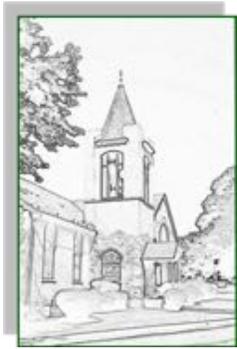


## What We've Been Up To...

Snowball Party



Alternative Worship



I remember a conversation I had many years ago with a friend of mine, named Dianne, who had left the church that she had attended for many years. She got into an argument with another parishioner, and she felt that the pastor had taken the other person's side in the argument, so she left the church. She spent Sunday morning watching one of those televangelists on T.V. "This is my worship service now," she told me. Nowadays, we have Youtube and live streaming to accommodate those who are unable or unwilling to darken the doorstep of their local church. I suppose that it's convenient, for people who want to stay home on a Sunday morning, that they can still attend worship, in a manner of speaking, while attending to the more important matters that demand their attention.

The poet, Emily Dickinson, began one of her poems, "Some keep the Sabbath going to church/ I keep it staying at home." That is true for the vast majority of Americans on Sunday mornings. In an issue of *Christian Century* magazine, editor Peter Marty writes, "I have decided that making worship an integral part of one's life is highly inconvenient. For those who stay away from communal worship because Sunday is the day to arrange personal leisure, take special care of oneself, or get the kids off to soccer, making time for church is just plain inconvenient."

Even for those who come to church on a regular basis, Sunday mornings are inconvenient as well- you have to sing songs you didn't pick, hear Scripture readings you didn't get to choose, get asked to commit time to mission projects for which you must sacrifice time and money, and- here's the worst- sit next to people you might not even like!

We live in a world in which we can have so much of what we want instantly and effortlessly. But, as Marty goes on to say, "Convenience often feels great, but it's not always good. If I exercise only when it's convenient, or buy groceries only at the convenience store, or drink coffee only from paper cups, these choices do not make a good life. Inconveniences can hold their own deep value, especially when they ask us to experience a larger life than the one we typically design around our personal comfort."

Lent, traditionally, is that season of the year when we try to give up this or that, to sacrifice something with the explicit intention of getting closer to God. While some might believe that they can achieve this kind of closeness all by themselves, I am inclined to agree with Dietrich Boenhoeffer, who said that we cannot know Christ apart from Christian community. Most find that inconvenient. I think it's kind of wonderful.

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

## Evangelism and Outreach

### Food Bank

Thank you for continuing to remember the urgent needs which our food banks seek to address. Canned goods and other non-perishables are always in demand. Please bring **anything** you think would be appreciated. Consider donating spices. Spices allow cooks to add flavor to food without additional salt. Think about buying cumin, cinnamon, coriander, onion powder, garlic powder, cloves, oregano, basil, parsley, cayenne pepper, rosemary, thyme, bay leaves, or any other spices you commonly cook with.

**Please keep your cans coming and place them in the pantry shelf. March's food of the month is Easter items.**

### Trinity Soup Kitchen

Our next date to serve lunch is April 14th from 10:30-1:30. Please see Sharon Merluzzi with questions. We'd love to have you!

## Christian Education

### Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School this year: July 16th-20th. Please see Amanda Knitter if you'd like to volunteer!



### CPR Class

Ever wonder if you could help out if you saw someone collapse in front of you? Knowing how to perform CPR would certainly be beneficial if you ever found yourself in this type of situation. Forks UCC will be hosting a CPR class on Saturday April 14, 2018 at 9 AM which will include instruction, a manual, and hands on training to teach participants the necessary skills to perform adult, child, and infant CPR. Instruction in using an automatic external defibrillator (AED) will also be included. If you are willing to sacrifice 1 1/2 hours on a Saturday morning to learn the skills to help someone in need, please sign the sign up sheet in the social hall, or call Jeff Stoudt @ 610-863-8764 if you have questions. Cost is \$30 per person.

## Property Committee

### Bids

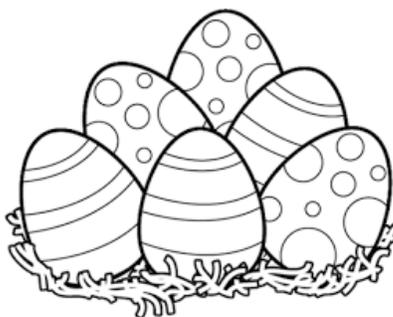
The Property Committee will be accepting bids for the painting of all wood of the Memorial Home side exterior porch off the efficiency apartment. This job is to be completed in the Spring at your leisure. Please have bids in to the church office by April 8, 2018. If anyone is interested in volunteering to do this painting, that would be greatly appreciated. The church would pay for all materials. Please contact Cheryl in the church office if interested.

### Memorial Home Efficiency Apartment

The newly remodeled and beautiful (thanks to Eric Hanlein) Memorial Home efficiency apartment is available for rent at \$600 a month. If interested, call the church office.

### Parish Life

We will be hosting our Easter egg hunt and pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 24th for children. The breakfast will begin at 9:15 with the egg hunt following at 10AM. Come visit the Easter Bunny!



### Palm Sunday

We will be hosting a free pancake and sausage breakfast after worship on Sunday, March 25th. Please stay after with us.

## Donation Requested

The church is in need of a color printer. The estimated cost with back up cartridges is \$575. If someone from the congregation is inspired with the generosity to donate this item, or a portion of it, please contact the church office for details. Thank you.

## Pennsylvania lay leader creates traveling road show around UCC's 3 Great Loves

February 05, 2018

Written by Connie Larkman

A lay leader of the United Church of Christ Penn Northeast (Penn NE) Conference is on a spiritual journey, spending his Sundays with several different congregations, and spreading the word about the 3 Great Loves (3GL) initiative.

Gary Barraco, the Outreach Director at Forks UCC, in Stockertown, Penn., was tapped to be the Penn NE Conference's '3 Great Loves Ambassador', a role he jumped into with both feet.

"3GL is a wonderful initiative," Barraco said. It is the denomination's opportunity as one church to express how Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation work together to address the inequities in our world. "The stories that we can share amongst our faith communities will solidify our purpose and goal as a united church."

A project marketing director for a software provider, Barraco immediately got to work launching 3GL in his part of Pennsylvania. He's put together a traveling roadshow around a customized worship service, with a special liturgy, worship suggestions and a sermon—which he shows up to deliver.

"Gary was one of the first 3GL Conference Coordinators and is so dedicated to sharing the message of our 3GL initiative with the local churches of the Penn NE Conference. He inspires me each time we speak," said the Rev. Dave Sigmund, the UCC 3GL ambassador. "His many travels speak to his creativity and passion to share the message of 3GL and his commitment to the shared mission and ministry of the UCC. In other words, Gary rocks!"

Barraco sent out information and invitations to every congregation in the conference, offering to bring them a Sunday service designed around 3 Great Loves. He created postcards, pamphlets, pins and polo shirts. He commissioned a video that he uses to start his worship presentation, and put an ad in the conference newsletter. Churches immediately took notice.

"The emails started coming in and I am booked for twenty Sunday services between now and June 3," Barraco said. "I am helped by another lay leader – Geoff Brace – who fills in when he can."

Right now Barraco is collecting stories from local congregations, and plans to present information about the top five 3GL ministries in the conference at the Penn NE Annual Meeting in May. But he may have a hard time choosing.

He shared one story about the mission of Christ Church UCC in Bethlehem, Penn. The congregation runs outreach programs to serve a large homeless population in its community; a Saturday soup kitchen, and a weekly program called S.T.A.R. – Serving to Aid and Restore – which uses the fellowship hall and other building space to store and distribute clothing, food and other necessities, information, and resources to homeless and in-need individuals. The church also operates overnight emergency sheltering when the weather turns bad from December through March. It is one of many facilities that comprise Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering, a faith-based partnership that provides a network of care and hospitality for homeless people in the community.

"This congregation is truly dedicated to serving those in need, in a city where hope, peace, love and joy are part of its name. The community has been impacted in many ways through these programs, but the volunteers also leave with the feeling of grace," Barraco said. "Every church I visit tells me that they have connected my message with their own spiritual journey and their outreach work within their individual communities. Not only am I inspiring them, but they inspire me."

The 3 Great Loves initiative, which runs through General Synod 2019, is a visible witness to the collective efforts of one uniting mission. It embraces the many types of ministry in which United Church of Christ congregations are already engaged, all working toward making a more just world for all as God's hands and feet. UCC churches and organizations are invited to discern and lift up the love of God, through their expressions of Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation in their community. Resources for the initiative can be found on the [3GL website](#).

"There are so many inventive and inspiring ways to share the story of our 3GL Initiative," said Sigmund, who serves as the national liaison, connecting the denomination's clergy, congregations and conferences in support of 3GL. "Every local church and each conference have amazing stories about how they are living out God's love through the lens of 3GL. What's your story?"

Please complete the following SURVEY and return to the church.

#### Worship Service

1. What would you like to see or hear in a sermon?

Stories relating to everyday life

Scripture/parables explained

Other

2. What is your favorite part of the worship service?

Message

Music

Fellowship

Other

#### Attendance:

3. What would encourage you to attend church on a more regular basis?

Service hours earlier / later

Saturday evening service

Sunday evening service

Different format

More/less music

More/less scripture

Shorter/longer service

Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Giving

4. Which of the following would inspire you to increase your giving?

Knowledge of how money is spent/receive monthly financial report

Having more expendable income

If you enjoyed your church experience more

Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Would you find it easier to contribute using a debit/credit card?

Yes  No

#### Outreach

6. Which of the following would motivate you to volunteer for events?

Better knowledge of the event's purpose

More spare time

More regularity (events or timing)

## Making ConneXions

We are eager to know more about the people who worship with us. If you would like to share yourself and “make a connection”, please email Alice Hornbake ([wmhornbake@yahoo.com](mailto:wmhornbake@yahoo.com)) for the form. Thank you!

### Featuring:

*Anthony Newett* from Allentown, PA is a musician, instructor, director and sound engineer and is new to Forks UCC:

★If you had to describe yourself in five words, what would they be?  
considerate, funny, talented, compassionate, generous

★If you could change something in the world, what would it be?  
For people to treat others precisely as they like to be treated

★What makes you wildly happy?  
When I see positive results from putting my values to good use

★Which of your parents are you most like and why?  
I'd have to say my father, for the most part. He is the reason why I've dedicated my life to music. He was a very gentle, kind man. He passed away in 2008, but I believe he is with me everyday. My rigid, principled and generous attributes (oh, and cooking talents) definitely come from my mom. I'm proud to say, they both shaped me in a positive way!

★What big life changes have you recently experienced?  
I met my true partner... the love of my life, my wife, Janet. She is also the reason why my daughter and I have moved to The Lehigh Valley.

★What is the most valuable life lesson you've ever learned?  
People can pull themselves out of a seemingly hopeless situation, if they surround themselves with good people; people that help remind you that you're a valuable person.



*Mindy Melia Hahn* from Pen Argyl, PA is an artist and art therapy graduate student and has been attending Forks UCC her whole life:

★What accomplishment are you most proud of and why?

Winning the People's Choice Award in ArtPop; having my drawing on my own billboard was a pivotal lesson to not abandon oneself through doubts and the judgment of one's inner critics

★What's on your bucket list?

Start a support group for bullying victims; Writing a novel, not for publication, just for the adventure of attempting it; Carving my own carousel horse

★If you could change something in the world, what would it be?

To see bullying in all forms diminished; for people to learn from, connect through, embrace, and celebrate both their similarities and differences

★What makes you wildly happy?

Taking walks outside throughout the year and observing the transformation and subtle changes of the natural world such as the gradual unfurling of a fern's growth or the race of storm clouds across the sky in a summer's afternoon

★What big life changes have you recently experienced?

Finding my own unique voice with which to express myself; I recently have found that silent actions can sometimes shout louder than the most blaring scream

★What is the most valuable life lesson you've ever learned?

To try to never judge someone by their outer appearances; the most incredible individual may be hidden beneath a daunting exterior

## Altar Flowers

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, select your Sunday and affix your name and intention ("In honor of" or "In memory of" or "To the Glory of God"). The arrangements are \$30. Another way of showing your love is to opt out of having flowers, rather choosing to have a single candle on the altar and your flower money will be donated to a charity of your choice. This is a powerful way to honor the day but make a difference in our world. Please make checks payable to "Forks UCC" with the notation "Altar Flowers". Simply drop your payment in the offering plate. Thank you.

