

THE LONGSWAMP UCC BEACON - JULY 2021

Teaching, sharing and acting on what we believe.



From the Pastor

Rev. Lynn Shoemaker

I am a person who enjoys my freedom. I believe in the respect of all God's children, and that all are created equal. This I also believe - Human rights are written in the Bible – maybe not outright. However, all through the Bible there is an acknowledgment of a person's free will to make their own decisions. I believe we

are made in the likeness of God, be it physical or soul, and we all deserve to be treated equally and fairly. We are the vessel of the Holy Spirit. Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV) says we are to "speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." As Christians within the UCC, we believe in values of love, dignity, fairness, equality, respect, and independence of all of God's children.

Let us celebrate....with all Americans.....our independence. Let us remember those who risked their lives to escape tyranny and secure our freedom, and let us remember our God who stands beside us. Pastor Lynn

Pastoral Request...

Longswamp UCC has many shut-ins, and visiting is a little difficult right now for me. I am looking to train as many individuals as I can to make one visit a month to a few people. I will do my best to visit those individuals on the opposite month until you have a full-time pastor.

My belief is there are MANY of you who enjoy visiting and listening to people. It brings so much joy to those visited, especially after COVID.

Please consider signing up for this training. Please contact the secretary or myself (lynn@longswampucc.org) if you decide you would like to help. Thank you, thank you! Pastor Lynn

In This Issue...

- Conference News
- Search Committee Update
- Worship/Events Calendar
- LLC Happenings
- Mission News
- And so much more!

Prayer Concerns

Please contact the church office if you or someone you know is in need of immediate prayer. Thank you.

Hospital Code - #451

Church Office Hours - 9:30am to 2:30pm

A Leadership Update

Conference News

This month I thought I would give members of LUCC a bit of insight beyond the Conference level of the church and focus on some of what the National UCC has on its agenda. In addition to my duties with PNEC, I am also serving as one of about 25 delegates from the Penn Northeast Conference to the 33rd General Synod Meeting of the National UCC to be held in July. The General Synod gathering is an expanded version of the Conference meetings I have reported on in the past, with a similar schedule of business meetings, worship and workshops, and delegates representing all thirty-six Conferences across the country. This year it will be a virtual meeting, but it is hoped that the following Synod meeting in 2023 will once again be held in person. In this article I will focus on the resolutions that will come before the business sessions, giving a brief summary of each. I hope to give more information about how the voting went, and perhaps some details on the discussion, in the following article next month.

General Synod 33 Proposed Resolutions

I. The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers of the UCC Request to be Recognized as a Formal Group

Summary: The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers (AACM) seeks to be recognized as a Self-Created Group according to United Church of Christ By-Laws. The AACM exists to be a support for those who serve in a staff or called position doing conference Ministry.

II. Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices Inherent in the Present System

Summary: This resolution calls on the UCC to advocate and act to change the Cash Bail Bond System in the individual states and in the United States of America to be more just to the poor. The current system requires pretrial defendants to pay hundreds to thousands of dollars to the courts, and, in the case of low-income individuals, borrowing the funds at high interest rates or be incarcerated prior to their trials.

III. A Resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy

Summary: This resolution urges congregations and other settings in the UCC to advocate for a ban on “conversion” or “reparative” therapy – a medical practice legal in all 50 states that attempts to change or “repair” the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQ+ persons in the belief that their orientation or identity is a mental illness. The resolution further urges congregations and other settings to assure their LGBTQ+ neighbors, especially youth, that their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression are gifts from God.

IV. A Commitment to Gender Safety & Equity in Ministry Settings

Summary: This resolution calls us to renewed accountability for the theology of equality that we have long professed as the UCC. In a climate of increased violence and hatred, where women in public leadership are targeted with intimidation by the highest office of government, women and non-binary clergy are uniquely vulnerable as they stand in the pulpit. This resolution asks the Church to explore ways to promote gender safety, empowering women and non-binary persons to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, free of censure or threat of retaliation, and urges congregations to address inequities in pay, benefits, senior leadership, etc.

[Continued on next page]

A Leadership Update

Conference News Continued...

