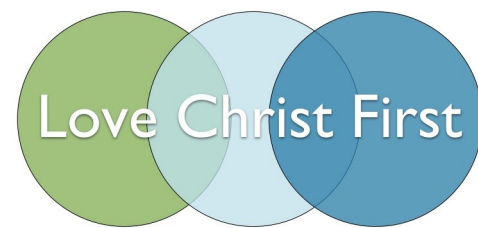




Refill Your Cup Women's Retreat



DECEMBER 2024



December Mission Project The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need.

To make a donation to the Christmas Fund, you may include it with your regular offering. Please indicate the amount designated for The Christmas Fund. At the end of December, we will send one check directly to this Fund.



First United Church of Christ
Pastor Becky Thomas
501 Northampton Street
Hellertown PA 18055
(610)838-8811
office@firstucchellertown.org



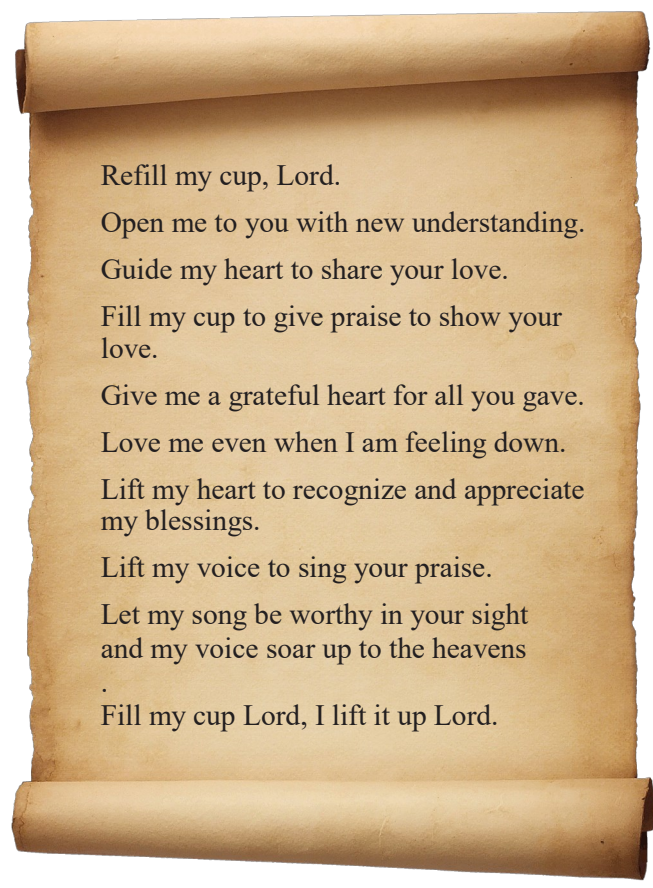


It is hard to believe that yet another church year is ending and a new one beginning. I have to be honest, we are over halfway through November and my Halloween decorations are still outside. Between the first semester of my doctoral program coming to an end and the busyness of life, I just haven't had the chance to take them down. The truth is that sometimes I am just not ready and right now I am not ready for anything. I am not ready for the lengthening nights. I am not ready for the cold winter air. I am not ready for the end of one church year and the beginning of something new. What I desire more than anything else, at least at this moment, is to just pause time for a while so I can breathe.

I wish Advent could really be used for us to slow ourselves down and sit with the hope of the season. Unfortunately, that isn't how our world works. The Christmas season means the busyness of shopping, baking, planning, and celebrating. For me, it means that it is almost time to bake several hundred kiffles, plan multiple worship services, buy and wrap gifts, and start praying that it doesn't snow before my worship services on Christmas Eve so I can travel safely from church to church. I know all of you are just as busy as I am. So, here is my little prayer for you even if you are struggling to find time to slow down or if you are finding that you, too, are just not ready. May the hope, peace, joy, and love of the season find you and may the Light of the World shine in your lives today and every day.

