

TIDINGS

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

The Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Forks United Church of Christ

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey....

...you are welcome here!



Christmas Eve 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Recently, I was writing a series of devotionals about “love”, and I was reminded of the 1970’s musical, “Fiddler on the Roof.” There’s a song in the musical, called, “Do You Love Me?”, which is a conversation between a husband and wife, who, twenty-five years earlier, were married in an arranged ceremony. Since it was an arranged marriage, and they didn’t choose each other, the husband wants to know, after twenty-five years, if his wife really loves him. He keeps prodding her, “Do you love me?” She protests, “For twenty-five years, I’ve washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children, milked the cow, after twenty-five years, why talk about love right now?” But he persists, and finally, she offers this answer, “For twenty-five years, I’ve lived with him, fought with him, starved with him, twenty-five years my bed is his, if that’s not love, what is?” I love her answer, because it is less about romantic love and more about sacrifice and selflessness and presence, which, I think, is the kind of love we all should try and emulate with each other. It is especially necessary in a faith community, in which we do not always get along with or agree with each other.

The last two years of the pandemic that we have lived through have, of course, brought with them grief and isolation and loneliness for many. They have also brought a lot of division and disagreement and dissent. I will confess that, when it comes to subjects like vaccinations, and mask-wearing, and social distancing, I have felt and expressed some unkind thoughts and words. Just this week, someone sent me an email that expressed, with certainty, the conviction that the pandemic will soon be over when the current spike in cases subsides and I became angry. “Of course, I hope that’s true, but there’s no way of knowing that for sure”, I thought. These last two years, I have not been my best self.

At the beginning of the year, I received a devotional from the United Church of Christ national office, entitled, “What If? A Pocket Portion of Post-Pandemic Ponderments.” They included a few that have challenged my present way of being, including, “What if you’re defending yourself against the very thing you need?” “What if you continued to imagine new things, do hard stuff, and create new kinds of community?” And this one, that really stuck with me, “What if you stopped believing the people around you were not as smart as you?”

At the beginning of this new year, with the reality of the pandemic still with us, along with racial justice issues, political polarization, and a host of other issues we can disagree about, I am going to resolve to be a little more kind to people I disagree with, and try and express a love that is less about feeling, and more about doing. Our Conference Minister, the Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates, in her Letter to the Conference, expressed much the same sentiments, which inspired my thoughts, and she included a wonderful prayer from author, Heather King, which I’d like to share with you.

Prayer for Gentleness

Dear Lord, please teach us to be gentle.

Remind us of the many ways you have shown gentleness to us.

When we respond to others, help us see how you love them and died for them, also.

Convict us when we descend into mockery or hurtful speech.

Show us how to stand for what is right without abandoning gentleness or respect.

Teach us to speak the truth in love.

Let our gentleness be evident, a clear sign that you are at work in our lives. Amen.

Happy February & March

Pastor Bob

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

The special offerings for February and March are as follows:

- 2/13 – Heat Special Offering
- 2/20 – Maintenance & Repairs
- 3/20 – Maintenance & Repairs
- 3/27 – One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery. Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place. We will be taking part in this special collection on Sunday, March 27th.

You can always give your special offerings (envelopes) online at:

<https://forksucc.breezechms.com/give/online>

Please note those words in the "comment" box while completing your online gift to allow your gift to be moved into the correct account.

PENN NORTHEAST CONFERENCE – 2021 TOTAL GIVING

Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 1,695.49
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 345.00
Neighbors in Need	\$ 750.00
Strengthen the Church	\$ 355.40
Haiti Appeal	\$ 50.00
UCC Christmas Fund	\$ 450.00
	<hr/>
2021 Total	\$ 3,645.89

EVANGELISM & OUTREACH



● ProJeCt of Easton, Inc. ● 320 Ferry St., Easton, PA 18042 ● Phone: 610-258-4361 ● Fax: 610-258-7502 ● www.projecteaston.org

January 11, 2022

Rev. Bob Gutekunst
Forks United Church Of Christ
4500 Sullivan Trail
Stockertown, PA 18083-0158

Dear Rev. Gutekunst,

We are so grateful for your congregation donation of canned goods to our Food Pantry. Our full-choice pantry has provided high-quality, nutrient-dense food as well as healthy-eating information to low-income adults, children and seniors for more than 30 years, thanks to supporters like them.

The Food Pantry is just one of the many free services and programs that we offer people at risk in our community to help them bridge the gap between poverty and self-sufficiency. Their support strengthens our mission and our ability to help people help themselves.

We invite you to visit our Food Pantry as well as our Fowler Literacy Center, where we hold our adult education and family literacy classes. Please contact Nancy Caroprese, our Director of Development, at 610-258-4361 ext. 25 or ncaroprese@projecteaston.org to arrange your visit.

Take care, and thank you for being a part of the ProJeCt family.

Sincerely,

Janice D. Komisor
Chief Executive Officer

OFFICERS

President
Cary Giacalone

Vice President
Sharon DiFelice

Treasurer
Alan Abraham

Secretary
Isaac Hof

Chief Executive Officer
Janice D. Komisor

BOARD MEMBERS

William D. Bryson
Debra Ashton-Chase
Daniel E. Cohen
Rabbi Melody Davis
Misty Holmes Dorsey
Pete Reinke
Rev. Susan Ruggles
Ryan Seiple
Thomas J. Schlegel
Linda Tretiak
Mary Wilford-Hunt

FOUNDERS

Msgr. Francis X. Connolly
1933 – 1991
Rabbi Norton Shargel
Rev. John F. Steinbruck
1930 – 2015



EVANGELISM & OUTREACH

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. February's food of the month is breakfast items. March's food of the month is Easter items.

Our blessing box will remain on the front step of the church. Please use it to drop-off donations or to fill a need you have.

ONA Corner

Visit this area of the newsletter for current Open and Affirming information. Our team is meeting again!! Watch this area for news and updates. Please use this link to find out more about Open and Affirming in the United Church of Christ:

<https://openandaffirming.org/>

ONA Committee members are:

Brenda DeLong, Bob Gutekunst, Sharon Solt Harfman,
AliceHornbake, Carolyn Mitch, Rick Taylor, Betsy Warner

Emergency Prayer Chain

An outreach for prayer when you or someone you know and love has an emergency, unexpected surgery, accident, etc. The place to call is:

- Church Office - (610) 759-5676
- Lois Steward - (610) 759-3519
- Rita Blossey - (484) 373-0614

One of us will start the chain. Anyone who would like to join our Emergency Prayer Chain, please call Lois Steward or Rita Blossey at the numbers listed above.

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE**Visitation List**

Please contact the Church office for addresses. Also please call members prior to visiting to ask them when would be a convenient time to visit. Warren Eberts, Chuck Givler, Anna Laudenslager, Janet Rush, Betty Stocker, Irene Tenges, Bonnie Warren

Confirmands

Andrew Biddle, Eleanore Hornbake, Kaiden Kresge,
Chloe Miller, Grace Quinn, Mekhi Zuniga

Call the Church Office When...

- ✓ A member of your family is admitted to the hospital so the proper people are notified.
- ✓ Your home phone, email address, or mailing address has changed.
- ✓ An addition to your family has occurred.
- ✓ You want your birthday and/or anniversary added to our newsletter list.
- ✓ You feel the church can help you in any way.

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 \$35.00 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.

Housekeeping

We are looking for volunteers to help keep our church clean. Some responsibilities include emptying the trash cans, swiffering the floor under the pews, and vacuuming. If you or a group of your family or friends would be interested in doing this once for a particular month, please contact Jacob Allen (610-533-9108) or Alice Hornbake (610-703-3095) for details. Youth can also earn community service hours for their participation. Thank you for caring for our congregation and building.

Events

February Birthdays

- 01 Cathy Tirrell
- 03 Vilma Milham
- 05 Cayden Shook
- 05 Samantha Shook
- 08 Bob Zabe
- 08 Diane Dewalt
- 09 Nick Hendricks
- 10 Shannon McCollian
- 11 Tyler Mitch
- 13 Jennifer Wood
- 15 Roger Keat
- 15 Lily Ringhoff
- 15 Jakob Herres
- 15 Allison Silfies
- 15 Kelsey Beers
- 16 Dale Wilson
- 16 Kim Edelheiser
- 16 David Warner
- 19 Pauline Frace*
- 21 Gloria Burkos
- 21 Shelby McCollian
- 22 Will Hornbake
- 23 Kim Starner
- 23 Chris Mumaw
- 25 Patty Starner
- 26 Ron Mumaw
- 26 Violet Ortiz
- 26 Abigail Audenried
- 26 Devon Clifton
- 27 Derek Hammerstone
- 28 Judy Kinsey

March Birthdays

- 01 Kate McKelvey Jones
- 01 Deann Allen
- 01 Chris Beers
- 03 Carol Labar
- 03 Jennifer Zabe
- 05 Debbie Hartzell
- 05 Kurtis Fleming
- 05 Jordan Allen
- 07 Joan Guthrie
- 08 Kelvin Dewalt
- 09 Janet Berger
- 10 Sarah Fleming
- 11 Tagan Steward
- 12 Victor Zeeman
- 12 Alyssa Knitter Gilfilin
- 14 Charles Prutzman Sr.
- 15 Kay Kromer
- 15 Kaitlin Grogg
- 16 Tammy Uhler
- 19 Justin Chesney
- 20 Dane Edelheiser
- 21 Sarah Ringhoff
- 21 Ryan Barrick
- 24 Brett Fleming
- 24 Apryl Audenried
- 24 Jennifer Hughes
- 25 Tim Weis
- 26 Dustin Gable
- 28 Craig Warner
- 29 Irv Angstadt*
- 30 Ryan Hartzel

Anniversaries

- February
- Will & Kerrie Schneebeli 02/23/2002
- March
- Jennifer & Brent Wood 03/11/1995
- Sherry & Charles Pruntzman Sr. 03/12/1987
- Carole & Doug Steckel 03/13/1954
- Carol & Chuck Hartway 03/20/1983
- Jennifer & Michael Zabe 03/20/1999
- Judy & Jerry Kinsey 03/25/1967



*Over 90 years of age.

Events

Pulled Pork Dinner

Come enjoy delicious pulled pork served with seasoned baked potatoes, a medley of roasted vegetables, coleslaw and an array of desserts on Saturday, Feb 26th. Tickets are \$12 but are not required. Call Jacob Allen(610-533-9108) or the church office for tickets or questions.

February 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 ONA 6:30PM	3	4	5
6 Communion 5 th Sunday after Epiphany	7	8 Spiritual Council 6:00 Consistory 7:00	9	10	11	12
13 6 th Sunday after Epiphany Confirmation - Forks	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 7 th Sunday after Epiphany	21	22	23	24	25	26 Pulled Pork Dinner
27 Transfiguration	28					

Events

March 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Ash Wednesday	3	4	5
6 Communion 1st Sunday in Lent	7	8	9	10	11	12 Women's Workshop 10:00 AM
13 2nd Sunday in Lent	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 3rd Sunday in Lent	21	22	23	24	25	26 Roast Beef Dinner
27 4th Sunday in Lent	28	29	30	31		

Newsletter Submissions

If anyone wishes to submit any articles for the NEWSLETTER, please have all items emailed by the **20th of each month** to: forksucc@gmail.com

