

THE LONGSWAMP UCC BEACON - FEBRUARY 2023

Teaching, sharing and acting on what we believe.

200 CLAY ROAD, MERTZTOWN, PA 19539

WWW.LONGSWAMPUCC.ORG

OFFICE PHONE: 610.682.6230

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday, 9:30am - 2:30pm

HOSPITAL CODE: #451 (LVHN & Sacred Heart & St. Luke's)



Weather Updates...

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

MARCH 2023

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, February 21st

Please have all articles to the church office.

In This Issue...

- ✝ Pastor's Message
- ✝ Worship/Events Calendar
- ✝ LLC Happenings
- ✝ Missions Updates
- ✝ Family & Community News
- ✝ And so much more!

Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. Kimberly Berenotto

pastorkim@longswampucc.org

610-401-1847

Organist & Choir Director - Ann Mabry Miller

ann@longswampucc.org

Office Administrator & Newsletter Editor -

Dawn Strunk secretary@longswampucc.org

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



From the Pastor

Rev. Kimberly Berenotto



Valentine's Day always makes me think of my childhood – which might not make a lot of sense. But every Valentine's Day my mom put together what she called "Manners Night." Despite the name, I loved Manners Night. My mom would set a full table with her grandma's dishes and cloth napkins. My brother and I would have to make sure we were dressed well. And the highlight, because it was Valentine's Day, is our entire meal was red and pink foods: baked ham, red potatoes, and always red jello. These Manners Nights happened periodically throughout the year and I loved them so much. It was a creative way for me and my brother to learn table manners, my mom enjoyed breaking out the good china handed down in her family (and she loves ham), and my dad was along for the ride.

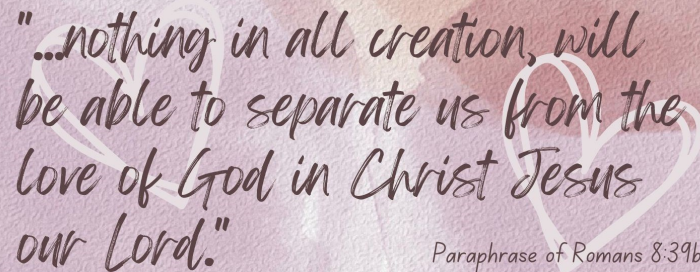
Proverbs 22:6 says, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." I think this scripture is one of those frequently misinterpreted ones and makes people think there's some magic way to raise good kids. Lots have preached on this scripture, saying raising kids in the church is what will keep them on the right paths. But our own experiences show this isn't always the case. We know of church folks who have strayed from God's paths; and there's plenty of awesome adults out there who weren't raised in the church! If the original Hebrew was translated more accurately, this Proverb would actually read, "Dedicate a child in the way of his mouth and when he is old he will not turn aside from it."

This scripture is NOT about trying to make kids follow some strict rules or fit rigid ideas the church has of how a child should act and be – but hearing the desires and passions of a child and helping them to follow those.

And with thinking about Valentine's Day, that's

what love should be too – not trying to mold a kid or adult to fit into a box we've created – but truly listening to the "way of their mouths" and helping them to blossom more into the person they want to be and the unique individual God is calling them to be! My parents aren't perfect by any means, but loving us into following our passions and never forcing us to fit into anyone's boxes is something they did well.

So in this month that our culture focuses on love, let us focus on God's love. Love that encourages us to accept and encourage people (including children) as exactly who they are – and love that stays with us always no matter who we are too. Romans 8: 38-39 reminds us: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor **ANYTHING** else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."



"...nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Paraphrase of Romans 8:39b

Sharing our Faith

February Worship 2023 ~ Services Sundays at 10:15am

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

February Sunday Worship Schedule

- Feb. 5th: Scout Sunday
- Feb. 12th: Regular Sunday
- Feb. 19th: Communion
- Feb. 26th: First Sunday of Lent



BOYSCOUTS OF AMERICA

Boy Scout Sunday February 5 @ 10:15 am

We welcome Troop 575 to help lead worship. Fellowship time to follow the service.

Ash Wednesday

February 22, 2023

Ashes-to-Go
7:00 am to 9:00 am
If you are unable to join us in the evening, come by the sanctuary between 7am and 9am to receive ashes on your way out for the day.

Ash Wednesday Worship
7:00 pm
Join us for worship, communion, and imposition of ashes to begin Lent.

Muddling through MIRACLES

Sundays in Lent we will be exploring miracle and fantastical stories in scripture and what they have to do with those of us who are just making do and getting by.

Lent Series 2023
Beginning Sunday Feb. 26th

CELEBRATING 275 YEARS

BE A PART OF LONGSWAMP UCC'S 275TH ANNIVERSARY

The first meeting of the Anniversary Committee is Sunday Feb. 5th after worship. All are welcome to join!

SAVE THESE DATES

275th Anniversary Celebration
Sunday May 7th

Longswamp Homecoming Event
Sunday October 29th

Sharing our Faith



God's Explorers Sunday School will meet every Sunday in February! Children begin in worship and after the Children's Message head down to Fegely Hall with our God's Explorers Guides for stories, crafts, games, and more!

We need leaders and helpers for God's Explorers - please speak with Pastor Kim if you'd like to be involved in this important ministry of our church.



Jesus loves the Little Children and so do We!!

Children are welcome at worship - the noises of kids in worship are celebrated at Longswamp UCC. However, if you need a moment outside the sanctuary you are invited to take your kids to the Nursery. Head through the Bell Room, into our Office/Daycare Building, past the restrooms, and down the hall toward the door that says NURSERY. There you'll find rocking chairs, changing stations, toys, and room for your little one to wiggle. Additionally, the service is live-streamed into the Nursery so you can continue to worship with us!

THE OTHERS

Wednesday Lenten Bible Study at 10:30 am OR 7:00 pm

MORE
DETAILS TBA!

Join Pastor Kim Wednesdays in March to explore the other bible characters in the story of Jesus' last days & crucifixion.

3/1: Judas

3/8: Pontius Pilate

3/15: Simon of Cyrene

3/22: The Women

3/29: Snow Make-Up Date

Church Family Prayer Needs: Beverly Long, Caroline DeLong, Barbara Eck, George Unger, Barbara Weaknecht, Annabelle Solt, Ramona Romanik, Fern Fritz upon the death of sister, Joan Lehr



Serving Our Country: Zachary Rachor, Alexander Jenkins

Church Friends Prayer Needs: the Blue Family, the Harrison Family, Andreina Castillo, Charles B., Rebecca A., Wayne Ziegler

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

Teaching What We Believe



Longswamp Learning Center News...

Are you or someone you know looking for quality care and education for your children (infants - 5th grade)? Please contact Sharon Wetzel, the LLC Director, via email (sharon@longswamplearningcenter.com) or by calling the LLC office at 610-682-9750 to get more information about enrolling your child(ren) for the current school year.

December was very busy for all our classrooms!

The infants enjoyed exploring things that are cold. They played with ice cubes and painted their hands and made mittens that are displayed on the bulletin board in the classroom.

The young toddler classroom enjoyed learning about the holidays. They did many different hands-on activities like exploring our cocoa bags, crushing cookies, and crawling through our light tunnel. Coming up in January, we will be learning about the winter weather. We will also be learning about different arctic animals.

The older toddler classroom made decorations for the classroom. They talked a lot about trees and ways to decorate them. They used their fine muscles to decorate trees and sorted big and little trees. Candy canes provided them with many fun activities. They enjoyed pretending to make cookies and decorating them. They decorated gingerbread men and heard the story of The Gingerbread Man.



The preschool classroom decorated their classroom, put up a Christmas tree and decorated it with ornaments that they made with melted crayons. They decorated ugly sweaters, marble painted candy canes, made Christmas trees and wrote lists for Santa. In December they also had quite a few special days, such as peppermint day, cookies and cocoa, our Christmas program for families and a movie and pajamas day. On December 8th they went on a field trip to the Brandywine Community Library.

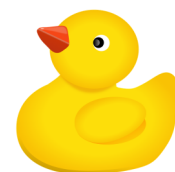
School-age was busy this whole month prepping for Christmas! Miss Sharon had the school-age students do a competition/challenge for her! They made Christmas programs for the younger groups, and as a class reward, she gave them an ice cream sundae treat for all their hard work! The TOP activity they enjoyed was the plastic cup ornaments! School-age had a blast with doing several Minute to Win it games too!



The center had a Little Caesars Pizza/Cookie Dough Fundraiser to support the Transportation Fund. We raised \$800! Thank you to all who bought pizza kits or cookie dough!

Coming up in January...

Friday, January 13th - Center wide celebration "Rubber Ducky Day"



Acting on Jesus' Teachings

SUPER BOWL OF CEREAL

to support the Brandywine Food Pantry



10 20 30 40 50 40 30 20 10
BETWEEN FEB 1ST & FEB 12TH
YOU CAN BRING IN BOXES OF CEREAL
(VARIETIES THAT KIDS LOVE) AND DROP
THEM OFF IN THE BELL ROOM. PUT YOUR
DONATION IN THE BOX OF THE TEAM
YOU THINK WILL WIN THE SUPER BOWL!

10 20 30 40 50 40 30 20 10



Thank you Notes...

Dear fellow Christians,

Thank you for my Christmas goodies and card. It was an overwhelming gift. I really appreciate all my church family. Thanks for prayers and loving thoughts.

In Christian Love to all, Ramona Romanik

Dear LUCC members,

I want to thank all of you for the beautiful cards I received for my 95th birthday on Monday, January 9, 2023. Also, thank you very much for the Christmas present that I received as one of LUCC's Senior Saints. It is great to belong to a caring church family.

In Christian love, Fern Shade

Dear Longswamp UCC Members,

Thank you for the wonderful gifts, snacks and health products that were in my Christmas gift bag! It was such a thoughtful and generous present. The card with many signatures and well wishes was quite lovely, too. A special thank you to the Steventon family for delivering it to my house! May God Bless each of you and keep you safe and healthy in 2023!

Sincerely, Robert Scheirer

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

LUCC's "Acting" Ministry Theme for 2023 - "LUCC - A Church Alive Makes Missions Thrive" Upcoming Missions in 2023

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

February - December 2023 (1st Sunday of each month) - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) -

Our Church's Wider Mission funds the work the UCC does in its Associations and Conferences, and in the national & global church. These funds are invested in programs, resources, and tools needed to keep local UCC churches strong, effective, and growing. Please use the first mission envelope for each month for your OCWM offering. (taken from <https://www.uccresources.com/products/our-churchs-wider-mission-ocwm-flyer>)

February - December 2023 - mission for the **Brandywine Food Pantry** - Please consider helping the in-need residents of BHASD by dropping off your donations of non-perishable food, personal care and household items, cleaning supplies, etc. on Sunday mornings, or during the week from 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM. Please put your donations in the appropriately marked tote box in the bell room.



Friends, when we attend worship or any event at our church, we hope to have our hearts and souls warmed by the Holy Spirit. We also have a right to expect that we will be warm in body in the sanctuary and other church facilities during the cold of winter. The sanctuary is heated by a propane boiler and electric split heat pump units. The other facilities are heated by oil-fired boilers. As I'm sure you are aware, the cost of heating oil, propane and electricity has risen substantially for this current heating season. Last year, the church budgeted \$2,700 for propane and \$8,415 for heating oil. For this year, the church has budgeted \$3,500 for propane and \$14,500 for heating oil. As you can see, this is a substantial increase year over year. These projections do not include the cost of electricity for the split heat pump units in the sanctuary. The Learning Center does share the cost of heating the Education Building which it primarily utilizes, but not all of the cost. Church leadership is asking for your assistance in helping to defray some of the energy costs needed to make our facilities a comfortable place to worship and meet. For the month of February, please use the February mission envelope in your envelope packets, envelopes in the pews or a plain envelope to make a monetary contribution. "Heat" should be written on any envelope you may use and include your name so you will receive credit for your giving. Your generosity will keep away the winter chill and be greatly appreciated.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings



Local Mission - January 2023 Backpack Buddies Program Brandywine Heights Elementary School

Our new missions theme, “**LUCC - A Church Alive Makes Missions Thrive**” was certainly a great choice for 2023 as we supported the Backpack Buddies Program at Brandywine Heights Elementary School in Tipton. A **HUGE “THANK YOU”** to our LUCC members who very generously donated a variety of specific individually wrapped/ packaged non-perishable food items, gift cards for Weis Markets, and/or gave monetary offerings which were then used to purchase more food and/or gift cards for the Backpack Buddies Program at our local elementary school. Some of our Longswamp Learning Center families and staff also participated in our January 2023 mission. LUCC definitely did our part to help the children in our community who are suffering from food insecurity because we know that hunger doesn't end on Fridays.



BRANDYWINE HEIGHTS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

200 West Weis Street, Tipton, PA 19562 | 610.682.5100 | bhasd.org

Dear Longswamp United Church of Christ Congregation,

1/19/2023

The Brandywine Heights Area High School life skills class is grateful to have the opportunity to support the Backpack Buddies initiative. Each week the high school class visits the elementary school to sort and organize the food pantry and then fill backpacks with enough food for a weekend. To fill the backpacks, students count the number of backpacks that are needed, pull that many items off the shelf and set up an assembly line. After the backpacks are filled, they are delivered to the elementary classrooms and sent home. There are currently 22 students that receive backpacks every week.

Finally, the high school class will take inventory of the food pantry and note any items that are low in supply. With your generous gift card and monetary donations, Miss McLean's class can shop for any food items that were not donated that month. While grocery shopping, the students are responsible for locating the items in the grocery store, comparing the store brand vs. name brand, and choosing the items with the best price. At the checkout, the students unload the shopping cart, put the items on the belt, bag the groceries, and use the gift cards and money to pay for them.

The high school class is truly involved with every step of the Backpack Buddies program- from inventory, creating a shopping list, shopping, checking out, restocking the pantry, filling, and delivering the backpacks. Each week these students get to practice real-world life skills while supporting such a beneficial program. We thank you for all your support to help us successfully implement this program.

Sincerely,

Samantha McLean
Special Education Teacher

Doug Felegy
School Counselor

Family & Community Updates

February Birthdays

Feb. 1 - Tina Carter
Feb. 2 - Gabriella Jenkins
Feb. 6 - William "Charlie" Lantz
Feb. 10 – Jenna Masenheimer
Feb. 11 – William Isamoyer
Feb. 12 – Sarah Reed
Feb. 15 – Christopher Ward, Paul Weller
Feb. 17 - Beverly Long
Feb. 19 - Robert Reidnauer
Feb. 21 - Jared Steventon
Feb. 23 – Tina Isamoyer, Patricia Kunkle
Feb. 26 – Joyce Isamoyer, Ann Miller

&

February Anniversaries

02/16/1968 Hope & Ron Delaco

*Let's
Celebrate*

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

Heavenly Notes Ministry

End of Year Update 2022

Heavenly Notes Ministry started in 2014. We are continuing our ministry by reaching out to congregation members and planting seeds of faith. Cards are sent each month to members of the LUCC Congregation and their families. We send cards to our members and their families going through a difficult time. We want to let them know the LUCC Congregation is thinking of them. Members of the Heavenly Notes Ministry send Get Well, Thinking of You Cards and Birthday Cards to congregation members who are on our Senior Saints List. We send cards to members on our monthly prayer list. Get Well or Thinking of you cards are sent to members of the congregation who are hospitalized or recovering from recent hospital stays. Sympathy cards are sent to members or families of the congregation who have suffered a recent loss. We appreciate the members of our LUCC Congregation who help to write and send cards and notes. Thanks to Dawn Strunk and our writers: Brenda Bower, Shirley Solt, and Karen Friedly. Thank you for sending out cards in a timely manner each month. In 2022 we sent **223** cards out to members of our congregation. If you have someone who would like to receive a card from Heavenly Notes Ministry please let Dawn Strunk know.

