

THE LONGSWAMP UCC BEACON - SEPTEMBER 2022

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)

OCTOBER 2022 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, September 20th

Please have all articles to the church office.

In This Issue...

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

Church Staff

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pastorkim@longswampucc.org

610-401-1847

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From the Pastor

Rev. Kimberly Berenotto



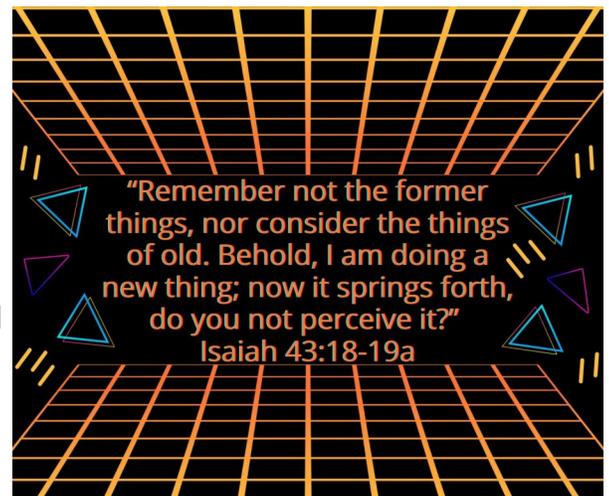
So why *Back to the Future*? Why take a 1985 science-fiction movie as the center-point of our Back to Church efforts for the month of September?

A simple answer: *Back to the Future* is an entertaining and beloved comedy film that combines science fiction with meaningful story-telling which has served as an enduring pop culture touchstone for many generations. If you haven't experienced *Back to the Future* (or need a reminder of the plot) it's the story of Marty McFly, a teen in the 1980s, who is unhappy with the life his family leads. His parents are miserable and his siblings are unsuccessful and Marty worries that he'll end up the same way. With the help of his friend, Doc Brown, Marty goes back in time to the 1950s, and, through some fun, antics, and a great movie soundtrack, Marty helps his teen parents. When Marty returns to the 1980s, his family is happier, confident, and more successful because of his efforts. And whether you've seen the movie or not you should certainly join us for our Outdoor Movie Night on Saturday Sept. 10th at 7:30 pm in the Pavilion/Grove.

I think there is much we can empathize with in Marty's story – wishing we could change things from our past, or even from the church's past. When Marty goes back to the 1950s, the time period is seen with a certain nostalgia, or rose colored-glasses. Life seems simpler, and a safe escape from the anxiety of living in modern America.

The church has the same tendency to look to the past with nostalgia and rose-colored glasses. Remember when the balcony was full? Remember when we had so many church dinners? Remember when our Sunday School program was full of kids? We are weary focusing on the challenges of living and ministering in our world today, when the past seemed so much easier. The problem is, we can't get in our time machine, make some adjustments in the past, and come back to a completely different world and church now. And the truth is, every generation has its challenges and downsides. We reminisce about the 1950s touting strong family values and communities – but know racism and sexism ran rampant. We look back to the 1980s when *Back to the Future* was released and long for the economic boom and expansion of new media – but know that crime and drug use was at an all-time high. And today, there are good things and bad things too.

We can't stay in the past, though. We can head back to church, back to Sunday School, and find our way back to God. We can hold fast to all the things that built our faith foundation. But all of that has to happen as we move to the future. I can't wait to see you in September as, together, we discover all the wonderful new things God is doing at Longswamp UCC: "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" – Isaiah 43:18-19a.



Sharing our Faith

September Worship 2022 ~ 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.



Sunday Sept 4th - BACK TO SCHOOL

Worship returns to 10:15 am this Sunday and we also begin our new Sunday School program. During worship we will celebrate the Longswamp Learning Center and do a Backpack Blessing! Anyone who has headed back to school is welcome to bring in their backpack to have it blessed for the year.

Sunday Sept 11th - BACK TO THE FUTURE

This week we will celebrate our church's history as well as where we are going! Worship will include some fun surprises, including a gift for grandparents to celebrate Grandparents Day. To keep with our Back to the Future theme we will also be hosting a Movie Night the previous evening on Saturday Sept 10th at 7:30 pm in the Pavilion/Grove. Free popcorn! Families can bring drinks, snacks, chairs & blankets

Sunday Sept 18th - BACK TO OURSELVES

Join us for communion and as we take time during worship to discover who we each are as individual followers of Christ.

Sunday Sept 25th - BACK TO NATURE

This Sunday we will worship outside in our pavilion/grove and share in a blessing of the animals. Your pets are welcome to come along for worship and to be blessed.

