



Longswamp United Church of Christ

The Beacon

February 2026

Teaching, Sharing, and Acting on what we believe

*Worship:
Sundays @
10:15 am*

**200 Clay Road,
Mertztown, PA 19539**

www.longswampucc.org

**March Newsletter
Deadline: Tuesday,
February 17th**



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



Contact Us

Church Office: 610-682-6230

Monday-Friday

9:30am - 2:30pm

secretary@longswampucc.org

From the Pastor

Rev. Kimberly Berenotto



I wish I could come to you this month with a cheery message, but I'll be honest, I feel a little as if I've stumbled into 2026 and could use some comfort these cold winter weeks.

Many of our members have been walking difficult journeys right as the new year began – through illness, disease, grief, instability, and even death. I feel grateful each day for this calling to ministry and to be able to walk alongside folks going through some of the hardest moments of their lives. But it also felt inauthentic to write this month's article while ignoring the very real struggles so many of our church members and friends have faced in the last 4-6 weeks.

I've come across a scripture twice this month that isn't a part of my regular rotation and it's piqued my interest. In Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians (Chapter 1, Verses 3-4) he writes:

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

The scripture needs to be read more than once to not feel like a tongue twister, but it serves as a somewhat curious reminder – God comforts us so we can comfort others. Even in our difficult moments where we seek God's guidance and peace for ourselves, God is preparing us to return the comfort we are given to someone else in-need. God is compassionate to us, but compels our compassion toward others too.

The new year came barreling in with cold and snow and too many folks in our community walking a tough road. So, if 2026 finds you seeking comfort; you are in good company and God is ready to bestow you with peace that surpasses all understanding. But, if your footing feels a little more secure this year, perhaps it's your turn to take the comfort you've been blessed to receive in the past and BE the hands and heart of God, imparting that comfort on someone who needs it right now.

And maybe, this season, we all could use to allow ourselves space for comfort, compassion, and a little coziness too.

"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire..."

Edith Sitwell, British Poet 1887-1964



Sharing Our Faith



February 2026 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.

- February 1st**- Regular Worship - Glenn on Flute
- February 8th**- Rescheduled New Year's Wish, Boy and Girl Scout Sunday, Fellowship Time
- February 15th**- Holy Communion, Family Sunday, Welcoming New Members
- February 18th**- Ash Wednesday Service at 7PM
- February 22nd**- First Sunday of Lent
Unexpected Encounter: Jesus in the Wilderness

February Altar Flower Sponsors

- February 8th**- In honor of the Scout Troops, given by the Boy Scouts.
- February 22nd**- In loving memory of Brian Isamoyer, given by the Moser and Isamoyer Families



Transfiguration Sunday

When God's glory is fully revealed in Jesus Christ.

February 15th at 10:15am

- Welcoming of New Members
- Family Sunday
- Communion
- Fellowship Time



February Ministry Partners

Greeters

- Feb 1**- Chris Freudig
- Feb 8**- Theresa Haffner-Stearns
- Feb 15**- Vern Shade
- Feb 18 (7PM)**- Shirley Solt
- Feb 22**- Allison Isamoyer
Head Ushers
- Feb 1**- Chris Freudig
- Feb 8**- Theresa Haffner-Stearns
- Feb 15**- Vern Shade
- Feb 18 (7PM)**- Shirley Solt
- Feb 22**- Allison Isamoyer

Readers

- Feb 1**- Maggie Isamoyer
- Feb 8**- Boy & Girl Scouts
- Feb 15**- Kim Jenkins
- Feb 18 (7PM)**- Needed
- Feb 22**- Charlene Rachor

Ash Wednesday



Worship with Communion and Imposition of Ashes to begin the Lenten Season
February 18th
7:00 pm

Rescheduled Date!

Celebrate PA Dutch Heritage

at Longswamp United Church of Christ

Sunday February 8th, 2026



PA Dutch New Year's Wish

We kick off the day at 10:15 am in the Sanctuary for worship, featuring music from Mike & Linda Hertzog; including the traditional PA Dutch New Year's Wish.

Fellowship Time Featuring PA Dutch Treats

After worship (around 11:15 am) we will gather in the Preschool Room for a time of Fellowship and Food - including some favorite Pennsylvania Dutch goodies.



Scout Sunday
February 8th @ 10:15 am

Our church's Boy Scout & Girl Scout troops will join us; leading worship and updating the congregation on their events and activities.



UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS

LENT 2026

Join us each Sunday in Lent (2/22 through 3/29) as we discover the surprising ways Jesus meets and interacts with people throughout his ministry!

Encountering God for Ourselves

Lenten Study 2026

Feb. 25 & March 4, 18, & 25

10:30 am Sanctuary

7:00pm Fegely

Note, there is no gathering March 11th.

Join us Wednesdays in Lent as we learn about traditional and historic Christian Spiritual Practices. We'll give a try to Lectio Divina, The Daily Examen, The Book of Hours and more. Find out how Christians through the ages engaged with God and perhaps discover a new way for YOU to encounter God for yourself!



Leadership Updates



The ministry of the new Keystone Conference continues to take form in the new year! For more info about what the Keystone Conference is and what it means for our church - please read January's newsletter article about it!

The Keystone Conference has officially published their mission statement to help draw together the purpose and connection of all the UCC churches in Pennsylvania: "Trusting in God's Grace, the Keystone Conference proclaims the living Gospel of Jesus Christ; embodies the Holy Spirit's transforming Love in the World; and cultivates and strengthens unity across Local Churches, Associations, and the wider church for the flourishing of God's commonwealth."

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

LUCC's "Acting" Ministry Theme for 2026 "Doing God's Work in Today's World."



February-December 2026 - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)

Gifts from congregations like ours to OCWM Basic Support make it possible for our Conferences and the National Ministries to strengthen local churches and leaders and engage us in mission well beyond our community.

(taken from: <https://www.ucc.org/giving/ways-to-give/our-churhcs-wider-mission/>)



2026 Ongoing Mission for The Brandywine Food Pantry

Please consider helping the food-insecure residents of BHASD by dropping off your donations of non-perishable food items, personal care items, paper products, cleaning supplies, etc. Please put your donations in the appropriately marked wicker tote box in the bell room before or after our worship services on Sunday mornings, or during the week from 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM. Thank you so much to Nancy Snyder for delivering our donated items to the Brandywine Food Pantry.

We received a wonderful letter from Friend Inc. Community Services thanking us for our 20 gifts for the Children who utilize Friend Inc's services. Because of our help and help from the surrounding community, Friend Inc. was able to provide for 344 families in the Brandywine, Kutztown, and Fleetwood areas. This includes 979 individuals, of which 277 were children. Each of these families received a turkey and a holiday dinner box for both Thanksgiving and Christmas and were also able to select a variety of much-needed items such as personal care items, socks, and blankets. Go LUCC!

THANK YOU

Our new missions theme, “Doing God’s Work in Today’s World”, is certainly a great choice for 2026 as we kicked off the new year by supporting the Backpack Buddies Program at Brandywine Heights Elementary School in Topton. A HUGE “THANK YOU” to our LUCC members who very generously donated a variety of specific individually wrapped/packaged non-perishable food items and/or gave mission offerings which will be used to purchase more food and/or gift cards for the Backpack Buddies Program at our local elementary school. 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.

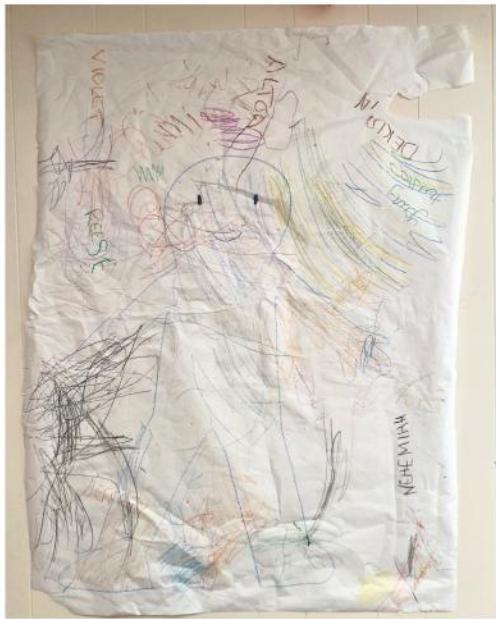
Continuing our January Mission

Because we had some church service cancellations, we wanted to allow more time for donations for our January Mission--Backpack Buddies-- to be brought in. Our January mission will be extended until February 7th. Please bring all donated goods or mission donations by then! A list of needed items can be found in the January newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact Jill Shade.

It's a Snow-Mergency! - February Mission

In February we turn inward for our monthly mission and look for the best way to support the continued ministry here at Longswamp UCC. Unfortunately, this winter has brought bitter cold temperatures and multiple snow storms (which have caused us to cancel worship). So, this month we are looking for contributions to help offset the cost of extra snow plowing, increased fuel and electric bills used for heating, and assistance “boosting” our plate offering after missing a few Sunday services. Check out the full list on our Snow-Mergency Fund Board in the Narthex to see how you can specifically contribute or call the church office with any questions.





Not much at LLC is new other than the fact that we've had a very cold and snowy winter! The hustle and bustle of the holidays is over and we're back to our normal routines. Each day, every class reads books, does fine motor activities, creates art, and tries as best they can to get their physical activity indoors. Sometimes this means running from one side of the room to the other or taking a walk around the building. When the weather is above freezing, they try to take the kids for a walk through the parking lot just to get some fresh air.

This month, we started a "Book of the Month," where one teacher chooses a book to read to each class and that class will then do activities based on the book. This month's book was chosen by Miss Maggie and was A Bad Case of Stripes by David Shannon. The children added rainbow colors to a paper person, played with "Stripes" (streamers), and the 1-2 year olds worked together to make a giant striped person. (left)

Children's CHURCH

There is something for kids and families every Sunday at Longswamp UCC!

On Sundays kids begin in worship and, after the Children's Message, head to our Sunday School program called Children's Church. Kids of all ages can join the teachers in the Preschool room for Bible Stories, crafts, games, and more. Kids are also always welcome to stay in worship with their families. .

Once a month, on Communion Sunday, we will have having Family Sundays! There will be no Children's Church, instead families can worship together. Plus, the children can more fully participate in communion.

Kids are always welcome in our PrayGround! We now have a special area for kids in the front left of the sanctuary to quietly play, learn, and participate in worship in ways that suit kids best! This area will have extra activities on Family Sundays, but will be available every Sunday for any kids who choose not to attend Children's Church. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Kim!



Family & Community Updates

In memory...

Andrew Toth, Jr.

July 20, 1955-January 14, 2026



Our hearts are with the Family and Friends of Andy Toth, who passed away at his home on January 14th. Andy was an avid golfer and enjoyed spending time with his family. Above all else, he was there for both his children and grandchildren. He is survived by wife, Kim, children, Stephanie & Bill Hapenovich, Briana & Adam Hapenovich, and Jared Toth & Anthony Toth. He also will be greatly missed by his grandchildren, Zoey, Willow, Lyla, and Cooper.

LUCC-

Thank you Pastor Kim for the nice visit from you. I enjoyed visiting with you and talking and praying with you!

Thank you so much for the planter and gift bag from my church family!

Hope everyone had a nice Holiday with family and friends!

God Bless Everyone,

Love, JoAnn Jones

In memory...

