



Longswamp United Church of Christ

The Beacon

May 2025

Teaching, Sharing, and Acting on what we believe



Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Worship:
Sundays @
10:15 am

www.longswampucc.org

200 Clay Road,
Mertztown, PA 19539

June Newsletter
Deadline:
Tuesday,
May 20th

Contact Us

Church Office: 610-682-6230
Monday-Friday
9:30am - 2:30pm
secretary@longswampucc.org

From the Pastor

Rev. Kimberly Berenotto



I love when Easter is the third Sunday in April. Easter falls differently each year – it takes place on the first Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon. The Paschal Moon is the first full moon after the fixed day of the March Equinox (3/21). The way this date has been calculated throughout history is complicated, and the complexity of Easter’s date has deep and important ties to when Jewish communities celebrate Passover.

But there’s still part of me that wants to say, “Hey, let’s always have Easter in April when the weather is warming, and the flowers are blooming!” The first daffodils blooming, those pops of yellow hues, feels like the joy of resurrection! And maybe that’s because daffodils seem to bloom everywhere and anywhere.

Sure, many people intentionally plant daffodils in their gardens to sprout as the first blossoms of Spring. But have you noticed daffodils are everywhere? Daffodils are persistent, they take root and grow in places a person likely didn’t plant them. I see daffodils blooming in the rocky shoulders of major roads and in the brambles and brush on the outskirts of the woods. Animals may spread seeds and bulbs in their travels and there are some historians that suggest that, particularly in the Appalachian region, the location of daffodils indicate where people first settled or had homesteads. Whether by animal or through history, daffodils take root, stick around, and find ways to bloom.

The daffodils help us answer the questions of what’s next after Easter? We’ve heard the Good News and we’ve sung our “Alleluias!” How do we keep the bright yellow blooming of resurrection alive? We do it with daffodil-like persistence.

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul writes, “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” Wherever we find ourselves planted this Easter season – whether in a manicured garden, the brambles of the woods, or the side of the road – let us not grow weary of blooming with the Good News.

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

Galatians 6:9



Sharing Our Faith

May 2025 Worship Schedule

Services Sundays at 10:15 am

On-site and live stream worship service ("Longswamp UCC" Facebook page). Afterward, service is uploaded to our "Longswamp United Church of Christ" YouTube Channel.

- May 4-** Regular Worship
- May 11-** Worship & Mother's Day, Loft Choir Singing
- May 18-** Worship, Congregational Meeting after service
- May 25-** Memorial Day Worship

May Ministry Partners

Greeters

- May 4-** Will Miller
- May 11-** Theresa Haffner-Stearns
- May 18-** Chris Freudig
- May 25-** Sarah Marburger

Readers

- May 4-** Liz Moser
- May 11-** Justin Smith
- May 18-** Laurie Heagy
- May 25-** Marilyn Herbert

Head Ushers

- May 4-** Will Miller
- May 11-** Theresa Haffner-Stearns
- May 18-** Chris Freudig
- May 25-** Sarah Marburger

May Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors

- May 4th-** *In loving memory of father, Michael Romanik, by Charlene Rachor*
- May 11th-** *In loving memory of mother, Edna Kocher, by Barbara Karom*
- May 25th-** *In loving memory of Althea Walbert's Birthday.*



Congregational

MEETING

Mark your calendars for a congregational meeting on Sunday, May 18th, after the church service. We will discuss, upcoming projects, some bylaw changes, and review 2024's financials.



SELLERS NEEDED!



SPRING YARD SALE



SATURDAY
MAY 17TH
8AM-12PM

Rain date: Sunday,
May 18 from 1-4pm

LUCC PARKING LOT
200 CLAY RD
MERTZTOWN, PA,
19539

**Rent a space for \$5,
LUCC-supplied table
is additional \$5. Both
fees benefit Hope
Rescue Mission.**

Swap, Sell, Donate!

