNE 22, 2025 following our 10:00AM church service.

Please, please mark your calendar and plan to join your church family and friends for our **"PHILLIES PHOOD SUNDAY"**! Why Phillies Phood Sunday? Well...the Philadelphia Phillies have a night game on June 22nd and they are calling it "Phans Feeding Families Day" - they are collecting food items to help feed families in need. Sooo...we felt it would be the perfect Sunday to gather for a tailgating event and collect food to help our local families through Boyertown Multi-Service. Our own "Phillies Phood Sunday"!!!

So...Here's the scoop folks:

- Outside tailgating (picnic) in lower parking lot - weather permitting (bring your lawn chairs if you can). We will move the event indoors if weather doesn't cooperate.
- Hot Dogs will be provided (hot dogs donated by fundraising team - thank you!). Chips & sodas will also be available while supply lasts.
- If you can, please bring a side dish or dessert to share (a sign-up sheet will be posted in the Fellowship Room).
- Important:** Please bring a non-perishable food item (or items) to donate. We will deliver all food items collected to Boyertown Multi-Service.

We will try to announce and remind you all of this event over the next few weeks. If you do have questions, please feel free to ask Bob or Sharon Schnaars, or anyone on Music & Worship Committee (Brenda Becker, Fran Berkowitz, Cassandra Krause, Peg Heffner or Jim Kooser).

Thank you! M & W Committee / Team

Dear Falkner Swamp Family,

On June 1 in worship we recognize our three graduating high school seniors, all from Boyertown Area High School: Olivia Baez, Cameron Krause, and Casey Shaak. Below is their news about post-graduation plans. Check out the photos of these young folks, ready to take on the world!



Olivia volunteers at the library and works part-time at Giant, while maintaining honors and college accredited classes. She plans to attend Kutztown University in the fall, majoring in environmental science.

Cameron will ship off to Navy boot camp on July 3rd, to the Great Lakes in Illinois. After boot camp, he will ship out to Pensacola, Florida, for schooling as a CWT (cyber warfare technician). Cameron joined in membership as a Confirmand in 2022. From Jan 2024 – March 2025, he was our volunteer livestream technician.



Casey is pursuing a career as a heavy equipment operator in the construction industry. Casey joined in membership as a Confirmand in 2022. Each week Casey drags our trash and recycle bins from behind the stairlift door to the parking lot for our collection.

Our Women's Ministries has a gift for each senior from the Memorial fund gathered to honor Arlene Umstead. Arlene was a teacher and camp counselor, a lifelong advocate of young people. She would be proud of Olivia, Cameron and Casey, and so these gifts are a celebration of all they've accomplished.

Olivia, Cameron and Casey, may you always know you are God's beloved. Your church family is proud of you and sends you off with their love and prayers.

~ Rev. Frances

CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

Committee Reports/Consistory Minutes

Committee reports that are received by the Church Office, and Consistory Meeting minutes that are approved by Consistory, are refreshed on the board outside the church office after each monthly Consistory meeting, typically the third Monday evening of each month, excepting one summer month.

Financial Update through April 2025

Total funds available for general use at the end of March:	\$76,595.83
Total Income received in the month of April:	+ \$28,016.33
Total Expenses paid in the month of April:	<u>(\$13,501.84)</u>
Total funds available for general use at the end of April:	\$91,110.32

The net financial results from general church activity for the month of April reflected a gain in the general fund of \$12,580.24 (this amount does not include the parsonage rental income).



We gratefully receive your financial offerings for the mission and ministry of Falkner Swamp UCC through our weekly worship and via checks sent in the mail. We can also receive your financial gifts through this QR code to the left. Your donation will be processed through Vanco and is safe and secure. For all the ways you give, our church thanks you!



