

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:

- ~Boyertown Homelessness Taskforce*
- ~Keeping You in the Loop*
- ~April calendar*
- ~God hears our prayers*
- ~Covenant Association information*

Thank you for another successful peanut butter egg fundraiser! So many of you contributed to this by donating ingredients, taking orders, mixing, rolling, dipping, and boxing (and the list goes on). We'll have the total funds raised in the next newsletter.



Dear Friends of Falkner Swamp,

You will receive this during Holy Week after a festive Palm Sunday celebration. During a triumphant entry to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, Jesus is celebrated by friend and stranger alike. Days later how quickly the tables are turned – quite literally in this case – as Jesus rises from the Passover table where one of his closest friends (Judas) chooses to betray him. His choice results in Jesus’ arrest, a midnight kangaroo court, beatings, and horrifying death on a Roman cross.

Over a three-day period, beginning on what we call “Maundy Thursday,” meaning “new commandment,” we re-enact and remember each year when our brother, savior, friend, rescuer, Son of God, Christ – the man we follow called Jesus – is put to death.

And yet we rise on that 3rd day to the astonishing act of God that forces our stubborn knees to the ground, our hearts to leap and our minds to expand beyond what we thought was possible.

God chose to raise Jesus from the dead. The Resurrection, 3 days after Jesus’ death on the instrument of torture that is crucifixion, is God’s promise that nothing – not death, nor disease, nor level of belief, nor powers or principalities of any time, place or age can separate us from the love of God in Christ. (Romans 8:38-39, adapted).

During Lent we have been invited to ask the question: *What is the good news your soul longs for?* How have you met that question in the past six weeks? Here is a sampling of what you’ve written on the leaves on our Lenten Tree: *Release of those unjustly detained. Deeper faith. That our leaders would have compassion and mercy. A different way to live, to love.*

Many themes centered on *health and healing* (for family members, our nation). Also *peace* (worldwide, national, within one’s family), *truth*, and *patience* were featured often.

If you plan to be at church for the prayer vigil or at the Maundy Thursday service, please continue to add your leaves. Name what needs to be said. The pain. The joy. The confusion. The blessing. The question. The anger. Let God know what is your deepest yearning, and trust God to meet you there.

On Easter, the leaves of our longings will be draped in fresh blooms! Like the women who found the tomb empty, and a risen Christ greeting them as they ran, the blooms signal that God is with us, offering a fresh start with hope and promise.

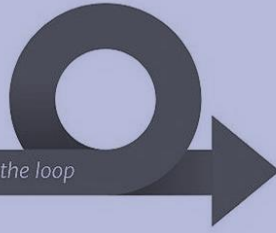
With you on the journey,
Rev. Frances



Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen,
photo by Rev. Frances,
March 2026

Be informed

Keeping you in the loop



Did you know the church has a first aid kit, AED (defibrillator), and a Naloxone Overdose Prevention Kit? These items are located just inside Fellowship Hall. There is another first aid kit in the back of the sanctuary. Dedicated members regularly check to ensure everything is in working order and replace expired supplies and batteries. While we hope you never need to use them, being aware of their location could make a difference in an emergency.

Additionally, there are 9 fire extinguishers stationed throughout the church, all recently inspected in March. Their locations include: one in the downstairs hall, two at each end of the Christian Ed hall, one in the kitchen, one in Fellowship Hall, one by the closet in the foyer, two in the sanctuary and one in the outside boiler room. It's reassuring to know they're easily accessible if needed.



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 February 2026


Total funds available for general use at the end of January:	\$80,817.62
Total Income received in the month of February:	+\$14,760.19
Total Expenses paid in the month of February:	(\$12,940.53)
Total funds available for general use at the end of February:	\$82,637.28

The net financial results from general church activity for the month of February reflected a loss in the general fund of \$226.34 (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	2	3	4
			office hours 9 – 2 PM	Prayer Vigil Thursday into Friday **Rev. Frances' office hours Maundy Thursday service @ 7 PM	Good Friday	8 – 11 AM Community Breakfast
5 Easter Sunday 8 AM & 10 AM Worship w/Communion 7 PM/AA Mtg.	6	7 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 10AM Women's Ministries 1PM Scripture Study	8 Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	9 **Rev. Frances' office hours	10	11
12 10 AM Worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Rev. Frances attending Clergy Convocation in Harrisburg				
	7 PM M & W mtg.	Rev. Frances' office hours 9 – 11 AM Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	Sharon's office hours 9 - 2 PM	Dinner Mission @ First Presbyterian, Pottstown		
19 10 AM Worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	20	21 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 1PM Scripture Study	22 Earth Day  Sharon's office hours 9 - 2 PM	23 **Rev. Frances' office hours	24	25
	6:30 PM Consistory					
26 10 AM Worship Joyful Noise Covenant Assoc. Spring mtg, 3 PM in Leesport 7 PM/AA Mtg	27	28 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 1PM Scripture Study	29 Sharon's office hours 9 - 2 PM	30 **Rev. Frances' office hours	Thank you, Barb McDonough & Deb Lord, our lay delegates to Covenant Assn. Spring Mtg 4/26	

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

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



Thank you to our Cleaning Crews! They keep all our church spaces sparkling & fresh. Our April cleaners are Becky Comer, Barb Geary, and Lee Heffner.

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

Women's Ministries
invites you to their
annual Ladies Night.



*Somewhere over the
rainbow - there's a
Ladies Night!*

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

6:00 PM ~ dinner (doors open & 5:30 PM)

\$15/adult, \$5/child ages 6 – 12, free for children ages 5 & under

Cash only to Judy Miller or Beth Reese ~ due by May 3rd

Entertainment, "A Visit with Betsy Ross",
in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM.

Boyertown Homelessness Task Force:

One of the missions of Falkner Swamp is being part of the Boyertown Homelessness Task Force, comprised of local churches, Boyertown Area Multi-Service, Salvation Army, Boyertown School District, Tower Health, and the local police department, among others. Its mission is "making homelessness in the Boyertown Area a rare, brief and no-recurring experience and help the homeless/near homeless reach and maintain financial, mental and physical stability". Members of our church attend virtual meetings which occur every couple of months to learn about needs of the homeless community, area resources that can provide help, and how we as a faith community can help. An example of our church's support was gathering and providing hygiene kits for homeless women several years ago. We continue to look for ways to support this mission!

Isaiah 58:7: Share good with the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, and support your own family and community.

If you would like to attend a Zoom call meeting for this task force, please reach out to Rev. Frances or Diane Weller (dweller100@gmail.com).



The Covenant Association

of the Keystone Conference UCC
News from around the Association
April 5, 2026

CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

On this Sunday, as we celebrate Christ's triumph over sin and death, I extend heartfelt greetings to you and your congregation from the Covenant Association.

Over the past two months, our bulletin inserts have aimed to inform every member of UCC congregations within the Covenant Association. I hope these updates have helped you better understand how your congregation connects with the 45 other UCC communities across Berks County.

This April, I'm reaching out for your support. Just as our congregations rely on volunteers for ministry, the Association also depends on willing hands. Below are several committees along with their purposes. As you review them, consider whether your gifts and talents might serve in these areas. You'll find contact information after each committee description.

Currently, the Covenant Association is looking for a **SECRETARY**. According to our bylaws (October 27, 2019), the Secretary records minutes for all Association and Executive Committee meetings, ensures proper record-keeping for all standing committees at regular meetings, and manages relevant correspondence. The Secretary also serves as the second signatory for the checking account and is bonded through the Conference. The Executive Committee meets monthly (except August and December), and the Secretary also takes minutes at the Spring and Fall Association Gatherings, which fall on the last Sunday of April and October each year.

THE FORMATION COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)

The Formation COM supports Members in Discernment (MID), mentors for MIDs, and oversees authorized clergy offering guidance in field education settings (licensed, commissioned). This committee determines both ordination eligibility and what qualifies as an ordainable call. They also manage scholarship funds for MIDs and decide who should enter the MID process. Contact: Mr. Carl Altenderfer at carl1801@comcast.net

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)

This committee provides preparation, support, and oversight for ministerial leaders as granted by the United Church of Christ. Committees on Ministry act on behalf of their Association to carry out these responsibilities. Contact Rev. Steven Simpson at pastorstevensimpson@gmail.com

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee maintains accurate records of all offices and committee positions as outlined in the By-Laws, including terms and home churches. They announce open positions in the Covenant E-Blast, through emails to churches and pastors, and via individual outreach that emphasizes matching talents and personalities to each role, always seeking those called by God. Staying alert throughout the year, they look for potential candidates and strive for balance between clergy and lay members. They present candidate recommendations to the Executive Committee for approval. Contact Rev. Mary Etta Mest at maryettamest@gmail.com

Please take time to prayerfully consider how you can contribute your gifts to our Association.
Rev. Sharon S. Morris, Moderator, Covenant Association

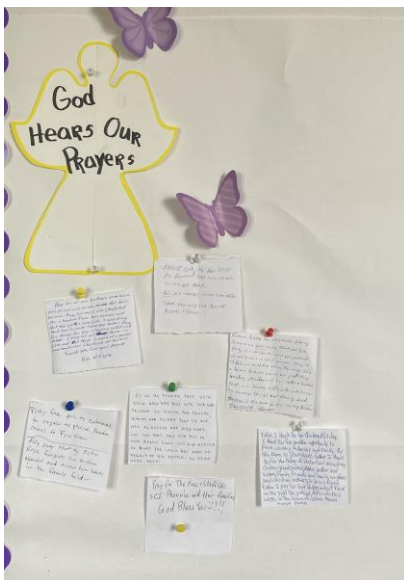
APRIL EVENTS

Sunday, April 19, 3 pm, Installation of Rev. Tammie Wisniewski at One UCC, 1730 New Holland Road, Kenhorst, PA 19607

Sunday, April 26, 3 pm, **Covenant Association Spring Meeting**, at St. John's (Gernants), 13 Gernants Road, Leesport, PA 19533



God Hears Our Prayers ... will you pray?



The longer I walk with Jesus, the more I understand prayer as a lifelong conversation between us. It doesn't matter how long we go between conversations. Like two old friends who may not speak for years but pick up right where they left off, our relationship with God can do the same.

On the bulletin board in the foyer—decorated so lovingly by Susan Mercer for each church season—you'll see a section titled “*God Hears Our Prayers.*” In the past, when members shared prayers for our spoken and silent prayer time, I pinned them there.

Recently, I received several prayers from inmates at SCI-Phoenix, and I've added theirs to the board. I have a favor to ask: will you take a moment to read their conversations with God? Perhaps offer a brief prayer for each one—even a simple “bless you.” You may find one that stays with you and invites you to keep praying for that person over time.

Thank you. And remember—God hears your prayers, too.

So I have a second favor to ask. Will you keep returning to this board, both to add your own prayers and to pray for those posted? You may include your name or remain anonymous, and you're welcome to remove your prayer at any time. I'll refresh the board periodically, taking down prayers that have been there for a while.

We are a people who have covenanted to walk with one another through this journey called life. May this small space in our church remind us that we never pray alone.

~Rev. Frances