Bring anything you want to swap or sell! After the sale is over, you can leave any unwanted clothing with LUCC/LLC. The Hope Rescue Mission in Reading will be picking up any remaining clothing items. (Clothing ONLY! All other items must go back home with you)

If you'd rather just donate clothing- that's ok too! You can drop your unwanted clothing items off at LUCC the week prior to May 17!

****Please note: each table will be responsible for their own items and sales.**

Contact Maggie, Pastor Kim, or Sharon for more info!



cookies for a cause

MAY 31ST @
RADCLIFFE'S
10AM-2PM

Any shopper who donates a non-perishable food item, personal care item, household product, paper product, or monetary donation will receive a small bag of homemade cookies!

Benefitting LUCC's May
Mission for the
Brandywine Food Pantry



If you're interested in volunteering to help at the table or bake cookies, please contact Jill Shade.

Phone: 484-894-0636
Email: jill.shade@longswampucc.org

Musicians Needed!



CALLING ALL MUSCIANS! We're looking for YOU to perform during church in May (and over the summer too)! If you're interested, please talk to Pastor Kim! Any and all talents are welcome!

The United Church of Christ was first formed by adopting the proposed constitution in summer of 1961. (Coincidentally, I had just graduated high school, so we've been around for a while!). The Penn Northeast Conference was formed in December of 1962 when several local synods of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and delegates from former the PA Conference of the Congregational Christian Churches jointly adopted the Constitution and Bylaws for the Penn Northeast Conference.

Less than a year later, the Conference had set up four Associations to serve the sprawling geography it served, namely the Susquehanna, Lehigh, East Pennsylvania and Blue Mountain Associations. Each of the four maintained two committees – The Executive Committee to oversee administrative matters, and the Church and Ministry Committee, which supported individuals studying for the ministry, granting ordination and/or licensing to those successful candidates, and supporting them in their chosen ministry positions.

Nearly 20 years later, in spring of 1981, delegates to the annual PNEC Conference meeting voted to empower the Conference to act as an Association, thereby dissolving the previous four associations. This action was taken to streamline, simplify and unify the processes used to in all common functions across the Conference. Now, on the cusp of a vote to combine all four PA conferences, we are the only one that functions as both a Conference and an Association, and the other three have 2-5 associations which have adopted different procedures within each.

If the National Synod vote is affirmative this summer, PNEC will continue to be an Association (with a new name yet to be determined) and it will function as it has (a least for a while) with two exceptions. The new, unified Keystone Conference will oversee much of the Committee on Ministry functions that help students striving to become pastors, going through ordination, and receiving guidance while serving in their called position. Volunteers from the association will provide welcome, collegial support and pastoral care.

A second significant change will be in financial resources. As they always have, OCWM funds will support the budget of the Conference. That means none of this funding will support the association we will become. Knowing this shift was coming was one of the reasons that PNEC established the Friends of the Conference campaign to create a new revenue stream. We will continue to rely on individuals in our area who are able, to provide this support and hope to augment these funds with grant funding. Associations in other parts of the state rely on a per member assessment formula for each church to support their work. Part of the proceeds from sale of the Palmerton building may be available to stay within our association, as well as bequests such as that from the estate of Gwilym T. Williams, which supports the Scholarship Fund, should remain with the association. These issues are still being discussed.

The new Conference will also oversee the search and call efforts of member churches, but, again, will rely on (trained) volunteers to be involved in search committee meetings, etc. The Conference can also be expected to provide training opportunities for clergy and laity, sharing of best practices, and resources. It can also provide specialized support by request in areas like conflict issues, coaching, congregational transition support, etc. And the Conference will be responsible for an Annual Conference meeting.

The Penn Northeast Conference will no longer function in its current form beginning in 2026. Many other things will change, including our relationships with staff since Patty Rehrig, Barbara Jennings, and Bonnie Bates will all retire, and new staff will be positioned to serve our congregations. The office building in Palmerton will have a new owner/purpose and three regional Conference offices will be established. Locations are being determined.

