

THE LONGSWAMP UCC BEACON - JANUARY 2022

Teaching, sharing and acting on what we believe.



From the Pastor

Rev. Lynn Shoemaker

What does 2022 have in store for us? I can only tell you what I hope and expect. 2022 is a year of great expectations. God has been moving in our church for many years. We have seen great things God has done. We are on the verge of something even greater. I hope and expect an explosion of growth. What will precede this drawing of souls? We've been faithful to preach the Gospel, teach God's Word, model faith, provide programs, serve in ministry and missions and give generously for many years. There is a cumulative effect that happens when a church does this. We've come to a point where something is going to happen. I hope and expect this church to be full whenever you have events and services. So full that it will be increasingly difficult to figure out how to manage all the people in the spaces we have available. I hope and expect to have a children's ministry, provide space for youth, fellowship events, community events, provide adult classrooms and become a beacon of light and hope to the entire community.

Declare this to be the year we are committed to serving our community and ministering to every person we possibly can with God's strength and help. 2022 is the year we expect great things from a great God. Work together, faithfully persevering in the wonderful ministry we have entrusted to the Holy Spirit and a powerful God. In God's love, Pastor Lynn

In This Issue...

- HAPPY NEW YEAR!
- Conference News
- Worship/Events Calendar
- LLC Happenings
- Mission News
- And so much more!

NOTE:

It has come to my attention that there are a few people who are interested in joining Longswamp UCC. I would like to welcome those people into the flock before I leave, so January would be the time to do this. If you are interested, please email me at lynn@longswampucc.org with your full name and phone number. You will also need to email a request to your present church to change your membership to Longswamp UCC. I will be in touch with you then. Thanks

Hospital Code - #451

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

A Leadership Update

Conference News

Since the last Conference News article, we have conducted a full Conference Meeting and a Board of Directors meeting in November, and an Executive Committee meeting in December. I will cover highlights from all three in this article.

At the Fall Conference Meeting, Bonnie Bates conducted a Service of Lament for Chaplains and Pastors to help heal the stress they have experienced supporting those in pain and suffering loss during the time of the pandemic. She anointed all who came forward with oil and offered a blessing to each.

She then gave a "state of the Conference" presentation highlighting several of the ministries and programs made possible through the Conference. Several of them have just been initiated during the past year. Many churches were recognized for their OCWM giving over the past year.

The Treasurer, the Rev. Martin Nuscher gave an overview of the Conference finances, and then he presented the proposed budget for 2022 as compiled with the help of the Budget and Finance Team. This budget had previous approval of the Board and simply needed a final approval by the delegates. They readily approved the budget.

The Spring Conference Meeting will be held May 13-14 at Camelback Resort in the Poconos. Valerie Kaur, founder of the Revolutionary Love Project, will be the Keynote Speaker Friday evening. Visitors may come for the Keynote address and the Opening Worship on Friday evening for a separate registration fee if they do not care to attend the entire two-day event.

In addition to receiving the usual reports at the November Board meeting, results of a survey of individuals engaged with the work of PNEC regarding the Governance and Ministry system employed at the Conference the past three years was also presented. Most of the comments were positive and cited benefits; others offered suggestions for improvement. It was decided some of those suggestions will be initiated in months to come.

The Treasurer announced the closing date for the 2021 financial year will be January 14th, 2022, so all monetary transactions should be completed by that date.

The Disaster Ministries Team is planning a joint venture with the Susquehanna Area Mission Council (SAMC) to raise \$5,000 to double a grant received from the National Church to support disaster relief efforts from several natural disasters. This venture will kick off in January 2022 and will ask all congregations participating in the SAMC to donate \$5.00 per member. They would also like to challenge all PNEC and PSEC churches to raise the equivalent of \$5/member to add to the available funds for the joint PNEC/PSEC Disaster Ministries Team to respond to these incidents in our area. It would aid those impacted by events like tropical storms Ida and Isaias which struck the Philadelphia area and Northampton and Monroe Counties.

[continued on next page....]

A Leadership Update

Conference News Continued....

The Board accepted with sincere regret the resignation of long-time member Doug Lander, who also helped our Search Committee through the process which led us to Pastor Kim Berenotto. He will continue his work with our Search and Call Team.

As required by law, each Authorized Minister on the Conference staff must have Board approval of the portion of their salary that is designated as housing allowance and this approval must be reflected in the Board minutes. This applied to Bonnie Bates and Christian Creyer at PNEC, and it was recorded that the requirement was satisfied at the meeting.

Finally, as a result of the keynote presentation of Rev. Chad Abbott at the Fall Conference Meeting earlier in the month, it was recognized that creation of a Discernment and Visioning Team could be beneficial to PNEC. The members of such a team would research, discuss, and make recommendations to the Board on large-scope issues. An example of such an issue might be whether or not the Conference should continue to own the building in Palmerton or seek another office location. After constructive discussion it was agreed that the idea of forming such a team should be explored further and made a part of the January Board meeting agenda.

At the December Executive Committee meeting, the development of a Discernment and Visioning Team was discussed in greater detail. It was suggested that a good approach would be to think about initial subjects the group would explore and that would help determine who should be invited to join the team. Bonnie suggested three areas where the team would be helpful would be:

Partnerships that would extend our ministries and future goals, **Office Space** that would meet our needs and give us more flexibility, and **Staff Retirements** which loom on the horizon for three of the paid staff and require succession planning. Before creating a list of potential team members, it was decided a smaller group should develop and draft an outline of the purpose of the team and some guidelines about process. Another part of this outline would be a characterization of the team's relationship to the Board. Members for the smaller group were suggested, and Exec. Committee members were assigned to contact them to explain the project and invite them to convene.

It was also decided that the Board's strategic visioning process, which usually takes place in the first months of the year, would be better if delayed until spring in 2022. The reason was to enable the Discernment and Visioning Team to be established and to introduce its formation at the Spring Conference Meeting in May. Then the Board's strategic planning to accomplish its goals for 2022 could be better coordinated with the proposed work of the new team.

Finally, the group was informed the National Church will be launching a Minister's Financial Vitality Initiative and will distribute informational packets to all UCC churches in the first quarter encouraging them to consider a gift to this campaign.

This article has covered a lot of information in several areas. As always, if you have any questions, you may feel free to contact Helena Lindquist at hklindquist@ptd.net.

Sharing our Faith

January Worship 2022

Services Sundays at 10:15am
(unless otherwise noted)

On-site and live stream worship service ("Longswamp UCC" Facebook page) starting at 10:15am. It will be uploaded after worship to our "Longswamp United Church of Christ" YouTube Channel.

January Worship Calendar Themes & Events:

January 2 - "Another Road"

January 9 - "Affirmed By Love"

January 16 - "Extravagant Sign" - Holy Communion

January 23 - "Good News, Good Ways" - New Year Wish

January 30 - "Prophet on the Edge"

Longswamp New Year Wish

Mark your calendar for the **Longswamp Nei Yahr Wunsch from Mike and Linda Hertzog on Sunday, January 23rd**. The New Year wish will be sung in our native Pennsylvania Dutch! The tradition began in Longswamp and so it shall continue!



Sharing the Joy of Christmas with our Senior Saints and Fragile Members

Our LUCC congregation helped to make the Christmas holidays merry and bright for our eleven Senior Saints and fragile members by preparing a Christmas present for each one of them. A huge "Thank You" to our 5 confirmands and their teachers who packed the Christmas gift bags for our special members. Also, thank you to our members who delivered the Christmas presents to our Senior Saints and fragile members. Each beautiful "Glory to God in the Highest" gift bag contained a variety of items: a paperback "Resting in His Shadow...Devotions to Close the Day" prayer book, a metal nativity ornament, an inspirational pocket calendar for 2022 - 2023, a Christmas pen and matching bookmark, a mini composition book, a small bottle of hand sanitizer, a pocket pack of tissues, lip balm, 2 granola bars, a small bag of fruit and nut blend, a small cup of peanut butter, 2 packs of cracker sandwiches, 1 pack of graham crackers, a pack of yogurt cookies, and a Christmas card from our LUCC congregation. We truly hope that our Senior Saints and fragile members enjoyed their Christmas present from our congregation.

Teaching What We Believe



Longswamp Learning Center News...

LLC Board Welcomes 2 New Members!

Elizabeth (Isamoyer) Moser and Jessica Steventon graciously volunteered to serve on the LLC Board beginning in January 2022. They were elected to serve as congregational representatives at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 21, 2021. Jessica was elected President and Elizabeth was elected as the Secretary at the LLC Board meeting on Monday, January 3, 2022. Congratulations, Jessica and Liz!

Thank You, Jill, Helena, and Leo!

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Jill Shade, Helena Lindquist, and Leo Desrosiers for their dedicated service on the LLC Board over the past few years. Jill served as a congregational representative since February 2018. She was the Interim President of the LLC Board from August 2018 - December 2018. Jill has served as the President of the LLC Board from January 2019 - December 2021. Leo has been the LUCC Church Board representative on the LLC Board since July 2017. Helena served as a congregational rep during 2021. We will miss you greatly, Jill, Helena, and Leo!!



Preschool Class Takes Field Trip to Brandywine Community Library

LLC's Preschool class thoroughly enjoyed their field trip to the Brandywine Community Library on Thursday, December 9, 2021.



The children finally got to meet Sheldon, the library's turtle. Miss Amber, the youth services coordinator at the library, read a story to the children. They also enjoyed the bus ride to the library and back to LLC.

Teaching What We Believe

LLC Classes Celebrate Christmas in Many Ways

The children of Longswamp Learning Center had lots of fun doing various Christmas-related activities in their classes during December 2021.

The infants had the wonderful opportunity to do interesting Christmas activities at LLC. They played with felt trees, crawled through a large cardboard box that had Christmas lights poking through the top, and played with Christmas bows and jingle bells on their toes. They also made reindeer out of the children's hands and feet. The teachers also read Christmas books and they listened to holiday music. Families were given a 1st Christmas ornament.

Our LLC toddler class was quite busy doing lots of fun Christmas activities last month. They decorated a Christmas tree in their classroom, made presents for their parents, painted paper trees and decorated them with stickers, read holiday books, and sang and listened to holiday songs. They also watched a holiday show while wearing their pajamas.

Our preschool spent the last few weeks of December spreading Christmas cheer by decorating individual triangular trees which then were used to create a classroom tree on the wall. They also made reindeer food and decorated cookies. They had lots of fun painting with bows and jingle bells. They colored elves and then added pictures of their faces on them. Each child brought in a new book to exchange with their friends. The preschoolers had lots of fun celebrating Christmas in many different ways.

Our school-age students created a Christmas present for their parents using tree cookies. They also made reindeer food, created a garland with stockings, and made popsicle Christmas figures. During their early dismissal on their last day of school before their winter break, they had a snowball fight and played other Christmas-themed physical movement games.

The children and staff of Longswamp Learning Center celebrated Christmas in a fun way with Pajama and Polar Express Day on Thursday, December 23, 2021. The preschool class watched a well-known children's Christmas movie. Santa (aka Dan Wetzel, our LLC Director's husband) surprised the preschool class with a socially distant visit. The SAC class had a mini Christmas party, decorated cookies, watched a movie, played some games, and did some arts and crafts.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

Upcoming Missions in 2022

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

January 2022 - December 2022 (1st Sunday of each month) -
Our Church's Wider Mission



January 2022 - December 2022 - ongoing mission for the benefit of Brandywine Food Pantry which helps food insecure residents of BHASD. Please drop off your donations of non- perishable food items, personal care items, household items, cleaning supplies, etc., before or after our worship services on Sunday mornings, 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.

January 2022 - Backpack Buddies - (See explanation on next page)



February 2022 - Special Mission Offering (goal of \$5.00 per member) for the benefit of the **Penn Northeast Conference Disaster Ministries Team**

March 2022 - Donations (actual items, monetary offerings) for **LUCC's Community Egg Hunt**
(tentative - dependent on the pandemic)



November/December 2021 Local Mission:

Christmas Presents for Phoebe Home Residents



LUCC revived an old tradition at the end of 2021 by participating in Operation Santa at Phoebe Home in Allentown! A huge "Thank You" to our LUCC members who helped to spread the joy of Christmas to 30 residents of Phoebe Home by providing one present (with a maximum cost of \$20.00) for the residents.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

Local Mission - January 2022 Backpack Buddies Program Brandywine Heights Elementary School

Many of us are looking forward to a much better year in 2022! However, there are many children in our local community who are suffering from food insecurity during these unprecedented times. They really need LUCC's help! Our January 2022 mission will be the **Backpack Buddies Program** at **Brandywine Heights Elementary School**. This very worthwhile mission project will run from **Sunday, January 9, 2022 - Monday, January 31, 2022**. The Backpack Buddies Program at Brandywine Heights Elementary School has been extremely important over the past few years because they use donations of specific individual food items to fill backpacks for the needy children to take home over the weekend. Many local churches and organizations contribute specific individually packaged food items and gift cards for Giant and Weis Markets to help the needy children and their families because hunger doesn't end on Friday.

We need your help in collecting the following individually packaged food items:

- Cereal - individual cups or boxes - any variety
- Muffins - individually wrapped - any variety
- Meals (Cheese Ravioli, Lasagna, Spaghetti & Meatballs, Lasagna) - microwavable cups - 7.5 oz.
- Chicken and rice - microwavable cups - 1.97 oz.
- Macaroni and Cheese - microwavable cups - 2.0 oz. (approximate)
- Soup - microwavable cups - any variety
- Vegetables - individual microwavable cups - any variety
- Fruit - individual cups - any variety
- Crackers - individual packs - 6 crackers per pack - any variety
- Goldfish Crackers - individual packs - 1 oz. - 1.5 oz.
- Granola bars (preferably chewy) - individually wrapped - any variety
- Peanut butter (Jif To Go) - individual cups - boxes of 4 or 8 individual cups
- Popcorn - microwavable packs or pre-popped bags (individual serving)
- Juice boxes - 100% juice - any variety
- Non-refrigerated milk - like juice boxes - 6.75 oz.
- Gift cards - Giant or Weis Markets



Because hunger doesn't end on Friday.

Family & Community Updates

January Birthdays

&

January Anniversaries

2 Samuel Reichel
5 Cindy Conrad, Bonnie Leshner, Sadie Moser
6 Adam Fredericks, Mary Mabry, David Snyder, Jr.
8 Ellen Quier
9 Chris Freudig, Fern Shade
11 Reynolds Jenkins, Jr.
12 Susan McElrea
15 Elizabeth Moser
22 George Unger
26 Maggie Isamoyer
28 Dennis Bower
30 Dolores Isamoyer, Easton Moser



Jan. 11, 1975 Cindy & Neil Conrad
Jan. 24, 1959 Wilma & Winfield Lease

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.

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 610-682-6230 if interested.

Thank you

This "thank you" letter was recently received from Marian Gehman, the ventriloquist who performed at LLC's 35th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, October 17, 2021.

Dear Jill,

Thank you so much for inviting me to be a part of the 35th Anniversary Celebration of Longswamp Learning Center. What a blessing it was to share fun and laughter with the congregation at Longswamp UCC? It was great to see you and several familiar faces again. The service was beautiful and I was grateful to be there. Many continued blessings to your Learning Center!
Sincerely, Marian

Veterans Christmas Wreath Project Sponsors:

Willard & Ann Miller
Ramona Romanik

(1) - In Memory of David W. Mabry
(2) - In Memory of Michael Romanik & William Oberdoerster

Longswamp Troop 575 is very thankful for the continuing support of the Longswamp UCC Members to help with the Veteran Wreath Project. The funds are used to purchase new replacement wreaths as they weather and decorations to refurbish existing wreaths. This project to beautify the cemetery and remember our veterans would not be possible without your support.

Family & Community Updates



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

Church Family Prayer Needs:

Barbara Eck, Beverly Long, Harold Dankel, Judy Sechler, Zachary Rachor, Zachary Strunk & Jazzie Boyer, Fern Fritz

Church Friends Prayer Needs:

Violet, Allan Schwenk, Thaddeus Pesce, Corrine Bauman, Jan Christensen, Wayne & Helen Ziegler, Marilyn Herbert, Herb

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
Church Office - 610-682-6230

LLC Director - Sharon Wetzel
sharon@longswampllearningcenter.com

LLC Office - 610-682-9750

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

Maintenance Manager - Dwayne Snyder
dwayne@longswampucc.org

Radcliffe's Receipts

Please remember to drop off your Radcliffe's receipts in the marked box in the Bell Room. This is a very easy way to assist your church. Please do not roll them up as it is difficult to tally the amounts since they won't lay flat. Thank you to Nancy Snyder for faithfully gathering the receipts from the box, tallying the receipts, and taking them to Radcliffe's to raise funds for our church. Last year, we raised \$752.10! This year, as of this writing, we raised **\$826.13!** Keep those receipts coming in! Thank you!

Your 2021 Giving Statements

Thank you for all of your generous gifts that helped us to teach, share and act on the teachings of Jesus this year! Please call the church office (610-682-6230) or email Dawn at (secretary@longswampucc.org) if you would like your giving statement. Also, let us know if you prefer it to be emailed or mailed to you.

Church Business

Income and Expenses

Member giving	\$ 5,262.00
Other income	\$ 4,284.98
Total income	\$ 9,546.98
Expenses	\$ (5,850.52)
Net income (gain)	\$ 3,696.46
Memorial Fund Expense	\$ 891.52
Building Fund Expenses	\$ 4,157.87

Account Balances (as of 11/30/2021)

General Fund Checking	\$ 95,438.41
Contingency Fund Checking	\$ 3,021.35
Memorial Fund Checking	\$ 4,603.74
Memorial Fund CD	\$ 10,253.42
Building Fund Checking	\$ 375.27

Weather Updates...

- ✓ Check WFMZ for cancellations
- ✓ Check Longswamp UCC Facebook page
- ✓ Stay safe

November 2021 Financial Information

Notes from the Treasurer...

Included in member giving for missions are \$200 for the BHMS WHY program and \$65 for Our Church's Wider Mission. Included in Other income are \$292 in proceeds from the Road Ramble, the Learning Center facility use payment of \$2,245 and \$1,983.75 for the cell tower lease. Included in Building Fund expenses are payments of \$1,244.66 for a new sump pump and repairs to the boiler in the Schubert Haus, \$1,106.38 for propane for heating the church sanctuary and Boy Scout cabins, \$414.60 for water testing and equipment maintenance, \$498.22 for electric service, and \$765 for the heating oil budget payment.

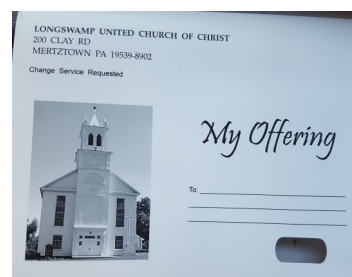
FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, January 18th

Please have all articles to the church office.

2022 Offering Envelope Books

Offering envelope books for 2022 will be available for members to pick up in the Bell room or if you wish for them to be mailed, please call the church office. The books include weekly envelopes, monthly envelopes for Our Church's Wider Mission and special missions, as well as envelopes for Lent, Ash Wednesday, Advent and Christmas Eve. If you do not receive envelopes and would like to have a book, please contact the church office. Offering envelopes that were not picked up in 2021 will be removed from the envelope database. Questions, please call the church office. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



Longswamp Church

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

Our Newsletter

The Beacon

January 2022

Longswamp UCC

200 Clay Road
Mertztown, PA 19539

610.682.6230

secretary@longswampucc.org

Visit us on the web at
longswampucc.org

Wishing you all a Happy & Healthy New Year!

Longswamp UCC

200 Clay Road
Mertztown, PA 19539

PLACE
STAMP
HERE