

SHENKEL HAPPENINGS - SEPTEMBER 2026

Greetings, Shenkel Friends and Family!

I don't know about you, but I've had times in my life—sometimes long stretches--when I feel like I've lost my center. Maybe you can relate. When I'm centered, I know that all will be well, that I can look at situations, people, and the world with compassion, love, forgiveness, and hope. It's a knowing that things are messy, but they'll get better. It's a knowing and a feeling that Love undergirds everything. Sadness, grief, hurts, worries, and unanswered prayers can trigger this feeling of disconnection. At its worst, the hole is dug so deeply it's hard to climb out.

It seems rather obvious, being a Christian and a pray-er and all, but I've noticed that when I skip the morning reading and centering prayer time in favor of checking the often scary news, emails, and doing Wordle and Connections to kickstart my brain, my perspective tilts towards worry, regret, and fear. Richard Rohr, a present-day theologian and prolific writer, puts it this way:

"Love, like forgiveness, is a decision. It's a decision in our minds and in our hearts. And we'd better make it early in the day, because once we're a few hours into low-level resentment, anger, or disappointment, it's too late. When we're not choosing love, we'll use any excuse to be unhappy or irritated...Unhappiness just needs an object—as do happiness and love. We have to recognize ahead of time when we're not living in love. This is surely why a morning prayer practice is so important—to allow us to choose to love each and every day."

So, I'm regaining my center by making time for God's Love to work in me and through me. To trust God's Love. To pray for people in a way that surrounds them in God's Love. I invite you to join me!

Now, let's see what is happening at your church!

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- Join us in our beautiful, rustic worship area **SUNDAYS at 9:45 AM in the Grove.**
- **FINAL OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE and BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS – SEPTEMBER 27 at 9:45 AM** – Calling all pet lovers! Bring your favorite pet to receive a blessing from Pastor Suzanne! In the past we've had dogs, cats, and a bunny who was a big hit! Please bring your pets on a leash or in a kennel. Refreshments will be served after the service.
- **WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY – OCTOBER 4**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 from 10:00 to NOON - SCAM ALERT!** We have a speaker from the FBI coming to discuss ways to avoid being a victim of scams, how to protect your identity, and much more critical information to keep you safe from criminals trying to hijack your money and peace of mind. Bring your friends and family! We will be posting this information on Facebook and have flyers available for you to post at local businesses and gathering places. Please help us spread the word!

CHURCH SCHOOL

Calling all children ages 3 through 6th grade! Beginning **SEPTEMBER 20, 11:00 AM TO NOON**, and continuing the third Sunday of each month, children will gather downstairs to learn all about our faith. Spread the word! Bring your friends!

TIME-SENSITIVE OPPORTUNITY!

We have a collection of Bibles in the hallway across from the Agape Room that need your attention. Many are dedicated to people who may have been special to you. You have until **SEPTEMBER 27** to claim them before they are donated. Feel free to take as many as you'd like!

CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

- **FACILITIES RENTAL** – Shenkel will be renting space in the Fellowship Hall and designated downstairs classroom from September 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027 to New Earth Traditions (a homeschool enrichment group). In addition, they will be conducting activities in the Grove and Pavillion. Any questions regarding New Earth and Shenkel's agreement should be directed to Julie Zachesky. We welcome New Earth and are glad we can better utilize our existing spaces. The Wayfarer's group has elected to move their classes to another facility. We thank them for their careful stewardship of Shenkel's facility.
- **FINANCIAL AUDIT** - Consistory completed an audit of Shenkel's financial accounts and are pleased to announce that all of Shenkel's accounts are in order and no exceptions have been identified. Many thanks to Ken Bevan and his tireless efforts as our Shenkel Treasurer.
- **INTERIM DIRECTOR OF MUSIC** - Susan Royer has been appointed Interim Director of Music to fill in for Dan Wogelmuth until December 31, 2026. Our

prayers are with Dan and Rose as they navigate Dan's medical situation.

STEWARDSHIP

- Join us **Thursdays at 11:00 AM in the Social Hall** for Qigong, led by our amazing teacher, Salil Gutt. Qigong's gentle movements have been used for centuries to improve health, reduce stress, and keep us in the present moment. Please wear comfortable clothing. The suggested fee is \$12.00 per class payable by cash or check, but if that is prohibitive, pay what you are able. Adults only, please.
- Along with presenting interesting events to help people in the community know who we are, Stewardship is also tasked with coming up with fundraising ideas. If you know of anyone who needs a rental space for picnics, meetings, showers or birthday/anniversary parties, have them call the church office for information. Every little bit helps! And this has proven to be a very good moneymaker for our church.
- 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, Mo or Tom Gallant, or Brenda Berriker.