1 10 AM Worship w/ Communion Honoring HS Grads Joyful Noise 7 PM/AA Mtg.	2 7 PM M & W mtg.	3 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 1 PM Scripture Study	4 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	5 **Rev. Frances' office hours	6	7 Fellowship Hall Rental (Shaak)
8 10 AM Worship Pentecost/ Confirmation Strengthen the Church special offering 7 PM/AA Mtg.	9	10	11	12	13	14 Fellowship Hall Rental (Krause)
	*Rev. Frances Vacation June 9 - 11			**Rev. Frances' office hours		
		Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 1 PM Scripture Study	Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM			
15 10 AM Worship Apostolic Sunday Rev. Ann Few leading worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	16 6:30 PM Consistory	17 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 1 PM Scripture Study	18 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	19 **Rev. Frances' office hours	20	21
22 10 AM Worship Rev. Frances preaching on Summer Movie #1: Field of Dreams Tailgate Sunday, Philly Phood drive, after worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	23	24 Rev. Frances office hours 9 – 2 PM Scripture Study summer break, starts again September 2.	25 Rev. Frances office hours 9 – 2 PM	26	27	28
		Sharon Vacation June 22 – July 4			*Rev. Frances Vacation June 26 - 30	
29 10 AM Worship Rev. Paul Jones leading worship Future of F.S. special offering 7 PM/AA Mtg	30					
		*For urgent pastoral care needs during Rev. Frances' vacation, Rev. Ann Few may be reached at 717-468-4981.				

Please send any newsletter submissions by 9 AM on the final Tuesday of each month (except December & June when they are double month editions), to the church office, falknerswamp@comcast.net.

** Times vary, please call or text for an appointment:



		1	2	3	4	5
		Sharon Vacation June 22 – July 4				
		**Rev. Frances' office hours		**Rev. Frances' office hours		
6 10 AM Worship w/ Communion 7 PM/AA Mtg.	7 7 PM M & W mtg.	8 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	9 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	10 **Rev. Frances' office hours	11	12
13 10 AM Worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	14	15 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 10 AM Women's Ministries mtg	16 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	17 **Rev. Frances' office hours	18	19
20 10 AM Worship Rev. Frances preaching on Summer Movie #2: Up 300 th Ann. mtg. following worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	21	22 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	23 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	24 **Rev. Frances' office hours	25	26
27 10 AM Worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	28	28 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	29 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	30 **Rev. Frances' office hours	31	

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Ladies' Night was an enjoyable night with good food, entertainment and fellowship.



Thank you to our Cleaning Crews! They keep all our church spaces sparkling & fresh. Our June cleaners are Bob & Sharon Schnaars. For July we are in need of cleaners. If you have any availability, please contact Becky. We can always use more team members, please contact the church office if you have some time & can help out: 610-323-4053 or falknerswamp@comcast.net



YOU SAY YOU CAN'T SING - We doubt that is true. You sing in your car, in your shower, while working around the house. We know there are some very good singers in our congregation! Our choir is always open to anyone who would like to join us! ***"The woods would be very silent if only the best birds sang"***. Most of your Falkner Swamp choir members cannot read music. We simply learn to follow the notes up and down. Reading music is not required! So...if you are being nudged by the Spirit of God to sing along with your church choir, please feel free to talk to ANY choir member (you know who we are). Note: The choir will be off for the summer - beginning again in mid-August. So, you have time to pray on this and when God whispers "give it a try", you can join us then. Thank you!!!

P.S. The church is still seeking a choir director/piano player. So, if you know of anyone, give them Bob Schnaars' information (Phone: 215-266-9606). Thanks!

300th Anniversary Happenings

****Did you know Casey Fritz is creating another video featuring Falkner Swamp? His 300th anniversary video is planned for a debut at the PSEC Spring Meeting, Saturday, May 31, at Zwingli UCC in Souderton. Casey, son of Patty, is the creator of Keystone Curiosities, a library of videos featuring historical sites across Pennsylvania. His video featuring Falkner Swamp was created in December 2023 and can be accessed from our website.**

Worship Celebrations:

****Falkner Swamp's celebration: Sunday, Oct 12, 2025, 10 AM, followed by a catered lunch**

****State-wide celebration, Sunday, Oct 12, 2025, held at Falkner Swamp. 1:30 Cake and Punch reception, 3 pm worship service**

****Oct 15, services held within each of the four PA Conferences on the actual day, 300 years ago, when Boehm served the first Communion for Falkner Swamp.**

300th Anniversary Celebration of the First Communion of the German Reformed Church in America

