

# Our Spire

Volume 43 Number 10

December 2023 / January 2024



**Reaching Up  
to God,  
Reaching out  
to People**



## Pastor's Page: Be a kid at Christmas

I was in my mid-twenties when someone shared something that felt a bit sad to me in the moment. A woman well into her eighties said, "My husband and I will only set up a small Christmas tree this year."

She was sharing how much work a big tree in their living room would be. She added, "And we don't spend much time in that room. What's the point?"

A practical person, she shared the couple would enjoy a small, tabletop tree in their kitchen.

How could Christmas be turned down so much, I thought at the time.

Now, I think how truly inspiring (and informative) it was that the two seniors actually put up a tree in their home. Lights are lights, whether there are 10,000 individual lights on a towering, ten-foot tree, or less than 100 lights on a two-foot tree. Christmas doesn't have to be loud, big, or over the top.

But Christmas is Christmas.

This can make us all wonder what "Christmas is Christmas" means. As Christians, how can we experience Christmas beautifully and meaningfully? Ten-foot Christmas trees can certainly be something. I smile when I add that two-foot Christmas trees can be something, too.

Maybe there's no tree at all.

**Christmas being Christmas can be that in some sparkling, renewing, and wonderful way, we all get to be kids again—at least in part. By this, I mean we can all reenter the story of the angel Gabriel visiting Mary.**

Mary devoutly practiced her Jewish faith. She loved God. She went about her day-to-day life as we do, and as the couple I mentioned did. She had no idea of the grand plans God had for her life. She may never have even thought that God would have grand plans for her life.

This is interesting. Mary did what we can all do: she was faithful. Period. She wasn't faithful to gain or get anything other than a connection with God. She likely never said, "If I hang in there long enough, I'll get some grand reward." Like the woman who, with her husband, chose a small Christmas tree, Mary took her life and her walk with God practically. No big thrills (and no big trees).

God did to Mary what God does to all of us each Christmas. He gives. Specifically, He gives a message. The message is one of hope, peace, love and joy. We will not receive a message like the one Mary heard from the angel Gabriel, but there is message, nevertheless.

I am not sure what your message will be, but your message (like my message) will come when we let Christmas be Christmas. Large or small, grand or tall (or not so tall!), we can find the meaning and the message of Christmas by simply being present to the Word of God, and to the promises of God.

Be present. Be faithful. Be attentive. Be connected to God and God will give the joy of Himself to us.

While we will not receive what Mary received—the news of an upcoming virgin birth—we will get what Mary had, which is the feeling inside of knowing that Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, is on His way to us.

Be a kid at Christmas. Expect the wonderful—even if the wonderful comes in a brilliantly small and beautiful way.



## Making the New Year meaningful: 4 ways to let God be God



As the new year approaches, we have a reset, a turn-the-page moment.

Welcomed, unwelcomed, observed, or not so observed, we will arrive at the time of wondering what the new year will hold for us, or, how we as Christians will hold and share our love of Jesus with others.

It may begin with the word “happy.” After all, we say and hear “Happy New Year!”

World-renowned psychiatrist and existential philosopher Viktor E. Frankl, M.D., Ph.D. once referred to the pursuit of happiness. He said, “Don’t aim at success—the more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it. For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one’s dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one’s surrender to a person other than oneself. Happiness must happen, and the same holds for success: you have to let it happen by not caring about it.”

True happiness, Dr. Frankl wisely espoused, comes from relating to something greater than or someone other than yourself—a timeless, *meaning-centric* principle known also as self-transcendence. In other words, 2024 can be the start of better times if we let happiness *ensue* (in a self-transcendent way) rather than try to *pursue* it.

Christians, be aimed toward something greater! To the faithful, the something greater is, of course, God.

As we move from December into January, let God be God. Let the joy of following God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be the joy and the meaning in our lives not just at the kickoff this January but throughout the year.

### **In 2024, we can stop searching for happiness and start searching for meaning.**

To look for meaning, we can stop focusing on resolutions. Why resolutions often don't work is because they start from the outside and work in. People think about how they want to change and then are surprised when they can't sustain the hard work and dedication required to make a huge life shift.

Often people make lofty goals at this time of year that don't pan out. For example, someone who never works out hits the gym for a week only to find that such a demanding routine isn't sustainable.

I'm not saying we shouldn't try to get healthier or stop an unhealthy habit. This is important! If, however, you've struggled with sustained success, a different approach begins when we let God be God.