*In light and love,
Pastor Becky*

Retreat Psalm—2024

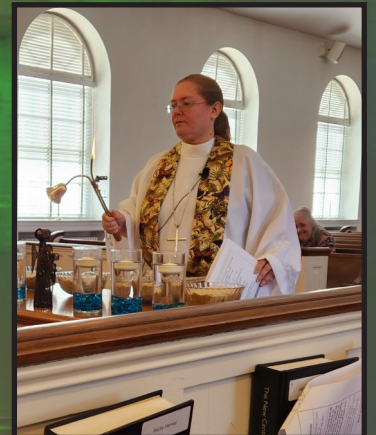


Refill my cup, Lord.
Open me to you with new understanding.
Guide my heart to share your love.
Fill my cup to give praise to show your love.
Give me a grateful heart for all you gave.
Love me even when I am feeling down.
Lift my heart to recognize and appreciate my blessings.
Lift my voice to sing your praise.
Let my song be worthy in your sight
and my voice soar up to the heavens
Fill my cup Lord, I lift it up Lord.

At the Fill Your Cup Women's Retreat held on Nov 15-17 at Mariawald Retreat House, eleven women were collectively asked to write a Psalm about filling their cups. This is the Psalm they created.



Remembrance Sunday, November 3rd



On Remembrance Day we light a candle for each of our members who passed since the last Remembrance Day: Claire Moran, Richard Hacker, Catherine Underkoffler, Aileen Werner, Mildred Lewis and James J. Reiss.



A Potluck Luncheon followed worship on Remembrance Sunday.



Thank you to everyone who brought food and helped with set-up and clean-up for this luncheon.



November 17, 2024

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for all the prayers, cards, food, phone calls and well-wishes extended to me following my recent surgery.

I feel blessed to be a part of this First UCC Church Family.

Denise Keen

Dear First UCC,

Thank you for your gift of **\$295.00** to the Alzheimer's Association. Your generous donation supports our mission to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia-by accelerating research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing the quality of care and support. Because of you, a caregiver can find a sense of belonging at a support group. Thanks to you, a caller to our 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900) can receive information from an experienced specialist or a master's-level clinician. And you are the reason the Alzheimer's Association is advancing research toward a future without Alzheimer's and all other dementia.

Sincerely and with gratitude,
Michael Reich
Chief Marketing Officer

Dear First UCC,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to the Habitat Lehigh Valley ReStore on 10/11/24. Did you know that your donation helps to empower local families to build homes, community and stronger futures? All donations of stuff are resold at our ReStore and all the proceeds stay in the Lehigh Valley to continue building homes for local families. Thanks to you, we can continue our mission of building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter.

We thank you greatly!

Very truly yours,

*Habitat for Humanity of the Lehigh Valley
And our partnering families*

Dear First UCC Members,

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$50.00 to Greater Lehigh Valley Walk. We appreciate your support.

Net proceeds will benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, to fund research, education, prevention, advocacy, and survivor programs to assist those affected by suicide.

On behalf of everyone who will be touched by AFSP's work in the coming year, thank you for helping us take steps toward a world without suicide.

Sincerely,

American Foundation for
Suicide Prevention

A Request from Bethany Children's Home

November 4, 2024

Dear Pastor and Committee Members,

Bethany is blessed throughout the year with the kindness and generosity of our community.

Your special gifts help to provide not only basic needs of our youth, but opportunities to make positive, lasting memories for them.

As you can imagine, holidays can be a very difficult time for our youth, many of them have never received gifts for Christmas or participated in traditions. While they are with us, it is wonderful to give them these experiences. Each year, our children participate in cookies and ornament swaps, holiday parties and more to make their season bright.

We wanted to share with you our wish list to help fulfill Christmas wishes we receive during this time. We ask your youth for help in creating this wish list each year.

There are two ways to help our youth during the holidays: purchase items on our wish list or call me at 610-589-6810 for specific names and gift ideas.

Thank you so much for helping our youth to have some of their wishes met this holiday season. If you have any questions regarding our wish list, please contact Jocelynn Phillips in the Development Office at 610-589-6834.

I wish you and your families a joyous And blessed holiday season.

Sincerely,

Dana L. Hoffman, Director of Development
Bethany Children's Home



SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Each Sunday, children begin in worship at 10:30am and are invited to class following the Children's Message.

Special Dates:

December 8 – Advent Spaghetti luncheon, Nativity displays, children's crafts, following worship

Pageant Sunday and Love Feast is Sunday, December 22

All children are invited to participate in the service.

Please meet in the narthex by 10am.

Christmas Eve family service – 7:30pm, December 24

No Sunday School December 29

January 5 – Epiphany Sunday with a visit from the three Wise Men during worship

The **Nursery** is open for young children during Sunday worship as needed. An adult is required to remain in the nursery when anyone under age 16 is present. Adults may still listen to the service while in the nursery.

Worship bags are available in the coat room area for children during worship. Please remember to return the bags to the shelf following the service.

Contact Marji Hughes - mphughes22@gmail.com 610-984-5053 - if you have any questions at all about Faith Formation

Blue Christmas Gathering

Sponsored by Hellertown Area Ministerium

Saturday, December 21st at 7:00 PM

Held at the Carriage House



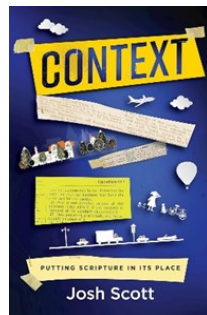
Service of the Longest Night

Sunday, December 22, 7 pm

Held at First UCC



Every Sunday morning
9:45 AM
before worship
in the Wimmer Room



Bibles & Brunch is on Tuesdays!

1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month 10:30am
December 3 and December 17
We will finish our discussion of
"Context - Putting Scripture in Its Place" by Josh Scott
Feel free to drop in and try us out!

Sunday morning Bible Study --

9am in the Youth room upstairs

We are studying *Genesis*

Sundays 9:15am

Please contact Tricia Shelly for more information,
or just join us!



Confirmation class schedule:



December 15, December 29
11:30am – 1pm in the Youth/Young Adult Room
Questions, please contact Marji Hughes or Pastor Becky

YOUTH GROUP for all 7th-12th graders

DECEMBER 1, 11:30-1pm (Note our new time) Pickleball at Lower
Saucon UCC

No church affiliation is required. Bring your friends! Questions:

Pastor Becky - pastorbecky1121@gmail.com 610-297-2295

Ashlynn Mixa - [REDACTED]

Marji Hughes - mphughes22@gmail.com 610-984-5053

Blessing Box Schedule



Our Blessing Box Food Pantry is being used heavily. We are blessed to be able to help. Obviously, there are many in our community who are aided by your generosity. We need to replenish our emergency supply.

Week of Dec 1-7— Andy Spear
Week of Dec 8-14—Phyllis Scherer
Week of Dec 15-21—Ann Brown
Week of Dec 22-28—Sandy Panick
Week of Dec 29-Jan 4 —Amy Mixa
Week of Jan 5-11 - Diane French
Week of Jan 12-18—Tammie Vosburg
Week of Jan 19-25 —Georgie Stuempfle
Week of Jan 26-Feb 1 - Letty Petrino
Week of Feb 2-8— Carlann Broglie
Week of Feb 9-15—Doug Miller
Week of Feb 16-22 —Marji Hughes



Poinsettia Sale

The Altar Guild is taking orders for Red Christmas Poinsettias. The Poinsettias will be used to decorate the sanctuary and narthex and can be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service.

Payment of \$9.00 per plant is due when you place your order. Please fill out and detach the order form with you dedication and turn in with your payment. Thank you. Please make checks payable to First United Church of Christ. The deadline for orders is **Friday, December 5th.**



On January 5
we will welcome the Magi
to our sanctuary during worship as they
search for the Christ Child.

December - Sponsors/Volunteers

December 1
Counting Team..... Team 2
Ushers.....Team 2
Altar Flowers...Wayne Packer/Andrea Danner
BulletinsWayne Packer/Andrea Danner
Lay ReaderBecky Rosenberger

December 8
Counting Team..... Team 3
Ushers.....Team 3
Altar Flowers.....Richard Carl
Bulletins.....Doug & Brenda Miller
Lay Reader.....Phyllis Scherer

December 15
Counting Team..... Team 4
UshersTeam 4
Altar Flowers..... Norine Haas
BulletinsGlenn & Ann Brown
Lay ReaderPhyllis Heil-Henry