V. A Resolution Encouraging to end 128 Years of War between the United States of America and the Hawaiian Kingdom

Summary: This resolution calls the UCC to actualize its historical commitment to justice and peace with the friendly Christian Hawaiian Kingdom nation, after descendants of the earliest missionaries led the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom after promising a Hawaiian-led and Hawaiian-run church. This “illegal occupation” has gone on for over 100 years even though the church, the Federal Government and the Nat’l Lawyers Guild has recommended that the government in Hawaii “begin to comply with international humanitarian law in its prolonged and illegal occupation of the Hawaiian islands”.

VI. Declaration for a Just Peace between Palestine and Israel

Summary: The resolution calls on the General Synod to adopt a Declaration on the Requirements for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel, articulating the principles that must be in place and honored in any future relationship between them. The Declaration affirms that justice, understood both as adherence to the message of the Hebrew prophets and the life and teachings of Jesus, as well as to applicable international laws, is the fundamental and requisite principle which must guide a peaceful future for Israel and Palestine. It rejects any future imposed by military power, illegal occupation and dispossession, or unilateral annexation of land.

VII. “Who will speak for the Trees?” A resolution on the Rights of Nature

Summary: The manifestations of climate change have radically escalated with increased severity, and it is more than likely we have only about ten years to dramatically change our relationship to nature. This resolution calls for a change of human relationship to nature from apartheid with nature, viewing nature as “object” and a “commodity” for our benefit, profit, and exploitation to a recognition that we are citizens of the Earth, interconnected to the web of life. The UCC has the opportunity to address our need as a church and humanity’s need to change our relationship of relating to Nature from an “it” to a “thou”.

VIII. Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action – A Resolution of Witness

Summary: This resolution calls for the UCC to be a church of “contemplatives in action”. The UCC is known historically as a denomination of bold leadership on social justice, peace, and environmental concerns. This resolution seeks the church’s integration of action for justice alongside intentional commitment to the life of prayer. Through fostering spiritual practices that deepen us in love for God, neighbors, ourselves, and all creation, this would empower the UCC to base its collective life of activism more fully with justice.

IX. A Resolution to Declare and Respond to Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Summary: The Resolution calls the UCC to declare and respond to racism as a public health crisis. Since its inception, the UCC has been committed to social justice and has dedicated efforts towards racial justice and health justice, specifically. It has advocated for health care as a human right that is inclusive, accessible, and affordable for everyone, and has called for a commitment to be an anti-racist church by examining both historic and contemporary forms of racism. This resolution proposal would employ tools for change, such as education, training, and advocacy. To this end, we call our churches and conferences to intentionally work on the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities.

[Continued on next page]

A Leadership Update

Conference News Continued...

X. A Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)

Summary: This resolution calls on the UCC to recognize the United Nations Declaration of an International Decade for People of African Descent. The U N accounts for over 200 million people who self-identify as African descent living in the Americas, and in declaring this Decade, it acknowledges that African descent people are a group whose rights must be protected and promoted. The resolution calls on the UCC to 1) acknowledge this Decade; 2) adopt its frameworks for addressing the issues; and 3) promote the Decade and resulting outcomes for advocating for the rights of African Descendant people.

XI. A Resolution on Protecting Workers at Churches and Other Religious Institutions

Summary: This resolution invites the UCC settings to discern and implement appropriate measures to protect their non-clergy employees, and to be attentive to the ways that religious freedom laws, including the ministerial exception defense to legal claims of discrimination, gives churches and religious institutions wide latitude in decisions impacting their employees. This is especially true in the area of employees' rights to claim discrimination (such as disability and age-discrimination or harassment). It is suggested that UCC settings define specific employee policies and procedures that will assure individuals in these positions have a means to enact anti-discrimination legal protections.

I realize this is quite lengthy, even though I tried to condense as much as possible. If you are a policy nerd (like me) and would like more detail about any of these items, feel free to email me at hklindquist@ptd.net, tell me the number of the Resolution and I will gladly send you a fuller description. Thanks for your interest!

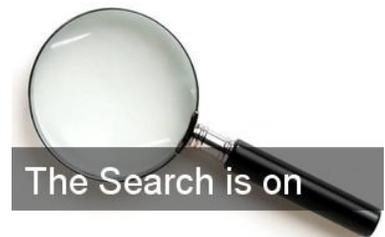
Search Committee

Greetings from your Search Committee!!!