Our focus on God makes our lives meaningful. Here are four ways to stay focused on God.

#### **Start your day by dedicating it to God.**

Begin each day with a prayer of thanksgiving and praise. You don't even need to leave your bed to do this! Surrender your plans and goals to God. Yes, this spiritual practice can be habit forming and will help you stay focused on His will for your life rather than worrying about what lies ahead or letting the world's noise dictate your day's direction.

#### **Read the Bible daily.**

Reading scripture is the most powerful way to stay focused on God. This helps you remember His promises for your life. Set aside time to read the Bible and meditate on its words, even if it's just for a few minutes. Perhaps you'll look for what I send each Tuesday, which is the scripture intro. This centering on the text will prepare you to hear the upcoming sermon at its fullest and will help keep you grounded in Him as it will remind you of His faithfulness.



## **Making the New Year meaningful: 4 ways to let God be God Continued..**

### **Spend time in prayer.**

Take time each day to talk with God. Express your fear and gratitude. Pour your heart into Him. This will help you stay connected with God, and He will let you see your circumstances from an eternal perspective.

### **Be in a community of believers.**

Surround yourself in a community of believers. This helps you stay grounded in your faithfulness to God. And yes, participate in corporate worship. This doesn't mean "watching" worship, of course. Participating in a community of believers means reaching out specifically to those you worship with care, devotion, and love.

When we focus our attention on God, we find we dedicate ourselves to His service easily, naturally, and obviously. This focus on God makes our relationship with Him deepen. In a self-transcendent way, our joy expands. Our lives have meaning. Our direction is clear.

Scripture tells us that "those who look to Him are radiant (Psalm 34:5)." Let's let this radiance shine here in 2024! Join us for worship weekly. Be a part of our community daily.

*Dear Lord,*

*We turn to You (or return to You) at this time in this prayer. Help us hear You. Help us understand that Your love for us is not idle, and that, in turn, our love for you is not idle. Move us. Inspire us. Direct us. Call us to worship. Stay persistent with us to attend church collectively so that yes, we experience the body of Christ together.*

*You are radiant. May this radiance shine in us and through us as we follow Your Son, our Savior, by way of the Holy Spirit.*

*Amen.*



## **ATTENTION WILLING WORKERS**

**Please update your calendars. A change from the minutes:  
the next meeting of the big group of Willing Workers will be  
TUESDAY, February 6, 2024 at 1:00.**

It's what we do. It may even be what we do best. We lean on each other.

I have shared we can listen and learn from each other. When we listen and learn to intentionally hear and then understand someone, then the one heard and understood is blessed, thankful. This may sound obvious, even simple. What is neither obvious nor simple is a phrase found in Galatians 6. Here Paul, the author of Galatians, mentions "the law of Christ."

Scholars offer different insights into what, exactly, is this law of Christ. What most biblical experts agree on is "the law of Christ" likely refers to the two commandments Christ Jesus shares: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Paul argues that the law given to Moses at Sinai does not speak specifically to those who believe in Christ. Paul then appeals to the Galatians. He advises his listeners to hold to a Christ-like mindset by walking in the Spirit, and being led by the Spirit. A way to walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit is to lean on each other. When we lean on each other, we listen and we learn. When we listen, learn and lean on each other, misunderstandings are overcome. Connections that may have been shaky are solid. Joy that seemed so far away is suddenly close and shareable.

In an October 2014 online article titled, "When You Don't Understand, Lean on Jesus," Ernest Angley speaks to leaning on Jesus, particularly when it comes to listening and to learning. Angley doesn't say this outright but suggests the best listener we can learn from is Jesus Himself.

Angley shares peacekeeping wisdom, yet I respectfully disagree with him when he writes, "You can bring troubles upon yourself when you are not justified in the eyes of God. When you accuse God or blame Him for things, you will not get His help; and He will back away." I cannot imagine God backing away. The God I know and experience firsthand never backs away. Ever. Backing away, turning a shoulder, or keeping distant or silent is not what God does. In fact, this is the opposite of what God does. God pursues. God persists. And God is also patient.

I do agree with Angley when in the article he adds we can also get into trouble when we do not use God's wisdom. Angley sites James 1:5, "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking (NLT)."

God's wisdom comes from His Word. His wisdom and compassion also come when we listen to, learn from and lean on each other. God's Word also directs us. Scripture can even challenge us to move from places of despair to soft landings of comfort. How? We can lean on each other.