### Altar Flower Sponsors for March

March 4 - Ruth Hartzell

March 11 - Doug & Carole Steckel

March 18 - The Grogg Family

March 25 - Carol Kleinle

## Those Serving

### Greeters/Offering Collectors

March 4 - Lorna & Bill Dreisbach/Tracey Cressman and Brandon Cressman

March 11 - Lorna & Bill Dreisbach/Betsy Warner and Brenda DeLong

March 18 - Mike & Cathi Tirrell/Carol & Dave Young

March 25 - Sharon Merluzzi and Bobbi Ricci/Rocky Starner and Pam Davis

## Celebrate with our Church Family

### Happy March Birthdays

01 Kate McKelvey-Jones	14 Charles Prutzman Sr.
01 Deann Allen	15 Kay Kromer
03 Carol Labar	16 Tammy Uhler
03 Jennifer Zabe	19 Justin Chesney
04 Bonnie Starner	20 Dane Edelheiser
05 Debbie Hartzell	21 Sarah Ringhoff
05 Kurtis Fleming	23 Corinne Gold Eberts
05 Jordan Allen	24 Brett Fleming
07 Joan Guthrie	24 Jennifer Hughes
08 Kelvin Dewalt	24 Apryl Audenried
09 Janet Berger	25 Tim Weis
10 Sarah Fleming	26 Dustin Gable
11 Tagan Steward	27 Bob Egolf
12 Victor Zeeman	28 Janet Rush
12 Alyssa Knitter	28 Craig Warner
12 Alexandria Dugan	29 Irv Angstadt
13 Jane Rader	30 Ryan Hartzell



### March Anniversaries

Jennifer & Brent Wood	3/11/1995
Sherry & Charles Pruntzman Sr.	3/12/1987
Carole & Doug Steckel	3/13/1954
Carol & Chuck Hartway	3/20/1983
Jennifer & Michael Zabe	3/20/1999
Corinne & Warren Eberts	3/23/2004
Judy & Jerry Kinsey	3/25/1967

## Is Church Canceled Today?

To find out this winter, or anytime, if Forks UCC services are canceled due to inclement weather, the Consistory has implemented procedures to notify the congregation.

The Forks UCC Congregation can find out if church is canceled the following ways:

- The cancellation notice will be sent out to members on the mass e-mail list
- The cancellation notice will be posted on WFMZ.com & in extreme weather conditions on WFMZ TV
- Members who sign up will receive a phone call between 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM on the Sunday in question if services are cancelled. To sign up please let the Church office know or e-mail Jacob E. Allen at [jacob.e.allen@gmail.com](mailto:jacob.e.allen@gmail.com). Sign up using the yellow forms in each vestibule.

**Please take advantage of these services to find out if church services are ever canceled.**

## Confirmands

Ashley Cressman, Gavin Gaul, Hannah Gutekunst, Shanon McCollian, Tanner Riehl, Samantha Shook, Tagan Steward, Riley Williams

## Visitation List

Please see the Church Directory or contact the Church office or a member of the visitation team for addresses. Earl & Dolly Abel, Fred Bolling, Mary Correll, Corinne Eberts, Tony Jiorle, Dorthy Kortz, Marge Markley, Florence Saylor, Perma Seiple, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

## March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Lenten gatherings with area churches</b> Soup and Fellowship 6-6:45PM Worship 6:45-7:30PM  3/7 - St. Luke's UCC, 471 Belfast Rd. 3/14 - Wesley United Methodist Church, School Rd. 3/21 - Forks UCC				<b>1</b> 7PM Nominating Committee	<b>2</b> World Day of Prayer	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 3rd Sunday of Lent Communion	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir 6:30-8PM Open Support Group Lenten Worship	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Daylight Savings
<b>11</b> 4th Sunday of Lent <i>One Great Hour of                      Sharing Special                      Offering</i>	<b>12</b> 7PM Stewardship and Finance	<b>13</b> 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory	<b>14</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir Lenten Worship	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 5th Sunday of Lent	<b>19</b> 6:30PM Adult Fellowship	<b>20</b> 6:30PM Evangelism and Outreach	<b>21</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir 6:30-8PM Open Support Group Lenten Worship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Parish Life Breakfast/ Easter Egg Hunt 9:15AM Alternative Worship 4PM
<b>25</b> Palm/Passion Sunday No Sunday School Breakfast after Worship	<b>26</b> 7PM Christian Education	<b>27</b> 6:30PM Parish Life	<b>28</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>29</b> Maundy Thursday 7PM Service John 13:1-17, 31b-35	<b>30</b> Good Friday 7PM Service John 18:1-19:42	<b>31</b> Holy Saturday Matthew 27:57-66

Sundays

8AM - Meditative Worship

10AM - Worship