Unfortunately we have nothing new to report since our last Newsletter update last month. We are still waiting for new pastoral profiles to review. We do still have a bit of work to do on the pastor's job description but otherwise continue to wait for new pastoral profiles.

So please pray that we should receive that one profile that God has intended for we here at Longswamp.

May the Peace of Christ be with you Always,
Will Miller, Chair
willann@ptd.net
484-358-6786



Search Committee Members: Chris Freudig, Hope DeIaco, Theresa Haffner-Stearns,
Maggie Isamoyer, Will Miller, Vern Shade

Sharing our Faith

July Worship & Events 2021 ~

Summer Worship 9:00AM

IN-PERSON AND LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP ON FACEBOOK EVERY SUNDAY

Uploaded after worship to our "Longswamp United Church of Christ" YouTube Channel.

July 2021 Calendar Themes & Events:

July 4 - Worship 9:00AM - "Sent with power" - Independence Day Celebration

July 11 - Worship 9:00AM - "God-inspired Joy"

July 18 - Worship 9:00AM - "Wherever You Are" - Holy Communion

July 20 - June Newsletter articles are due

July 25 - Worship 9:00AM - "God's Abundant Presence"

Worship & Music Request

The worship and music committee will be meeting to plan meaningful worship services in the future. We would like your input in this process!! Please feel free to make us aware of things that you want to see more of and what is meaningful to you. Is there a service that you attended or saw on TV that you liked and it held some special meaning to you? Let us know!! Or, is there a hymn you love to sing on a special Sunday or a bible reading that means so much to you that you want to hear it during a special season of the year? We want to hear from you. We want our services to touch your soul and we can't know what you need unless you reach out to us and tell us what you are thinking.

See Pastor Lynn, Chris Freudig, Hope DeIaco, Ann Miller or Laurie Heagy with your suggestions!

AUGUST 2021 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, July 20th

Please have all articles to the church office by this date.

Confirmation

Confirmation prepares a young person to be a life long learner in the House of God, and gives the student the tools to develop a living faith in Jesus Christ. Any young person at least 10 years of age may join this program. A parent/guardian must notify the church office if interested in their child joining in the Fall.

Teaching What We Believe



Longswamp Learning Center News...

Summer Camp 2021

Do you know someone who's looking for a Summer Camp experience for their school-age child/ (ren)? If so, please tell them that Longswamp Learning Center is offering a fun and enriching **Summer Camp 2021** experience for **school-age children** in our community. This year's theme is "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" The Summer Campers and their teachers will take a step back to colonial times, visit the future, and take imaginary trips to many places (beaches, mountains, etc.) across the U.S. This year's fun adventure continues until Friday, August 20, 2021. Please feel free to contact Sharon Wetzel, our LLC Director, via email (sharon@longswamplearningcenter.org) by calling the LLC Office (610-682-9750) to find out more about LLC's Summer Camp 2021.



Summer Camp 2021 Fundraiser

A big "THANK YOU" to our LUCC members who purchased subs and/or pretzel sandwiches from Longswamp Learning Center's fundraiser on Wednesday, June 30, 2021! The proceeds will be used to cover transportation costs for our Summer Camp field trips. Thanks again for your continued support. We hope you enjoyed your sandwiches!



Save the Date!



Mark your calendar and make plans to join us as we celebrate **Longswamp Learning Center's 35th Anniversary** during the **10:15 AM worship service on Sunday, October 10, 2021!** Watch for more details in LUCC's upcoming newsletters!

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

Ongoing & Upcoming Missions in 2021

*** Please note: LUCC's monthly missions are subject to change.

January 2021 - December 2021 (1st Sun. of each month) - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)

What is **Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)**? - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) funds the work the UCC does in its Associations and Conferences, and in the national and global church. OCWM funds are invested in programs, resources, and tools needed to keep local UCC churches strong, effective, and growing.

(taken from <https://www.uccresources.com/products/our-churchs-wider-mission-ocwm-flyer>)

January 2021 - December 2021 - ongoing local mission for the **Brandywine Food Pantry** -

Let's help the many needy people in the Brandywine Heights Area School District who rely on getting non-perishable food, personal care items, household items, cleaning supplies, etc. at the Brandywine Food Pantry. Please consider donating items that the needy people of our community can always use. Your donations can be dropped off on Sunday mornings before or after the worship service or during the week from 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM. Please put your donations in the appropriately marked wicker tote box in the bell room.

