

Happy New Year!

May the Lord make the New Year a happy one...

Not by shielding us from sorrow and pain but by
strengthening us to bear it if it comes.

Not by making our path easy but by making us sturdy
enough to tread any path.

Not by taking hardship from us but by taking all
cowardice and fear from our hearts,
as we face hardships together.

Not by granting us unbroken sunshine but by keeping our
faces bright even in the shadows.

Not by making our life always pleasant but by showing us
where the world needs us most and giving us means and
opportunity to be there and to help...

Amen.

UPCOMING AT UCCG:

Please plan to attend this special meeting for Greenawalds!



TWO LENTEN STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

#1

Our *Faith Club* Small Group Discussion will begin a book discussion for Lent. We welcome all who are interested to read along. If you would like to join a discussion group but cannot attend Wednesdays at 10:30am, please sign up in the lobby for an alternative time.

Book Title: *Traveling Mercies; Some Thoughts on Faith*

Author: Anne Lamott

Summary: *Traveling Mercies* is a collection of autobiographical essays by Anne Lamott in which she explores her life without God, her road to faith, and her continuing struggle to live a life worthy of the beliefs she holds.

Six Week Study: Weeks of February 18 through March 24th

#2

The four UCC Conferences in Pennsylvania have been exploring the idea of becoming one conference instead of four. A "Conference" is not the staff. It is not even the pastors. A Conference is the churches and all of their members - and that is YOU.

Members from all four conferences have been meeting for over a year now in a group called "The Keystone Working Group." The first question they asked was WHY is this being discussed. Here is the answer, and the new tagline for us, should we combine:

Together We Are Stronger, The Keystone Conference.

Task Groups from the Working Group continue to study future issues related to :

- Finance
- Governance
- Legal Issues
- Approval Process
- Staffing Needs

In the meantime, one thing we can do as congregation members is to participate in the upcoming Lenten Study to meet others around the state and learn more about ourselves, our faith, our past and our future - together.



4 Conference Lenten Study Looking Back to Look Forward

The Penn West, Penn Central, Penn Northeast and Penn Southeast Conferences of the United Church of Christ cordially invite you to participate in this virtual Lenten opportunity! Meeting each Wednesday in Lent, this Bible Study explores the foundations of our identity as Christians and members of the UCC as we explore what the future may hold! Each week is unique so if you cannot attend every date you can still participate in as many as you are able. **If you have any questions, or you would like to participate in this study, please email patty@pnec.org to receive the link.** Thank you!

February 21: Unity and Foundation

February 28: United Church of Christ

March 6: Lent in Context

March 13: The Priesthood of All Believers

March 20: Communion

There will be a sign up sheet in our lobby for those from UCCG who are interested in participating. We will register you with the conference office.

The zoom meeting will take place the above Wednesdays at 7:00 pm.

A Charlie Brown Christmas

On Sunday, December 17, the children of UCCG presented *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. They did an amazing job singing, narrating and acting their parts. Here are a few pictures. Thank you to Ashley Adams, Dave and Karen Adams, Pastor Janet, and Anthony for sharing their time and talents to make this show possible.



Ant's Corner



Just Don't Do It!

Happy New Year! My family is excited to report that our house should be (mostly) ready for move-in by mid-to-late January.

For those of you who don't already know, our fire was caused by a poorly-manufactured lithium-ion battery (or Li-ion). The invention and commercialization of Li-ion batteries are considered to have had one of the largest societal impacts in human history among all technologies, as recognized by the *2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry*. We all have them and use them.

So, what went wrong for us? What can we do to prevent this from ever happening to any one of us?

Li-ion batteries stand out as the most efficient and effective rechargeable technology, residing in our laptops, tablets, cell phones, power tools, and more. While they perform admirably, replacing them or securing a spare can be a pricey affair.

