



COMMUNIQUE



December

2024

SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2251 Willow Road
York, PA 17408

A GROWING CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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2251 WILLOW ROAD
YORK, PA 17408-4024

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- December 1** *First Sunday of Advent*
 Jeremiah 33:14-16
 Psalm 25:1-10
 Luke 21:25-36
“Looking for the Fig Tree”

- December 8** *Second Sunday of Advent*
 Malachi 3:1-4
 Philippians 1:3-11
 Luke 3:1-6
“Repent and Follow”

- December 15** *Third Sunday of Advent*
 Isaiah 12:2-6
 Philippians 4:4-7
 Luke 3:7-18
“What Should We Do?”

- December 22** *Fourth Sunday of Advent*
 Psalm 80:1-7
 Micah 5:2-5a
 Luke 1:39-55
“Can They Hear Us Singing?”

- December 24** **Christmas Eve Service**
 Luke 2:1-20
“Salvation from the Margins”

- December 29** *Fifth Sunday After Christmas*
 Luke 2
“The Sounds of Silence”



“Shiloh United Church of Christ is called to show Christ’s love for all through witness, word, and worship.”

CONSISTORY

Elders

- Nathan Limbert, President
- Linda Little, V. Pres.
- Bev Arnold, Secretary
- Jane Harrison
- Matt Hildebrecht

Deacons

- Sue Besecker
- Tom Fox
- Pat Myers
- Carolyn Poff

- Natalie Fuhrman – Treasurer
- Sallie Hagerman – Financial Secretary
- Sallie Hagerman – Church School Superintendent

THE CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Melinda LaMontagne, Ph.D.
pastormelinda@shilohucc.com

Pastor Melinda office hours:

Tues, Wed, Thurs 9AM-1PM

- Director of Music
- Organist
- Missionaries in Costa Rica
- Administrative Assistant
- Family and Youth Ministry Coordinator
- Early Learning Center
- Church Office Phone Number
- Church Email Address
- Website

- Stephanie Limbert
- Sandy Bamberger
- Crosby and Sally Jane Johnson
- Courtney Olschefski
- Brandi Shoff

Allison Hartnett
 717-764-3569

office@shilohuccyorkpa.org
www.shilohuccyorkpa.org

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SYMPATHY



Our sympathy to the family and friends of **Joanne Overmiller** who passed away on **October 15 2024**. A memorial service was held at Shiloh UCC on Monday October 21st officiated by Pastor Rev. Melinda LaMontagne, Ph.D.

Our sympathy to the family and friends of **Donna Robertson** who passed away on **October 31 2024**. A memorial service was held at Shiloh UCC. on Tuesday, November 5th officiated by Pastor Rev. Melinda LaMontagne, Ph.D.

Memorial contributions were made in Memory of **Joanne Overmiller** by Sara Jacoby, Jim & Rosemary Bentzel, Janis & Bill Heindel, Melissa Heindel, and Don & Jeanie Bentzel, Contributions were also made in memory of **Donna Robertson** by Don & Jeanie Bentzel, Sylvia Laucks, Sara Jacoby, Bonnie Robertson and Delores Daughtery.

COMING UP

Jan 1 New Year's Day Office Closed

TBD Consistory Retreat

Jan 5 Communion

Epiphany

Installation of Consistory

Jan 19 MLK Sunday

Jan 26 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Feb 2 Communion

Boy Scout Sunday

Come to church this Christmas!

Dear Members and Friends of Shiloh UCC,

It's so easy to get busy during Advent and Christmas. Especially we women, like to plan out every single detail. We plan ahead for trips and family gatherings. We buy gifts and think about every aspect of the upcoming holiday, so that our family may have a "perfect" celebration. But how can you have a "perfect" Christmas, without remembering the "reason for the season?" How can you enjoy all the aspects of the Holy Night, without allowing the Christ Child to be born in your heart? How can you enjoy a "perfect" Christmas without the presence of the Perfect God, who "became flesh" for us on Christmas? This Christmas, do something "perfectly" good for your family and your own soul. Come to church this Christmas! If you have family visiting with you for the holidays, bring them to church, so that your whole family may celebrate the birth of Christ together. Let me invite you: Come to church this Christmas! I would love to see your shining eyes and smiling faces in church. If you come to church every Sunday, I would love to see you! If you come to church once a year because you are busy or just don't think about church that much, let's say "Hi!" to you this Christmas. Even if you are busy all year long, make time for God this Christmas. Bring your children and grandchildren with you, so that they may also learn about the reason why we celebrate Christmas every year. Come to church this Christmas. Let God's healing light into your life this year! Let the old-old stories about shepherds, angels, a star, and a young unwed mother with her newborn baby, refresh your soul. Give yourself a well-deserved break from the hustle and bustle of this life. Just sit in God's presence for an hour, and find peace for your soul. Everyone needs to sing "Silent Night," holding a candle once a year! Believe me, nothing can replace the experience. It's also my favorite part of the Christmas Eve service! For once, you can just relax. Listen to carols and stories; and fill your soul with the true joy of this season. The Christ Child is ready to be born. Jesus Christ is coming to light up the world with hope. Come, prepare room for Him, by spending time with God at Shiloh UCC. Remember, our Christmas Eve services are on December 24th, at 3PM and 7PM. Please, make the effort this year. Come to church this Christmas and bring your family with you! Have a Blessed Advent and meaningful, joy filled Christmas!

Pastor Melinda Family and Youth Ministry

November Consistory Highlights

Pastor's Report-

Worship

Special worship services:

- October 18th – Jerry Eppley graveside service (private - only for family members)
- October 21st – Joanne Overmiller Memorial Service at Shiloh UCC.
- October 27th – Remembrance Sunday (when we remember those who passed away recently.)
- November 3rd – Communion service at Shiloh UCC.
- November 5th – Donna Robertson Memorial Service at Shiloh UCC.
- November 10th – Veteran's Sunday celebration at Shiloh UCC.

Administration

- October 16th Worship and Music Meeting.
- Pastor Melinda vacation - October 21-25 (Memorial service on the 21st)
- October 30th - Staff Meeting
- November 5th – Outreach Meeting
- Pastor Melinda Sabbatical plans for 2025: away during the summer months (June, July and August). Plan: Read at least three major theological books (I have the book titles at the church!) about church growth and/or preaching. Take at least one theological course at a seminary/online or in person (I haven't found an online course that I would like to take, but I'm looking.) I will also work on my spiritual replenishment (so that I can "give" to the congregation). Nora Faust from the UCC Conference will talk to the Consistory about how a "Sabbatical" works for the church.

Pastoral Care

- Home, hospital, hospice, and nursing home visits (7)
- Office/lunch meeting (4)
- Phone calls (14+); countless text messages to our members, office, and friends

Christian Education

- Confirmation class meets twice a month (the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month!) at 9AM in the Library. We have two confirmation kids. Please, contact Pastor Melinda if there are more people interested in this class.
- Brandi is doing a great job bringing together the youth and the children. Thank you, Brandi!

Early Learning Center



It is amazing our quickly the month of November flew by! Our students were busy learning about the meaning of Thanksgiving, turkeys, and hibernation. Our teachers focused on thankfulness as we explored and identified the many blessings in our lives. The outdoor classroom took on a "new look" and a colder feel which allows for much discussion and exploration. Finally, this month of gratitude ended with a delicious and sometimes untraditional Thanksgiving Feast. The sights and sounds of December are always fun and festive in the ELC. We mark this incredibly special month with many meaningful activities. Our children are busy learning songs, finger plays and mini musicals to present to their families during our Christmas programs. We welcome members to join us for our Christmas Programs which takes place between December 12th -19th . These amazing celebrations will happen either in room 100 or in the sanctuary. For the exact times and locations please check with Courtney in the office. In addition to preparing for their Christmas Programs, the children have been busy making unique gifts for their families which I am sure will be treasured forever!! Finally, the Bible lesson this month is the timeless story of the birth of Jesus. This beautiful lesson will be shared through crafts, songs, Bible reading, puzzles, felt board illustrations and children's literature. This month includes many other highlights. Our three-year-old friends will be receiving a beautiful Bible, a special gift from the members of Shiloh UCC. What a precious gift that our children will cherish for many years. On December 5th, Beth Rebert from Fun-In-It-Storytelling will present the beautiful story entitled The Polar Express. In addition, members of Shiloh UCC Church Chums will be hosting a Parent's Night Out on December 7th. This special event will allow our parents to enjoy a "night out" while their children are cared for by members of Shiloh UCC and ELC Staff. The children will be busy making crafts, listening to stories, watching a Christmas skit, singing Christmas carols, and enjoying pizza and snacks during the festivities. As we wrap up 2024, I continue to feel blessed. The blending of our ELC staff, church members and ELC families have created a beautiful community. It is because of this community and the support and blessings we offer one another that we have an amazing preschool. On behalf of the ELC staff and children we hope your Christmas will be warm, peaceful, and filled with many beautiful sounds and memories. May your New Year be filled with gratitude, hope, and good health.

THANK YOU NOTES

The Worship and Music Committee extends thanks to Linda Little and Lin Heckert for volunteering to assist with Communion preparations.



Worship Together!

The poinsettia sale will continue **until Sunday, December 8**. Each poinsettia is **\$7.00 for a 6 in. pot**. They will be delivered for display on Sunday, December 22 and Christmas Eve. You may take your poinsettias home after the 7:00 Christmas Eve service. Thank you for your support of this project to help decorate the sanctuary for this important holiday.



Engaging Women will be meeting Tuesday Dec 10 at 6:30 pm in Room 202 to make cards for the shut-ins.

Advent Study Go from Bah! Humbug! To a blessed Advent and Merry Christmas in this Study, you will learn about living with and for others in a world blessed by Jesus. Please mark your calendars for Wednesday's starting November 20th thru December 18th, at 7 pm. Please note there will be NO study on November 27th.



December 8th 9:15-11:15 in room 100 Ornament Making, open to ages 5-12. We will be creating ornaments for the holiday season. Cookies & Milk



will be available Lesson "True meaning of Christmas"

December 16th 6-7:30 in room 202 Holiday Card Making, open to ages 5-12 Themed donut treats Lesson "The Fruit of the Spirit"

Beginning November 24th, the SOUP KITCHEN crew is asking for donations of wrapped candy (i.e. and snack sized wrapped candy or mini candy canes). Please put candy donations in the boxes labeled "Soup Kitchen" in the church Gallery or kitchen. The deadline for donations is Sunday, December 15th. We will fill small gift bags with the candy and distribute them at Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in December. Thank You!



The Sunshine Class is selling cashews again this year! They will be available for pickup on Friday, December 13 from 7-8 pm in Room 100 ,or you can get them on Sunday morning December 15th. Price is \$7.00 half pound bag.

Orders will be taken until December 1st. You can find order forms in the church office, the welcome center, the gallery, or in room 100.

Unfinished Business-

A. Soup kitchen is wondering when the new sink will be connected? The sink is currently being worked on by Matt. Matt is currently working on putting in the water supply line, hoping to have it completed by Thanksgiving.

Church and ministry-

- A meeting will be held this Wednesday 11/13 to review the membership
- Brandi gives a written report to Linda each month on all her activities

Worship and Music-

- Organ tuner was here Wed. 11/6 to examine pipes for needed repair. Will return Wed. 11/13 to tune organ. Repair on bass pipe will happen at a later date.
- Poinsettia Sale begins Nov 24, ends Dec 8. Price \$7.50 . Hope to have delivery Dec.21
- Christmas Caroling - Sunday, Dec 8 (Country Meadows and Normandy Ridge) Times to be announced
- Thanksgiving dinner - Nov 28 - 1:00 PM - sign-up sheet available
- New banners purchased for sanctuary
- Family Choir rehearsals began Nov 7
- Brandi would like to supply a live tree for the welcome center for the kids to decorate and live wreaths for the front doors. Matt will check on whether we may have a live tree inside the church.
- Next Meeting 11-26-24
- Christmas Eve Services are at 3:00pm and 7:00pm

Church Life-

- No Report

Outreach/Evangelism-

- T-shirt sale is being planned for the month of December. Delivery will be during January. Cost is \$15 per shirt (adult sizes S-XXL). Shirts provided by Funny Farm Apparel.
- A Direct Mail project is planned for Christmas to promote services during week of Christmas
- Considering a "Cookie Walk" for December of 2025. It was decided to postpone this activity till next year.
- Next meeting Tues. Dec 3 at 7:00 PM in room 202

Visioning-

- Hope to schedule meeting in January

Missions Committee-

- FYI Reminder: Thanksgiving envelopes will go to the Salvation Army and the Christmas envelopes will go to the Veterans of the Cross. Also all money received in the Love offering will be going to Hurricane Relief which runs through December.
- Challenge for 2024 -\$920 worth of Gift Cards for Weis and Giant given to Bell, remaining money (\$1285) to be put in capital expense fund.
- Next meeting is January 21, 2025

Christian Ed.-

- Tree of Warmth items are to go to Mr. Sandy's and The Lehman Center

Early Learning Center-

- Next meeting will be Dec. 5 at 5:00 PM in room 202

Finance Committee-

- The budget was approved at a congregational meeting after the Nov. 10 service.

Communication and Technology-

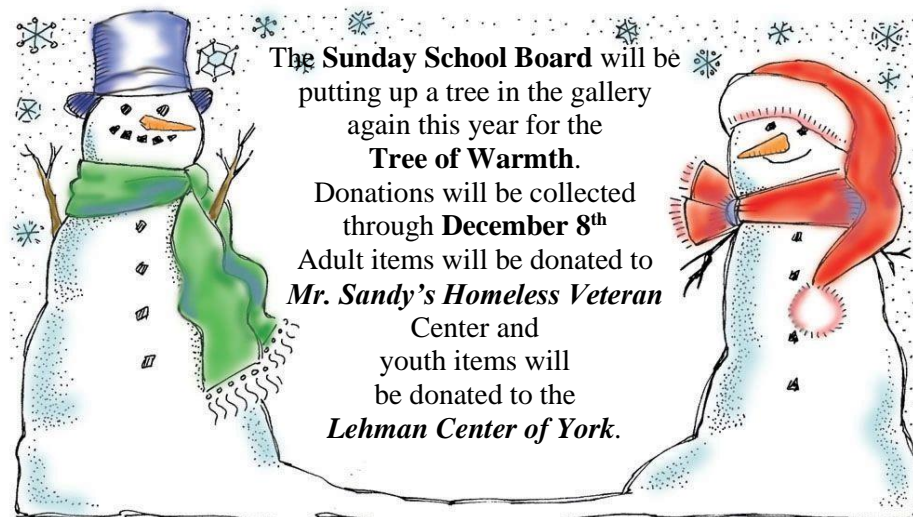
- This committee will work with Brandi's husband on checking out our network and pcs to see what needs to be done to update the system

Property Committee-

- Add PTAC in the ELC purple room
 - Matt to get and install
- Pot sink underway
 - Hopeful completion by Thanksgiving
- Rake leaves November 23rd 12PM with Cub Scouts
- Rapunzel's New Owner sent an email about moving the church sign. It will interfere with their business sign. Making Inquiries.
- Looking into adding a light over the kitchen sink.
- Changing the old lights to LED lighting in the ELC and Room 100 in the near future.
- Property meeting Dec. 2 at 7 PM.
- There is a leak in the roof of the Parsonage. Will be looked into to determine next steps.

Correspondence-

On Saturday, November 9th, 2024, Judy Clark, Steve Besecker and myself attended a Zoom satellite campus (St. Paul's UCC Stoverstown) meeting of the Penn Central Conference. The other three conferences were also meeting at that time either in person or by **Zoom**. **The other conferences** are Penn Southeast, Penn Northeast, and Penn West.



Veteran's Helping Hand was created by Sandy Walker, a Vietnam Veteran who did not want any of his fellow Veterans to feel isolated or unwelcomed after coming home from war. The mission of *Veteran's Helping Hand* is to provide immediate aid to homeless Veterans and any Veteran that needs assistance. *Veteran's Helping Hand* offers a variety of services including: emergency shelter, mental health counseling referrals, emergency food baskets, clothing, hot meals on weekends and many more! The *Lehman Center* was started in 1913, by a group of compassionate and dedicated individuals who made a contentious decision to do something to help orphaned, neglected, and indigent children to change their life situation. Today, their team of compassionate and dedicated professionals, volunteers, churches, businesses and community organizations collaborate to create the Children's aid Society. Their vision, is that all children are safe and feel loved by helping them and their families build stronger healthier lives through their compassionate and professional services of; children centered creative art & play therapy, crisis nursery respite care, family advocacy, *Incredible Years* Parent Support & Education groups, children's clothing bank, and their 24-hour Parenting Hotline and York Cares Coffee Spot. The Children's Aid Society is unique in our commitment to help all children and their families regardless of their economic or social circumstances. The Sunday School Board thanks you for your consideration in donating to these two organizations!

Please save this date Sunday, December 8. The Worship and Music Committee is planning to go Christmas Caroling! This will include singing for the shut-ins of the congregation during the afternoon. Watch for more details in the bulletin and the December Communique. Please consider joining the group to bring some Christmas cheer.



Texas Roadhouse Gift card fundraiser for Family and Youth Ministry has started, information is in the Gallery. Money & Checks are being collected in the folder in the gallery or by Courtney in the office.

The Outreach Committee is also planning a direct mailing. Postcards announcing the services for Christmas Week will be sent to residents in the neighborhood surrounding our church. If you receive one, please feel free to share it with a friend or family member. It is a wonderful time for people to visit a church filled with lovely decorations and seasonal music!



Funds from the **Christmas envelope** will be given to the Veterans of the Cross.



- Grief Group meets once a month. Last meeting was on October 15th.
- Wednesday Bible Study meets weekly. Thank you, Ray!
- Two Sunday School adult classes meet weekly. Thank you to our Sunday School teachers!
- Thank you to all the ladies who lead our women's social groups!
- Men's Breakfast group meets monthly. Thank you, Brad!
- Contact with the larger UCC, ELC, and local community
- October 20th – Participated in the Fall Festival and decorated our car for Trunk or Treat
- November 6th – Chapel Time with the ELC children at 9:15am and 12:15pm.
- November 10th – UCC York Association meeting – Attended on Zoom (from 2-4:30pm.)
- November 11th – Attend and say prayers at the Veterans' Memorial Dedication at Dover High School – Brad Jacobs's project (and invitation).

President's Report-

Time Off Requests

- Approved requests by Administrative Assistant and Organist

Guest Report-

Dr. Nora Driver Foust, Associate Conference Minister for Congregational and Ministerial Excellence. Information from Dr. Foust concerning sabbatical leave and vacation time was as follows:

- A sabbatical leave may be taken after every five years of service.
- Vacation is four weeks (five working days per week) plus regular days off. This vacation time is over and above time off for the sabbatical leave.
- Dr. Foust suggested we form a sabbatical committee to guide church concerns while Pastor Melinda is on her sabbatical leave

New Business-

- Written report on conference meeting by Sue Besecker (at end of Highlights under Correspondence)
- Suggestion for a Sunday service when the Pastor is on Sabbatical. Possibly have someone from Hoffman Homes, Homewood, New Hope, or New Life for Girls come to speak about their program. More to come at a later date.
- Announcements will be printed on a separate page and inserted into the bulletins each week starting in December and updated weekly
- A thank you to Linda Little and Lin Heckert for volunteering to help with communion preparation
- Office closed on 12-25-24 and 12-26-24
- A Sabbatical Committee needs to be formed.

We voted to adopt the budget for 2025, form a coalition called STAR (Small Town And Rural) and to join all the conferences into one called The Keystone Conference. STAR and Keystone have to be adopted at General Synod next Summer in 2025. The purpose of STAR is to help smaller churches receive resources that are currently only available to Urban churches. The main reason for Keystone is efficiency and cutting costs. With a majority of UCC churches now having about 50 members, it is cost prohibitive to have 4 PA Conferences maintaining offices and staff, etc. Also, at General Synod, PA UCC will have a stronger voice.

Submitted by - Sue Besecker

WOW! How did we get to December already? The most beautiful time of the year. I don't know about you all, but the holidays are my favorite. The lights and decorations bring warmth to my soul. I love to see my children's faces when we get the Christmas decorations out! November has come and passed and it's been a successful month. We were able to host our first girls group, which we got to make candles and talk about how positive words are important. We also hosted a boys group where they got to watch a faith based movie called "Letters to God". Along with these groups we hosted our very first PAINT DAY! This is something that I had visioned for since coming aboard Shiloh UCC. Families from ELC, and families from outside the Shiloh UCC gathered to create a family canvas with handprints of their family members. The canvases that were created were able to be taken home and put in each of their homes! We also got to enjoy chicken corn soup! Now on to this month... December! This month Family and Youth Ministries will be hosting a small group on December 8th from 9:15-11:15 in which we will be creating ornaments for the holiday season. The children will also be able to participate in a lesson, "The true meaning of Christmas". Then on December 16th from 6-7:30 our children will be Holiday card making. Our lesson that day will be called "The Fruit of the Spirit". The cards will be distributed to the "shut- in" members of our congregation. I hope everyone has a blessed Christmas. As always please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or ideas.

Brandi Shoff
Family and Youth Ministry Coordinator



FREE Live Nativity Saturday, December 7th at 4:00 PM.
Salem United Church Of Christ (picnic area behind the church) 2705 W. Canal Road Dover. Live actors & animals, Refreshments provided. Bring your folding chairs.



This Year's Adopt A Family Program will sponsor low income preschool children, and supply toys and books to them. There are 125 children yet to be sponsored so donations are much appreciated. Donations can be given to Katie Bentzel, Patti Goodyear or Natalie Fuhrman, or put in an envelope marked Adopt A Family and place in donation box in Gallery. Donations accepted until December 8th.

The Women's Guild will be meeting **December 2nd, at 1:00 pm in room 202.** The program will be from our study book **Experiencing Contagious Joy Chapter Eight: Count It All Joy.** Shirley Lohmann will be leading this chapter. Special offering this month is for our missionary Sally Jane Johnson. *We invite all women of the church to join us at any time.*



Mark your calendar for the next **Shiloh UCC Men's Breakfast on Tuesday December 10th, at 8:30 am at Dover Valley Restaurant.** Contact Brad Jacobs at bcj402@verizon.net or 717-764-2773 for additional information.

The **Women's Social and Support Group** will meet for lunch at **Chedders on Rt. 30 on Friday, December 20th at 12:00pm.** Please contact Joyce Bowers at 717-767 8966 by **December 16th** if you plan to attend.



"We here at Shiloh UCC are collecting cookies again this year for the Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry Cookie Collection. We will collect cookies **Sunday Dec 1 and Sunday Dec 8, 2024.** There will be a table placed in the narthex to receive the cookies. Place 5 or 6 cookies in a plastic 'zip-lock' bag and then into a paper lunch bag, which may be decorated. (Christmas card fronts stapled to the bags are great!) The Ministry encourages us to enclose a friendly note, Bible verse or tract. They are asking us to wear gloves while preparing and packaging cookies, and that we seal the bags with staples, bows, etc., so they stay fresh. They also asked that we write Shiloh, UCC York, Pa on the bags, if possible. **Please see Brian Curren with any questions.**"