

THE LONGSWAMP UCC BEACON - JUNE 2021

Teaching, sharing and acting on what we believe.



From the Pastor

Rev. Lynn Shoemaker

Here we are!!!! Months stretched into months! We reopened the sanctuary to 15% capacity. However, the Church never closed – perhaps the building, but not the true Church, which is the people. We still worship, serve, give, and fill the needs of our souls and our communities. I am ready to move on from

this quarantined time. I have heard from others that they have learned to listen better, to spend time with others more intentionally, and to prioritize those things which beg for attention. We are moving ahead with finding new ways to live out the ministry of LUCC. We are sharing more often on a greater variety of platforms.

As we move into the summer longing, expecting, and hoping for growth in our discipleship with Jesus, let's think about Philippians. Most scholars believe this book of joy, encouragement, and challenge was written at a time when Paul was confined to a prison in Rome, his own type of Shelter-in-Place at the time. Paul's freedom was limited, but he still looked for ways he could communicate his faith to everyone. This letter of Paul's is full of hope, rejoicing, and expectation. Paul did not let his situation paralyze his correspondence or decrease the opportunities for him to live out his faith. He took time to think about how his situation could bring him closer to God and how he could respond. He wanted to continue to increase getting the gospel out there, chained or not.

I think this is a great letter to look at when we are restricted. However, our voices can still be heard. Let's continue to speak of hope, joy, and peace. Blessings! Pastor Lynn

In This Issue...

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

Hospital Code - #451

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

Prayer Concerns

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

A Leadership Update

Search Committee

Greetings from your Search Committee!!!

As you may recall we reported in our last Newsletter update that we were starting our interview process anew. Inasmuch as we have not received any new pastoral profiles since our last Newsletter there is little to report.

While waiting for new profiles we have met twice over the last month working on the pastoral job description and laying out where we think (based upon your survey responses and the need to rebuild attendance and membership) the pastor should be spending his/her time. Church Board has asked Helena Lindquist to work on all job descriptions so we have been working with Helena on this very important matter. We hope to finalize this work over the next month.

Beyond the above we are presently in a holding pattern as we await more pastoral profiles. We wish we could tell you how long this will take but sadly we really have no idea.

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 Delaco
Theresa Haffner-Stearns
Maggie Isamoyer
Will Miller
Vern Shade



A Leadership Update

Conference News

Two eventful Conference meetings have taken place by Zoom in recent weeks, the Spring Conference Meeting on April 17th, and a regular meeting of the Executive Committee just a few days later. The theme of the full Conference meeting focused on the fact we are all equal in God's eyes as his children and should share Christ's love with all. In her update celebrating the work of PNEC, Conference Minister Bonnie Bates highlighted ministries and programs that fulfilled that objective. They ranged from the \$5,000 recovery grant from the National Church which Disaster Response Ministry secured to build a private bridge to help a family in need with a disabled son who needed frequent trips to medical treatment, to fairly new ministries like the Mental Health Ministry Team and Racial Justice Initiatives.

The first of those teams is sponsoring educational events on subjects like the process for congregations to become certified as WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Encouraging to individuals identified with Mental Illness), education around counseling guidance and resources for ongoing counseling, collaboration between the community services and the local church, and advocating for individuals with Mental Health conditions Including veteran's issues and suicide prevention). The Racial Justice Ministry Team is reviewing the requirements for PNEC to become a Racial Justice Conference, initially focusing on education and working together with interfaith, ecumenical, and community partners. They are endeavoring to understand where we may be inadvertently harboring theologies and practices that accommodate interpersonal, structural, and systemic racism, and replace them with building genuine relationships and reconstructing just systems and structures.

The Keynote Address of the meeting was by Robert P. Jones, author of *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity*. His presentation was based upon his own research and that of many others who had studied the topic over generations of history. His study led him to conclude that white churches had upheld white supremacy even against the civil rights movement, and that they were not just complacent but complicit, thereby effecting the religious legitimization of the supremacy of whites. He then answered several thoughtful questions from the Conference audience, mostly asking advice on how congregations could effectively alter the current misperceptions and improve awareness and understanding to move forward.

Bonnie Bates also introduced a presentation by Rev. Larry Pickens, newly chosen as the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches. He stated he has focused on reactivating many of the Council's ministries since he took the reins and highlighted their programs to: serve the "fruit belt" migrant workers, provide chaplains for campground ministry, offer services for travelers on the I-80 corridor, and the advocacy work they do with the legislative bodies in Harrisburg where their offices are located. He hopes to further enhance the Council's interaction with PNEC in the future.

[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]

A Leadership Update

Conference News Continued...

Also included on the agenda were numerous recognitions of individuals for their service to the Conferences and congregations for their support.

The PNEC Executive Committee meeting initially focused on reports from their strategic subgroups, including:

- Wider Church - Bonnie Bates mentioned that she will be making a presentation to the staff of the Lehigh Conference of Churches staff about Social Justice activities and how they are supported by scripture from the Christian perspective. Others will give the perspective from the Muslim, Jewish and Sikh faith traditions. She also mentioned that she is now on the Board of the PA Council of Churches, as well as their Executive Committee and she has engaged in conversations with the Executive Director of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society.
- Generosity Team – Rev. Becky Sausser reported that this group is on track to reach their goal of raising \$30,000 in additional funds to support the Conference operating budget through the new Friends of the Conference Campaign.
- Strategic Fund Development Plan – Bonnie Bates is studying to receive an Executive Certification for Religious Fundraising and she determined that the final project could also be an outline for the Conference to develop a strategic fund development plan. She summarized her thinking by pointing out that the Conference has a clear Vision and Mission, but that developing a Strategic Fund Development Plan, which is similar to a strategic business plan, would be the next logical step to be in a position to accomplish more. She explained that It would begin by reviewing what we are known for and are good at that is unique, and what attracts people to us. She went on to outline what subsequent steps would be and proposed that the Executive Committee could develop the plan and then take it to the Board for approval. The Executive Committee agreed and will try to have the plan outlined and approved in time for the Fall Conference Meeting in November.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to finalizing details for the upcoming Board Orientation and Strategic Planning meeting to be held on May 22nd . The meeting will include Ministry Team chairs in the morning as well as members of the Board. After reviewing the goals established by the Board for 2021-2022, there will be illustrations of how the Board and Ministry Teams have worked together to formulate actions supporting some of those goals. Small groups will be utilized to develop further suggestions on additional action steps to realize the goals. The Board will work alone after lunch to develop the Strategic Fund Development Plan and to create a calendar and timeline for the upcoming year.

As always, if you have any questions about the work of the PNEC, please feel free to contact Helena Lindquist at hklindquist@ptd.net.

Sharing our Faith

June Worship & Events 2021

Summer Worship 9:00AM

IN-PERSON AND LIVES STREAMING WORSHIP ON FACEBOOK EVERY SUNDAY

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

June 2021 Calendar Themes & Events:

June 6 - Worship 10:15AM - "God's Will" - Wedding Sunday

June 13 - Worship 10:15AM - "Flourishing" - Graduation Sunday

June 15 - June Newsletter articles are due

June 20 - Worship 10:15AM - "Pushing the Boat Out" - Holy Communion & Father's Day

June 27 - Worship 10:15AM - "Healing Powers"

Current Policy for In-person worship:

- * Masks are required and ample hand sanitizer is provided.
- * Pews are marked off to encourage proper social distancing.
- * There will be no passing of the peace
- * The offering basket will be located mid-way down the center aisle.
- * Social distancing is to be observed, so please be patient entering and leaving the sanctuary.

JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, June 15th

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...

Welcome to Our New LLC Staff Members!

Longswamp Learning Center would like to welcome our newest staff members: Miss Tori, Miss Amanda, and Miss Nikole. Miss Tori, a student at Kutztown University, has been working mostly in the Older Toddlers class for several months. Miss Amanda, who recently graduated with her Associate's Degree in Applied Science in Early Childhood Education from Lehigh Carbon Community College, will be the Group Supervisor for our School-Age Care/Summer Camp program. Miss Nikole will be serving as an Assistant Group Supervisor and working wherever she's needed. We'd also like to welcome Miss Kaylyn, a nursing student at Cedar Crest College, back to LLC. All of our newest staff members have prior experience working in child care. We look forward to having these young women on our LLC staff!