However, the Keystone Conference will still be in relationship with our congregations and pastors. We will also have an Association Board, and it will support our congregations and host an

Association meeting annually. There will continue to be communication, interaction and representation from our association serving on committees, teams and the board of the new conference. And our individual congregations will still have the independence our denomination's constitution and bylaws provide; we can continue to reach out to our surrounding community and neighboring congregations to share our Christian values and the love of Christ in action as we have for over 275 years.

If you have any questions about what is happening with at PNEC, please feel free to email hklindquist@ptd.net.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings



LUCC's "Acting" Ministry Theme for 2025 **"Missions - Around the Church, Around the Community, and Around the World"**

May 2025 - December 2025 (1st Sunday of each month) - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)

What is OCWM? - Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support funds all the ways we strive together to be the church the world needs. 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/)



May 2025 Local Mission- Brandywine Food Pantry

Let's reach out and help the food-insecure residents of BHASD by supporting the Brandywine Food Pantry. We will collect non-perishable food, personal care items, household and paper products for the local food pantry from Sunday, May 11, 2025 until Saturday, May 31, 2025. The Brandywine Food Pantry is housed at St. Peter's UCC in Topton.

Did you know that the Brandywine Food Pantry is now under the umbrella of Friend, Inc. Community Services outside of Kutztown? Therefore, our local food pantry is able to purchase a larger variety of non-perishable food and also refrigerated and frozen items from Friend, Inc. (Friend, Inc. buys the majority of the food which they provide in their food pantries, from Helping Harvest of Berks and Schuylkill Counties.)

The **Brandywine Food Pantry** is always in need of the Paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet tissue), Personal care items (body wash, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, individually wrapped toothbrushes, etc.), and cleaning and disinfecting products (dish soap, laundry detergent, etc.).

Continued --->

Please deposit your donations for the Brandywine Food Pantry in the appropriately marked boxes in the sanctuary or in the bell room. If you would rather give a mission offering, please put it in your May mission envelope (dated May 18, 2025) or a plain white envelope (with your name and Brandywine Food Pantry on it) and drop it in the offering basket during our Sunday morning worship service, in the locked offering box in the bell room (open during the week from 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM), or mail it to the church.

Please contact Jill Shade (484-894-0636; jill.shade@longswampucc.org) if you have any questions or concerns about our May 2025 local mission for the benefit of the Brandywine Food Pantry. Also, feel free to contact LUCC's very own Pastor Kim or Sue Lishman who are members of the Brandywine Food Pantry Board.

***** Please check the expiration dates on donated food products! Brandywine Food Pantry cannot accept food items with expired dates.**

Donated items most helpful right now: Paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet tissue), Personal care items (body wash, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, individually wrapped toothbrushes, etc.), and cleaning and disinfecting products (dish soap, laundry detergent).

Teaching What We Believe



LLC News



It's hard to believe that the school year is almost over! We've been preparing for the summer schedule changes and summer camp throughout the month of April. This year's summer camp theme is "The Great Outdoors," and will be focused on nature and spending as much time outside as possible!

For Easter, each classroom got to have an egg hunt on the playground and each student took home some goodies. The school age students were very helpful in hiding these eggs before the egg hunt!

Our DHS inspection also happened in April and LLC passed with flying colors! Thank you to everyone who got the kitchen cleaned up and looking spiffy prior to the inspection!

We're looking forward to this warmer weather sticking around so that our students can have more fun on the playground!

**LONGSWAMP UCC
CHILDREN'S
CHURCH**

Children's Church meets every Sunday during worship. Kids begin in church and then head to the Preschool room for stories, games, crafts, and more!



SAVE THE DATES!

July 8th & August 5th
6pm to 8pm

Join us for summer-camp fun
at Longswamp UCC!

During these two evenings we
will learn about how Jesus
showed compassion to those in-
need. Each night will focus on a
different Gospel story and will
be paired with games, crafts,
food, campfire time, and more!
Kids and families of all ages are
welcome to join us for this fun
VBS-style summer event!

