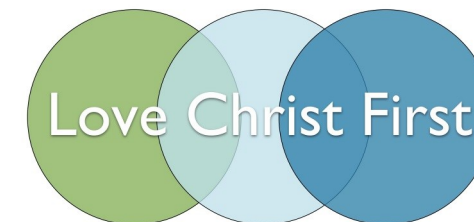




UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



January Mission Project

New Jerusalem Food Bank

New Jerusalem Lutheran Church is the home of the Community Food Bank for the Hellertown Area Ministerium (HAM). The Food Bank is supported with food, monetary donations, and volunteer time from HAM congregations as well as community groups and individuals. Volunteers are always welcome to assist with unloading the truck and its distribution. The Food Bank continues to use a "shopping" system on Saturday mornings to have clients pick their own groceries. Your monetary donations will be used to purchase food and supplies for the Food Bank.



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



Lighting the Candles of Advent

Week 1—Hope



Week 2—Peace



Week 3—Joy



Week 4—Love



Lighting the Christ Candle



Adam Leferovich performed on the Cello during one of our Advent services.



Bibles & Brunch Group discussing "The Angels of Christmas"



Fellowship Hour and Craft Workshop



Longest Night Service at Lower Saucon UCC



Ann Brown visits Mark Lorah in celebration of his 96th birthday.





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

A gift given in loving memory of Richard Hacker:

**Alice Totenbier Harry J Fried Mr & Mrs Stanley Czeck, Jr.
Doris & Bob Turner Andy & Melissa Spear Matt & Andrea Milliren
Dave & Georgie Stuempfle Kenneth Garey Family
Henry & Suzanne Lyons Letty Petruno Gretchen Diehl/Chip Wagner**

A gift given in loving memory of Claire Moran:

**Alice Totenbier Dave & Georgie Stuempfle Andy & Melissa Spear
Matt & Andrea Milliren Kemmerer Family Glenn & Ann Brown
Gretchen Diehl/Chip Wagner**



Christmas Eve



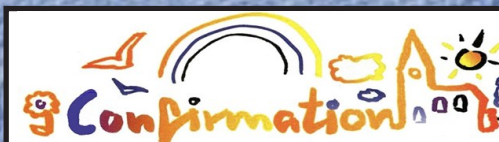
As I write this, Christmas is approaching quickly. In fact, it will have come and gone by the time you read these words. I've never been a fan of the winter months. All of the Christmas lights come down and the air gets colder. The darkness and the cold seems to seep in, dampening the flames of hope, peace, joy and love that we lit not long ago. New Year's Eve will come and we will make resolutions and the celebrations will be done for another year. If you are anything like me, you will forget your resolution less than two weeks into the New Year.

As I thought more about it, I found myself wondering what would happen if, instead of just individually, we as a church made a resolution together. Recently, I was reminded of a Bible verse that I feel should be at the forefront of our minds. "Don't forget to extend your hospitality to all—even to strangers—for as you know, some have unknowingly shown kindness to heavenly messengers in this way (Hebrews 13:2 VOICE)." What happens if all of us support each other in an effort to live into that verse in the coming year? If we support each other in opening our hearts to everyone one we meet in Christian love? Perhaps then, instead of dampening with the winter, the flames of hope, peace, joy, and love can continue to burn and grow in our hearts the whole year.

*In light and love,
Pastor Becky*



Celebrate with us at our 10:30am service on Sunday, January 7 when the Magi join us in worship while following the star to the Christ Child. Special music by the "3 Wise Men".



CONFIRMATION CLASS

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

January 7 and 21, 2024

To sign up or with questions, please contact Marji Hughes or Pastor Becky



Penn Northeast Conference Youth Retreat

March 1-3, 2024

Spruce Lake, Canadensis, PA

Cost is \$195 per person
Scholarships will be available





SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Thanks to everyone who volunteered through Advent and Christmas --- Hanging of the Greens, Advent Workshop, Pageant, Love Feast, Candle lighting --- all happened because you said "yes"!

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.

January 7 – Epiphany Sunday – the Magi join us in worship as they search for the Christ Child. Regular Sunday School classes follow their visit.

January 14 – Baptism Sunday – we dedicate the baptism cross stitch and ask for special blessings for those who were baptized in 2023. Regular Sunday School

Contact Marji Hughes - mphughes22@gmail.com 610-984-5053 if you have any questions at all about Faith Formation at 1st UCC.



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.*

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.