LLC Celebrates Teacher Appreciation Week!

Did you know that National Teacher Appreciation Week was celebrated from Monday, May 3 - Friday, May 7, 2021? Our LLC staff was honored each day during this special week for their dedication to providing quality care and education to our children on a daily basis. Many of the LLC families made special posters thanking our LLC staff for the great job they do.

Also, the LLC staff received very special treats all week -

Monday, May 3 - "Nothing Bundt the Best Teachers" - individual bundt cakes from a local bakery;

Tuesday, May 4 - "You Make Learning Sweet" - a bowl of candy donated by LLC families;

Wednesday, May 5 - "Make Your Own Ice Cream Sundae"- all ice cream, toppings, etc., donated by LLC families;

Thursday, May 6 - "We Love Our Teachers" -heart-shaped rice krispie treats;

Friday, May 7 (National Child Care Provider Day) - Pizza luncheon, individual snack bags, and drinks provided by LLC.

Sharon Wetzel, the LLC Director, and the LLC Board members would like to express our sincere gratitude to each of our staff members for the GREAT WORK THEY DO EACH AND EVERY DAY!



Teaching What We Believe

Congratulations, Miss Dolly!



Dolores Bauer (a.k.a. Miss Dolly), a longtime member of the Longswamp Learning Center staff, retired on Friday, May 28, 2021, after 27 years of dedicated service. She started working at LLC in March 1994. Miss Dolly has held various positions - chef, laundry person, and assistant group supervisor in our Infants and Toddlers classes. She is a beloved caregiver, very dedicated, highly respected by everyone (children, parents, and co-workers), and loves every child so much for whom she cared. Miss Dolly received a variety of special retirement gifts from the LLC children, parents, staff, and Board. You will be greatly missed, Miss Dolly! We truly hope you'll come back to visit us!

Preschool Graduation 2021

Graduation for six of LLC's preschoolers, who will be moving onto Kindergarten this fall, will be held at 3:00 PM on Friday, June 4, 2021, at the pavilion in the LUCC picnic grove. Attendance will be limited to the families of the 6 preschool graduates, their fellow classmates, and teachers.



Summer Camp 2021

Can you believe that the end of the 2020 - 2021 school year is almost here? That means that **LLC's Summer Camp 2021** for **school-age children** in our community is just around the corner!!! Come and join the LLC staff for lots of fun at our Summer Camp 2021! This year's theme is "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" We will be taking a step back to colonial times, visiting the future, and taking imaginary trips to many places (beaches, mountains, etc.) across the U.S. This year's fun adventure begins on Monday, June 7, 2021, and ends on Friday, August 20, 2021. Our LLC Summer Camp organizers are finalizing details as they deal with the challenges of the pandemic! Please feel free to contact Sharon Wetzel, our LLC Director, by calling 610-682-9750 or via email (sharon@longswamplearningcenter.org) to find out more about LLC's Summer Camp 2021.

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

What is **Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)**? - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support funds all the ways the national United Church of Christ strives together to be the church the world needs. In isolation, no single UCC congregation can be the church the world needs today. To be that world-changing church, we work together through Our Church's Wider Mission to support and inspire each other. Together we are stronger, our reach is wider, and our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is deeper. *(taken from https://www.ucc.org/ocwm/ocwm_basic-support/)*

January 2021 - December 2021 - ongoing local mission for **Brandywine Food Pantry** - There are 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. Let's help our neighbors by donating items that the needy people of our community can always use.

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

Please put any gift cards you purchase or monetary donations 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.

June 2021 - monthly global mission for the benefit of **Church World Service** - We will be assembling CWS Hygiene Kits containing the following new items:

July 2021 - Let's help the **students of the Brandywine Heights Intermediate School (grades 4 & 5) and Middle School (grades 6 - 8)** prepare for the 2021 - 2022 school year by collecting school supplies for them. Watch for more details in the July 2021 newsletter.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings



May 2021 Local Mission Brandywine Food Pantry

A huge "THANK YOU" to everyone who donated non-perishable food items, personal care items, cleaning supplies, paper products, etc. and/or gave a monetary offering for our May 2021 mission for the benefit of the Brandywine

Food Pantry. Also, thank you to the LLC families for their continued support of LUCC's missions. Also, I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to William "Charlie" Lantz for being very dedicated to delivering everything that is donated for the food pantry once a week during the entire year. All of our donations were greatly appreciated by the people in charge at the Brandywine Food Pantry.