June 2021 - December 2021 - ongoing local mission for **LUCC's Adopted Family** -

There are 3 ways you can currently support our adopted family right now:

- 1) buy a gift card for a local gas station;
- 2) purchase a gift card for a local grocery store (Radcliffe's, Giant, or Weis Markets); or
- 3) give a monetary donation which will be given to the mother of the adopted family so that she can buy clothing, etc. for the children.

Please put any gift cards you purchase or monetary donation for LUCC's adopted family in a plain envelope and mark it for the "adopted family" and then put the envelope in the offering basket on Sunday morning, in the locked offering box in the bell room between the hours of 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM during the week, or mail it to the church.

August 2021 - **Brandywine Heights Intermediate & Middle School Food Pantry**

Let's help the students of the **Brandywine Heights Intermediate School** (grades 4 & 5) and **Middle School** (grades 6 - 8) start the 2021 - 2022 school year by donating non-perishable snacks and meals for their school's **Food Pantry**. Our donations will be used by the students during the school day and/or they will take them home so they will have food over the weekend. Watch for more details in the August 2021 newsletter.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

June 2021 National/Global Mission Church World Service Hygiene Kits



A big "THANK YOU" to our LUCC members who generously supported our June 2021 national/global mission for the Church World Service by donating complete hygiene kits, various contents for the kits, or gave a mission offering (used to help purchase items needed for the hygiene kits, cover the \$2.00 processing fee per kit, and pay to ship the hygiene kits to Church

World Service's headquarters in Maryland).

July 2021 Local Mission Let's Help Unwanted/Stray Animals!

Once again, it's time for us to **ACT ON OUR FAITH** by showing our support of unwanted and stray animals in our local area. Let's reach out and help the **Safety Net Sanctuary** outside of Fleetwood.

Several local townships have been bringing unwanted and stray animals (dogs, cats, rabbits, ducks, chickens, goats, potbelly pigs, and horses) to Safety Net Sanctuary so they can receive the care they desperately need. Many of the animals are not spayed or neutered and are not up-to-date with vaccinations.



Safety Net Sanctuary is in need of the following items:

Old blankets, old newspapers, dog food (canned - any brand), cat food (canned - Purina; dry food - Cat Chow in a blue bag), animal biscuits, dog collars, dog leashes, paper towels, bleach, cleaning supplies, and laundry detergent (any kind - used to wash old blankets that are used for bedding). Also, they will gladly accept monetary donations.

Please put your donations in the Missions boxes in the church foyer between Sunday, July 11 and Saturday, July 31, 2021. Monetary donations should be put in your July mission envelope and either dropped in the offering basket in the middle aisle of the church before or after our worship services, or in the locked offering box in the bell room, or mailed to LUCC.

Please contact Jill Shade (484-894-0636 - cell; jill.shade@longswampucc.org) if you have any questions about our local mission for the benefit of Safety Net Sanctuary.

Family & Community Updates

JULY Birthdays

July 1 - Andrew Steventon
July 3 - Kaitlyn Gross, Mackenzie Gross, Nancy Weymouth
July 6 - Barry Eck
July 12 - Sheila Fox, Susan Kutz
July 17 - Paul Stoudt
July 21 - Carol Ivey

&

JULY Anniversaries

July 2 - Ramona Romanik
July 10 - Anthony George
July 15 - Don Siegfried
July 20 - Tina Cirafesi, Matthew Reed, Andrew Toth
July 22 - Vern Shade

JULY Anniversaries

07/07/2007 Lily Chen & Frederick Dankel

07/24/1965 Geraldine & Paul Stoudt



If you are a member of the church and would like your birthday and/or anniversary listed in upcoming newsletters or if there is a correction, please contact the church office at 610-682-6230.