December 22
Counting Team..... Team 1
Ushers Team 5
Altar FlowersLeroy & Jeannie Miller
Organ Piece..... Daphne Rodriguez
Piano Piece.....Mark & Amy Mixa
Bulletins.....Becky & John Harvey
Lay Reader.....Warren Kurz

December 24
UshersConsistory
BulletinsDave & Georgie Stuempfle
Lay ReaderAndy Spear

December 29
Counting Team..... Team 2
Ushers Team 1
Altar FlowersDiane French
Bulletins.....Diane French
Lay Reader.....Wayne Packer

The December Newsletter
has been sponsored by:
Dave & Georgie Stuempfle

2025 Sponsors Needed

We are looking for sponsors for Newsletters, Bulletins and Altar Flowers for 2025.
The cost to sponsor Newsletters is \$70.00/mo., Bulletins—\$10.00/wk., and
Flowers—\$40.00/wk. Sign-up for Newsletters, Bulletins & Flowers
in the Church Office.



Upcoming Schedule of Services

You will be notified by Facebook or One Call of any changes to the schedule listed below. If you are not receiving messages by One Call, please contact the Church Office with your contact information. If you have recently changed your email address, or phone number, please update your information in the church office. Thank you.

Dec 2024	10:30 AM	1	Worship/Communion/First Sunday of Advent
	10:30 AM	8	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	15	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	22	Worship/Pageant/Lovefeast
	7:00 PM	22	Longest Night Service
	7:30 PM	24	Christmas Eve Service
	10:30 AM	29	Worship/No Sunday School
Jan 2025	10:30 AM	5	Worship/Communion/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	12	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	19	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	26	Worship/Sunday School
Feb 2025	10:30 AM	2	Worship/Communion/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	9	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	16	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	23	Worship/Sunday School

Church Office Hours: — The Office will be open 9:00 am to 1:30 pm, Monday thru Friday. Please make your calls to 610-838-8811 and conduct your business during those hours. Other calls will be recorded on voicemail. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and cooperation.

PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION NEEDED

Discussions of church business should be reserved for after services on Sundays or during office business hours. Please allow our members and staff to prepare their hearts for worship.

THANK YOU

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

Saturday, November 9, 11:30 am at St John’s UCC, Laurys Station, was a historic day for our congregation. PNEC and the other three UCC PA conferences – Penn West, Penn Central, Pennsylvania Southeast - voted to become one conference. Answering the UCC motto “that they may all be one” (John 17:21) we will become the Keystone Conference in January 2026 after two years of combined conference leadership working on this merger. As your delegate from First UCC with our pastor and the 121 congregations in PNEC I was excited to be part of the unified 90% decision by the four conferences. Will keep you informed or if there are questions, please contact me, Jane Joyce.

Women’s Breakfast at the Hellertown Diner
December 10, 2024 (Second Tuesday of each month.)



*Come as you are!
Come whenever you are able!
First one there, grabs a table!
Please feel free to join us!*



Tuesday Morning Men’s Group
Every Tuesday at 8:00 AM
At the Hellertown Diner
After breakfast they come to the church to do various jobs or projects
All men are welcome to join this group

Attention All Dart Players—November Schedule

12/2 Away @ Star of Bethlehem 12/9 Home vs Trinity/Edgeboro
12/16 Home vs. Holy Cross

For **anyone** who is interested in joining this group,
please contact Leroy Miller at [REDACTED]

Staff

Rev. Becky Thomas, Pastor	610-297-2295
Marji Hughes, Minister of Faith Formation	610-984-5053
Pat O ’Connell, Minister of Music	484-357-9764
Phyllis Scherer, Administrative Asst.	610-554-6223
Tammie Vosburg, Church Treasurer	610-533-8009
Sherwood Stauffer, Sexton	610-838-7391

Consistory Members

	Email address	Phone Number
Elders		
Sandy Bender	purplepeep@rcn.com	[REDACTED]
Amy Mixa	athomeamy@hotmail.com	[REDACTED]
Georgie Stuempfle	gdflea@yahoo.com	[REDACTED]
Deacons		
Karen Frankenfield	gumbycat1@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Diane French– Pres.	dcfrench48@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Ashlynn Mixa	ashlynnmixa@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Sandy Panick	hygienist2000@msn.com	[REDACTED]
Trustees		
Ann Brown—Sec.	forglan@verizon.net	[REDACTED]
Keith Lentz-Vice-Pres.	keithlen56@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Doug Major	pamajors@rcn.com	[REDACTED]

Join us Online!