Lean on someone. Go ahead. Give them your weight. Expect the same weight, or even more weight, back. No one is alone when it comes to gray days or melancholy moments. We can all blanket, cover, ignore, or simply move as if this is fine, or somehow okay. But something far better to do is to lean on someone. In turn, let someone lean on you. And for this you will both be thankful.

## Income and Expenses for 2022 and 2023

October	2022	October	2023
Income:	\$22,929.07	Income:	\$14,556.19
Expense:	\$9,480.56	Expense:	\$9,579.14
Total:	\$13,448.51	Total:	\$4,977.05
Year to Date –General Fund:		Income:	\$148,681.07
		Expense:	\$115,784.57
		Total:	\$32,896.50

**Notice: Please send all material for February to be included in the Spire to:**

**[Firstchurchspire@gmail.com](mailto:Firstchurchspire@gmail.com)**

**by the 15th of January 2024!**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

## Memorial Plaque Information

Are you interested in having a plaque attached to the memorial stone in the memorial garden? One may have a plaque ordered by doing the following:

Cost---\$25.00

Send check (made out to Harford First Congregational Church -UCC) along with name of person and the year of birth and the year they passed away to the office.

The office will then proceed to order the plaque and have it placed on the stone.

Thank you.



**In Loving Memory of  
Richie Masters  
and  
Joanne Decker  
-Shirley Masters**



## Christian Education

We have been learning and growing:

Nov. 5 Esther

12 Fiery Furnace

19 Daniel and the Lion's Den

26 Jonah

Dec. 3 Christmas Story

10 Practice and Pageant

17 CE Christmas party

24 no Sunday School

31 no Sunday School

Jan. 7 Wise Men

14 Jesus as a child

21 Jesus—Baptized

28 Jesus Tempted



## Trustee Meeting Minutes November 6, 2023

Harry Gardner, Kandy Wellman, Jim Batzel, Irv Needham and Rick Masters were in attendance.

### Old Business:

Church keys need to be distributed to the Harford and Clifford Volunteer Fire Co. Jim will get one to Harford and Rick will get one to Clifford.

### New Business:

A Fire Extinguisher needs to be hung inside Judy's office.

The North side of the Lecture Hall needs to be pressure washed in the Spring. John Butler was suggested as an option to do the work.

Trustees will need to discuss the need for new windows in the Lecture Hall on the south side in the future. Rick will reach out to Matt Thomas to inquire. Kandy will look into alternatives.

Trustees were invited to join in the lighting of the "Tree of Love" on November 26<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

Jim Batzel made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Rick.

Respectfully submitted, Rick Masters, Secretary

## Deacons 11-26-23

**Attending:** Nancy Burris, Dee Archer, Kay Gow, Holli Chichester, Will Hagenbuch, Wendy Phillips, Sharon Frantz

**Opened in Prayer:** Holli Chichester

**Communion:** Communion scheduled for December 24, 2023 at the 10:00am service. The first communion of 2024 will be on January 28, 2024 (annual meeting day).

**Bible Study:** We are studying Ephesians: Wholeness for a Broken World: We meet every first Sunday after church 11:15-12:00 in the lecture hall. Bible study will be encouraged during the announcement time.

Facilitators: December: Nancy Burris, January: Holli Chichester, February: Kay Gow

**Community Outreach:** Trunk or Treat was on October 29, 2023 from 2:00-3:00. This event was very well attended, approximately 75 persons. Pastor Will is the last station and is supposed to hand out special prizes and church information, however, he usually is very busy talking with the people. Someone will need to man that station next year.

**Veteran's Day:** We observed Veteran's Day on November 12, 2023. All went well.

**All Saint's Day:** We observed All Saint's Day on October 29, 2023. Although the congregation was asked to submit names of loved ones to be remembered, we unfortunately missed a couple names. To avoid this we will keep a running list from year to year and check with Betty Lou (clerk) for members that have passed.

**Christmas Tree Lighting:** November 26, 2023 at 6:00pm. Theme: Tree of Love (Hearts, Stars). Pastor Will MC'ed the event. Robbie Fisher played the piano for the Christmas carol sing. The Stouts managed lights on the tree. The ornaments were red, silver and white hearts and stars. We had coffee, tea, hot chocolate and cookies. Approximately 85 people attended.