7 by 7

A Bible Study of Noah

Save the dates to learn about
Noah with us before the trip to
Sight & Sound Theater (or just
come to learn more!).

Wednesdays July 16th, 23rd,
and 30th at 10:30 am or 7pm



Family & Community Updates

May Birthdays

- May 1- Coralie Eck
- May 2- Suzette Ward, Annabelle Weller
- May 3- Sarah Marburger
- May 9- Frederick Dankel
- May 10- Alexander Jenkins
- May 13- Tyler Reed
- May 15- Raymond Conrad, Jr.
- May 19- Tim Masenheimer
- May 21- Brandan Clark, Claire DeLong
- May 22- Barbara Weller
- May 25- Zachary Rachor
- May 30- Robert Dierolf
- May 31- Tim Long

LUCC's Men's Group

The men's group will continue to
meet at the Hometown Diner on
the 3rd Thursday of each month at
7pm. If you need more info or have
questions, please call or text Justin
Smith at 610-529-3394



May Anniversaries

- May 3, 2014- Andrew & Heather Shoemaker
- May 12, 2007- Art & Jen George
- May 18, 1985- Dean & Diane Shoemaker
- May 20, 1995- Barry & Coralie Eck
- May 25, 2018- Alexander & Riana Jenkins
- May 29, 1999- Andrew & Jessica Steventon
- May 31, 1980- Sheila & Steve Fox

Prayers Needed



Church Family Prayer Needs: Barbara Eck, George Unger, Ramona Romanik, Wilma Lease, Karen Friedly, Annabelle Weller, Doris Epting

Serving Our Country: Zachary Rachor, Alexander Jenkins, Adam Hapenovich, Tyler Reed

Church Friends Prayer Needs: Lynn Shoemaker and Emily Wetzel & Family, Family & Friends of Florence Vangeri, Barron & Kallie Kistler

Church Business

March 2024 Financials

Income and Expenses

Member Giving:	\$7,399.43
Other Giving:	\$11,487.75
Total Giving:	\$18,887.18
Expenses:	\$12,209.41
Net Income (loss)	\$6,677.77
Memorial Fund Income:	\$500
Building Fund Expenses:	\$10,228.62

Account Balances as of 3/27/2025

General Fund Checking:	\$46,846.47
Contingency Fund Checking:	\$3,022.44
Memorial Fund Checking:	\$13,943.94
Building Fund:	\$1,064.92
Building Fund Checking:	\$34,529.66

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Please contact the church office if you don't see it here! Please inform us, also, if you want to be added to our email list!

Message from the Treasurer

Included in member giving for missions are \$145 for Our Church's Wider Mission and \$926 for Internal Missions (church steeple repairs, egg hunt) Included in Other income is \$1,983.75 for the cell tower lease fee, \$2,600 for the Learning Center facility use fee, \$734 for the Sight and Sound trip and \$6,170 for the church steeple insurance claim. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$493 for cleaning services, \$978.74 for electric service, \$654 for the monthly heating oil budget payment, \$1,105.12 for water testing and equipment maintenance and \$5,577.25 for the quarterly church insurance package premium.

Thank You

Thank you for all the cards, phone calls, and visits from Pastor Kim and Sarah. Thanks also for the Easter gifts. I'm so glad I belong to this special church family.
God Bless,
Doris Epting

Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. Kimberly Berenottopastorkim@longswampucc.org.....610-401-1847
Organist & Choir Director - Ann Mabry Millerann@longswampucc.org
Office Administrator & Newsletter Editor - Maggie Isamoyer...secretary@longswampucc.org
LLC Director - Sharon Wetzelsharon@longswampllearningcenter.com
LLC Office - 610-682-9750
Church Board President - Laurie Heagy.....laurie@longswampucc.org484-269-4619
Maintenance Manager - Dwayne Snyder.....dwayne@longswampucc.org

Longswamp UCC

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

Our Newsletter

The Beacon
May 2025



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