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

January - Sponsors/Volunteers

January 7

Counting Team.....	Team 3
Ushers.....	Team 4
Altar Flowers.....	Catherine Underkoffler
Bulletins	Denise Keen
Lay Reader	Doug Miller

January 21

Counting Team.....	Team 1
Ushers	Team 1
Altar Flowers.....	Janice Csrnko
Bulletins	Gretchen Diehl/Leroy Wagner
Lay Reader	Dave Stuempfle

January 14

Counting Team.....	Team 4
Ushers.....	Team 5
Altar Flowers.....	Ann & Glenn Brown
Bulletins	Bob Kervin
Lay Reader.....	Sandy Panick

January 28

Counting Team.....	Team 2
Ushers	Team 2
Altar Flowers	Andrea Danner/Wayne Packer
Bulletins.....	Andrea Danner/Wayne Packer
Lay Reader.....	Sandy Bender

The January Newsletter

has been sponsored by:

Jackie & Rich Teitsworth

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—January Schedule

1/8 Away @ East Hills

1/15 Homes vs. Bethany UCC

1/22 Home vs. Star of Bethlehem

1/29 Away @ Trinity UCC

For **anyone** who is interested in joining this group, please contact **Leroy Miller** at **610-838-9704**.

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	██████████
Amy Mixa	athomeamy@hotmail.com	██████████
Georgie Stuempfle	gdflea@yahoo.com	██████████

Deacons

Minga Ferencin	mingaf1@gmail.com	██████████
Karen Frankenfield	gumbycat1@gmail.com	██████████
Diane French— Pres.	dcfrench48@gmail.com	██████████
Sandy Panick	hygienist2000@msn.com	██████████

Trustees

Ann Brown—Sec.	forglan@verizon.net	██████████
Keith Lentz	keithlen56@gmail.com	██████████
Doug Major	pamajors@rcn.com	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████

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!

Monday—January 8

10:30am in the Wimmer Rm



We will be looking at books/topics to decide together what we would like to study next.



All Women are welcome to join the discussion. Light refreshments will be available. Pick up the reading in the Wimmer Room or from Marji Hughes. Our next meeting in February 12.

Sunday Morning Study 9:15 each week

in the YA Café. Just come and join any Sunday

Speak with Tricia Shelly ██████████ for more information.



Every Sunday morning

9:45 AM

before worship
in the Wimmer Room



Women's Breakfast at the Hellertown Diner

January 9, 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 !





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 610.838.9704 Elsie Stout 610.838.6470
Jane Joyce 610.838.7593

7th-12th grade YOUTH GROUP

January 14, 2024 from 5-7pm

at Lower Saucon UCC 1375 Third Ave.

No church affiliation is required.

Bring your friends!

Food, fun and friendships, in a place where all feel safe, supported and accepted for who you are.

If you cannot make our meeting, PLEASE let us know.

Any questions, just ask!!

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

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



De-tinseling the Sanctuary

January 7 – immediately following worship. Help put away the Christmas decorations



Like us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/hellertownucc



January Birthdays

1/1	Donald Gingles	1/23	Bethany Geisinger
1/3	Ashlynn Mlxa	1/23	Kim Johnson
1/3	Dave Stuempfle	1/23	Daphne Rodriguez
1/5	Ava Riehl	1/24	Emily Hoff
1/6	Ronald Anders	1/25	Thomas Lechner
1/6	Wayne Pavlinsky	1/27	Charles Holmberg
1/10	Howard Fulmer	1/28	Jarred Kyra
1/11	Becky Harvey	1/30	Ann Brown
1/11	Joel Stoneback	1/31	Kevin Miller
1/13	Joan Yelovich		
1/14	James Rosenberger		
1/16	Bill Hoff		
1/17	Joseph Searfoss		
1/18	Paxton Searfoss		
1/19	Elsie Stout		
1/20	Jill Holmberg		



January Anniversaries

1/14	John & Sharon Musgung
1/26	Thomas & Donna Ball



Stewardship of God's People at First Church

Date	Contributions	Benevolences	Attendance
Nov 5	\$3,875.03	\$135.00 Blessing Box	82
Nov 12	\$2,688.03	\$343.00 PNEC	59
Nov 19	\$2,914.20		61
Nov 26	\$4,160.89	Fundraisers	72
		\$611.00 Nutroll Sale	
Total	\$13,638.15		
Budget	(\$16,000.00)		
Over/Short	(\$2,361.85)		

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

A Year of Appreciation and Thanks

As the new year begins, it brings with it a time of reflection, joy, and profound gratitude. On behalf of the Consistory, we would like to show our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Pastor Becky and our Staff who continue to serve us so faithfully and go “above and beyond” in so many ways to be a blessing to First Church.

We thank our volunteers, who without, First Church could not fulfill its missions.

- Our Choir Members
- Sunday School and VBS Teachers and Volunteers
- Consistory Members
- The Tuesday Group
- The Altar Guild
- Our Music and Worship volunteers
- The Video Streaming Team
- The Organizers of Men’s and Women’s Breakfast Groups

To our members who contribute to:
Monthly Missions, generously support our needs with Gifts-in-Kind, altar flowers, newsletter and bulletin contributors, and those who organize our yearly fundraisers

As Christians, we can find hope and strength in knowing that God is with us in all things, including the new beginnings. And so with the new year, comes much appreciation and great expectations for 2024. God is constantly at work in our lives, creating new opportunities and possibilities for us in our lives and here at First Church.

December 1, 2023

Dear First UCC,

We are proud to provide compassionate person-centered care to every resident who calls Phoebe home, and charitable care when needed. You help us fulfill our mission, and you also help us provide the opportunities that make life worth living, like seasonal celebrations, enriching community life activities, and uplifting spiritual programs.

Thank you so much for your congregation’s generous donation of \$242.00 to Phoebe. We can’t thank you enough for your support and commitment to those we serve.

With gratitude,

Kristine Paupini

Donor Relations Coordinator
Phoebe-Devitt Homes.

Thank
You

December 7, 2023

Dear Members of First UCC,

Sending thanks to the church for the lovely card and gift!

Emma Harvey



Change of Address

Howard Fulmer
The Vero
4700 Bath Pike, Rm 206
Bethlehem PA 18017

Aileen Werner
107 Fall Run Road
Pittsburgh PA 15221

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.

Jan 2024	10:30 AM	7	Worship/Communion/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	14	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	21	Worship/Sunday School
	10:30 AM	28	Worship/Sunday School
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
	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
	10:30AM	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 Worship/Communion

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.

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 Dec 3-9 - Letty Petrino
Week of Dec 10-16— Carlann Broglie
Week of Dec 17-23—Doug Miller
Week of Dec 24-30—Marji Hughes
Week of Dec 31-Jan 6 — Andy Spear
Week of Jan 7—13—Phyllis Scherer
Week of Jan 14—20 —Ann Brown
Week of Jan 21— 27 —Sandy Panick
Week of Jan 28—Feb 3 - Amy Mixa
Week of Feb 4—10—Diane French
Week of Feb 11-17 —Tammie Vosburg
Week of Feb 18-24—Georgie Stuempfle



Walking Together Women's Retreat

in combination with Lower Saucon UCC

Has been Rescheduled to:
JANUARY 27 - SAT. ONLY
at First UCC Hellertown
For all women ages 18 and up
Saturday 8am - 3pm

Includes breakfast and lunch!

Sign up in the Narthex.

Speak with Pastor Becky or Marji Hughes
for more information

You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly

The Consistory Minutes in Brief December 11, 2023

Treasurer's Report: Tammie Vosburg, Treasurer
Report accepted as submitted.

Highlights:

- We have a deficit of \$6,900 YTD.
- Our investments showed excellent gains in November.
- Remembrance Contributions totaled \$2,735.
- We still have over \$15,000 available in Wimmer funds for 2023.
- We have not withdrawn funds from savings or investments to cover general expenses in 2023.

Presentation of the 2024 Budget:

Tammie Vosburg presented the budget for discussion and review.

After discussion, a motion to accept the budget with revisions followed this discussion. Copies will be available for the congregation in the Annual Report

Pastor's Report: Pastor Becky Thomas

Highlights:

Total Hours: 104

Breakdown of hours for major responsibilities

Hours Dedicated to Worship: 47, Hours Dedicated to Pastoral Care: 16, Continuing Education Hours: 6

Office Hours: 21, Meetings: 5, Other: Youth group met 12/10, helped lead the confirmation class, and attended Light Up Night to do blessing.

Elders' Report: Georgie Stuempfle

We reviewed and approved the Monthly Missions for 2024.

Deacons' Report: Sandy Panick

The Usher Schedule for 2024 was hand-delivered or sent to teams. Prepared Communion trays will now be available to balcony people for distribution.

Trustees' Report: Ann Brown

- Acorn Stairlift / Stairlift signed service agreement
- Received Kitchen Inspection Certificate
- ABE Door's Proposal— We will replace the Old Fellowship Hall outside door.
- The Midas MR18 sound system ordered at a cost of \$839.

Old Business:

- CPR Training: Researching information for a group training for staff, ushers and members who are interested in this training session.

New Business:

Prayer Requests: Due to the steps and need to look at safety for our members, we will support those who have difficulty climbing the altar stairs, by presenting Prayer Requests in a basket to Pastor Becky at the lower altar step and she will place the basket on the altar.

A full report is available in the office on request.

Next Meeting: January 8, 2024 at 6:30 PM in the Wimmer Room



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!