Holli greeted arrivals and give out the ornaments. Those representing groups were be noted for recognition during the lighting. Dee and Kay will set up the refreshments. Will, Wendy and Gary lead the singing.

**Advent:** Every Sunday in December. Plan to ask all members from the following groups to light the Advent Wreath:

December 3: Willing Workers

December 10: Ugly Quilt

December 17: Missionary

December 24: Deacons

Christmas Eve: Choir

**December 10:** Children's Program

**December 17:** Sunday School Christmas party

**Christmas Eve Day:** No Sunday School

**Christmas Eve:** 6:00. Candle lighting

**New Year's Eve Day:** No Sunday School

**Next Meeting:** December 17, 2023





## Willing Worker Big Group Meeting

November 1, 2023

The quarterly meeting of the Willing Workers Big Group was held in the lecture hall on November 1, 2023. The meeting was called to order by Kay Gow at 1:00. Others present were: Ivie Simons, Sharon Decker, Kandy Wellman, Sharon Kinney, Peg Empet, Ellen Holdredge. A motion to accept the minutes as printed was made by Sharon K with 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kandy. Passed. Sharon K presented the treasurer's report. Profit from the roast beef dinner --\$2,518.68 (\$300 less than last year). Harford fair profit was \$7,845.47 (\$1300 less than last year). There was a discussion on why profits were down. Kandy requested a category breakdown from the fair to see how each area (crafts, edibles, treasures, knives) did.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**Roast beef dinner.** Sharon Decker bought 3 dinners. One was missing a piece of pie, one was missing a roll, and one was missing coleslaw. Hopefully this was the only time that happened.

**Harford Fair.** More was spent on tickets this year so we need to work with the fair dinner people to be more prudent in the purchase of tickers.

Kandy wondered at what point she should stop ordering knives. In other words, how much longer are we going to be able to have the members and energy to keep doing a fair booth. She has decided, with approval from the group, to not reorder items that don't sell well. She will just let them sell out.

There is always a worry that the fair will tear down the building that we are now in. The space is not ideal as it is. Kandy will contact someone at the fair and put in a request for a different space, if one opens up, like down by where Master's Concrete has their space or somewhere better suited to our purposes. There were a few pounds of chocolate fudge left. The year before we ran out on Friday. Peg suggested that we put a sign outside saying fudge and cookies available inside—Kandy will make a sign. Fudge bag order for next year will just be for the ½ pound bags.

**Stove** is fixed. The re-ignitor wasn't working.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Kandy made a motion to pledge \$7,000 to the general fund and \$800 to OCWM. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kay. Passed

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Ivie made a motion to retain the same slate of officers. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Peg. Kay Gow-President, Sharon Decker-Vice President, Ellen Holdredge-Secretary, Sharon Kinney-Treasurer. Passed

**GENERAL DISCUSSION-** There are a number of church dinners in the fall and at least one other locally was on the same date as ours. Are there other fundraiser ideas that we could do instead? Think about that.

The church tree lighting is November 26. Sharon Kinney will represent Willing Workers and hang an ornament on the tree.

On December 3, the Willing Workers will be lighting the advent candle so whomever is in church should come up front at that time.

### GROUP REPORTS:

Each group worked at the fair, worked at the roast beef dinner, and contributed pumpkin pies.

North Harford-1 present- made fudge for fair.

Harford-2 present-made fudge for fair, donated to Interfaith Back to School project.

Kingsley-4 present held a meeting at Ellen's, soup sale on November 12, meeting next week to make crafts.

Next meeting February 6 at 1:00PM

Ellen Holdredge, Secretary

## Missionary: Operation Christmas Child

**Mission:** The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations.

*"Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."  
Mark 10:14, ESV*

**Our congregation filled 55 Operation Christmas Child boxes this year. Many of these boxes contained "Grow with me" shoes that adjust as a child grows up to 5 sizes. These shoes were purchased by the Missionary group for the Operation Christmas Child boxes.**



Dear Heavenly Father,

We pause and pray our appreciation for those who heard You in their hearts and gave a box or two or more to Operation Christmas Child this year. Thank you, Lord, that You called them to share Your love this Christmas time.

We also pause and pray for those who will be receiving these gift boxes this year. Bless the miles that will be covered from here to the places where Christmas 2023 will be a little more bright and cheerful for children because of these gifts. Bless the children who will open these gifts. Bless their families.

And Lord, bless this congregation that we learn to see today what a church like this can do--and what a church like this can do is give gifts of love from Your abundance.

