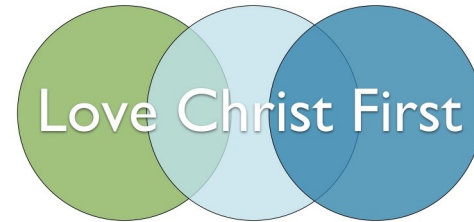




Women's Retreat



FEBRUARY 2024

Annual Meeting Announcement
 Sunday, February 18, 2024
 our Annual Congregation Meeting will be held immediately following worship.

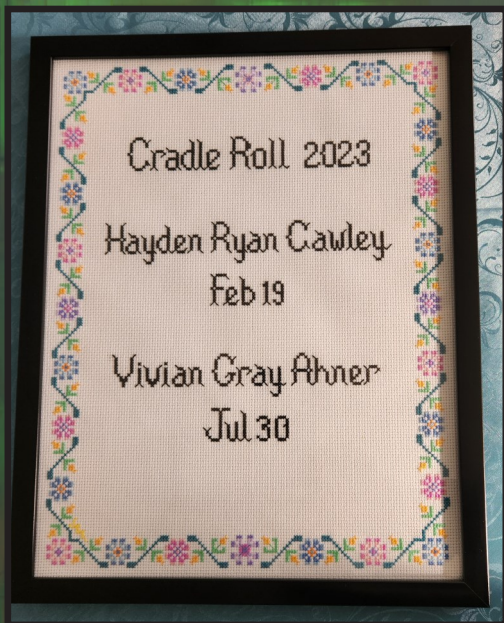
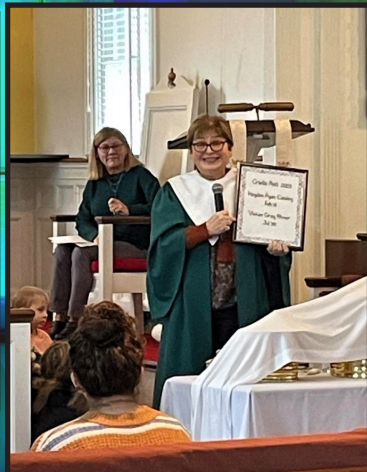
Mission Project for February
Phoebe Home
 See page 3 for more details



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



Dedication of Baptismal Plaque,
stitched by Joan Kiak



Children listen as Pastor Becky gives the
Children's Sermon



Scouts held their Pinewood Derby here
on 1-20-24



**Reflections on the Psalms—Sacrificial Meal at 6pm
Worship Service at 7 pm at Lower Saucon UCC**

We will celebrate by gathering for a meal, much as the early Church did. While we enjoy food and fellowship including hearty chicken rice soup we will spend a bit of time thinking about the meaning of Lent and its symbols. This sacrificial meal is not a sacrifice that we make but a remembrance that God feeds us, God nourishes us, God welcomes us, God places love in our hearts. If you are moved to show your gratitude by giving what you might have spent for a dinner out, offerings will be accepted and passed on to Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering.

Mid-Week Lenten Soup & Services

Soup Meal @ 6 PM Worship Service @ 7 PM

- Feb 21 First UCC , 501 Northampton Street, Hellertown
- Feb 28 New Jerusalem Lutheran Church, 3233 Apples Church Rd, Bethlehem
- Mar 6 Christ Lutheran Church, 69 Main Street, Hellertown
- Mar 13 Lower Saucon UCC, 1375 Third Avenue, Hellertown
- Mar 20 Friedens Lutheran Church, 2451 Saucon Valley Rd, Center Valley

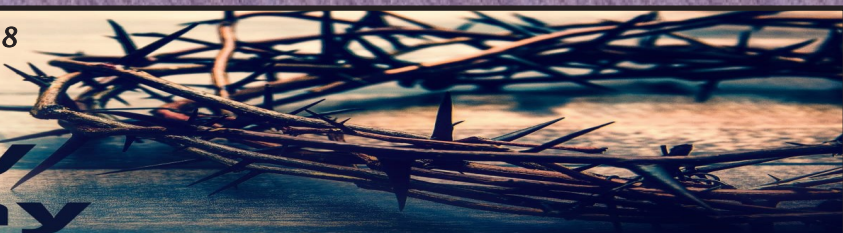


PALM SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, March 24—10:30 AM

*Joint Service -Thursday March 28
7 PM at First UCC*

**Maundy
Thursday**



Joint Service—Friday, March 29—7 PM at Lower Saucon UCC

good friday

Easter Sunday—March 31st

10:30 AM





January 12, 2024

Dear First UCC,

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$300.00 on 12/31/2023 to New Bethany! Your gift allows us to offer wraparound services designed to remove barriers and assist individuals and families in reaching self-sufficiency.

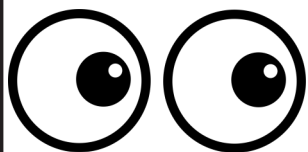
We start with a meal and meet people where they are with street-level human services, including showers, laundry services, mailing address, and monthly access to our food pantry, and continue with housing assistance, job search support and tools, and case management.

New Bethany offers hope and support to our neighbors who experience poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness. We believe that all people, regardless of circumstances, should be treated with dignity and care without judgement. No one who seeks help is turned away.

Each year, New Bethany serves over 40,000 hot meals through our Southside Drop-in Center and Trinity Kitchen; provides 2,000 showers, and mail and laundry services to over 100 individuals and households; Distributes nutritious groceries to create nearly 200,000 meals through our Choice Food Pantry; shelters and offers supportive services to over 30 families and 13 individuals experiencing the trauma of homelessness through our supportive housing programming; prevents thousands of households from losing their homes through Housing Advocated and Assistance; keeps over 60 people stably housed with Representative Payee services; and helps over 70 individuals avoid the crisis of homelessness through permanent housing units operated by New Bethany.

You are a crucial partner in this work. Thank you again on behalf of New Bethany's board, staff, and most importantly, our neighbors who need assistance!

Sincerely,
Tim Burke
Development Director
tburke@newbethany.org



Watch for information on a Mid-Week Lenten Study Group.



December 28, 2023

Dear Members of First UCC.

Thank you for your charitable contribution of \$1,000.00 on 12/27/23 in support of Valley Youth House Holiday Gift Drive 2023. Your generosity makes a significant difference in our ability to provide programming to young people in desperate need of our services.

Valley Youth House supports young people who are experiencing homelessness, housing insecurity, and loss of family connections to achieve healthy and independent futures. Personalized programs and services offer emergency shelter, stable housing, counseling, and life skills training.

For the last 50 years, VYH has provided crisis intervention and outcome-driven programs to more than 446,000 youth and families in our community. This is only possible with the assistance of philanthropic support, and therefore we are most appreciative of your donation.

Thank you for supporting our mission to be the catalyst for youth to achieve their desired future through genuine relationships that support families, ensure safe places, and build community connections.

Sincerely,
Christina J. Shoemaker, MBA, CFRE
Senior Vice President of Advancement



The following members are celebrating 90+ birthdays this month. Perhaps you would like to send a birthday card or thinking of you card to brighten their day.

Catherine Underkoffler Feb 3
Sacred Heart Senior Living, Rm 307
4851 Saucon Creek Road
Center Valley PA 18034

Aileen Werner Feb 24
107 Fall Run Road
Pittsburgh PA 185221



As I write this article, the sky is gray and you can almost feel that it is going to begin snowing soon. Winter is my least favorite time of the year. The combination of cold and darkness always makes me feel like God is far away. It seems fitting that the joy of Christmas shines a little light in our world in the beginning of the cold months. But, now, we are in the middle of those cold, dark nights and I find myself wishing that the holiday season had lasted a little longer. The glow of those happy lights have returned to their boxes, collecting dust until next year.

Lent is upon us. It is meant to be a time of searching our hearts, an opportunity to draw closer to God. Perhaps, then, it is equally fitting that the heaviness of the Lenten season ushers us into Spring. Now, during these cold, dark months, we can imagine the seeds waiting in the frozen ground and draw hope from the new life that comes with the changing of the seasons. The words of a familiar children's song has been floating through my mind as I write this. "Rise and shine and give God your glory, glory!" Rise and shine, my friends, and may this Lent be a season of waking up.