LOCAL MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

- **COMMUNITY MEAL** - 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.
- **MISSION FIRST - OCTOBER 9 from 3:00 TO 5:00 PM – HIGH TEA FUNDRAISER** – What makes a high tea special? China, silverware, and linen.

Assorted loose leaf brewed teas. Tea sandwiches. Multiple dessert choices, and warm, fresh baked scones with butter, jam, or lemon curd. Sample one of everything! Donation \$30 per person. Gather your friends and book a table for four or six. Reservations are a must! Contact Sue Meloy at skmeloy52@gmail.com.

Mission First, located on High Street in Pottstown does much more than fill holiday food boxes. They maintain a not-so-little food pantry on the street and keep it filled for those whose food budgets don't stretch far enough. They have a clothes closet, open M, T, W, F mornings providing clothing and hygiene products to those who need them. On Wednesday evenings, they serve a community meal. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, they provide space to Street Medicine for a health clinic. They also provide Baskets of Hope filled with linens, cleaning supplies, etc. for families moving from shelters into more stable housing. There's a lot going on! For detailed information, go to www.missionfirstpottstown.org.

How can you help this amazing outreach to neighbors who need help?

- Donate needed items. In-season clothes in good condition and hygiene products are always welcome. For items needed, check the website.
- Volunteer to help out. Needs vary from day to day, but are mostly Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Drivers to pick up donated food are always needed. For more information, contact Sue Meloy at skmeloy52@gmail.com.

REQUEST FOR ALL FACEBOOK USERS

Stewardship is working hard to put together interesting and timely speaker series events, but we may not be getting the word out. So, if you are on Facebook, please follow Shenkel UCC and look for any posts on upcoming events that Julie Zachesky has so faithfully been creating and posting. Then share it on your own personal FB page. We need to reach as many people as we can, and this is an easy way for you to use social media to let people know about our events. BETTER YET: Personally invite your friends and neighbors—it works! Thank you for your help!

SHENKEL PRAYER GROUP

Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and celebrate the Spirit of God moving among us as we pray together. The group meets at **10:00 AM on the first Monday** of the month. All are welcome to participate!

CLUSTER NEEDS

SEPTEMBER: Salt and Pepper, common spices

OCTOBER: Razor blades and shaving cream

YOCOM FAMILY LANDSCAPING FUND FOR THE GROVE

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. Please contribute as you are able!

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. Members are Dan Jenkins and Tootie Hine. Please feel free to discuss any joys or concerns you have with any member of this committee.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Mark Dushanko	9/5/26
Clay Zachesky	9/5/26
Glen Bradley	9/8/26
Sherri Mocarski	9/9/26
Collin Gray	9/11/26
Connie Armbruster	9/16/26
Catherine Dyott	9/19/26
Heather Burhans Tran	9/20/26
Chris Gray	9/21/26
Tesia Craner	9/23/26
Ronald Pearson	9/24/26

SEPTEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY

Sept 6

Linda and John Jonides

Bonnie Cox

Stacy, Bill and Aurora Keim

Jess, Adam, Lucy and Jordan Hartzell

Sept 13

Susan and Homer Royer

Cameron Dushanko

Olivia Dushanko

Bob and Sherri Mocarski

Sept 20

Mindy, Isabelle, and Sela Chidawu

Kaleena Sweinhart

Erika Burhans-Price and Kim Price

Steven and Kim Bade

Sept 27

Tootie Hine

Jennifer Braley

Ted and Chris Gray

Suzanne Spaulding

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Glen Hoff 10/2/26

Joe Granger 10/5/26

Forrest Kreiger 10/5/26

Sharon Snyder 10/6/26

Adrienne Wanner 10/7/26

David Phillips 10/8/26

William Zachesky 10/10/26

Susan Stultz 10/12/26

Stacia Bradley 10/13/26

Aaron Foss 10/14/26

Danielle Petersen 10/17/26

Maureen Gallant 10/19/26

Roberta Peterman 10/20/26

Cameron Duhanko 10/23/26

Betsy Bevan 10/28/26

Jacoby Mest 10/29/26

Aaron Gray

10/31/26

OCTOBER PRAYER LOTTERY

October 4

Barbara Sweinhart

Christian, Mari and Connor O'Drain

Eric Klein

Kathy Murphy

October 11

Lilly Keim

Abigail Dise

Forrest Kreiger

Sandy Rowe

October 18

Matthew Scharneck

Daniel, Sharon, Malcolm and Amelia Snyder

Laura Golden

Randy and Brenda Berriker

October 25

Marie Bade

Lori and Kaya Skulski

Roberta Peterman

Drew Sweinhart

Happy Almost Fall!

Your Shenkel Happenings Editor,

Brenda Berriker