

SHENKEL HAPPENINGS – NOVEMBER 2025

Greetings, Shenkel Friends and Family!

How do you respond when someone asks, “How are you doing?” It’s often the store cashier just being polite, so you probably respond, “Good, and how about you?” Or maybe it’s a casual friend, not someone you’re comfortable with revealing your messy life to because who really wants to hear that you’re mad at your spouse/partner/friend/kids or there’s not much in your checking account? In a recent sermon, Pastor Suzanne related that someone’s friend always responded, “I’m grateful.” Well now, that got my attention. God knows—and I really mean that-- there’s a lot to worry about these days! But saying, “I’m grateful” changes the narrative. It brings the focus back to what is good in your messy life. So, guess what I did? I tried it out on a cashier at Boscov’s. To be honest, we had the typical how are you/good back and forth, but then I said, “You know what? I’ve been waiting to say this.... I’m grateful.” Did I feel comfortable doing it at first? Not really. Did it stop me? No again. Did I weigh whether I thought she would be receptive to the response? Yep, because who really wants to be thought of as, well, unconventional, right? And this woman smiled and responded, “Yes, we are so blessed.” Even though her life was no doubt messy, too, for just a moment, she could focus on what she valued and appreciated.

In this season of giving thanks, let us remember all the reasons to respond, “I am grateful.”

Now let’s see what is happening at your church!

WORSHIP SERVICES

You have two convenient choices for worship each Sunday:

1. **REFLECTIVE SERVICE AT 8:30 AM**, a good choice if you prefer no music and time for discussion and reflection, and
2. **TRADITIONALISH SERVICE AT 9:45 AM**. You’ll 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 are really appreciating.

PLEASE NOTE: On the Third Sunday of each month, there is one service held in Fellowship Hall where we gather for worship around tables. People love the casual atmosphere!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **NOVEMBER 16 at 9:45 AM – COMBINED SERVICE and CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**– There will be a Congregational Meeting after the service in Fellowship Hall to act on a proposal to fund the Current Fund deficit. Please

make this a priority! Feel free to bring a snack or lunch item to share, if you want. Drinks will be provided.

- **NOVEMBER 15 – “JOY TO YOUR WORLD...WHEN IT’S NOT QUITE THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR.”** For many of us, the holidays can be stressful, sad, disappointing, and lonely. We understand! We are fortunate to have Jane Buhl, a retired family therapist, as Stewardship’s November speaker to address some of the ways to manage holidays stressors. You won’t want to miss this!
- **NOVEMBER 23 at 5:00 PM - COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SOUP SUPPER -** Gather with your Shenkel and Temple UMC friends for our annual soup and bread supper. We need an accurate head count, so please sign up in the narthex and indicate whether you are bringing a soup, bread, or dessert. Additionally, we are collecting canned goods, non-perishable food items, or monetary donations to help stock the Coventry Food Pantry.
- **NOVEMBER 29 at 9:00 AM –** It’s time break out your Christmas spirit and help decorate our sanctuary and social hall for Advent and Christmas. We need lots of help from our Shenkel elves! Hope to see you there!
- **NOVEMBER 30 – COMMUNITY LABYRINTH WALK –** Pastor Suzanne will offer some food for thought as you walk the labyrinth after the late worship service at 11:00 AM. Come experience the calming, centering possibilities of walking the labyrinth in community!
- **DECEMBER 21 after the 9:45 AM SERVICE –** It’s cookie time! Join us after the service for cookies and Christmas Carols. What a fun way to put yourself in the Christmas spirit with your Shenkel friends! Bring your favorite cookie to share (homemade is nice, but if you’re like me and baking isn’t your thing, Costco will do!) Just come and enjoy!
- **DECEMBER 21 at 7:00 PM – LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE -** We are surrounded by messages telling us that Christmas is a time for joyous family gatherings, parties, and laughter. In reality, many people struggle this time of year due to ongoing grief, mental health challenges, or addictions. Add to that the news of nationwide uncertainty and war in the Middle East and Ukraine, and it can all be overwhelming. And so, we come together on the longest night of the year to name our struggles, draw comfort from the presence of others, and see the grace of God for these difficult days. Let’s help each other find peace.

- **DECEMBER 24 AT 7:00 PM** - The beautiful candlelit sanctuary is the stage for our celebration of Jesus' birth. There is no better way to immerse yourself in the true meaning of Christmas than by spending an hour surrounded with peace and joy on Christmas Eve. I hope to see each of you there!
- **DECEMBER 28 at 9:00 AM – ONE SERVICE TODAY** – Fellowship is hosting a breakfast with service to follow at 9:45 AM. Please bring a breakfast item to share. Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided.
- **JANUARY 10 – SECOND ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S REBOOT** – This event was a huge success last year, and we heard your pleas to offer it again. There will be some new surprises that we are very excited about, so keep watching for details!

CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

- We have changed Shenkel's internet and phone plan with Comcast and will be saving over \$130 each month.
- During December, the congregation will have the opportunity to purchase gift cards for the residents at Bethany Children's Home. Watch for the Giving Tree in the Narthex.

CHURCH SCHOOL

Our youngest Shenkel learners meet for Sunday School on the **third Sunday of each month from 11:00-12:00**. They are learning about God's love and the life of Jesus. Each lesson includes music and singing (thank you, Susan Royer!), a Bible story, craft, and snack. Our group has grown this year, and we are always looking for new friends to join us! Please spread the word. Our next meeting is Sunday, November 16th. Future meetings are December 21, January 18, February 15, March 15, and May 17.

CLUSTER THANKSGIVING MEAL KITS – The Pottstown Cluster is organizing Thanksgiving Meal Kits to provide 800 meals for area residents. Shenkel is participating by collecting boxes of instant potatoes, and our goal is 300 boxes! We will be gathering them until November 16 and, as usual, they will be displayed on the altar rails in the sanctuary. This is one of the ways we can show our caring and generosity to those in need!

CAROL LYKENS FILL-THE-HAT CHALLENGE

GOOD NEWS: **We have met \$3,070 of our \$5,000 goal!** You have until December 31st to participate in the second year of our five-year challenge where \$5,000 of Carol's generous bequest will be used to help fund our current budget. Here is your challenge:

Commented [b1]:

We encourage you to make an additional Fill-the-Hat Challenge donation to the Current Fund beyond your usual giving. Our goal is to match Carol's bequest of \$5,000 to help us meet our budget, which is currently underfunded. Last year, you hit the mark and then some!! Great job! Please give what you can and generously if you are able. Make checks payable to Shenkel UCC and in the memo line write "Carol Challenge". If you are making an online donation, you'll find it on our website. We only have \$1,930 'til we reach our goal!! We can do it!!

YOCOM GROVE LANDSCAPING FUND

The times when volunteers were plentiful and eager to put their backs into taking care of our properties are long gone. This means we must pay for much of the work that needs to be done for upkeep and repairs. To address this need, the Yocom family has generously started a fund to pay for mowing and to maintain the grove and labyrinth. Feel free to contribute as you are able!

STEWARDSHIP

- Qigong classes are in full swing with Salil on **Thursdays at 11:00 AM in the Social Hall**. Everyone is loving Salil's calm presence as he teaches us the gentle movements used for centuries to improve health, reduce stress, and keep us in the present moment. Please wear comfortable clothing. There will be a charge of \$12.00 per class payable by cash or check, which Salil has kindly asked be donated to our church. And remember to bring a friend!
- We're always looking for new ideas for our Speaker Series! Do you have a particular topic you'd like to explore? Know someone (community member, college professor, friend, to name a few) who could present a 1-to-2-hour program on a topic of interest? Please let anyone from Stewardship know your thoughts: Chris Gray, Dan Jenkins, Julie Zachesky, Kim Yocom, or Brenda Berriker.

FOSS FAMILY THANK YOU

Andrew and I would like to thank our church family for all the love and support, prayers, and gift cards **and meals** we received during his recent surgery. Words cannot express how much the gift cards were appreciated. Luckily Andrew's surgery was not as severe as they had anticipated. That being said, he will have to have his other knee done within the next year. Your support has meant the world to us. We love you all.

CLUSTER NEEDS

NOVEMBER: Bar soap

DECEMBER: Peanut butter and jelly

LOCAL MISSION OPPORTUNITY

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 **4th Monday of each month**, a handful of our members help serve a **Community Lunch at Christ Episcopal in Pottstown**. Our church is an active participant in this local mission. 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.

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, 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. My term was up in April, so present members are Sandy Rowe, Dan Jenkins, and Tootie Hine. Please feel free to discuss any joys or concerns you have with any member of this committee.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Cole Major	11/5/25
Louise Hine	11/6/25
Alex Mocarski	11/6/25
Joe Palubinsky	11/7/25
Homer Royer	11/8/25
Kaleena Sweinhart	11/8/25

Madeline Mest	11/15/25
John Sabo	11/16/25
Peter Wanner	11/17/25
Clair Faust	11/19/25
Ben Mocarski	11/21/25
Tracy Dise	11/25/25
AJ Foss	11/25/25
Linda Foss	11/28/25
Mindy Chidawu	11/30/25

NOVEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY

Nov 2

Tracy Dise
Sharon and John Sabo
Joe and Joan Palubinsky
Henry and Carole Bailey
Randy and Brenda Berriker

Nov 9

Ashlyn Augustine
Gloria Mest
Sandy Rowe
David Klein
Stephanie and Jace Horonzy

Nov 16

Ron and Carol Pearson
Nicole, Scott and Tully Meehan
Lucas Zachesky
Louise Hine
Josh Palubinsky

Nov 23

Julianne Wanner
Jennifer Braley
Laura Golden
Abigail Dise
Steve Craner

Nov 30

Kaleena Sweinhart
Joyce Pashley
Lori and Kaya Sluski (spelling?)

Stacey, Bill and Aurora Keim
Lilly Keim

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Isabelle Chidawu	12/4/25
Mari O'Drain	12/4/25
John Jonides	12/8/25
Abigail Dise	12/9/25
Analexis Foss	12/15/25
Verna Walters	12/15/25
Judith Gergle	12/20/25
Betty Bortz	12/21/25
Bonnie Cox	12/21/25
Jim Faust	12/22/25
Josh Palubinsky	12/23/25
TJ Augustine III	12/24/25

DECEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY

Dec 7
Kim Yocom and Barry Peterman
Jim and Clair Faust
Maryln Rohrbach
Danielle Petersen
Verna Walters

Dec 14
Gary and Susan Stultz
Peter and Adrianne Wanner
Joan Granger
Jesse Painter
Rachel Berriker

Dec 21
Judy Gergle
Cara Bevan
Connie Armbruster
Collin Gray
Anthony Gulotta

Dec 28
Ben Mocarski
BJ Peterman

Eric Klein
Roberta Peterman
Betty Bortz

Happy Thanksgiving!
Your Shenkel Happenings Editor,
Brenda Berriker

