



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:

~Upcoming 300th Anniversary events
~Beautifying our building
~Women's Ministries collections

Our 300th Celebration Begins!

Sept 13: 9 am – 1 pm, *Bake Sale at Freed's*. Please sign up to bring baked goods.

- Can you bake cookies or brownies? How about loaves of zucchini, pumpkin, or apple bread? All will sell and help raise funds for our ****free**** catered lunch on October 12!

Sept 20: 1 – 4 pm, *Echoes of Faith: Stories, Tours and Artifacts of our Church*, held at FSUCC.

- 1 - 1:45 pm - a tour of the Hollowbush Cemetery (next to the church) and building.
- 2 - 4 pm – presentations by local historian Bob Wood and by brothers Dr. Kevin and Dr. David Sterner, who co-authored a book on John Philip Boehm that will be available for sale.
 - Artifacts display and ice cream Sundae Bar provide a break between presentations.

Dear Falkner Swamp Beloved,

I recently saw this statement located at the entrance to a land preserve near my home: “Stewardship is an active process of engagement with the land to direct it toward, or keep it at, a desired state.” What if we replaced one of those words in the above quote?

“Stewardship is an active process of engagement with the **church** to direct it toward, or keep it at, a desired state.” September 2025, as we prepare for our 300th anniversary, is Stewardship month.

When we think about stewardship, it helps to set aside the checklists and balance sheets for a moment and simply ask: *What do we love?* We tend to care for the things that have a place in our hearts. We water the plants we want to see grow. We nurture the friendships that bring us joy. We protect the spaces where we feel at home.

Our church is one of those beloved spaces. It is not just walls and windows, but a community of people bound together in faith, prayer, and hope. If the church has ever comforted us, encouraged us, or given us strength, then stewardship is the way we say “thank you” with our actions.

The word itself reminds us that nothing here truly belongs to us. The church, like the earth itself, is God’s gift. We are asked not to possess it but to tend it—to engage actively, to help it flourish, and to keep it healthy for generations to come. We inherit the blessings of those who loved and cared for this church before us, and now it is our turn to do the same.

To be a steward is, in many ways, to be a prayer in action. Each time we show up, offer our gifts, lend our voices, or extend kindness to another, we keep the church in the state we hope for: alive, welcoming, faithful, and full of love. It is less about obligation and more about gratitude, less about duty and more about devotion.

Perhaps stewardship is best understood not as a season or a campaign, but as a way of life—a steady rhythm of care. It is the quiet joy of knowing that what we love, we are helping to sustain. It is trusting that our small acts of faithfulness, joined with those of others, can nurture something much larger than ourselves.

As you receive the Stewardship Team’s pledge card on Sunday, Sept 7, I invite you to reflect:

- What do I most cherish about this church?
- How might I show my love through care, presence, or generosity?
- Where is God inviting me to engage more fully, so that this community continues to be a place of light and hope?

When we live with these questions in our hearts, stewardship becomes less of a task and more of a prayer—a way of offering ourselves, with gratitude, for the sake of God’s work among us.

With you on the journey,
Rev. Frances

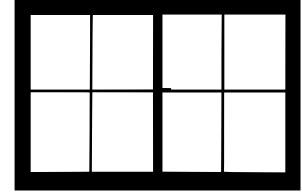
BEAUTIFYING OUR BUILDING FOR THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY



When I returned from vacation and walked into my office Aug 18 before Consistory, I almost needed sunglasses the room was so bright!

That's because our cleaning teams used some of the funds specially collected by the congregation to hire a company that cleaned *all of the clear windows, inside and out*. While the company was busy, our own members - Carol, Barb G., Becky, and Ken and Linda Sell were right behind them *cleaning all the screens*.

Ken also painted the windowsills of the large stairwell windows, which look beautiful!