The thankful people say,

Amen.

## Honoring our Veterans



**Chris Manley, Gary Phillips, Kay Gow, Richard Zick, Loren Robinson**

### Veteran's Day

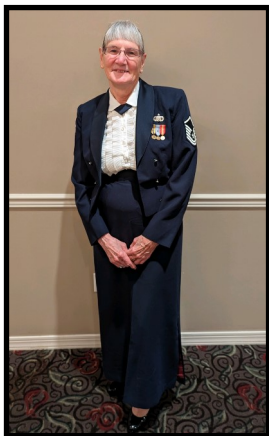
Veteran's Day began as Armistice Day. Armistice Day was the day that marked the end of hostilities in WW1. It was the 11<sup>th</sup> month, 11<sup>th</sup> day, and the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of November 11, 1918.

Veteran's Day is the day our country honors those who have served in our military forces. The oldest branch of the military is the Army, followed by the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, and the most recent branch the Space Force.

All of these branches with the exception of the Space Force have seen combat at one time or another in our country's history.

Today, we as a congregation say thank you to those who have served. It takes a certain mindset to enlist in the military. Without men and women willing to do what is needed our country would not be what it is today. A military life is not for everyone, so again, **Thank You** for your willingness to do a duty others may not be able to accomplish.

*Lord, We ask you to bless the men and women who have served and are still serving in our military. Keep them and our country safe. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.*



**Congratulations Kay Gow!!!**

Kay was honored by the MountainView Alumni Committee for her Military Service. She was also recognized for her service during the MountainView Veteran's Day Assembly.

We are so very proud of our veterans. Thank you all!!







**Trunk or Treat**  
**Fun in the Sun**  
**Approximately 75 people attended our church outreach this year!**  
**The children played games and received candy.**  
**The parents met Pastor Will and received information about our church.**  
**Thank you all!!**





## 2023 Christmas Tree Lighting

### Tree of Love

**Our Community Outreach Tree Lighting was very well attended with approximately 85 people attending.**

**The Stout family placed the lights on the tree and managed the lighting count down.**

**Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate and cookies were available and enjoyed.**

**The attendees decorated their "Love" ornaments for the tree.**

**Thank you All!!!!**



## Spire Sponsor

In loving memory of Debbie Pompey  
The Pompey Randall Family



### Hymn Dedication

Dedicate the Offertory Hymn of any Sunday Service in Honor or in Memory of someone. There is a sign up sheet in the Hallway next to the Flower sign-up sheet or place a card in the collection plate with the hymn and the name of the individual to whom you wish to honor.



### Beginning Hand Bell Choir

Our beginner hand bell choir has started. Practice will be held right after church every 2nd and 4th Sundays.

No prior experience is necessary and the ability to read music helps but is also not necessary.

Please text or call Earl Cottrell for question or to let him know that you are interested at 701-405-3417.



### Spire Sponsors

We **need Sponsors** to help us cover the cost of printing and mailing the Spire. Please let us know if you can help. The sponsorship can be in Memory or in Honor of someone or just a donation. Mailing costs approximately \$75/month. Please send to:

Harford First Congregational Church—UCC PO Box 217 Harford, PA 18823





**Vivian Rutherford**  
**Clark Summit Sr. Living Rm #204**  
**950 Morgan Highway**  
**Clark Summit, PA 18411**

**Harry Osborn**  
**4250 State Route 848**  
**New Milford, PA 18834**

### Correspondence

First Congregational Church

The officers and members of the Harford Volunteer Fire company thank you very much for your donation to our department. Your very generous donation of \$500 is greatly appreciated.

Harford Volunteer Fire Company

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### **A Thank you from the Stewardship Committee 2024 Pledge Campaign**

We have completed our presentations of the 2024 Campaign with 5 different doors crafted and beautifully created by artist Karen Jones and uniquely staged by Irv Needham.

The different doors reflected a variety of types and reason for its usage, such as a screen door, for protection, that guards us from harm; a wooden door, that is solid, that may guard us from hurt; a storm door, for safety, when we encounter life’s storms; a steel door, for protection, and is hard to open if we are not receptive; the fancy door that may hide a multitude of difficulties causing pain.

We hoped to present how God is calling us at each door. Pastor Will spoke to what it is like for us when we open doors through scripture. The messages and sermons along with Christian Education singing Behold! Behold! I stand at the Door and Knock, led by Kandy Wellman doing sign language and Robert Fisher accompanied on piano, complementing our Campaign program.