Helena K. Lindquist

October 24, 1943-January 22, 2026

It is with very heavy hearts that we announce the passing of longtime member, Helena Kathryn Lindquist. Born in 1943 in Rhode Island, Helena grew up in Maryland and eventually made her way here to PA. In her professional life, Helena was very accomplished in the banking industry, was an Executive Director for a start-up connecting businesses and school districts, and organized fundraising events. Helena was very involved in many of the activities here at Longswamp UCC since she joined in 2014. She served on the LLC board for a few years and painstakingly took notes at many of the meetings of the congregation. Helena also was very active in the Penn Northeast Conference of our UCC denomination, serving as the secretary for many years, travelling to the National Synod and acting as the liaison between Longswamp UCC and the happenings of the PNEC. Helena even wrote the LUCC monthly newsletter section under "Leadership." In her personal life, Helena always made time for her family, gardening, traveling, and expressing her creativity. Overall, she stood for kindness and love above all else.

She is survived by children Doug Lindquist (& Amanda) and Diane Carter (& Herb); grandchildren Jason Carter (& Amanda), Kallie Kistler (& Barron), and Andrew, Gabrielle, and Natalie Lindquist. She also had one great-grandson, Colten, and soon-to-be great grandson, Beau. Helena will be greatly missed.



Heavenly Notes 2025 Update

Heavenly Notes is LUCC's postcard ministry that was started in 2014. Currently, there are 3 writers for Heavenly Notes: Karen Friedly, Shirley Solt, and Brenda Bower. The writers send cards to each of the nine Senior Saints each month and also to anyone who is in the hospital, needs a cheer-up card, or has lost a loved one. This is a meaningful way to reach out to the Longswamp UCC Families and to stay connected with everyone. Thank you to all of our writers. In 2025, we sent out 125 cards!

February Birthdays

February 1- Tina Carter
February 2- Gabriella Jenkins, Chris Malewicz
February 6- Charlie Lantz
February 10- Jenna Masenheimer
February 12- Sarah Reed
February 14- Emma Shoemaker
February 15- Christopher Ward, Paul Weller
February 19- Robert Reidnauer
February 21- Jared Steventon
February 23- Tina Isamoyer, Patricia Kunkle
February 26- Ann Miller

February Anniversaries

February 16, 1968- Hope & Ron Deiaco

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!



Prayers Needed



Church Family Prayer Needs: George Unger, Ramona Romanik, Wilma Lease, Karen Friedly, Annabelle Weller, Doris Epting, Bob Fritz, Fern Fritz

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

Church Friends Prayer Needs: Martin Bilger, Family & Friends of Andy Toth, Barron Kistler, Family & Friends of Helena Lindquist, Family & Friends of Stanley Radcliffe, Jr.

Church Business

December 2025 Financials

Income and Expenses

Member Giving:	\$13,907.50
Other Income:	\$4,727.73
Total Giving:	\$18,635.23
Expenses:	\$19,261.42
Net Income (loss)	\$626.19
Memorial Fund Income:	\$0
Building Fund Expenses:	\$2,975.85

Account Balances as of 1/26/2026

General Fund Checking:	\$32,990.95
Contingency Fund Checking:	\$3,022.67
Memorial Fund Checking:	\$14,600.21
Building Fund:	\$2,990.24
Building Fund Checking:	\$69,109.25



Message from the Treasurer

Included in member giving for missions are \$95 for Our Church's Wider Mission, \$20 for the Phoebe Home gifts and \$5,571 for Internal Missions (Wish List.) Included in Other income is \$2,127.73 for the cell tower lease fee and \$2,600 for the Learning Center facility use fee.

Included in General Fund expenses is \$6,023.50 for the quarterly church insurance package premium. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$785 for heating oil, \$493 for cleaning services, \$403.88 for water testing, treatment, and equipment maintenance and \$1,293.97 for electric service.

Is your information up to date? Please let the Church office know if you'd like to be added to the email list or if you've had a change of address or phone number!

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@longswamplearningcenter.com

LLC Office - 610-682-9750

Church Board President - Vern Shade.....vern.shade@longswampucc.org

Maintenance Manager - Daniel Dolich.....daniel.dolich@longswampucc.org

Longswamp UCC

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

Our Newsletter

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