Heavenly Notes are enjoyed by everyone receiving them. We have received several nice cards and responses. We appreciate all donations for our ministry. For questions call: Karen Friedly at 610-682-9068 or email Karen at kafrd2@aol.com.

Family & Community Updates



THANK YOU, LONGSWAMP UCC for Bringing Joy to our Seniors!

Many thanks to the volunteers, donors, families, businesses, churches, and organizations who supported Phoebe's 2022 Giving Tree, also known as Operation Santa! Only through the generosity of others, were we able to ensure every resident at Phoebe had a wonderful holiday season that included 1,602 gifts delivered to residents by 11 Santas, as well as 21 parties, 48 sing-alongs, 37 holiday movies, 926 holiday meals, 47 craft projects, and religious services at each Phoebe Campus. We are grateful for your thoughtfulness and support of our seniors!



Twas just days after Christmas and all through our town
You could not see a tear or even a frown
On faces of Friend clients who received food, gifts, and cheer,
From the many donors and volunteers who spent hours this year,
Preparing gifts for the children to open Christmas day
And putting meals on the table..... the yummiest, some say!
So thank you, Santa's helpers, for being on call,
Your thoughtfulness is appreciated....Happy New Year to all!

2022 Friend, Inc. December Statistics

771 Pantry Individuals in 271 households - including 223 children receiving gifts in the Kutztown, Fleetwood and Brandywine Heights School districts

Dear Congregation,

Thank you for your donations of 10 Christmas gifts for children of our pantry clients. The generosity from your congregation helped to make this past Holiday season a little brighter for those in need.

From the clients, staff and Board of Friend, Inc. Community Services, we sincerely thank you and wish you a happy and healthy 2023!

Friend Inc. Christmas Cheer Program

It was a crisp, breezy night but there were many warm hearts as a group of Longswamp UCC volunteers headed to Friend Inc. on December 14, 2022. We had 3 members, Willard Miller, Derek & Dawn Strunk and 2 of their friends help to distribute holiday boxes and stock shelves. There were other volunteers there and everyone worked together to make sure the clients received their boxes and the shelves were filled for more clients to shop the next day.

Church Business

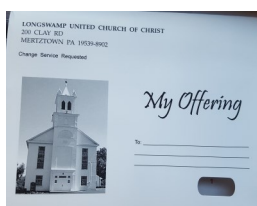
December 2022 Financial Information

Income and Expenses	
Member giving	\$ 7,836.37
Other income	\$ 9,130.75
Total income	\$ 16,967.12
Expenses	\$ (14,572.01)
Net income	\$ 2,395.11
Building Fund Expenses	\$ 15,765.14

Account Balances (as of 12/31/2022)	
General Fund Checking	\$ 69,157.75
Contingency Fund Checking	\$ 3,021.74
Memorial Fund Checking	\$ 15,606.43
Building Fund	\$ 6,695.76
Building Fund Checking	\$ 82.86

Notes from the Treasurer...

Included in member giving for missions are \$130 for Our Church's Wider Mission and \$130 for the Christmas Fund. Also included in member giving is \$55.57 for Radcliffe's receipts. Included in Other Income are the Learning Center facility use payment of \$2,245, \$600 from the Longswamp Township Historical Society for use of the Schubert Haus, \$1,983.75 for the cell tower lease and \$4,027 for Food Sale gross receipts. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$884.64 for electric service, \$320.50 for water treatment, testing and equipment maintenance, \$750 for cleaning services, \$1,310 for the monthly heating oil budget payment and the initial installment payment of \$12,500 for the new carpeting in the sanctuary and narthex.



2023 Offering Envelope Books

Offering envelope books for 2023 can be picked up in the Bell room. If you wish for them to be mailed, please call the church office. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Altar Flower and/or Bulletin Sponsors

Altar Flowers: \$40.00 Bulletins: \$10.00

Please call Dawn Strunk at the church office (610-682-6230) or sign up on the bulletin board located in the right side hallway when entering the front doors of the church if you would like to be a sponsor.

Longswamp Church

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

Our Newsletter

The Beacon

February 2023



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PLACE
STAMP
HERE