To watch on Facebook, go to <https://www.facebook.com/hellertownucc> and you will see the live stream as the top post.
To watch on YouTube, go to <https://www.youtube.com/@firstucchellertown/streams>.
To view a playlist of our choir anthems, go to <https://tinyurl.com/FirstUCCMusicMonday>.

December Birthdays

12/2 Emily Morello

12/3 Lisa Fenon

12/4 Melanie Litz

12/4 Mark Lorah

12/4 Shannon Parsons

12/5 Kenneth Zurbano

12/7 Glenn Brown

12/7 Albert Lishman

12/7 Jean Miller

12/8 Emily Stetser

12/9 Search Willson

12/10 Madelyn Ball

12/12 Sharon Musgnung

12/14 Jason Muldowney

12/16 Michael O'Connell

12/17 Janice Csrnko

12/22 Julia Major

12/22 Annie Policare

12/24 Bernie Musgnung

12/24 Rachel O'Connell

12/26 Ben Schroeck


12/26 Grady Schroeck

12/27 Matthew Harvey

12/27 Jeanette Stoneback

12/29 Dylan Kurtz

12/29 Paul Laub




December Anniversaries

12/9 Al & Susan Lishman

12/15 Kevin & Milou Brown

12/29 Bill & Cindy Sabo

12/30 John & Kathy Chapman




Stewardship of God's People at First Church

Date	Contributions	Attendance	Fundraisers
Oct 6	\$3,215.93	60	\$2,932.25
Oct 13	\$2,433.78	81	Benevolences
Oct 20	\$1,981.24	51	Helene Relief \$1,095.00
Oct 27	\$6,494.64	62	CWS \$195.00
Total	\$14,125.59		
Budget	-\$16,000.00		
Over/Short	(\$1,874.41)		

Offerings may be made anytime electronically at www.firstucchellertown.org/give This allows you to make a one time or repeating gift from your bank account or credit/debit card. You may also elect to give directly from your bank through a Bill-Pay option or mail your gifts and envelopes to the church office. The Church office is open Monday through Friday 9am to 1 pm if you care to drop off your gifts.

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7



NEW BETHANY HOSPITALITY CENTER BETHLEHEM


First Wednesday of every month

10:00 AM – 1:00PM

Our monthly crew visits to the soup kitchen at New Bethany Hospitality Center. First UCC is signed up for the first Wednesday of every month. Four members are needed to chop, prepare, and serve meals at noon finishing at 1:00. pm

Interested in starting a second crew or be put on a sub list???


Contact : Jeannie Miller [redacted] e Stout [redacted]




Advent Luncheon

December 8, 2024 following 10:30 worship

Enjoy a delicious spaghetti lunch prepared by the Faith Formation Committee and delight in our display of creche scenes on loan from our congregation.






PLEASE sign up in the narthex to attend

If you would like to display any nativity scene from your home, please let the church office know, so we may have enough room to set up properly.

All help is welcome. Contact Marji Hughes, or sign up for kitchen help, clean up, or to bring a salad or dessert



The following member is celebrating his 97th birthday this month. Perhaps you would like to send a birthday card or thinking of you card to brighten his day.

Mark Lorah

1050 Main Street,

SVM 2, Apt 306

Hellertown PA 18055

December 4

10

7

**First United Church Hellertown
Consistory Minutes in Brief**

Treasurer's Report – Tammie Vosburg - Report accepted as presented

Highlights: • October year-to-date operating cash flow deficit (\$8,986) improvement over September by a small amount. • Investment Portfolio for October was down \$25,865, however year to date it is up \$122,957. • The preliminary budget for 2025 was presented for review. Fund Raisers Profits Penny Party & Auction – \$2,532 Halloween Parade – \$500 Nut Roll Sale - November is our last fundraiser for the year.

Discussion: • We need to share our progress, successes, and concerns during the announcements before church services each week to encourage giving. • It was suggested that we add directions in the newsletter for auto-giving and how this can be set up for members.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Becky -Report accepted as presented

Highlights:

Breakdown of hours for major responsibilities- Total Hours: 91, Hours Dedicated to Worship: 26, Hours Dedicated to Pastoral Care: 6, Continuing Education Hours: 9. Office Hours: 30, Meetings: 9

Faith Formation Report: Marji Hughes - Report accepted as presented

Highlights:

- We discussed details for our Advent Spaghetti Luncheon on December 8 - with our creches displayed around the room.
- Sign-ups are on the bulletin board to attend, to help, or bring salad/dessert. Faith Formation plus Charles K will be doing the cooking. There will be a "nativity" craft table for the children that will be available during the luncheon.
- Jane Joyce will be representing 1st UCC at the PNEC annual meeting on November 9 - where a historic vote will be held concerning joining all the Pennsylvania UCC conferences together to become one large Keystone Conference.
- Plans are in the works for the Pageant and Love Feast on December 22. Children and Youth will be helping with the service in various ways.
- We still need at least 1 teacher for the elementary school class. • We will soon gather volunteers to read and light the Advent Candles in December.

Elders' Report: Georgie Stuempfle • I have been in touch with Jane Joyce and Joan Kiak regarding Elder responsibilities. After the congregational vote at our Annual Meeting, these and other new consistory members will have full voting privileges.

Deacons' Report: Sandy Panick- We have talked to each ushering team about the panic buttons, their placements, and how to use them.

Trustees' Report: Ann Brown

- Fire Inspection: We did not pass inspection with several items to address before the certificate was issued. We have 30 days to address these issues.
- BEI will address the emergency lights that are not working in Narthex and downstairs New Fellowship Hall. They are scheduled on Tuesday, November 12 to begin correcting these issues.

The Consistory Minutes in Brief (cont)

Trustees' Report (cont)

- Meiser HVAC contacted to check our furnace and review our needs.
- JMS is scheduled to clean our church on Friday, December 6 in preparations for two activities planned for the 14th and 15th .

Committee Reports: Executive Meeting: Keith Lentz, Diane French, and Ann Brown met on 11/6 to set the agenda for the Consistory meeting and finalize evaluations with staff. We met with Tammie Vosburg to discuss the 2025 budget.

Music and Worship: Keith Lentz - Report accepted as presented **Highlights:**

- Sunday, December 22nd will be a big music Sunday and Longest Night Service at 7:00 PM at First UCC combined with Lower Saucon UCC that evening.
- Christmas Eve service on 12/24/24 begins at 7:30 PM.
- Thanksgiving Service will be on November 24th with a Baptism that Sunday.
- January 5th will be the 3 Kings Service.

Altar: Ann Brown Hanging of the Greens scheduled for November 24 after church. Georgie scheduled a team to hang the greens at the altar, place altar trees as well, and hang outside lighting on November 25th.

Stewardship/ Fundraising: Georgie Stuempfle

- The Nutroll sale profit is \$532.00. This is the last fundraiser for the year. The pickup date is Thursday, November 21st in the Wimmer Room.
- Ashlynn Mixa will be the new chairperson of this committee.

Old Business:

- James Rosenberger will research a new desktop computer for the office and a stand-alone hard drive to back up our files. He will present this information at our next meeting for our approval. If approved, we need to purchase these before the end of the year using the 2024 remaining Wimmer Funds.
- CPR Training by Debbie Anthony provided all Sundays in January as possible dates to get certification training after church beginning at noon. We suggest a possible date of January 19th.

New Business:

- Snow Removal: We contracted and approved Brent Stoy Abundant Lawn and Garden for snow removal. David Heintzelman has agreed to do parking lot this winter.
- Newsletter new pricing increase from \$60 to \$70 per month for sponsorship of monthly newsletter.
- Annual Meeting Date: We suggest January 26 as the date for the Annual Meeting with all committee and consistory reports due in the office by December 8.

A copy of the full minutes is available in the office upon request.

Next Meeting: December 9, 2024, in the Wimmer Room at 6:30 pm.

Like us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/hellertownucc