Church Staff

Supply Pastor - Rev. Lynn Shoemaker
lynn@longswampucc.org 717-836-2050

Organist & Choir Director - Ann Mabry Miller
willann@ptd.net

Office Administrator & Newsletter Editor -
Dawn Strunk secretary@longswampucc.org
610-682-6230

Evening Housekeeper - (Mon.—Thurs.)
Nancy Weymouth

LLC Director - Sharon Wetzel
sharon@longswampllearningcenter.com
610-682-9750

Church Board President - Laurie Heagy
laurie@longswampucc.org 610-682-4735



Church Office Closed Monday, July 5th

For non-emergency messages, please leave a message on the church answering machine.
For pastoral emergencies, please leave a message on Pastor Lynn's voicemail
(717-836-2050).

Offering Counter Helpers Needed!

We could use 1 more person to help Bob Fritz and Shirley Solt count the offering.
Please contact the church office if interested.

Family & Community Updates



Swamp Fest Update

Thank you to all of our devoted and faithful members of Longswamp UCC! Our walking taco stand at Swamp Fest 2021, with all proceeds going towards our community missions, was an incredible success! Thanks to all your thoughtful and generous donations, we were able to post a profit of \$701.11. That is incredible! A special thanks goes out to all those who donated food, drinks, paper products, gift cards, monetary donations, homemade baked goods, and the gift of their time. Our stand was open from 11 AM until we sold out of everything at 7 PM. Those who worked the stand included: Ann Miller, Pastor Lynn, Sarah Reichel, Liz Moser, Maggie Isamoyer, Jill Shade, and myself. It was truly a labor of love! Thank you all for showing our community, once again, that we are a small church with a big heart!

Respectfully submitted, Kim Jenkins



Scholarship Money Available

Applications for Endowment Scholarships may be picked up in the office space called “The Hub” (formerly known as the Pastor’s office) in a mailbox marked “Scholarship Applications”.

Applications are due no later than September 1, 2021.

Vacation Bible School at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Mertztown Aug. 1 - 6, 2021 from 6pm—8pm



Registration is now open!

Just follow the link & complete the doc.

<https://forms.gle/PpSZYKuirLcBR1qGA>

You are invited to join us for our community VBS, Bolt; Totally 80's! We are going to have an epic time learning about how God is with us all the time! There will be game, snacks, crafts & so much fun!!

Church Business

Income and Expenses

Member giving	\$ 3,991.74
Other income	\$ 4,228.75
Total income	\$ 8,220.49
Expenses	\$ (4,614.94)
Net income (gain)	\$ 3,605.55
Building Fund Expenses	\$ 2,916.55

Account Balances (as of 5/31/2021)

General Fund Checking	\$ 74,766.75
Contingency Fund Checking	\$ 3,021.20
Memorial Fund Checking	\$ 5,420.83
Memorial Fund CD	\$ 10,253.42
Building Fund Checking	\$ 30,489.38

May 2021

Financial Information

Notes from the Treasurer...

Included in member giving are \$25 for One Great Hour of Sharing, \$155 for Our Church's Wider Mission, \$355 for the Brandywine Food Pantry monthly mission and \$26.79 from Radcliffe's receipts. Included in Other income are the lease payment from Sprint in the amount of \$1,983.75 and the Learning Center facility use payment of \$2,245. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$750 for cleaning, \$352 for heating oil, \$457 for fire extinguisher and emergency lighting inspection, \$1,747 for water testing and equipment maintenance and \$360.55 for electric service.

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

Campus/Maintenance Manager Needed:

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

We are currently seeking a Campus and Building maintenance manager part time for **10-15 hours per week**. This is a perfect job for a handy man or woman looking for a part time job!

Job Duties include: Basic maintenance and repairs for the church and daycare, following a monthly schedule of duties and unexpected repairs as needed by staff. Demonstrates problem solving skills, interfaces with outside contractors, supervises cleaning staff, responsible for ordering supplies and restocking. Must be able to lift up to 40 pounds and climb ladders and stairs. Must pass all required background checks per the Department of Human Service.

Interested applicants should send a resume or letter of interest to 200 Clay Road, Mertztown, PA 19539 to the attention of the church board or call the church office at 610-682-6230 and

Longswamp Church

*Planting seeds of faith by teaching,
sharing and acting on what we believe.*

Our Newsletter

The Beacon

July 2021

Longswamp UCC

200 Clay Road
Mertztown, PA 19539

610.682.6230

secretary@longswampucc.org

Visit us on the web at
longswampucc.org

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE