



# *Shenkel United Church of Christ*



*December*

2021

SHENKEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
1580 Shenkel Road  
Pottstown, PA 19465

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



# DECEMBER

# 2021

**Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat**

|   |                  |   |  |   |  |                  |
|---|------------------|---|--|---|--|------------------|
|                        |                  | <p><b>1</b></p> <p>Bible Study<br/>on Zoom<br/>7 pm</p>   | <p><b>2</b></p>  | <p><b>3</b></p>   | <p><b>4</b></p>  |                  |
| <p><b>5</b></p> <p>Reflective Service<br/>8:30 am<br/>Traditional<br/>service 9:45 am<br/>Communion</p> | <p><b>6</b></p>  | <p><b>7</b></p> <p>Consistory<br/>6:30 pm</p>   | <p><b>8</b></p> <p>Bible Study<br/>on Zoom<br/>7 pm</p>  | <p><b>9</b></p>   | <p><b>10</b></p>   | <p><b>11</b></p> |
| <p><b>12</b></p> <p>Reflective Service<br/>8:30 am<br/>Traditional<br/>service 9:45 am</p>              | <p><b>13</b></p> | <p><b>14</b></p> <p>Consistory<br/>6:30 pm</p>  | <p><b>15</b></p> <p>Bible Study<br/>on Zoom<br/>7 pm</p> | <p><b>16</b></p> <p>Agape at<br/>Freda<br/>Wanner's<br/>home at<br/>6:30 pm</p> | <p><b>17</b></p>   | <p><b>18</b></p> |
| <p><b>19</b></p> <p>Reflective Service<br/>8:30 am<br/>Traditional<br/>service 9:45 am</p>              | <p><b>20</b></p> | <p><b>21</b></p> <p>Mid-Day<br/>Dinner Club –<br/>noon at Yellow<br/>House Hotel<br/><br/>Longest Night<br/>service at 7 pm</p> | <p><b>22</b></p> <p>Bible Study<br/>on Zoom<br/>7 pm</p> | <p><b>23</b></p>  | <p><b>24</b></p> <p>Christmas Eve<br/>Services<br/>3 pm &amp; 8 pm</p> | <p><b>25</b></p> |
| <p><b>26</b></p> <p>Reflective Service<br/>8:30 am<br/>Traditional<br/>service 9:45 am</p>              | <p><b>27</b></p> | <p><b>28</b></p>  | <p><b>29</b></p> <p>Bible Study<br/>on Zoom<br/>7 pm</p> | <p><b>30</b></p>  | <p><b>31</b></p>   |                  |

# Shenkel United Church of Christ

## CHURCH STAFF

Pastor  
Rev. Suzanne Spaulding

Organist:  
Susan Royer

Music Director  
Dan Wolgemuth

Office Administrator:  
Lisa Dice

Sexton:  
Stacey Keim

## COVENANTED MINISTER IN MISSION

Rev. Wanda D. Craner,  
Gestalt Pastoral Care  
Minister and Trainer  
Gestalt Pastoral Care  
Associates

## CONSISTORY

President:  
Randy Berriker

Vice President:  
Gary McDermit

Secretary:  
Dan Jenkins

Treasurer:  
Ken Bevan

Financial Secretary:  
Joan Palubinsky

Elder  
Randy Berriker

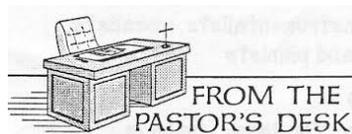
Deacons:  
Dan Jenkins  
Gary McDermit  
Pat Kuestner  
Tony Gulotta  
Chris Gray  
Kelly Strunk

## MINISTERS

All the members  
of the church

1580 Shenkel Road, Pottstown PA 19465 610.326.3535

Email: shenkelucc@aol.com www.shenkelucc.org



As I write this newsletter, it is Thanksgiving week, I have just returned from an amazing retreat experience at Holy Cross Monastery in New York State, and I'm thinking about Advent. One of the monks told me that at the monastery they don't have any signs of Christmas during Advent. They put up the tree on the third Sunday of Advent but don't decorate the tree until December 24. Then they keep the season of Christmas, singing the carols and reading the Christmas texts up through January 6 which is Epiphany. Their celebration sounds very counter-cultural in a world where money is always the bottom line, where very often the Christmas decorations mix in with the Halloween candy and stores don't allow their employees even a full Thanksgiving Day off work.

Granted, Advent is a liturgical season, having to do with the church. We don't really expect businesses to understand or even to wait with us for the Light to come. I think the question for us 'church' people is "How do we hold the two worldviews in balance?" We live in the midst of all the hype of Black Friday shopping and Christmas decorations in November. We are bombarded with advertising to make us think we need to buy more and more gifts for our friends and loved ones. At the same time we are called during the season of Advent to pause, to wait, and to relish the anticipation of the Light descending at Christmas.

It's a challenge, and not a new one. The Apostle Paul wrote to believers in Rome: "Do not be conformed to this world..." I understand him to be saying, "Don't just unthinkingly go along with all that the people around you do, how they act, and the things they say." This is certainly an easier way to live; going along with the culture. Instead, Paul urges, and Eugene Peterson translates in the *Message*: "Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out." That's a challenge for our faith every day of our lives, not just during Advent!

The monks at Holy Cross Monastery fix their attention on God by holding 5 services every day; Matins at 7 am, Eucharist at 9 am, Diurnum at noon, Vespers at 5 pm and Compline at 8 pm. How do you fix your attention on God? Maybe you have a morning prayer ritual or an evening one. Maybe you pause at your lunch hour to pray or read a devotional or some Scripture. Maybe you go for a run or a walk, and that is your prayer time to listen to God and tell God your troubles. We can't all be monks in a monastery, yet we can all do small things throughout our days that help us to fix our attention on God and allow the Spirit to continuously transform us to be more like Jesus.

It's Advent, a time of waiting. It's also a busy holiday season in our culture. So during this Advent/Christmas season remember to pause, take a breath, say a prayer of thanks and for a moment, fix your attention on God.

Advent/Christmas blessings in abundance,  
Pastor Suzanne

### November Consistory Highlights

- ◆ A UV Light system is being installed on the Sanctuary HVAC system so that we can begin to hold services in the Sanctuary. Revised COVID Protocols for the Sanctuary were approved and sent to all members.
- ◆ Consistory approved the painting of both the Pastor's and Secretary's offices. The effort should be accomplished at minimal cost.
- ◆ \$1,000 from our 2018 Mission and Service Allocation was donated to Al's Heart Warming Center in Pottstown. The Center provides services to the homeless in Pottstown.
- ◆ The Current Budget continues a deficit as of the end of October. Consistory asks that our members and friends consider what each of us can do to help reverse this situation.

### LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Christmas can be a painful time for some individuals. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult.

The constant refrain on radio and television, in shopping malls and churches about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation—all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and shopping.

We need the opportunity and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. We need to know that we are not alone.

Our spirits sink, as days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us.

For these reasons, a special "Longest Night" Service is being offered on Tuesday, December 21, at 7:00 p.m. Come and join us in sharing and hearing prayers, Scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness.

Everyone, regardless of church background (or lack of it), is welcome. Please extend an invitation to your friends, neighbors and colleagues.



# This Month at Shenkel UCC

## Mid-Day Dinner Club

*Our next event will be on*

*December 21 at Yellow House Hotel*

The Mid-day Dinner Club meets at 12 noon on the third Tuesday of each month and you're invited! It is open to young-at-heart adults of any age who enjoy eating out and would like to get to know other Shenkel members a little better. If you are attending, please add your name and phone number on the plate on the table no later than the Sunday before the lunch so your reservation can be made on time or you may call Sharon Sabo at 610-326-1945 by Sunday, December 19 or let her know at the Sunday service if you are able to attend.

**Pottstown Cluster.** We will be starting to collect items again for the Pottstown Cluster. This month's items are mouthwash, toothpaste (kids and regular. Please place your items in the bin marked for the Cluster. We will be collecting each week and items will change on a monthly basis.

Shenkel's collection assignment for the Cluster's Christmas meal this year is 200 cans of corn. Start looking for those sales now. Deadline to donate is Sunday, December 12. For Christmas, we are also collecting gifts for children ages newborn to 17 years old. The gifts can be unwrapped or a gift card. Deadline to contribute is also Sunday, December 12. Thank you!

## LUMINARIES....

We will be selling luminaries again this year to light our way into church Christmas Eve. This has become a lovely Shenkel tradition. You can sponsor one or two or five....or as many as you like! Look for the order envelopes in the Narthex, complete your envelope(s) and either put them in the offering plate, give them to Gloria Mest, or return them to the church office. The last day to order is Sunday, December 19th. Cost is \$5 each or 3 for \$10.