Mini- Congregational Meeting Sunday October 2nd after worship

Please plan to attend an important Congregational Meeting on Sunday October 2nd after the 10:15 am worship service. We would like to discuss replacement of the sanctuary carpeting and the quotes we have received. Since we need congregational approval when we plan to spend over \$15,000, we need your input. In the event you cannot make an in person visit to church to be at this meeting, you can dial in to a conference call to hear the details live and respond live as well. Please call the church office for more information on this option. Other property and church updates will also be given at this meeting.

Sharing our Faith & Teaching



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!



Sunday School is BACK at Longswamp UCC!

We begin our new Children's Ministry program called God's Explorers on Sunday September 4th. Kids will begin in worship at 10:15 am and after the Children's Message parents will sign-in their kid's with the God's Explorers Guide. The kids and guides will then head downstairs for games, crafts, stories, and more (parents can choose to stay in worship or attend Sunday School with their child). Parents will sign-out and pick-up their kids in Fegely Hall after worship has ended (usually around 11:15 am).

A short registration form can be found on our website, or you can just fill it out in-person any Sunday. If you are interested in volunteering as a God's Explorers Guide please speak with Pastor Kim or sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

We can't wait to learn what it means to be part of God's Family as we grow, proclaim, and serve together.

Leadership Updates



NEWS

The Conference Board met in late July and addressed the following issues:

The Treasurer summarized the activity of both May and June, saying the financial picture was the most positive it has been since he has been in the position. OCWM giving is currently at 146% of the same point in 2021 due to the combination of a \$50,000 bequest from the estate of a long-time volunteer at the Conference and a donation that came about from a portion of the assets resulting from the dissolution of Hope UCC in Allentown. He reported that the process to develop the 2023 operating budget would begin soon. Another issue he raised was that he and Bonnie Bates are the only two authorized signers on PNEC's accounts. Ordinarily, this is no problem but, looking ahead to her planned sabbatical at the beginning of 2023, additional signers would be prudent. Adding Lori Balliet, Asst. Moderator and Helena Lindquist, Secretary as signers was suggested, and they were approved.

Meeting dates for the Board and Executive Committee were approved for early 2023 and the newer members of the Board were assigned to Teams and Committees.

Board Subgroup Updates

Program Evaluation - The surveys regarding PNEC program performance are prepared and ready to be distributed. Results are anticipated in time for the September Board meeting.

Wider Church – Bonnie Bates listed several recent meetings with other faith-based and community groups such as the Lehigh Conference of Churches, the Interfaith Action Committee and Touchstone Theatre and their affiliates, who are already planning for the October Festival Unbound celebration of Lehigh Valley diversity through art and civic dialogue.

Generosity Team – Kathryn Foster reported that the team has been brainstorming new ideas to reactivate the Friends of the Conference campaign. The first will be to identify a member within as many congregations as possible to serve as a PNEC Ambassador. This individual will be asked to convey messages about the many services the Conference makes available to member congregations through announcements four to six times a year. The other idea is to designate a PNEC Sunday on Nov. 20, 2022, when we would celebrate the covenant the Conference has with each member church, and it will promote the idea of every individual in each congregation contributing one dollar to support the Conference.

Governance and Ministry Implementation – Helena reported that the team needs to begin their annual process of surveying Teams and Committees within the PNEC to learn if the Governance and Ministry system of organization is still meeting their needs, or if they can suggest improvements.

Leadership Updates

Conference News Continued...

Discernment and Visioning – Bonnie Bates explained that this group will explore larger, critical issues in PNEC's future to make recommendations to the Board on decisions that must be made. Issues include who we should partner with to further our objectives, what should we do with the building in Palmerton, how do we plan for succession for staff members, etc. Meanwhile, the four PA Conference Ministers have begun to discuss separately whether this would be a good time to consider merging all four conferences into one Pennsylvania UCC Conference. It was thought that these two groups might be exploring some of the same issues and seeking answers to similar questions. Also, the four conferences group (known as the Keystone Team) could apply for a supporting grant that would financially support their study efforts under the guidance of a coach/facilitator. Ultimately, it was decided to have some individuals serve on both groups to avoid duplication in research and planning, and the Keystone Team should proceed with the grant application.

Conference Meeting Planning Team – The Fall Conference meeting will take place on November 5, 2022, at Forks UCC in Stockertown. The program will focus on the ecumenical research and writing being done by pastors and educators across faith views on the participation of the Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z population.

Other/New Business

One request that came from an earlier report of the Authorization Working Group was a statement of support from the Board for the continuing education requirements for authorized ministers. Statement wording was suggested and ultimately was approved.

A more recent request from this group was consideration for initiating a community of practice to support Members in Discernment studying for ordination. This began an in-depth discussion about all the factors it would take to establish such a practical, educational support for these candidates. A plan was developed to outline the specifics, cover the cost, and put the community of practice in place. This information was communicated to the Authorized Working Group of the Committee on Ministry.

If you have any questions regarding the activities at the PNEC, please feel free to contact Helena Lindquist at hklindquist@ptd.net.



CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Monday, September 5th

For non-emergency messages, please leave a message on the church answering machine. For pastoral emergencies, please leave a message on Pastor Kim's voicemail 610-401-1847.

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.

Way to go, LLC! The center collected over 55 boxes of cereal for the Brandywine Food Pantry!

The Infant classroom is saying goodbye to Miss Taylor. She will be greatly missed, but we wish her well as she returns to completing her Master's program at BHES this semester.

The Young Toddler classroom was celebrating the beach and the ocean! They colored fish and also large palm leaves! The children loved sampling the Kona ice as a special treat during Hawaiian Day!

The Older Toddler classroom was busy with bubbles! They read books about bubbles, painted with bubble wrap, and loved popping bubbles! Bubble wands were made with pipe cleaners in the shape of a square. The children were able to see that even though the wand was square, the bubbles still came out in a circle shape!

The Older Toddlers also had fun on Hawaiian Day! They got dressed up in grass skirts and wore leis around their necks as they danced to Hawaiian music!

During water play, the children cooled off by running through a really neat dinosaur sprinkler!

Preschool had lots of fun learning about the beach! They looked at several different kinds of sea-shells using magnifying glasses. During art time, they painted using sand rakes! They even had the opportunity to taste salt water taffy thanks to one of our families!

The preschoolers also enjoyed ice cream week. In the dramatic play center, they played in the ice cream shop, had "dippin dots" in the sensory table, counted ice cream scoops, played a matching game with letter scoops and cones, and best of all, enjoyed ice cream for a snack!

The Summer Campers were busy using their "Imagination" during Beach Week! They did many art projects related to the beach and also ocean creatures. The campers enjoyed two days of water play and loved when the Kona Ice truck came for a visit!

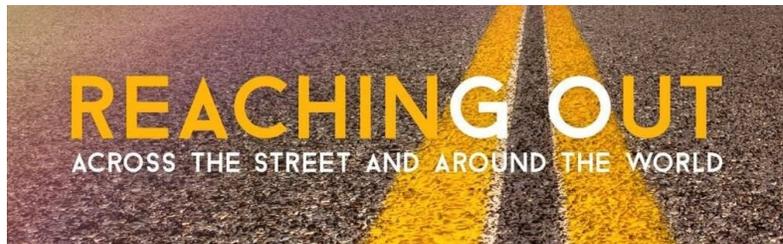
They took a field trip to Imagi-Nation in Allentown! It is an interactive educational experience where kids can role-play over 40 different careers! The campers role played in a grocery store, hair salon, animal care center, restaurant, fire station, construction zone, and more! They even got to make slime at the Creation Station!

The entire center enjoyed the "carnival" put together by the SAC students! They did an amazing job putting together games and activities for the younger students to enjoy! It was a beautiful, sunny day for our carnival and the children played games such as Pong Toss, a Shooting Gallery, Fish Bowl Toss, Bucket Ball, Duck Pond, and more! The SAC students even had a face painting station set up!

Summer has been so much fun for all the children at LLC!

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

LUCC's "Acting" Ministry Theme for 2022 -



Upcoming Missions in 2022

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

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

Basic Support - *What is Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basis Support?* OCWM is the name we give to congregational gifts that support wider UCC ministry in the national and global setting as well as in the Conference setting. The United Church of Christ emphasizes God's continuing testament in the world, the extravagant welcome of our churches, and changing lives. The ideal way to have the most impact is for UCC settings to all work together. Your gifts to OCWM help the UCC spread God's love to more people in more places than any one of us can do alone.

(taken from <https://psec.org/missions-ministries/ocwmfinancial/>)

September - December 2022 - ongoing mission for the benefit of **Brandywine Food Pantry** - Please consider donating items (non-perishable food items, personal care items, household items, cleaning supplies, etc). that the in-need people of our community can always use. Your donations can be dropped off on Sunday mornings before or after the worship service 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.

October 2022 - Local Mission - Friend, Inc. - Friend, Inc. Community Services is a not-for-profit, multi-service agency that supports the well-being of families and individuals in need, and is committed to strengthening the lives of those living in Northeastern Berks County. Rural communities are no strangers to food insecurity. Each month over 500 individuals have their food needs supplemented through the Noble Street Pantry (at Friend, Inc.'s headquarters outside of Kutztown). Between 8,000 and 10,000 pounds of food are distributed monthly through the Pantry; food that our families get to choose as they shop their way through the aisles.

(parts taken from <https://www.friendinc.org/> and <https://www.friendinc.org/food-pantry/>)

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

Neighbors in Need Offering National Mission - September 2022



Please consider helping LUCC as we reach out across the United States by contributing to the **Neighbors in Need** (NIN) offering. The NIN is a special offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

In 2022, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" offering focuses on economic justice. With inflation impacting all of our households, the national United Church of Christ wanted to provide a way to discuss this through a faith lens. One-third of our Neighbors in Need offerings, which will be sent to Penn Northeast Conference, supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of the NIN offering are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Our **Neighbors in Need (NIN) offerings** will be collected from Sunday, September 11 through Sunday, October 2, 2022 (World Communion Sunday). Please put your Neighbors in Need offering in your September mission envelope (dated Sunday, September 18) and then deposit it in the offering basket at our Sunday morning services or the locked offering box in the bell room. Also, please feel free to mail your September mission envelope to the church office.

(Parts of this article taken from <https://www.ucc.org/neighbors-in-need-special-mission-offering/>.)



Bethany Children's Home Update Local Mission - July 2022

This mission, (July 10 - 31), was to provide a variety of items requested by the youth and staff at Bethany Children's Home in Womelsdorf. We collected a total of \$235 in mission offerings from our members. With the generous donations from and purchases made by our LUCC members, we were able to provide the following items for Bethany Children's Home; a 10' x 10' pop-up canopy tent, an electric roaster oven, two fishing rods, two tie-dye party kits, acrylic paints (24 small bottles), twenty-four 8" x 10" canvas panel boards, pajamas, and athletic socks. Also, the offerings, which totaled \$510.00, from Pastor Kim's Installation Service and were designated for LUCC's July mission. Therefore, a check in the amount of \$510.00 was sent to Bethany Children's Home in early July.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings



Food Pantry at Brandywine Heights Intermediate and Middle Schools Local Mission - August 2022

A HUGE "THANK YOU" to our Lucc members who donated various grab-and-go items (fruit snacks, chewy granola bars, cracker sandwiches, and fruit cups) and/or gave a monetary offering for the benefit of the **Food Pantry at Brandywine Heights Intermediate and Middle Schools**. Our donations will directly benefit food-insecure students in grades 4-8. These students are able to get a healthy snack to help them get through the school day. Lucc's donations, which were donated and/or purchased with our mission offerings, were delivered to the Intermediate and Middle schools several days prior to the beginning of the 2022 - 2023 school year in mid-August. More donations of healthy snacks will be delivered to the two local schools in September.



Your Church Needs YOU!

Serve your church! We can always use volunteers to greet on Sundays, to read in worship, to usher, or to learn one of the many behind the scenes tasks that keeps Longswamp UCC going each week. Speak with Pastor Kim if you'd like to be more involved!

Choir Practice Begins!

Our Loft Choir will start singing for you on September 18! The Choir will rehearse on Mondays from 7:00 - 8:30 P.M. The first rehearsal will be on Monday, September 12th! Why not join us? We are always looking for new members!



Thank you Notes...

Dear members of Longswamp UCC,

Words alone cannot express our sincere gratitude to Pastor Kim and our fellow members for your continued support as we grieve the passing of my mother, Violet M. (Hixson) Schaeffer. Your cards, phone calls, and texts mean so much to us. We're so fortunate to be a part of Lucc's very caring and supportive congregation. God bless each and every one of you!

Jill (Schaeffer) and Vern Shade

Family & Community Updates



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Free Outdoor Movie Night

**Saturday
Sept. 10th
7:30 pm**

Longswamp UCC's Pavilion/Grove

Free popcorn!
Families can bring drinks, snacks, chairs, and blankets.



Volunteer Reading Tutors needed for Ready.Set.READ! Program

Help make a difference in a child's life! Volunteers are needed to tutor students at the District-Topton Elementary School on Wednesdays from 3:30 – 4:20 PM during the 2022-2023 school year.

No previous teaching experience is required. This opportunity is for anyone interested in volunteering 1 hour each week from October through May. Current background clearances are required and training is provided.

