

HUFF'S CHURCH CHATTER



December, 2020

Church Address: 540 Conrad Rd., Alburtis, 18011
Church office: 610-845-2626 Church & Chapel: 610-845-2541
Rev. Dr. Jennifer Bannerman
Pastor Home Office: 570-778-7524
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Website: www.huffschurch.com
Facebook Page: Huff's Union Church, Inc.
Facebook Group: Huff's Union Church

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of Huff's Union Church, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become evermore the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a ministry which includes increasingly meaningful worship, creative Christian Education, intentional witnessing, dedicated service, and responsible support.

Huff's slogan: Making Disciples: Inside and Out. UCC slogan: God is still speaking. ELCA slogan: God's work, our hands.

SPECIAL OFFERING OPPORTUNITY FOR DECEMBER

The special offering opportunity for December is the UCC Christmas Fund. This offering supplements pensions and health care costs for those retired pastors and leaders of UCC congregations who fall into very low income brackets, or provides emergency assistance for pastors and families in financial need. Please use the envelopes in the pew racks or literature racks and place filled envelopes in the offering plate, or mail in your contributions, clearly marked "Christmas Fund". Thank you for helping those retired servants of God in their time of need.

Congregation Meetings:

On December 13, 2020, there will be a Union Corporation meeting within the 10:30 worship service to nominate and elect Union Church Council Members and approve the 2021 Union Corporation Annual Budget. There will also be brief meetings to elect the members of Huff's UCC Consistory and Huff's ELCA Council and the respective corporation 2021 Annual Budgets. Anyone who is an Active Member at Huff's may vote (which includes our teenagers who have already been confirmed).

The required quorum to hold the meeting is 70 Active Members.

In the event that the business of the meeting cannot be completed for any reason including inclement weather, provision of additional information, or lack of quorum, the meeting will be rescheduled for Sunday, December 20, 2020, within the 10:30 Worship Service. Those Active Members who attend the meeting on December 20 shall constitute a quorum and are authorized to act on this matter even if less than 70 are in attendance.

If the voting is done on December 13, then the December 20 meeting will not be held.

Questions about the meetings, or vote, contact Martin Kriebel at martin.kriebel.315@gmail.com.

BLOOD ASSURANCE ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER

Thank you to everyone who has donated blood to Miller-Keystone during the past years. The past two drives have seen an increase in the number of people interested in donating blood. This is great and we hope we can continue to increase our giving in the future. Our goal is fifteen units per drive.

Hopefully in the coming year we can give even more as there is a very high demand for whole blood in our area. There will be a drive at Huff's Church on Monday, January 18, 2021, from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM in the church parking lot. Please consider donating to this great and necessary cause. You can sign up on-line (at GIVEaPINT.org or by phone at 1-800-B-A-DONOR) or just show up - walk-ins are always welcome.

Thank you all again!

Gary Moll

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

We are honoring our members who celebrate their 80th birthday or older and also honoring those members who celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary or more. Please let us know if we missed anyone.

BIRTHDAYS:

12/4 - Charles Hoffman	12/20 - Pauline Reinhard
12/24 - Jean Kline	12/25 - Stanley Geisinger

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY:

12/28 - John & Jane Leeser

SPONSORING BULLETINS OR FLOWERS IN 2021

New sign up sheets for sponsoring flowers or bulletins in 2021 will be posted in the Upper Narthex on December 1. The cost for sponsoring Bulletins is \$17 and the cost for Flowers is \$31. More than one bouquet can be ordered for a particular Sunday, but if no order is placed for a Sunday, we will not have flowers in the Church. Please sign up with your name and whether this is in memory of or in honor of someone. Payment may be sent to the office or use a pew envelope and mark it bulletin or flower sponsorship. If you would like to sponsor flowers or bulletins for December 2020, please call the office.

Thank You From Hereford Township District 1 - Elections Officers

Dear Huff's Church,

We would like to take the time to thank Huff's Church for hosting the Elections throughout the years!

CLOSING THE CHURCH BOOKS FOR 2020

Any offerings to be credited to 2020 giving statements must be received by the church office by December 31, 2020.

PAPER RECYCLING COLLECTION BINS

As of last Thursday, the Recycling Bins have been removed from the Chapel parking lot.

As a replacement, we refer you to the Schantz farm on the corner of Woodside Ave. and Pilgert St., (399 Pilgert Street, Alburdis). They are collecting paper to be shredded and used as bedding for their herd of dairy cattle. PLEASE - no books or other trash - just paper. Thank You.