## *Christmas Story Time Tea*

This event originally scheduled for Thursday, December 9th has been canceled due to the uprising numbers of Covid cases.

### **2021 Special Holiday Worship Opportunities**

(In addition to Reflective service at 8:30 am and The Traditional service at 9:45 am each Sunday morning in Shenkel's sanctuary.)



#### **Tuesday, December 21, 7 PM — Longest Night**

A time of worship designed to offer hope and healing for those struggling to find joy during this holiday season.



#### **Saturday, December 24, 3 PM — Christmas Eve Worship**

Worship designed for families with children. Includes familiar carols, light sticks, and a presentation of the Christmas story.



#### **Saturday, December 24, 8 PM — Christmas Eve Worship**

A traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service with communion and festive Christmas music.

### **December Special Offering—Christmas Fund**

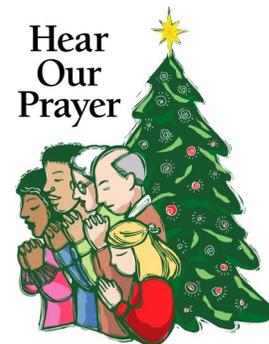
*The Christmas Fund provides assistance dollars in situations of critical need, including Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks to lower-income retired UCC pastors. Your gift will help to brighten the life of one of God’s servants who is facing a moment of personal need. For more information, go to <http://psec.org/resources/psec-documents/all-saints-sunday>.*



|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Isabelle Chidawu   | 12/04 |
| Kortne Hudick      | 12/04 |
| Mari O'Drain       | 12/04 |
| John Jonides       | 12/08 |
| Abigail Dise       | 12/09 |
| Analexis Foss      | 12/15 |
| Verna Walters      | 12/15 |
| Gillian Caplan     | 12/18 |
| Judith Gergle      | 12/20 |
| Betty Bortz        | 12/21 |
| Jim Faust          | 12/22 |
| Timothy Klein      | 12/22 |
| Josh Palubinsky    | 12/23 |
| TJ Augustine III   | 12/24 |
| Anna Bevan         | 12/26 |
| Jeffrey Luckenbach | 12/26 |
| Addison Markley    | 12/28 |

**During the month of December, Shenkel UCC will be praying for these randomly selected members and friends of our congregation:**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 12/5  | David Phillips<br>Judy Gergle<br>Roberta Peterman<br>Carol Lykens<br>Betsy and Ken Bevan                      |
| 12/12 | Kim Yocom and Barry Peterman<br>Sharon and John Sabo<br>Ashlyn Augustine<br>Verna Walters<br>Lilly Keim       |
| 12/19 | Gary McDermitt<br>Mark Dushanko<br>Joyce Pashley<br>Lexi Foss<br>Brooke Miller                                |
| 12/26 | Louise Hine<br>Lori and Kaya Skulski and Jordon<br>Gerhardt-Skulski<br>Kay Ellis<br>Gloria Mest<br>Marie Bade |



# Holy Communion

Shenkel UCC celebrates the sacrament of Holy Communion at both services on the first Sunday of the month.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**December 12, 2021**

| As of October 31, 2021 | Current Fund |           |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| ACTUAL                 | Month        | YTD       |
| Opening Bal.           | (8,529)      | 6,546     |
| Giving                 | 11,133       | 107,622   |
| Expenses               | (14,600)     | (141,470) |
| Subtotal               | (11,996)     | (27,302)  |
| Rent Income            | 1,700        | 17,000    |
| Other                  | 1            | 6         |
| Ending Balance         | (10,296)     | (10,295)  |
| Net Chg                | (1,766)      | (16,841)  |
| <b>BUDGET</b>          |              |           |
| Giving                 | 14,591       | 145,910   |
| Over (Under)           | (3,458)      | (38,288)  |

*If you are looking for nontraditional gifts for those close to you, consider browsing our Living Gift Market! You can give living gifts like goats or cows, which will help families start their journey toward self-reliance by supplying them with nutritious milk to drink, share and sell.*

Join us for the first Heifer International Living Gift Market at Shenkel U.C.C. on Sunday, December 12 following the 8:30 and 9:45 services. For more information about gift items, please visit <https://www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/get-involved/faith/living-gift-market.html>.

| Our Church's Wider Mission |          |            |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|
| October 31, 2021           | Month    | YTD        |
| Actual                     | 767.00   | 8,55000    |
| Budget                     | 1,000.00 | 10,000.00  |
| Over (under)               | (233.00) | (1,450.00) |