The committee selected 2 Corinthians 9:7

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
for God loves a cheerful giver.

With grateful hearts, we thank you, The Stewardship Committee

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Dear Church Friends,

My shower of birthday greetings certainly made my celebration of 90 years very special! I miss seeing all of you but I think of you often!

Thanks for sharing. Joyce Berish

# Home Bound

Lynola Carey  
Joanne Connolly

Martha Jenkins  
Dorothy Greene  
John Zimmerman

Norma Carey  
Vivian Rutherford  
JoAnn Titus

Anita Millard



## Prayer Concerns



- We pray for our nation to be blessed and that our nation seeks its blessings
- We pray for our national and local leaders
- All school districts—All staff and students
- for those with medical issues large and small
- Those with Alzheimer's and their families
- those experiencing financial pressures
- those fighting addiction or cancer
- all those in nursing homes and their families
- Will's kids
- Evan Clarkson, Andrew Kazmierczak, Robert Schulte, Ainsley Allen and all those serving in the military
- Sandy Zupanovich
- Gregg Symuleski and family
- Nancy Marr
- law enforcement officers & EMS
- hospital workers and fire personnel
- holiday travelers
- Truck drivers, farmers & Small businesses
- Patrick Simons
- Mark Ezdebski
- Earl Gow
- Karen Doolittle
- Ed Jones and family
- Lynn Hernandez
- Chris (Paula Smith's brother)
- Sherri (needs kidney)
- Breyden Peters
- Lois Miller Carlsen
- Vivian Rutherford
- Lois Miller Carlsen
- Todd Hunter (colleague of Earl)
- Andy Granick
- Situation in the Middle East
- friend of Shirley in Israel
- Millie Tingley
- Phil (Schulte's son)
- Abby Toolan's dad (Ben Heckman)
- Norma and Lynola Carey
- Rhonda—(Kidney)
- Ron Phillips
- Wayne Wellman
- Donna's mom - Nancy
- Don Lindsey
- Steve Holtsmaster
- Lynn—friend of George Lotter
- Mary Kiehl
- Maureen Warren—continued improvement
- Cheryl Augustine
- Sue Oakley and her prison ministry
- Ed Lindsey
- Joe Cowan
- Skip Borrows
- Ruth Taugher
- Nathaniel Polus - 1 1/2 yr old
- Linda Lindsey
- Trudy Butcher
- Carol Robinson
- Lynn Butler
- John Zimmerman
- John Butler
- Hunter (car accident)

**Spire Sponsor**

**Winemiller Family**

**Merry  
Christmas  
& HAPPY NEW YEAR**

### **Volunteer Delivering Meals on Wheels**

Looking for volunteers to deliver meals for the Fairdale (Montrose) and Clifford locations, both are on Monday's.

I am not sure about Clifford but we deliver for Montrose and leave the house at 10:00 am and are back home by 1:00 pm. The three hours go by quite quickly. In addition, most consumers are very thankful and grateful. You also are reimbursed for your mileage during delivery route.

Please contact the Area on Aging for more information. Or if you have any questions ask me.

Area Aging Telephone number--570-278-3751

**Thanks, Linda Lindsey**

### **Problems or Issues regarding Harford First Congregational Church—UCC?**

**Pastoral Relations** is the group that handles all concerns, issues and difficulties that can not be resolved directly. These meetings are confidential. Contact the office if you find that you need to meet with Pastoral Relations at **570-434-2260**.

**Emails:** It has come to our attention that some of you may not be receiving our email prayer lists. This is an oversight that we would like to correct. Please call or email Judy and let her know that you are not receiving the emails.