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

Because we want to have a complete picture of what is happening at Huff's Church each year, we ask each committee team or group to submit a report annually of what they have done in the previous year. 2020 reports are due in the church secretary's mailbox by January 23, 2021. Treasurer's reports are an exception; they will be due in the office by early February, 2021.

HUFF'S CHURCH FOOD PANTRY



Although the food pantry was emptied at the beginning of the Pandemic, 170 more items were discovered in October, contributors unknown. Those items were packed up and delivered to Open Link. Thank you to whomever stocked the cabinet.

Our brown pantry cabinet has been retired after 49 years of service. It now resides upstairs in the church to store Carl Arner's church records. Carl and Mary Shaub saw a need and started the first food pantry in 1971. For the first thirty years, space was limited and the food was stored on a couple of shelves near the furnace room. The food served the local community with the excess delivered every three months to Open Line.

In the year 2000 the old wood cabinet, which Marvin Diehl's mother used in the nursery to store Sunday School material, became available and was placed at its present location. Food donations have multiplied considerably and there became a need for a larger cabinet. Today we deliver quarterly to Open Link, Allentown Rescue Mission, Friend, Inc. and Boyertown Multi Services.

We were fortunate to have church member Terry Ziegenfuss build a beautiful, spacious new cabinet. It will serve to hold our food donations for years to come. Stop by and see it.

MITTEN TREE

With the Christmas Season at our doorsteps, the church will again be beautifully decorated at the end of November.

Therefore, the Mitten Tree will be erected upstairs for attaching caps, scarfs, hats, gloves etc. until the second week of January. Items will be sent to St. Vincent's Mission in David, Kentucky. Many thanks for your generosity.

PRAYER LIST

Prayer is a sacred and intimate act. God knows our hearts, our needs and who we are praying for, even before their name is uttered. To honor the sacredness of prayer, we always want to ask permission before we put a person's name on the public prayer list. Now that we are broadcasting our service, a person's privacy is even more important. To ensure that we can offer prayers for all who ask and honor their wishes, we are adopting the following policy:

Anyone may call the church office and ask Edwina to place their name or family member's name on the prayer list. She will confirm that you have the person's permission, remind each person that the name will be broadcast, ask if they want just their first name or full name to be spoken, and how long they wish to be kept on the list. Those names will be read as listed in Sunday worship. Names can still be added Sunday morning, but only a person's first name will be spoken until the office has been contacted. There will continue to be a time during prayers where anyone's name may be spoken aloud or in the quiet of our hearts.

STAYING CONNECTED

This year has shown us how important it is to stay connected with each other. Many of us are missing the simple gatherings before and after church, the conversations and the hugs. In an effort to increase our Congregational Care for one another, we want to make sure folks keep connected - especially those of you who don't get our weekly e-blast, aren't able to watch our service online, and can't yet make it to church.

If you would like to be on a list to receive regular calls from another member, or sign up to be a person who regularly calls other members, please give Edwina a call at the church office, and let her know. Once we hear from folks, we will coordinate phone connections. In the meantime, don't hesitate to call someone if you just want to talk, or to take the initiative to check in on other members. This is a chance for us to deepen our connections and show our care for one another.

COMMUNION ONCE AGAIN

We will begin to Celebrate Communion again in our online worship service and in person starting December 6th. For our online worship, folks will be asked to have their own bread and juice/wine at hand. For in-person worship, we will have the elements (in zip-lock bags) blessed and available for people to pick up on their way out of worship. You are invited to take the elements home and celebrate as part of your Sunday meal, or in any setting that feels most sacred to you. A special prayer will be included in the bulleting that day that you may read.

Jesus instituted communion as a part of a meal, to remind us that whenever we eat or drink, we should remember what he has done for us and what he is calling us to do and be as his followers. If you are more comfortable staying at home, I encourage you to focus what communion means in your daily life and our daily meals. I've included again the prayer to help us all focus on Remembering Christ each time we break bread.

A Prayer to begin our meal:

Through the breaking of bread, we participate in the Body of Christ. ~ Through this cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

Lord of life, let us see your gift of bread in each bite of food we eat, and the cup of blessing in each drink we take. Remind us that this meal is a gift of your bountiful grace, created by your Son's living among us, blessed by his death, graced by his resurrection, and served at his request. May we take care not to miss its nourishment, overlook its power, or avoid its demands. In gratitude, we pray. Amen.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The Holiday Season is always a time of gathering together with friends and family. This year the desire to gather is stronger than ever, yet complicated by Covid-19. If, in the upcoming weeks, you find yourself at family celebrations with folks you haven't been around for a while (especially those who have traveled from out of the area), please consider worshipping at home with our online service or in the parking lot while listening on the radio for a week or two after your gathering. This will help to ensure the health and safety of all our members.

RSVP FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

We will be offering two shorter worship experiences this year for Christmas Eve. Because of Covid-19 and its restrictions, we will celebrate by hearing the Christmas story and listening to some recorded Christmas Carols. (Our modified communion will be available at the 8:00 pm service.) We ask that everyone wear masks and socially distance themselves during the services. We also ask that you bring your own battery-operated candle, or phone app. of a candle, to be used as we listen to Silent Night at the end of the service. Please review the Worship Service Guidelines in the newsletter and posted on our web site.

The first service will be at 4:00 pm. It will be held outside either at the Park Pavilion or in the Church parking lot, weather permitting. You will be able to listen to the service on your car radio. This will be open to all. We ask that you bring your own chair, if you do not want to remain in your car.

Our 8:00 pm service will be in the Sanctuary and limited to about 85 in attendance. **To allow us to plan a service that is safe for all, we will need to limit those in attendance, and so have decided to take reservations for the 8:00 pm Service on Christmas Eve this year. You may call or email the church office to place your reservation. We will need your name and how many people in your family/group will be joining you and their names (limited to 8 people per family/group).** Your names will be added to the list for Christmas Eve. For those who couldn't get their names on the list, you may enjoy the broadcasted service on your car radio in the parking lot. You may also want to consider watching our online service with your family at home.

To RSVP for the 8:00 pm service please call (610-845-2626) or email (office@huffschurch.com) the church office to add your name(s) to the list. If you cannot reserve a space inside, you may consider attending the 4:00 pm outdoor service (no reservations, listening to the 8:00 pm service on your car radio in the parking lot or the online service with your family at home.

To make maximum use of the available seating at the 8:00 pm Service, we may have some planned seating so that families/groups are able to sit together. Ushers will be available to assist with seating. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we try to accommodate as many as we can at this time.

ADVENT

In days of old, Advent was a quieter time to reflect on life and look with hope to the birth of the Christ Child. The quietness of the season has been lost with all the commercial Christmas hype, office parties and family gatherings that happen from Thanksgiving through to New Years of recent decades. With all that we have gone through this past year and the restrictions on gathering, it will once again be a quieter season for us all. Perhaps, we can make the most of it and experience the quiet hope of Advent in our personal devotions. Perhaps this year, without all the craziness of past years, we can focus on the true meaning of the season. Perhaps, we can focus on preparing our hearts and our lives for the Christ Child to be born anew in our lives.

In last month's newsletter I gave you some basic instructions for creating your own Advent Wreath. This month I want to give you the readings for each week, starting with the 1st Sunday in Advent, November 29th through Christmas Eve. I invite you to create your own little Advent rituals as you focus on the theme of each week. Find time to celebrate the sacredness of this Season. Find healing and comfort and a deeper way to connect with family and friends.

May the Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Faith of the Season lead you to the light of the Christ Child.

Pastor Jennifer

ADVENT READINGS

Meditation on the First Advent Candle: HOPE

We are expecting, hoping, anticipating, like a couple expecting a child. We, too, are expecting a Child, It's not a new birth. We've observed it before, and we'll observe it again. But it's the birth of a Child who changes our lives. As the couple expecting a child, we are uncertain what change that Child will bring.

So, even though we're expecting, there is still the unexpected, the unknown. But we have an advantage, "inside information," Because we are believers in a Loving God, and followers of a Living Christ, we know now what to expect. This Advent, we know that the hoping, the waiting, the anticipation can mean better things, a new life, new changes; all because of an expected, and an unexpected, birth.

**LET US NOW LIGHT THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT:
THE LIGHT OF HOPE!**

Meditation on The Second Advent Candle: PEACE

We have expected the baby Jesus, the Christ. But no arrival is complete without the preparation. We are "getting our act together" or "ourselves in gear" as the popular expressions go. But preparation is somewhat different from expectation. Expectation, waiting, can be passive, non-active. But preparation needs ACTION on our part. Whatever we prepare for, we're busy doing--like preparing for Christmas for instance.

We cook, bake, buy, eat, wrap, give, receive, decorate. All of these are active, we have participated. This Christmas we must most of all prepare for Christ. In our lives, we must actively make straight the way of the Lord, to help with justice, and righteousness, and we will know that we have prepared well when we feel the blessing and Peace of Christ.

**LET US NOW LIGHT THE SECOND CANDLE OF
ADVENT: THE LIGHT OF PEACE!**

Meditation on the Third Advent Candle: JOY

What is Jesus' name? Christ... Lord... Savior... Isaiah says his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. What majestic images! What glorious music we hear in our minds as we replay the carols, the cantatas, the oratorios with these words. But Matthew, quoting Isaiah, says his name shall be called Emmanuel, which means God with us.

GOD WITH US! God with us. God with us continually, personally, forever, always...God's presence filling us with joy, guiding us, comforting us, encouraging us. God with us, challenging us to new possibilities, giving us courage to go on. God with us, giving us his Son, our Savior, who is Emmanuel! God with us! The joy of our lives!

**LET US NOW LIGHT THE THIRD CANDLE OF AD-
VENT: THE LIGHT OF JOY!**

Meditation on the Fourth Advent Candle: LOVE

We have spent long weeks it seems, expecting and preparing. The anticipation and hard work of preparing have heightened the Christmas spirit in us. And yet, how many times have you wondered, "Why do I do all this? Each year I do more and more. I'm so tired of all this. Why must Christmas be so frantic?"

The psalmist said words about God setting captives free, giving sight to the blind, protecting strangers, and helping widows and orphans. In the Scripture you will hear Jesus telling about the healings and the opportunities. It's easy to say, "That's nice," and wonder just how the expectation, the anticipation, and the preparation can be related to all the good things we have heard.

The prophet Jeremiah told his people that God had plans for them; a future and a hope, in which love would rule the day. We know from many Christmases followed by many Easters that birth is followed by life, followed by death--but that death is followed by life. We are aware of God working in our lives for good, for healing, for salvation, for possibilities, and as one biblical scholar puts it, for amazement! That is the why, the connection, the purpose, the reason. And if any person or event is worth expecting or preparing for, the love of God in Jesus, our Savior is!

**LET US NOW LIGHT THE FOURTH CANDLE OF AD-
VENT: THE LIGHT OF LOVE!**

Meditation on the Fifth Candle of Our Advent Wreath: THE CHRIST CANDLE

We have sung of hope, of peace of love and of joy, all of which are by-products of the light of Christ in our world. We have celebrated Advent-- that wonderfully mysterious time of year, with all of its expectations; but we are here primarily to celebrate our profound belief in Christ's presence in our world.

The presence of the Light of Christ is good news every day. When problems hang heavy, when nothing seems to work, when our hearts seem empty, and when we have run out of answers, we should know that God is at work in this world. Advent simply reminds us that we are never apart from his presence. Let us rejoice together as we mark his presence by the crowning of our Advent Wreath with the placement of the Christ Candle.

**LET US NOW LIGHT THE FIFTH CANDLE OF OUR AD-
VENT WREATH: THE LIGHT OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

HUFFS UNION CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are subject to change as the situation changes.

Before you leave home:

If you have been exposed to someone who is sick or do not feel well yourself or have any of the following symptoms: ~Chills or fever of 100.4 or higher ~Coughs, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ~Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea ~Sore throat or runny nose ~A new lack of smell or taste ~Awaiting Covid-19 test results for yourself or a member of your household ~If your immune system is compromised or you are at high risk due to age or other health issues

PLEASE STAY HOME and enjoy the pre-recorded worship service on-line at huffschurch.com or on our FaceBook page.

At the Church Building:

Please wear your mask and socially distance at all times. Please keep conversations outdoors. You will remain seated during the service. There will be minimal spoken responses and recorded music. Please follow the instructions of the ushers.

Parking Lot Worship

You may remain in your car in the parking lot and tune your radio to 99.3 FM to listen to our service. If you worship in your car, there will be someone in the parking lot before and after the service to provide you with a bulletin and collect your offering.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

As always, if the weather conditions are unsafe, we will cancel church and post the cancellation notice on the WFMZ (Channel 69) television station. You can also go to our Facebook page and website www.huffschurch.com <<http://www.huffschurch.com/>> to check for cancellation notices. You may also call a council member. We will make our decision by 8:00 am on Sunday morning.

If you are not sure of conditions, please put your safety first and join us in our online worship.

October 2020 Financial Report

	Oct 2020 Actual	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance	2020 Annual Budget
Income	12,500	172,799	222,703	(49,904)	267,244
Expenses	31,550	197,258	272,980	(75,722)	327,576
Operating loss	(19,050)	(24,459)	(50,277)	25,818	(60,332)
Transfers from investments	5,250	65,677	52,500	13,177	63,000
Net income (loss)	(13,800)	41,218	2,223	38,995	2,668

	10/31/20	9/30/20	12/31/19
Balance Sheet			
Designated Funds	53,719	53,699	52,916
General Funds	61,898	74,825	20,205
Sunday School CDs	4,372	4,339	4,339
Total assets (a)	119,989	132,862	77,460

(a) excludes investments managed by Youngs