Please contact Darby Wiekrykas at United Way 610-685-4574 or darbyw@uwberks.org.



CANDY CARNIVAL

We need YOUR HELP at the **Topton Block Party**. Along with other area churches we'll be providing fun and fellowship to the the community. Longswamp UCC will be setting up a Candy Carnival with, what else, games and candy!

We need volunteers **Sat. Sept. 17th between 3pm and 7:30pm** for set up/clean up & running the booth.

Plus we need CANDY DONATIONS!

Contact Pastor Kim to help out!

Family & Community Updates

SEPTEMBER Birthdays

- 2 Annabelle Solt, Kelli DeIaco
- 6 Pastor Kim Berenotto
- 9 Kaitlynn Steventon
- 11 Kevin Shoemaker
- 12 Karen Friedly
- 13 Aaron Hengst
- 15 Laurie Heagy
- 16 Cindy Masenheimer, Nicholas Strunk
- 23 Rita Walbert
- 26 Matthew Masenheimer, Geraldine Stoudt
- 28 Richard Rachor, Jr.

SEPTEMBER Anniversaries

Sept. 23, 2000 Beverly & Timothy Long

*Let's
Celebrate*

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 Family Prayer Needs: Beverly Long,
Judy Sechler, Barbara Eck, Wilma "Skip" Lease

Serving Our Country: Zachary Rachor, Alexander Jenkins

Church Friends Prayer Needs: Robert Freudig, Betty H.

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

In Sympathy...

Harold J. "Sugar" Dankel, 95, of Alburtis, passed away on Saturday, July 30, 2022. He was the husband of the late Lorraine E. (Moyer) Dankel to whom he was married for 49 years before her death in 1999. Born in Emmaus, he was a son of the late Llewellyn E. and Stella T. (Moyer) Dankel. He graduated from Emmaus High School and served in the U.S. Army during WWII. Harold was employed by the former General Electric for many years as a Quality Control Inspector. He was a member of the Emmaus Historical Society and Boy Scoutmaster for Troop #86 in Alburtis for 11 years. He was a member of Longswamp United Church of Christ and served as an elder since 1987. Survivors: son Frederick K. Dankel and wife Lily; two grandchildren, Ryan and wife, Brittany; Scott and wife, Jaclyn; four great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by a brother, Paul and sisters, Helen Nonnemacher, Mabel Kern and Arlene Dankel. Services were held on Wednesday, August 3, 2022 at Longswamp United Church of Christ. He is missed.

Please keep Sugar's family in your thoughts and prayers.

Church Business

July 2022 Financial Information

Income and Expenses	
Member giving	\$ 5,548.77
Other income	\$ 4,228.75
Total income	\$ 9,777.52
Expenses	\$ (16,524.92)
Net income (loss)	\$ 6,747.40
Building Fund Expenses	\$ 2,296.00

Account Balances (as of 7/31/2022)	
General Fund Checking	\$ 82,165.78
Contingency Fund Checking	\$ 3,021.58
Memorial Fund Checking	\$ 14,870.77
Building Fund	\$ 7,040.66
Building Fund Checking	\$ 27,309.74

Notes from the Treasurer...

Included in member giving for missions are \$100 for Our Church's Wider Mission, \$250 for a UCC grant for the Welcome Backpacks mission, \$185 for the Bethany Children's Home and \$1,100 for the Ukrainian Family. Included in Other Income are the Learning Center facility use payment of \$2,245 and \$1,983.75 for the cell tower lease. Included in Building Fund expenses are \$796 for water treatment, testing and equipment maintenance, \$750 for cleaning services and \$750 for mowing and trimming.

Longswamp Union Cemetery Association Update

from Eloise Long

Board of Trustees:

St. Paul: **Carl Meck**, President, **Joseph Dragovits**, **Vacancy** (replace Delores "Tootie" Hellwig)
Longswamp: **Tim Long**, Vice President, **Charlene Rachor**, **Eloise Long**

Rates for 2022:

Burial: \$975 + \$65 service charge for Esterly Burial

Cremation: \$500

Grave: \$900 – 1 burial or two cremations

History:

Nov. 25, 1924 – Longswamp Union Cemetery Company was incorporated

Dec. 27, 1964 – 8.902 acres from Longswamp UCC and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran to Longswamp Cemetery Association (current cemetery)

Aug. 18, 1977- 12.152 acres from Longswamp UCC to Longswamp Union Cemetery (former school property) Property class: farm

Longswamp Church

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

Our Newsletter

The Beacon

September 2022

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE