

## SHENKEL HAPPENINGS, DECEMBER 2024

Greetings, Shenkel Friends and Family!

Christmas is coming! Magnificent outdoor light displays. Blow-up Santas. TV commercials urging us to spend money we may not have. Christmas movies. Christmas cookies. Presents under the tree. B101's nonstop largely secular Christmas music. The signs are everywhere! But wait, isn't there more to Christmas than that? My one granddaughter said her favorite part of Christmas was, not the presents, but being with friends and family, and she meant it! Now we're getting closer. But there is more.

Christmas is a time when we celebrate the birth of a baby whose life, 2,000 years later, continues to give us a roadmap on how to live. Love. Compassion. Forgiveness. Healing. Acceptance of the "other." Love—it always comes down to love. So, as we experience the sights and sounds of Christmas, let us remember to celebrate the birth of Love in the form of a baby named Jesus.

Now let's catch you up on what is happening at your church!

### **SUNDAY SERVICES**

You have two great choices for worship each Sunday:

1. **REFLECTIVE SERVICE AT 8:30 AM**, a good choice if you prefer no music, time for discussion and reflection, and
2. **TRADITIONALISH SERVICE at 9:45 AM**. You will find everything you've always wanted in a traditional service plus more. Pastor Suzanne has added a time for centering at the beginning which people in person and online are really appreciating.

### **ADVENT SUNDAY SERVICES**

Pastor Suzanne is trying something new this year: Tapping into the talents of some of Shenkel's folks with a theatrical flair, she has developed a **DRAMATIC SERMON SERIES** during Advent. Join us at the **9:45 AM service** for an entertaining and meaningful way to deliver the Advent message.

### **LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE**

Is the prospect of Christmas with its expectations for happiness, parties and family gatherings getting you down? Are you grieving, feeling alone, or just needing to feel held in God's embrace? Our **LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 at 7:00 PM** may be just what you need. Please join us and wrap yourself in God's comfort and love.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

Join us to celebrate Jesus' birth on **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 at 7:00 PM**

**BREAKFAST AND SERVICE** - There will be *one service* on **DECEMBER 29 at 9:00 AM in the SOCIAL HALL**. Please bring your favorite breakfast casserole or finger food to share with your friends. Worship will be led by Rev. Pam McShane.

**BETHANY CHILDREN'S HOME CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE**

There is something about making a child's Christmas special that is so gratifying, and there is a way for you to help. A small Christmas tree is set up in the Narthex with ornaments identifying gift cards needed by Bethany Children's Home for the holidays. If you would like to participate, please select an ornament, which will provide a description of the gift card requested. Please bring the gift card or cards to the tree **by Sunday, December 15**.

**CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS**

**Sunday, December 15 - Beacon of Hope Dinner planning, preparation, delivery, and service**

On Sunday, December 15, Shenkel members will plan, prepare, deliver, and serve a meal for up to 16 individuals at St. Paul's U.C.C. If you are interested in participating in some or all of the effort, please see the details of the day below.

Immediately following the 9:45 am service, individuals will gather in the social hall to plan the meal. If you have a specialty, bring that to the table. Once a menu is determined, Dan Snyder and anyone who would like to assist, will purchase the food and bring it back to the church. Meal preparation will begin at 3:00 PM in the church kitchen.

Meal delivery will depart from Shenkel around 6 pm with an estimated time of delivery to St. Paul's at 6:30. Service will begin shortly after that. As individuals delivering and serving the meal prepare to depart, we are also looking for a few individuals to remain at the church to clean up the kitchen.

We are seeking cookie donations to provide to individuals who attend the meal. Cookies of all kinds can be dropped off during the meal preparation period for packaging and dispersal (either after the 9:45 am service or between 3-5 pm in the afternoon.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Dan Snyder at [einheir@gmail.com](mailto:einheir@gmail.com).

**OPERATION 143 BACKPACK NIGHT:**

**Monday, January 6** is the next Shenkel UCC Pack Night at Operation 143. Individuals interested in participating will meet at 6 pm at Operation 143 (entrance in the back of the New York Plaza Building). We will need at least 10 people for about 1- 1 1/2 hours.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE 2025 BUDGET:**

The Congregational meeting to review the 2025 Budget is schedule for Sunday, December 22. The meeting will open immediately following the 8:30 am service and close after the 9:45 am service.

### **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:**

**SAVE THE DATE!** The Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 26**. Please see your bulletin for upcoming information.

### **NOVEMBER FINANCIALS:**

Current Fund – underfunded by \$36,137

OCWM – underfunded by \$3,301.67

Carol Challenge Matching Funds - \$5,271.50

### **CAROL LYKENS FILL-THE-HAT GIVING CHALLENGE**

We did it! Thank you to everyone who donated. Carol would be proud! If you are able, please consider an extra donation to help us reduce the \$36,137 budget deficit. Many thanks!

### **JANUARY SPEAKER SERIES**

#### **“NEW YEAR REBOOT: CONNECTING MIND, BODY & SPIRIT FOR A HEALTHIER YOU**

Remember last year saying, in the immortal words of Steve Erkel, “Did I do that?” Over-eating, over-stressing, and plopping on the couch to watch all those Christmas movies left you feeling sluggish, remorseful (another 5 pounds?!), and determined to make a change. Here’s your chance!

Stewardship has found two practitioners who can help. A certified yoga instructor will lead us in some mindfulness practices and gentle, standing or sitting yoga moves (no equipment required). We also have a highly qualified Qigong instructor to explain and lead us in this ancient Chinese practice to promote health and well-being through simple movements and breathing. Anyone can do it! And some of us already have had the good fortune of experiencing these instructors’ practices.

So, treat yourself! Focus on your health and well-being on **SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 PM** in the Social Hall. Please wear comfortable clothing. This is an **ADULTS ONLY** event.

### **CHURCH SCHOOL**

Attention all children ages 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade! Church School is held the **THIRD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH from 11:00 AM TO NOON**. The focus is on God’s love in us and through us and showing compassion for others, as well as Bible stories. The kids love it!

### **LOCAL MISSION OPPORTUNITY – DECEMBER 23**

Shenkel folks are caring individuals who want to help those in need. We yearn to make a difference, but sometimes don't know where to start. Here is an opportunity to show you care: The **4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month**, a handful of our members help serve a **Community Lunch at Christ Episcopal in Pottstown**. At that time, Pastor Suzanne brings 70 salty and sweet snacks that are given out at lunch. These are purchased at Giant using the Giant gift cards that we also sell at church. These caring volunteers would love to welcome more helpers! You can serve lunch from 11:30-1:00, and/or go earlier to help sort food donations and prepare dessert trays. Don't worry—Shenkel is not responsible for the meal as we were years ago. We are simply willing helpers who are there to do whatever tasks need to be done.

### **HAVE A FUNDRAISING IDEA?**

Share it with the Stewardship Committee. Members are Chris Gray, Julie Zachesky, Kim Yocom, Dan Jenkins, and Brenda Berriker.

### **GIANT AND REDNER'S GIFT CARDS**

You're doing a great job! This is an easy way to raise money for our church. Purchase your cards Sunday mornings or in the Church Office Tuesday-Thursday, between 9:00 and 1:30. Thanks for doing your part!

### **ONLINE GIVING/QR CODE**

It's easier than ever to catch up on your giving to support and sustain our church. Just go to [www.shenkelucc.org](http://www.shenkelucc.org), open up Online Giving, and choose where you want your donations to go. Simple! In addition, QR codes are in the pews and will be on the table in the grove for an easy, fast way of contributing. Thank you in advance for your continuing support of your church.

### **PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

This committee is tasked with supporting the Pastor as well as bringing to her any concerns of the congregation. Information discussed is confidential. Members are Sandy Rowe, Brenda Berriker, and Dan Jenkins. Please feel free to discuss any joys or concerns you have with any member of this committee.

### **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

Isabelle Chidawu	12/4/24	Jim Faust	12/22/24
Mari O'Drain	12/4/24	Josh Palubinsky	12/23/24
John Jonides	12/8/24	TJ Augustine III	12/24/24
Abigail Dise	12/9/24	Jeffrey Luckenbach	12/26/24
Analexis Foss	12/15/24		
Verna Walters	12/15/24		
Judith Gergle	12/20/24		
Betty Bortz	12/21/24		
Bonnie Cox	12/21/24		

## **DECEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY**

Dec 1

Stephanie and Jace Horonzy  
Stacey, Bill and Aurora Keim  
Michael Kulp  
Steve Craner  
Julie and Bill Zachesky

Dec 8

Steven and Kim Bade  
Noah Bradley  
Joel Sweinhart  
Christian, Mari and Connor O'Drain  
Aaron Gray

Dec 15

Joyce Pashley  
David, Lynn and Katherine Derman  
Danielle Petersen  
Karl Metka  
Marie Bade

Dec 22

TJ Augustine  
Jesse Painter  
Roberta Peterman  
Pat Kuestner  
Judy Miller

Dec 29

Collin Gray  
Dan and Rosemary Wolgemuth  
Joan Granger  
Heather Burhans Tran  
Suzanne Spaulding

## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Kimberly Yocom	1/4/25
Susan Miller	1/5/25
Barry Peterman	1/5/25
Olivia Dushanko	1/9/25
James Heath	1/10/25
Brandon Foss	1/13/25
Freda Wanner	1/13/25
Delia Sanseverino	1/18/25
Mike Martin	1/21/25
Aurora Keim	1/22/25
David Braley	1/24/25
David Klein	1/24/25
Eric Klein	1/27/25
Joseph Bradley	1/29/25
Suzanne Spaulding	1/30/25

## JANUARY PRAYER LOTTERY

Jan 5

Elizabeth, James, Zoey, Henry and Molly Carr  
Barbara Sweinhart  
Freda Wanner  
Barbara Brown  
Clay Zachesky

Jan 12

Clayton, Katerina, Maxine and Bellamy Brewer  
Lucas Zachesky  
Michaela Craner  
Lilly Keim  
Drew Sweinhart

Jan 19

Kelly Strunk, Steve, Madeline and Jacoby Mest  
Louise Hine  
Scott Kutz  
Rachel Berriker  
Anthony Gulotta

Jan 26

Erika, Kyle and Gio Manetti  
Ashlyn Augustine  
Donald Laverty  
Tesia Craner  
Jim and Elaine Bevan

Merry Christmas, Everyone!

Your Shenkel Happenings Editor,

Brenda Berriker

\*\*If you need to reach me by email, please contact me at [Brenda.berriker@gmail.com](mailto:Brenda.berriker@gmail.com) instead of the AOL address. Thanks!