October 12th

@ 1:30 pm

Falkner Swamp UCC

2077 Swamp Pike,

Gilbertsville

w/ Guest Preacher

**The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia
Thompson**



October 15th

@ 6:30 pm

each PA UCC

Conference

**will hold a communion
service within its boundaries
see website link below**

**For more information and registration links go to:
psec.org and click on the 300th Anniversary Celebrations slider**

Historic online presentations @ 7:00 pm via Zoom

May 27—An Immigration Story: How we got to where we are w/ Rev. Rick Taylor

**June 24—A Living Theology: Thinking about God in the Reformed Tradition
w/ Dr. Lee Barrett**

**September 25—United and Uniting: How the UCC Makes Room for German
Reformed and Armenian Evangelical Christians w/ Rev. Dr. Heather Ohaneson**

October 28—Gifts of the Reformed Church Going Forward w/ Dr. Randall Zachman

**Coming
this fall...**

*A commemorative book with essays tracing the
development of the German Reformed Church from its
European origins through present day.*

300th Anniversary Video, Casey Fritz, Producer

Casey interviews Rev. Bill Worley, PSEC Conf. Minister, for a video to kick off the 300th anniversary of the first Communion of the German Reformed Church in America. The video is planned for the May 31 PSEC Spring meeting.



A big thank you to all who helped support our 2025 Community Breakfasts. Another successful year.



BAZAAR SUCCESS & WHAT'S NEXT!



A big thank you to everyone who made our first church bazaar such a wonderful success! Whether you donated, volunteered, baked, sorted, or simply shopped—we're so grateful. We're thrilled to share that we raised a grand total of \$2,650! 🙌

Even better—\$500 of that will be donated to the 300th Anniversary Committee to help support upcoming celebrations.

Now, it's time to look ahead! We're forming a Bazaar Planning Team to work under the FUNdraising Team. This smaller group will help shape what the future of the bazaar looks like:

- Should it be a large event every other year with a smaller rummage sale in the off years?
- Or do we keep it annual in some format?

The team will also help with some key behind-the-scenes responsibilities, like:

- Organizing donation collections
- Sorting and arranging donated items
- Planning the layout of the rooms
- Creating signs and a simple shopper map

It's rewarding work that makes a real difference—and we'd love your help!

If you're interested in joining the Bazaar Planning Team, or just want to hear more, please reach out to **Rob, Cassandra, Patty, Jim Fahy, Larry, or Karen.**

Let's keep this momentum going and make the next one even better! 📌



Summer Movie #3 -- What's it Going to Be? YOU Decide!

One Sunday a month during summer months, Rev. Frances will choose a movie and explore theological themes like redemption, grief and loss, and forgiveness. You'll come away with a deeper appreciation for beloved films, and some ways to reflect on your favorites.

She chose June and July's movies... YOU get to decide the one for August.

Let Rev. Frances know what movie you'd like to hear about in worship, either August 17 or 24, TBA. Send an email or call or write a note - can be anonymous.

Here's the schedule for June & July:

June 22 - Field of Dreams (Phillies Phood Sunday)

July 20 - Up

Each of these movies can be rented from the library. Currently *Field of Dreams* is streaming on Netflix with subscription; *Up* is streaming on Disney+ with subscription. Showing on other streaming platforms without a subscription and will charge a small fee (e.g., YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, Google Play, Apple TV.)

***Update on Rev. Frances' Writing Project for our 300th anniversary

In May I spent two weeks primarily focusing on my years as pastor, 2015-2025, to add to the booklet Sue Dickey is creating of our church's past 50 years, 1975-2025.

I'm about half-way done, so I will keep chipping away! It's an incredible exercise to review past VOICE newsletters, which is where I'm gathering most of my information.

One of the interesting pieces I ran across was a survey put out in 2015, from the pastoral search committee at the time. One of the questions – and the answers that came back – really struck me. So after ten years, I'm asking again, and very curious to see what you say!

If you would, could you return your answer to me? Anonymous, unless you'd like to add your name.

Please Answer, Cut Out & Return
to the Offering plate, on Sharon's or my desk, or in my hand are all good:



If Falkner Swamp no longer existed, what would the community miss?