The market offers a plethora of off-brand Li-ion batteries, notably from China, enticing consumers with significantly lower prices. However, the allure of cost savings comes with potential risks—risks that we, unfortunately, experienced firsthand. My advice - **JUST DON'T DO IT!**

Reputable manufacturers, the ones responsible for your personal electronics, adhere to stringent safety measures to prevent Li-ion batteries from overheating. Notably, these manufacturers are implementing electronic-encoding procedures to make off-brand batteries incompatible with their products. While skepticism might suggest this is a ploy to boost their sales, it's primarily a safety measure for consumers.

Ensure you stick with the original manufacturer's battery. As a golden rule, steer clear of electronic products lacking the UL (Underwriters Laboratory) label. This fundamental principle, ingrained in our memories from elementary school, is a reliable guide to product safety and quality.

As we embark on the new year, let's prioritize safety and opt for the reliability of original manufacturer batteries, steering clear of potential hazards associated with cheaper alternatives. Wishing you all a safe and prosperous New Year!



Our special music services are made possible through contributions to our SPECIAL MUSIC FUND.



Thank you for your continuous and generous support of the amazing music at UCCG!

Please use a pew envelope and indicate "special music." Memo all checks the same. You can donate anytime by dropping it in the offering plate but on days when we have a guest artist there will be a basket at the entrance of the sanctuary.



If you have a prayer request and any updates, please contact Sue Borger or Pastor Janet.

ALWAYS REMEMBERING OUR HOMEBOUND FAMILY AS WELL:

Eleanor Limpar, at home
Mae Moyer (Fellowship Manor - Room 324A)
Doris Shaver (Phoebe - Room T313A)

Naomi Thomas, at home
Lois Tice, at home
Geri Yarnall (Phoebe - Room T311B)

THANK YOU!

From Charlie Roeder ... for the prayers, calls and cards while he is recuperating. The pain and swelling in Charlie's leg (caused by the blood clot) has now lessened to the point Charlie is able to walk with a cane.



Congratulations to Linda Altrichter on the birth of her first grandson, Malakai Joshua Altrichter. Malakai, who was born on Christmas Eve, is the first child for Linda's son, Gregory and his wife, April. Congratulations to all!

2024 Sign-Up sheets for *Echoes*, bulletins and clip-art flowers are now available on the ledge in the lobby. You can also sign up to serve as a greeter, fellowship time host, reader, acolyte and offering counter. Please pick your dates now. You may also call Sue Borger to sign-up (484-695-7954).

NURSERY SCHOOL UPDATE: *Nursery School office can be reached at 610-435-5467.

Our Nursery School students returned from winter break on January 2.

We continue with two low maintenance fundraisers - collecting used clothing, bedding, shoes, purses and towels, etc. Last year we received a check for \$716.76 for this collection! We are also collecting soft plastics to earn our own Trex bench for the playground! Collection bins are located in the Christian Ed entrance and in the narthex/lobby for you. To date, we have collected 575 pounds of the 1,000 pounds needed to earn a bench (this year, the Trex people have upped the amount of plastic needed to earn a bench). Please keep collecting those soft plastics.

As this edition of *Echoes* goes to print we are still organizing our next fundraiser. We will update you in Weekly Words when it's finalized. Thank you.

Finally, we continue the Weis for Schools Rewards Program (contact Sheri Stephens for more information on this program).

As always we are truly grateful for the support to our school from our church members. ♥

Reminder: UCCG Small Group Dining

The 2024 Small Group Dining experience will start up in February with new groups of 6-8 members meeting to share fun, fellowship, some intriguing discussions, and many laughs. Last year we had over 30 participants. Members are assigned a group and try to meet monthly (if possible) to share a meal and get to know each other on a different level. Gatherings can be anytime of day, any day of the week at the group's discretion. In the past we have had groups meet for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Some even met at members' homes. If you would like more information or want to sign up to join in on the fun for the next go-round, please call or text Karen at 610 703-6826 or email at kgriff5@ptd.net. Deadline to sign up is January 15.

DISCOVERY PROJECT UPDATE

Due to a power outage, our hearing in the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas (which was scheduled for Thursday, December 21) was postponed. We will keep you informed when we have a new date.. There will be no testifying or arguments. The judge will review the transcripts and briefs presented by SWT zoning and UCCG and make his decision based on this information.

Karen Griffith

O.M.G.!!

Outreach + Mission = GROWTH

OMG's MISSION FOCUS FOR 2024



CLUBHOUSE

of Lehigh County

A Program of Goodwill Keystone Area

Each year, OMG selects an organization to be the recipient of 10% of profits from the year's fundraisers. In 2023, Community Bike Works (Madison Street, Allentown) received \$495.77.

We have selected the Clubhouse of Lehigh County, Allentown, as our 2024 mission recipient. The Clubhouse model embodies the belief that persons with mental illness can be productive and successful in both the workplace and their personal lives. It's a community intentionally organized to support individuals living with the effects of mental illness. Through participation in a Clubhouse, people are given the opportunities to rejoin the worlds of friendships, family, important work, employment, education, and to access the services and support they may individually need. A Clubhouse is a restorative environment for people who have had their lives drastically disrupted and need the support of others who believe that recovery from mental illness is possible for all.

Some time soon, a representative from the Clubhouse of Lehigh County will provide a Mission Moment during morning worship.

CHRISTMAS MISSION FOCUS - BETHANY CHILDREN'S HOME

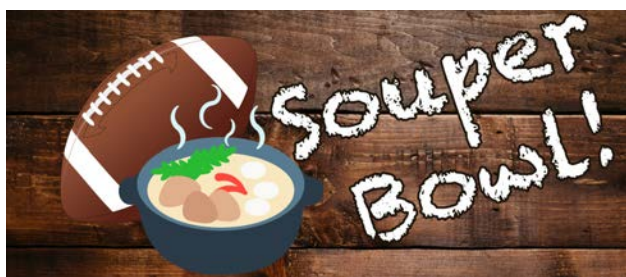


THANK YOU for your generous Christmas donations to residents of Bethany Children's Home. Basketballs, board games, clothing, toiletries and MANY gift cards were delivered on 12/18/23!

LITTLE FREE PANTRY



Our Little Free Pantry continues to see increased usage. We are in need of **CANNED MEATS** and **SPAGHETTI SAUCE**. As always your support of this important ministry is very much appreciated!



SOUPER BOWL

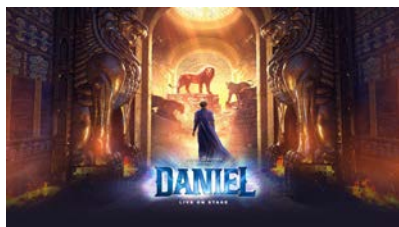
On Sunday, February 4, and Sunday, February 11, we will again have the opportunity to 'vote' for our favorite team by bringing cans of soup and placing them in the box in the narthex/lobby labeled with the TBD teams. On Sunday, February 11, you are invited to support your favorite team by wearing

your team's colors! Regardless of who wins Super Bowl LVIII, the Ecumenical Food Bank will be the big winner when all soup donations are delivered to them! Thank you!



LADIES IN FAITH TOGETHER

A limited number of seats have been reserved for "Daniel" at Sight & Sound Theater, Lancaster. Adult: \$75.00 pp; Child (age 3-12): \$42 pp



Contact Sandy Lakatos, 610.570.3421 or sjlakatos@rcn.com, to make a reservation. A minimum of \$25 pp is required to hold your reservation. Balance is due by Sunday, March 17, 2024. Checks should be payable to Sandy Lakatos. This is not limited to LIFT members; invite your friends and family, too!

Note that you will be responsible for your own transportation to the theater. Carpooling is encouraged.

Our LIFT Group (Ladies in Faith Together) was created a few years ago. **If you are interested in getting emails about LIFT, please contact the church office!**



Our next host week is May 26 to June 2, 2024 (due to the increased number of host churches, we'll only be hosting two times in 2024). Our other week is December 15 to 22, 2024. There are currently three families in the program - Natasha and Josiah, Thamira and Ezekiel, and Nemesis, Uziah, Yeshua and Zion.

Upcoming events for Family Promise:

- Designer Purse Bingo - January 20, 2024 - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at Jordan United Church of Christ. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door (for 20 games); \$5 for 5 special games.
 - For tickets or if anyone would like to donate a designer purse or donate a monetary amount toward a designer purse, please contact Sue Roth at 610-554-2781.
- Homecoming '24 – March 23, 2024 @ The Club at Twin Lakes.
 - The Homecoming is Family Promise's main fundraiser which helps them to provide prevention funding, coordination of shelter programs and case management services for area families experiencing or about to experience homelessness. Our goal is to raise awareness and support for a growing homeless crisis, celebrate our many accomplishments and thank our volunteers and community of friends for their tireless service to area families in crisis.
 - **The Homecoming Event will be held on Saturday, March 23, 2024, at the Club at Twin Lakes and includes a gathering of our Family Promise community of friends, volunteers, and area businesses for an evening that features dinner, entertainment, stories of hope, and a high-end auction to support our mission.**
 - We are asking for our congregations to support this event by attending the event and donating two gift baskets and gift cards for the auction. We are offering "early bird" congregation pricing for a limited time of \$1,000 for a table of ten or \$800 for a table of eight. That is \$100 per ticket. Same as last year. After that, prices will go up to \$1,250 for a table of ten and \$150 for individual tickets. The early bird pricing offers a great opportunity that will allow all of our wonderful volunteers to enjoy this event and support our mission. **The Early Bird Congregation Special pricing will run from January 6 to January 20, 2024.**
 - Those interested in taking advantage of the "early bird" pricing are asked to call Sue Roth ASAP to let her know (610-554-2781).

Bus Drivers Needed:

Family Promise continues to be on the lookout for bus drivers to help transport our families in the 14-passenger van/bus. You do not need any special license. Families are picked up at the congregations at 6:00 am and at the Day Center at 6:00 pm, except Saturday and Sunday mornings, with pick-up at 7:00 am. Congregations are within a 30-minute drive of the Day Center ... some just minutes away. If you can sign up for one or two shifts per week, please contact Rosalyn at director@fplehighvalley.org. Thank you.



HOME-MADE SOUP SALE

Sunday, February 11, 2024

Soup's On! We're making more of your favorite soups! Proceeds will go toward UCCG's heating oil bill, with 10% of the proceeds being donated to Clubhouse of Lehigh County, Allentown.

	# of <u>Quarts</u>
Split Pea w/Ham Soup	_____ x \$10.00 each = \$ _____
Chicken Corn Chowder	_____ x \$12.00 each = \$ _____
Vegetable w/Beef Soup	_____ x \$12.00 each = \$ _____
TOTAL	_____ Quarts = \$ _____

Orders must be received by UCC Greenawalds **no later than Sunday, February 4, 2024**. Place order forms in the offering plate or mail them to the church:

Soup Sale
U.C.C. Greenawalds
2325 Albright Avenue
Allentown PA 18104

NAME _____ PHONE _____

**** Return above order form to church; keep this portion as a reminder ****

Soup must be picked up at UCCG after worship (11:00 am-12:00 noon) on Sunday, February 11, 2024. (Total owed: \$ _____)

A WISE Beginning for UCCG



Dear UCC Greenawalds Family and Friends:

Thank you to everyone who returned a WISE Survey. The Mental Health Ministry Team will be looking them over and will give a report on them at a later time. If you would like to still turn one in, please do so - thank you!

Before January 14, you will receive the proposed WISE covenant to review before our Congregation Meeting on January 28. We are asking that you review it so that we can vote during that meeting on becoming a WISE congregation for Mental Health.

This is a very exciting time for United Church of Christ Greenawalds! This designation says that our faith community is committed to being a safe place for all people, interested in helping, educating, and breaking the stigma and stereotypes for mental health challenges such as, but not limited to, mental illnesses, brain disorders, addictions, and trauma.

Sincerely, Your Mental Health Team
Christy Dunbar, Colleen Horlacher, Sue Sawyer and Pastor Janet

From our PENN NORTHEAST CONFERENCE Ambassador, Karen Griffith

Mental Health First Aid Saturday, January 20, 2024

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Penn Northeast Conference Office 431 Delaware Avenue, Palmerton

(coffee & beverages provided)

(lunch will be provided to all-day attendees - fees will reflect the inclusion of lunch)

9 AM to Noon - Mental Health First Aid

Noon - 12:30 pm - Lunch

12:30 pm - Breakout Group Options:

- Becoming a WISE congregation
- Relating to/working with persons with dementia
- Relating to/working with LGBTQIA+ persons
- Relating to/working with persons with addictions, use of Narcan
- Relating to/working with persons diagnosed on the autism spectrum

Attendees may choose either **morning only (\$20)**

OR afternoon only (\$20) OR all day including lunch (\$35)

Sign up through tithe.ly at:

<https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/8182229>

Or use Registration form on following page:

Registration Form for PNEC Mental Health First Aid

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Church Name/Location _____

_____ Morning Only (no Lunch) _____ Afternoon Only (no lunch)

_____ All Day with lunch

Cost for Morning Only: \$20; Cost for Afternoon Only: \$20

Cost for All Day with Lunch: \$35

Return Registration Form to PNEC, 431 Delaware Avenue, Palmerton, PA 18071

Let us increase our discipleship, increase our faith and increase the impact we have as a Body of Christ here at UCCG, all in the name of our amazing God who gave us everything.

Discipleship, Fellowship, Evangelism and Stewardship: Together, We Can!

Month	Budget	General Offering Income	*Other Income	Total Operating Income	Operating Expense	Net Income
Jan-23	\$11,716	\$10,519	\$3,132	\$13,652	\$9,444	\$4,208
Feb-23	\$11,716	\$8,529	\$2,995	\$11,524	\$14,830	(\$3,306)
Mar-23	\$11,716	\$8,702	\$2,162	\$10,864	\$13,729	(\$2,865)
Apr-23	\$11,716	\$9,887	\$4,497	\$14,384	\$11,943	\$2,441
May-23	\$11,716	\$8,785	\$2,892	\$11,677	\$14,050	(\$2,374)
Jun-23	\$11,716	\$8,777	\$1,772	\$10,549	\$11,936	(\$1,387)
Jul-23	\$11,716	\$9,075	\$1,866	\$10,940	\$10,714	\$227
Aug-23	\$11,716	\$8,917	\$1,127	\$10,044	\$14,791	(\$4,747)
Sep-23	\$11,716	\$8,737	\$951	\$9,688	\$10,815	(\$1,127)
Oct-23	\$11,716	\$10,266	\$1,588	\$11,854	\$12,027	(\$173)
Nov-23	\$11,716	\$9,852	\$2,418	\$12,270	\$12,606	(\$336)
Dec-23	\$11,716	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$140,588	\$102,045	\$25,400	\$127,445	\$136,884	(\$9,439)

* Other income includes; Annex Rental, bulletin, flowers, bill tree and special income

Did you know?

New Year's Traditions From Around the World*

Make Some Noise:

Many people around the world like to make noise - from fireworks to gunshots to church bells.

Eat Lucky Food:

In Spain, people attempt to eat 12 grapes during the 12 strokes of midnight! Tradition says that if they succeed before the chimes stop, they will have good luck for all 12 months of the coming year. In the Southern U.S., black-eyed peas and pork foretell good fortune. In India and Pakistan, rice promises prosperity. In Dutch homes, eating any ring-shaped treat (such as a doughnut) symbolizes “coming full circle” and leads to good fortune.

In Pennsylvania, pork and sauerkraut is served. The combination of pork and sauerkraut is believed to bring good luck for the coming year. It is a Germanic tradition brought over to America by the Pennsylvania Dutch. There is a superstition that anyone who eats poultry on New Year's Day loses their happiness because it is believed that all good luck and happiness fly away with the bird's feather. Pork is believed to bring good luck because “the pig roots forward” for its food as opposed to the backward scratching of an animal like a chicken.

Have a Drink

Although the pop of a champagne cork signals the arrival of the New Year around the world, some counties have their own beverage-based traditions. Wassail, a punch-like drink named after the Gaelic term for “good health” is served in some parts of England.

Give a Gift

New Year's Day was once the time to swap presents. Gifts of gilded nuts or coins marked the start of the new year in Rome. In Scotland, coal, shortbread, and silverware were traditionally exchanged for good luck.

New Year's Folklore

Some customs and beliefs are simply passed down through the ages. Here are some of the favorite age-old sayings and proverbs.

- On New Year's Eve, kiss the person you hope to keep kissing.
- For abundance in the new year, fill your pockets and cupboards today.
- If the old year goes out like a lion, the new year will come in like a lamb.



*Taken from the Old Farmer's 2024 Almanac; Robert B. Thomas



January 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 5:30 pm Mental Health Team Meeting 7:00 pm Cub Scout Committee Meeting	3 10:30 am Faith Club Book Study 7:15 pm Evangelism & Outreach Meeting	4	5 6:00 pm Consistory Group dinner at CityView Diner 7:00 pm Eagle Scout Court of Honor Set Up (Fellowship Hall)	6 2:00-8:00 pm Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Kyle Pryor (Fellowship Hall)
7 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship – Epiphany Sunday w/Holy Communion Consistory Meeting after worship	8 7:00-8:30 pm Boy Scouts	9 9:00 am-3:00 pm Quilting Chicks (Fellowship Hall) 6:30-8:00 pm Cub Scouts	10 10:30 am Faith Club Book Study	11 6:30 pm Ant Jams	12	13 9:00 am Music & Worship – Take down Christmas decos 6:00-9:00 pm Cub Scout Pack Meeting Bake-Off (Fellowship Hall)
14 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship	15 No School – No Scouts	16 6:30-8:00 pm Cub Scouts	17 NO Faith Club today	18	19	20
21 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship	22 11:00 am OMG Meeting 2:00 pm Pastoral Relations Meeting 7:00-8:30 pm Boy Scouts	23 6:30-8:00 pm cub Scouts	24 10:30 am Faith Club Book Study	25 6:30 pm Ant Jams	26	27 2:00-5:00 pm Bethel House of Worship SHOE DRIVE – all shoes are repurposed – in JCCG Parking Lot
28 9:00 am Sunday School 9:30 am Fellowship 10:00 am Worship w/Congregational Meeting immediately after worship	29 7:00-8:30 pm Boy Scouts	30 7:00 pm Cub Scout Committee Meeting	31 10:30 am Faith Club Book Study			

OUR STAFF

Pastor Janet Newett, Pastor	610.657.2189 cell
pastorjanetn@gmail.com	
Church Office/Main Phone	610-435-1763
Susan Borger, Church Secretary	484-695-7954 cell
Anthony Newett, Music Director & A/V Tech Advisor	215-805-4353
Lee Stephens	610-216-1664
Nursery School	610-435-5467
churchoffice@uccgreenawalds.org	

Pastor's Office Hours Vary

**For a visit with Pastor Janet, please call her cell phone.
(Text messages preferred)**

**Church Secretary Office Hours are Wednesday, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm.
(Other hours, from home. Call as necessary.)**

ECHOES is a monthly publication of the United Church of Christ, Greenawalds. Members, committee chairpersons leading a group and anyone with pertinent information are encouraged to submit information and upcoming events. Submit news by email to the church office at churchoffice@uccgreenawalds.org or to Sue Borger at borgersusan@yahoo.com no later than the 22nd of each month.

The **January 2024** Edition of *Echoes* is sponsored by:

**Sandy Lakatosh and Sue & Ray Borger and family
in celebration of the January 20th birthday of our mother,
Eleanor Lakatosh. Happy 92nd Birthday Mom!!**

Communication to our members is an important part of our ministry. If you cannot attend church regularly, or do not use a computer, you can remain connected with the news, our mission and upcoming activities through this newsletter.

Sponsors for the *Echoes* help to support the ministry of UCC Greenawalds to all members. Call Sue Borger 484.695.7954 to sign up for a sponsorship and include your dedication information.

Cost is \$20.00 per sponsorship.

Each Friday, in our email newsletter entitled, WEEKLY WORDS, we share all of our prayer concerns, weekly bulletin and upcoming events. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email churchoffice@uccgreenawalds.org.