June 2021 National/Global Mission Church World Service Hygiene Kits

Let's help struggling families throughout the USA and the world by providing **hygiene kits** for **Church World Service**. This month's mission will run from **Sunday, June 13 - Wednesday, June 30, 2021**. We're asking our members to support this very worthwhile cause by either providing all the required items for one or two complete hygiene kit(s) (value of each kit = \$15.00) or donate a few of one of the required items so we can use them in extra hygiene kits. A sign-up sheet will be available in the narthex in early June. Monetary donations will be gladly accepted to help purchase more items to complete hygiene kits and/or defray the processing fee of \$2.00 per kit and the cost of shipping the kits to Church World Service's headquarters in Maryland.



Would you like to download a printable shopping list for the items required for the CWS hygiene kits? If so, click on this link; <http://cwskits.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CWS-Hygiene-Kit.pdf>

Each hygiene kit must contain the following:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
- One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package (either one is acceptable)
- One bath-size bar of soap in the original package
- One toothbrush in the original package
- Ten standard size Band-Aids

Please contact Jill Shade (jill.shade@longswampucc.org; 484-894-0636) to sign up to donate a complete hygiene kit or individual items so we can assemble extra hygiene kits.

Family & Community Updates

Graduate Recognition



High School:

Jonah Ashton Teel, son of Sarah Reichel and Bradley Teel, graduated from Brandywine Heights High School on June 2, 2021 with a 4.5 GPA and distinguished honors (gifted program) all 4 years. At Brandywine, Jonah was involved in 4 years of concert band, jazz band, concert choir, and chamber singers. He was the 2019 and 2020 talent show winner with the band, Condor. He received the 2019 certificate of excellence for solo vocal, guitar, and piano performance at the Educational Showcase, the 2019 recipient of the Emory S. Meck Service Award for excellence in the band program, 2020 Recipient of the Reading Music Foundation's Outstanding High School Musician Award, and 2020 Berk's Best in Performing Arts nominee. He participated in the 2020 PMEA District 10 Choir performance and 2020 Berks County Senior Chorus performance. He was inducted into the National Society of High School Scholars in 2020 and inducted into the Tri-M Music Honor Society in 2019. Jonah was also a 2 time district swimmer for the Brandywine Heights Swim Team. Also, from his family, "4 years of being an all around amazing, kind, beautiful human being!" Jonah will be attending Kutztown University in the Fall as a Music Education Major.

Medical School:

Valerie Rose Jenkins, daughter of Reynolds and Kimberly Jenkins, of Mertztown, graduated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine on Thursday, May 20, 2021 with a Doctorate of Medicine degree. After completing her undergraduate studies in Biochemistry, in May of 2017 at Saint Joseph's University, Valerie completed another 4 years at UMDSOM, in order to achieve this milestone. At commencement, Valerie was awarded the Dr. Jacob E. Finesinger Memorial Award for Excellence in Psychiatry and graduated with honors in several medical rotation sub-specialties. Valerie has decided to pursue Psychiatry as her specialty and has accepted her first-choice, four year residency position in Psychiatry at the University of Maryland Medical Center and Sheppard Pratt Hospital, Baltimore/Towson, Maryland, beginning in late June 2021. We are so proud of Longswamp United Church of Christ's newest physician, Valerie Jenkins, M.D!

Congratulations & Best Wishes to all our graduates!