In light and love,
Pastor Becky



Mission Project for February Phoebe Home—Valentine Gifts

During the month of February, our congregation will be collecting gifts for the Phoebe Home in Allentown. The items collected will be used as Bingo prizes or welcoming gifts for new residents. Please help us to spread some cheer to these shut-ins by bringing in any of the items listed below during the month of February.

There is a box located in the Narthex for your gifts.

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Assorted markers | Pens, paper, envelopes, stamps | Flavored teas/coffees |
| Assorted toiletries | Liquid soap | Calendars |
| Nail polish | Shaving Cream | Books and magazines |
| Cosmetics | Tissues | Jewelry/trinkets |
| Hand and Body Lotion | Toothpaste/tooth brushes | Candy (sugar free are great!) |
| Hair Accessories | Large Print wordsearch books | Peanut butter |
| | Small packets of crackers, cookies | |

Thank you for participating in this ministry to Phoebe.

Easter Basket Project—March Mission Project

Members of First UCC will be asked to donate for Easter Baskets for children served by the New Jerusalem Food Bank. In addition to donations, we will need volunteers to help assemble the baskets. We need to create 136 baskets. Check the Narthex bulletin board for items to donate and to sign up to volunteer your time.



FEBRUARY



SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Children pre-K through grade 6 leave for classes following the Children's Message in worship. 3-6 year old children may play in the nursery or come to worship prior to the Children's Message. Contact Marji Hughes - mphughes22@gmail.com 610-984-5053 if you have any questions at all about Faith Formation at 1st UCC.



We are looking for volunteers 16 years and up to help staff the nursery on Sunday mornings. Please contact the office 610-838-8811 or Tricia Shelly if you'd like to sign up. With enough helpers it would be not more than once a month.

Child care is offered on Sunday mornings during worship in our nursery. for babies and toddlers **as needed**. Adults may still listen to the service while in the nursery. There is a child-sized bathroom and a changing table available as well. *An adult is required to remain in the room when anyone under age 16 is present.*



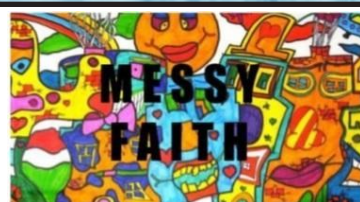
Confirmation Class

Confirmation class for 7th and 8th graders meets two Sundays a month 11:30-1pm

This month's classes are: February 11 and February 25, 2024

All mentors are asked to join us on February 25!

Questions, please contact Marji Hughes or Pastor Becky



Penn Northeast Conference
Presents the 16th "Annual" Youth Retreat

March 1-3, 2024 (check in Friday 6:30-7PM/Pick up Sunday at 12PM
Spruce Lake, 5389 Route 447, Canadensis

Cost: \$195/person (includes all programming and meals)

ALL youth in grades 7th-12th are invited.

Life and faith aren't always smooth sailing - And that's ok!
What's important is that we learn how to talk about it, ask questions about it,
and how to make the best of it.

Explore these things with us through art, games and more.

<https://tithely.com/event-registration/#/8208250> to register - or paper registration forms are in the Narthex. **Scholarships for all who attend. Please speak with Marji Hughes.**

February - Sponsors/Volunteers

February 4

Counting Team..... Team 3
Ushers.....Team 3
Altar Flowers.....Bob & Phyllis Scherer
BulletinsJim & Linda Exley
Lay ReaderMarie Laub

February 11

Counting Team..... Team 4
Ushers.....Team 5
Altar Flowers.....Diane French
BulletinsBob & Doris Turner
Lay Reader.....Doug Major

February 18

Counting Team..... Team 1
UshersTeam 4
Altar Flowers.....Denise Keen
BulletinsJane Parenti
Lay ReaderAnn Brown

February 25

Counting Team..... Team 2
Ushers Team 1
Altar FlowersDoug & Brenda Miller
Bulletins.....Dave & Georgie Stuempfle
Lay Reader.....Georgie Stuempfle

The February Newsletter

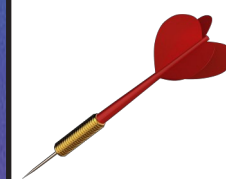
has been sponsored by:

Dave & Georgie Stuempfle

Always inform the church office if you are hospitalized. Please do not trust that word will get to the office through the grapevine. **Our hospital code is 428.** You can mention that if you are admitted.

2024 Sponsors Needed

We are looking for sponsors for Newsletters, Bulletins and Altar Flowers for 2024. The cost to sponsor Newsletter is \$60.00/mo., Bulletins - \$10.00/wk., and Flowers- \$40.00/wk. Sign-up sheets may be found in the Narthex.



Attention All Dart Players—February Schedule

2/5 Away @ Holy Cross

2/12 All Star Match

2/19 Home vs. Fritz Wesleyan

2/26 Away @ College Hill

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.	[REDACTED]
Tammie Vosburg, Church Treasurer	[REDACTED]
Sherwood Stauffer, Sexton	[REDACTED]

Consistory Members

	Email address	Phone Number
<u>Elders</u>		
Sandy Bender	purplepeep@rcn.com	[REDACTED]
Amy Mixa	athomeamy@hotmail.com	[REDACTED]
Georgie Stuempfle	gdflea@yahoo.com	[REDACTED]
<u>Deacons</u>		
Minga Ferencin	mingaf1@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Karen Frankenfield	gumbycat1@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Diane French— Pres.	dcfrench48@gmail.com	[REDACTED]
Sandy Panick	hygienist2000@msn.com	[REDACTED]
<u>Trustees</u>		
Ann Brown—Sec.	forglan@verizon.net	[REDACTED]
Keith Lentz	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>.



“Bibles and “Brunch”

for all 1st UCC women members & friends!
 February 12 & 26, March 11 & 25, April 8 & 22
10:30am in the Wimmer Rm



Coffee, tea, cold beverages and light snacks available. Participants are not required to attend every session. Drop-ins are welcome!

On the Road to the Cross by Rob Burkhardt allows readers to experience Easter through the eyes of the everyday people who witnessed the triumphal entry, saw Jesus drag his cross to Calvary, and cried through Christ's last words. Each new perspective opens the door to a fresh consideration of Easter and its impact on their lives and ours.



Books are available in the Wimmer Room.
 For more information, speak with Marji Hughes mphughes22@gmail.com

Sunday Morning Study 9:15 each week

in the YA Café. Just come and join any Sunday

Speak with Tricia Shelly [REDACTED] for more information.



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



Women's Breakfast at the Hellertown Diner

February 13, 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

SOUP KITCHEN



NEW BETHANY HOSPITALITY CENTER BETHLEHEM

First Wednesday of every month

10:00 AM – 1:00PM

Our monthly crew visits to the soup kitchen has resumed. 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. Interested in starting a second crew or be put on a sub list????

Contact : Jeannie Miller [REDACTED] Elsie Stout [REDACTED]
Jane Joyce [REDACTED]

7th-12th grade YOUTH GROUP
February 18, 2024
Glow-in-the-Dark



At Two T's Entertainment Center in Easton

Cost: \$8.50 for golf. Any snacks are extra
Meet at church 4:30pm - Back by 7pm

No church affiliation is required. Bring your friends!

Please let us know that you are coming so we have enough drivers.

A permission slip is needed. Check your email or speak with:

Pastor Becky - pastorbecky1121@gmail.com - [REDACTED] - 295

Ashlynn Mixa - ashlynnmixa@gmail.com [REDACTED]

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



*The Trustees of the Remembrance Fund
have received and gratefully acknowledged*

A gift given in loving memory of Richard Hacker:

John & Sharon Musgnung Bob & Phyllis Scherer Warren & Dinelle Kurz
Michael & Edna Santo

A gift given in loving memory of Claire Moran:

John & Sharon Musgnung Warren & Dinelle Kurz

February Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2/2 James Gebhardt | 2/16 Michele DeRenzis |
| 2/2 Marji Hughes | 2/16 Kyleigh Weaver |
| 2/3 Catherine Underkoffler | 2/17 George Eckstein |
| 2/4 Chuck Bender | 2/17 Drew Harvey |
| 2/5 Joan Kiak | 2/17 Gabe Harvey |
| 2/5 William Mills | 2/17 Linda Kurtz |
| 2/5 Rachel Petraglia | 2/17 Debbie Wolst |
| 2/6 Aryana Myers-Farinhas | 2/18 Diana Hill |
| 2/8 Kristin Williams | 2/18 Emma Hill |
| 2/11 Edward Csencsits | 2/20 Stacy Ross |
| 2/11 Tanya Scherer | 2/24 Aileen Werner |
| 2/11 Terry Snyder | 2/26 Michelle Major |
| 2/13 Stephanie Oblas | 2/27 Dinelle Kurz |
| 2/13 Rachel Panick | 2/28 Brianna Hill |
| 2/13 Walt Wusaty | |
| 2/14 Richard Yeakel | |
| 2/15 Dawn Hacker | |
| 2/15 Andy Spear | |



February Anniversaries

- 2/16 Walt & Elaine Wusaty
2/23 Doug & Brenda Miller



Stewardship of God's People at First Church

Date	Contributions	Benevolences	Attendance
Dec 3	\$2,367.17	\$20 Blessing Box	67
Dec 10	\$4,436.31	\$550 Pastor Emeritus	71
Dec 17	\$2,850.19	\$250 OGHS	76
Dec 24	\$4,266.26	\$250 OCWM	80- Dec 24 AM
Christmas	\$2,290.00	\$250 Ukraine Relief	128-Christmas Eve
Dec 31	\$1,909.00	\$250 Pastor Discretionary Fund	45
Total	\$18,118.93	Facility Rentals	
Budget	(\$20,000.00)	\$335.00	
Over/Short	(\$1,881.07)		

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

UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS

FEBRUARY—HOAGIE FUNDRAISER

Made by Gerrity's (formerly Valley Farm Market)



All hoagies come with lettuce, tomato, and side condiments (no onions). The nine inch hoagies come in the following flavors: Italian, Roast Beef, Ham & Cheese, Tuna, and Turkey. Orders and payments are due by February 9th (Make checks payable to First UCC).

Pick-up will be February 17th from 12 N – 2 PM in the Wimmer Room.

MARCH—SHEPHERD'S & COTTAGE PIE FUNDRAISER

MADE BY FORK'D IN HELLERTOWN, PA

Shepherd's Pies (Lamb) and Cottage Pies (Beef), also available in Gluten-free

Shepherd's Pies are \$19.00 and Cottage Pies are \$15.00

Orders & payments are due by February 29th. (Make checks payable to First UCC)

Pick-up will be in the Wimmer Room on March 14th from 5-7 pm.



APRIL—DINE TO DONATE FUNDRAISER

AT BRAVEHEART HIGHLAND PUB

430 MAIN STREET,

HELLERTOWN, PA

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17TH 5-8 PM



Pick up your Blue Vouchers at church to present when dining that day.

Upcoming Mission Projects

April—One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)

May—Heifer Project

Upcoming Fundraisers

May—Yard Sale and Flower Sale

June—Pierogi Sale

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. Always needed are: breakfast foods, tomato sauce, spaghetti noodles, soup, vegetables, canned tuna, other pasta, etc. However, please do not purchase large boxes of cereal or extra large jars of tomato sauce because they do not fit in the box. We suggest buying items in cans and plastic containers.

- Week of Feb 4—10—Diane French
- Week of Feb 11-17 —Tammie Vosburg
- Week of Feb 18-24—Georgie Stuemple
- Week of Feb 25-Mar 2 - Letty Petruno
- Week of Mar 3-9— Carlann Broglie
- Week of Mar 10-16—Doug Miller
- Week of Mar 17-23 —Marji Hughes
- Week of Mar 24-30 — Andy Spear
- Week of Mar 31-Apr 6—Phyllis Scherer
- Week of Apr 7-13 —Ann Brown
- Week of Apr 14-20 —Sandy Panick
- Week of Apr 21-27 - Amy Mixa

Faith Crosses



Our skilled Woodcraftman, Doug Miller, has created Faith Crosses. They are approximately 6 inches tall by 2.5 inches wide. They will be available in the Wimmer Room. Donations will be gratefully accepted and added to the General Fund of the church. Thank you, Doug, for your lovely creation!

EASTER FLOWERS



We are currently working on securing a new supplier for our Easter flowers, as Dan Schantz is no longer in business. We will be offering pink and purple tulips and Easter Lilies. Other details will be available as soon as we choose a supplier. Flower orders will be due the first week of March.



Like us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/hellertownucc





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.

Feb 2024	10:30 AM	4	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	11	Worship/Sunday School
	7:00 PM	14	Ash Wednesday Service at Lower Saucon UCC
	10:30 AM	18	Worship/Sunday School
	6:00 PM	21	Mid-Week Soup & Lenten Service
	10:30 AM	25	Worship/Sunday School
Mar 2024	10:30 AM	3	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	10	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	17	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	24	Worship/Sunday School-Palm Sunday
	7:00 PM	28	Maundy Thursday Worship @ First UCC
	7:00 PM	29	Good Friday Worship @ Lower Saucon UCC
	10:30 AM	31	Easter Sunday Worship/Communion
Apr 2024	10:30 AM	7	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	14	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	21	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	28	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.

The Consistory Minutes in Brief January 8, 2024

Treasurer’s Report: Tammie Vosburg, Treasurer

Report accepted as submitted.

Highlights:

- We opened a Major Improvement Investment account for \$30,000 from our year-end cash on hand. This fund is for an emergency building need should one arise. This money came from our Federal Retention Credit contribution.
- We had a Market Value Gain of \$165,451 for our 2023 Investment Portfolio. We regained funds from previous years' poor market losses.
- Our net Fundraising efforts were \$7209, a significant improvement over previous years. We did not withdraw funds from investment or savings accounts to pay general expenses. And we continue to pay our bills on time.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Becky Thomas

Report accepted as submitted.

Highlights:

Total Hours: 68
 Breakdown of hours for major responsibilities: Hours Dedicated to Worship: 28, Hours Dedicated to Pastoral Care: 4, Continuing Education Hours: 4, Office Hours: 15, Meetings: 6
 Instead of a regular soup supper on Ash Wednesday, Lower Saucon UCC would like to lead a sacrificial meal.
 I attended a HAM meeting on 12/20. We discussed having a joint Longest Night service next year and are starting to plan the Midweek Lent meals and services.

Elders’ Report: Georgie Stuempfle

We send monthly greeting cards and birthday cards to members acknowledging milestone birthdays.

Deacons’ Report: Sandy Panick

Epiphany Communion was rescheduled for Sunday, January 14, with trays planned for the balcony. Ushers will review procedures for serving communion.

Trustees’ Report: Ann Brown

- Kunsman Roofing was contacted to review the roof leak and provide an estimate on 1/3/24.
- Guide One Insurance was contacted, and the claim was initiated on 1/5/24. They were put in contact with Kunsman Roofing to discuss and review their estimates.
- Schulers: Met on 1/8 to review and provide a proposal to replace a toilet and sink in the upstairs bathroom and estimates for three other toilets in Old Fellowship Hall.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship/ Fundraising: Georgie Stuempfle

Georgie would like announcements and articles in the newsletter and bulletin to announce programs, ask members for their ideas, and request their support for fundraising events.

Old Business:

CPR Training: Researching information

New Business:

- Set Annual Meeting Date – February 18.
- Use of Facility; form revised for non-members.
- We contracted with Abundant Lawn and Garden, owner Bret Stoy , for sidewalk snow removal.
- Lock Smith – we need to replace the lock on the front door and install a lock on our sanctuary doors. Due to concerns about our sanctuary’s equipment, we recommend installing a lock on the sanctuary.

Next Meeting: February 12 at 6:30 PM in the Wimmer Room
 A copy of the full minutes is available in the office upon request.