Many, many thanks to those who contributed to this special cleaning fund, to the cleaning teams who tirelessly and faithfully report to duty each month to keep our well-used spaces sparkling, and to this special team of 5 who helped our building look its best as our faith community celebrates 300 years! ~ Rev. Frances

Freshly painted entryway
(posts will be completed soon)



New lamp post

Painted windowsills



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 July 2025

Total funds available for general use at the end of June:	\$85,754.31
Total Income received in the month of July:	+ \$6,523.36
Total Expenses paid in the month of July:	<u>(\$7,568.42)</u>
Total funds available for general use at the end of July:	\$84,709.25

The net financial results from general church activity for the month of July reflected a loss in the general fund of \$3,175.06 (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!



Consistory has two very important dates for you this fall:

❖ **Thursday, October 9 @ 7:00 p.m. – Budget Team – first meeting**

We would love to see at least one member of every committee/team at the Budget Team meeting so all groups can be represented. But you don't have to be on any other committee to be a part of the Budget Team – come to the meeting and learn about the process of planning for our next fiscal year.

❖ **Sunday, December 7 after worship – Annual Congregational Meeting**

At this meeting, we will vote to approve the 2026 Budget as well as a minor change in language in our By-Laws (due to the combining of all four Pennsylvania conferences into one Keystone Conference).



	1 	2 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM 10 AM Women's Ministries	3	4 **Rev. Frances' office hours	5	6
7 10 AM Worship w/ Communion Stewardship Invitation 7 PM/AA Mtg.	8 7 PM M & W mtg.	9 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	10 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	11 **Rev. Frances' office hours	12	13 Bake Sale @ Freed's 9 AM – 1 PM
14 10 AM Worship Children's Church begins Lay people speak: why is church special? 7 PM/AA Mtg	15 6:30 PM Consistory	16 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	17 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	18 **Rev. Frances' office hours	19	20 Tours of Cemetery & Building w/historic presentations 1 – 4 PM
21 10 AM Worship 7 PM/AA Mtg	22	23 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	24 Sharon's office hours 9:30 – 1:30 PM	25 **Rev. Frances' office hours	26	27
28 10 AM Worship Joyful Noise special offering Rev. Kevin McLemore preaching Dedication of Pledge Cards 7 PM/AA Mtg	29	30 Rev. Frances & Sharon's office hours 9 – 2 PM	<div style="border: 2px dashed red; padding: 10px;"> <p>Save the Date! Thurs Oct 9 - 7 pm: Budget meeting to plan for 2026. Needed: at least one person per committee/team to attend.</p> <p>Sun Oct 12 - Anniversary Sunday. Sign up for lunch (no cost) and if you plan to attend 3pm service.</p> </div>			

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 September cleaners are Sharon & Bob Schnaars. 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

The church windows (inside & out, except the stained-glass ones in the sanctuary) were professionally cleaned by Jeff's Window Cleaning and Power Washing. Church volunteers cleaned the screens and windowsills. We plan to have the woodwork in the sanctuary and foyer professionally cleaned next. Thank you to all that contributed to this cause. We will continue accepting donations as we consider more projects.



Thank you to all that contributed to our “Tissue Party” collection. Over 140 boxes of tissues were donated! They will be taken to New Hanover & Barth Elementary schools.

On to our next collection: from August 31 – September 30 we will be collecting food donations for Operation 143. They have a pre-approved shopping list of items that children can open on their own, so please pick up a copy of the list in the church foyer.

Thank you for helping our community!



“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matt. 7:7)

We asked, we searched, and we knocked....and the trial run last spring led to Erica Creed signing on to be our Choir Director! Erica and the Choir resumed rehearsals on Aug 27th. They will meet Wednesday nights, Erica will record anthems on the piano, and Choir will sing to the recordings on Sundays in worship. Welcome back, Erica, we are glad to have you!

✨ 300 Years of Communion at Falkner Swamp!

Join us **Sept. 20, 2025 (1–4 p.m.)** for tours, history, artifacts, and an ice cream sundae bar as we celebrate the **300th Anniversary of the First Communion of the German Reformed Church in America**. All are welcome!