Family & Community Updates

JUNE Birthdays

&

JUNE Anniversaries

June 2 - Sylvia Conrad
June 5 - Jennifer George
June 11 - Laura Stoudt
June 13 - Judy Sechler
June 17 - Valerie Jenkins
June 21 - Barbara Eck
June 25 - Carson Isamoyer, Samantha Schubach
June 27 - Juliana George
June 28 - Justin Dierolf
June 29 - Randall Diehl
June 30 - Norman Voortman

06/05/1985 Sandra & Dennis Reppert
06/08/1968 Fern & Robert Fritz
06/12/1976 Brenda & Dennis Bower
06/15/2018 Samantha & Robert Schubach
06/20/1959 Dorothy & William Weller
06/21/2003 Sarah & Matthew Reed
06/23/1984 Kim & Andrew Toth
06/25/1976 Karen & Robert Friedly
06/28/1958 Joyce & William Isamoyer
06/28/2003 Kathy & Richard Shupp
06/28/2014 Amanda & Andrew Thomas
06/30/1990 Linda & Raymond Davis



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@longswamplarningcenter.com 610-682-9750

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

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



Brandywine Community Library

Tails and Tales Summer fun at the Brandywine Community Library will begin on June 14th and run through July 31st for all ages, even adults! Children and teens can read books or participate in activities to earn raffles or library money to purchase prizes from the 'store'. Adults can earn prizes and enter raffles by reading books. You can use the WiFi and the computers or borrow books, DVDs, magazines, graphic novels, audiobooks and more including museum passes for exciting places like the Reading Public Museum, Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles and the Elmwood Zoo. Or just swing by and take a selfie with Sheldon, the library's 33 year-old Greek Tortoise. Visit www.berkslibraries.org/branch/brandywine or find them on Facebook to learn more.

SwampFest



Mark your calendars for the 3rd annual Swampfest to be held on **Saturday, June 12th!** LUCC has committed to a food stand from noon to "until we run out of food" for the event. All proceeds will go towards LUCC's Community Outreach program and is sorely needed during these (hopefully) end-of-COVID times! We will be doing a walking taco stand with drinks and carry and go desserts. We will be needing lots of perishable items (lettuce, sour cream, seasoned meat, cheese), so monetary donations or grocery store cards would be greatly appreciated by 6/6. Other items that could be dropped off at the church in the entryway (red box marked SWAMPFEST DONATIONS) would include, drinks, LOTS of snack bags of Doritos and Fritos, salsa, napkins, plastic forks and spoons. Baked goods could be dropped off the night before at church or the day of, at the Longswamp Park. All questions, donations and drop offs should be directed to Kim Jenkins at 610-858-4152 (text and/or call). We will need helpers to work, but it will be a blast under our covered tent right by the incredible live music (James Supra Band and the Large Flowerheads from 2-5 pm and then from 6-9), followed by fireworks around 9:15 pm. Please come out and help LUCC have a great presence in our community and help our neighbors! Any questions text or email Kim Jenkins, kim@longswampucc.org



New Arrival Blessings!

Congratulations to Samantha & Robert Schubach on the birth of their son, **Darby John Schubach!** Darby came into the world on April 29th at 2am, weighing 7 lbs and 21" long. Darby has twin 2 yr old big brothers, Remy & Cooper, and is the grandson of Chris & Suzette Ward. Blessings to the whole family!



Church Business

April 2021

Financial Information

Income and Expenses

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Member giving | \$ 5,166.38 |
| Other income | \$ 4,228.75 |
| Total income | \$ 9,395.13 |
| Expenses | \$ (7,292.79) |
| Net income (gain) | \$ 2,102.34 |
| Building Fund Expenses | \$ 7,582.09 |

Notes from the Treasurer...

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 member giving are \$25 for the adopted family. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$316.27 for heating oil, \$322 for water testing and equipment maintenance, \$372.82 for electric service, \$4,171 for the quarterly church insurance package premium and \$2,400 for plowing and salting of the parking lots this past winter.

Account Balances (as of 4/30/2021)

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| General Fund Checking | \$ 71,161.20 |
| Contingency Fund Checking | \$ 3,021.20 |
| Memorial Fund Checking | \$ 5,420.79 |
| Memorial Fund CD | \$ 10,253.42 |
| Building Fund Checking | \$ 34,155.93 |

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

Campus/Maintenance Manager Needed:

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 leave a name and phone number.

Longswamp Church

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

Our Newsletter

The Beacon

June 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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200 Clay Road
Mertztown, PA 19539

PLACE
STAMP
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