**Tel.570-434-2260 Email: [firstchharford@gmail.com](mailto:firstchharford@gmail.com)**





# December

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

December 5 Sharon Frantz  
Margaret Ann Maza

December 6 Wayne Frederici  
Doug Phelps  
Wendy Phillips

December 7 Jacquie Phillips  
Carol Zick

December 12 Betty Lou Bennett

December 13 Ed Morrison  
JoAnn Titus

December 16 Lynola Carey

December 18 JoAnn Grimes

December 19 Rick Masters  
Amanda Tyler-Norris  
Rich Graf

December 21 Carol Morrison

December 24 Barb Chidester

December 25 Grace Allen

December 28 Ann Marie Graf  
Tammy Stout

December 29 Michael Lamberson

December 31 Rick and Beth Ann Master



# January

January 4 David Schulte, III

January 6 Alyssa Clarkson-Nolan  
Anita Millard

January 7 Taven Hagenbuch

January 10 Shayna Mack

January 22 Sharon Decker  
Maya Mitchell

January 23 Aiden Miller

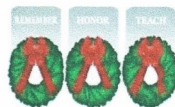
January 24 Melissa Heller

January 25 Ashley Millard-Parsons

January 29 Bailey Ann Millard

January 30 Sue Furney  
Karen Jones  
Linda Lindsey

January 31 Charlene Batzel  
Bill Chichester



## WREATHS *across* AMERICA

### 2023 Wreath Sponsorship Order Form

**National Wreaths Across America Day December 16, 2023 At 12:00**

Sponsored wreaths are placed on grave markers at state and national veterans' cemeteries, as well as at local and community cemeteries each December for National Wreaths Across America Day.

Worship every Sunday at 10:00am.

Hymnals and Bibles may be utilized but all text will be available via our monitors in the sanctuary. We would like to invite those who are not able to attend in person to watch our livestreaming worship at 10:00 am.



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmQ-Xr0IE5xwdZS0yVs7dtg>



## Men's Breakfast

at 7:30am

at Bingham's Restaurant.  
The second Tuesday of each month.



## The Website

We have worked hard, but we realize that important things may not have been included. We are still adding and changing things so if you have suggestions, please email Holli Chichester at [hollischichester@gmail.com](mailto:hollischichester@gmail.com) or call 301-643-1775. Please check it out at

[www.firstchurchharford.com](http://www.firstchurchharford.com)



## Weinberg Food Bank

Harford First Congregational Church  
Please contact Tammy if you have registered but do not plan to pick up.



Next distributions:  
Friday, December 15, 2023  
Friday, January 26, 2024

Any income can apply, complete the form online [firstchurchharford.com](http://firstchurchharford.com) or call Tammy @ 570-396-7081.

Day of Distribution please bring with you a photo ID and a current household bill with your current Susquehanna County address.



## Women's Lunch

3rd Monday of each month  
12:00 at Bingham's  
All Welcome!



Bring a Friend

## Greeters and Ushers

Dec 9 - Judy Mitchell and Emma  
Dee Archer

Dec 10 - Alyssa Nolan  
Missy Clarkson

Dec 17 - Sharon Frantz  
Peg Empet

Dec 24 (morning) Shirley Masters  
Karen Jones and Taven  
(evening) Kay Gow and Marge Tater

Dec 31 - Sue Needham  
Irv Needham



Jan 7—Betty Lou and Ken Bennett

Jan 14 - Bill Chichester & Karen Jones

Jan 21 - Kay Gow and Karen Jones

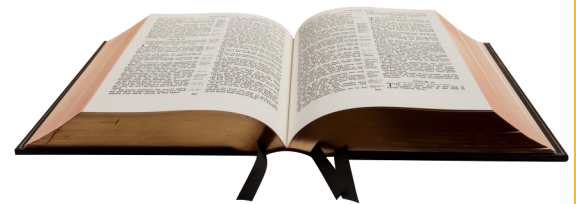
Jan 28—Chris Manley and Karen Jones

**If you would like to greet,  
usher or read during our worship  
services please contact the office.**

## Lay Readers

Dec 3rd- Sue Needham  
10th- Ellen Holdredge  
17th- Nancy Burris  
24th- Earl Cottrell  
31st- Wendy Phillips

Jan 7th-Karen Jones  
14th-Gary Phillips  
21st- Peg Empet  
28th-Alice Archer



## Celebrate the joys in life!

Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, weddings,  
births, graduations and let us celebrate with you!

Contact Tammy at 570-396-7081

for more information or to request your celebration sign.



**2023 POINSETTIA ORDER FORM**

I would like to order:

\_\_\_\_\_ Red poinsettia plants at \$9.25==\$(total price)

\_\_\_\_\_ White poinsettia plants at \$9.25==\$(total price)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pink poinsettia plants at \$9.25==\$(total price)



**I would like to donate my poinsettias to a shut-in Yes No**

**Given By:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

In Loving Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mail order and payment to: First Congregational-UCC, P. O. Box 217, Harford, PA 18823

**“DEADLINE December 03, 2023**

**2023 POINSETTIA ORDER FORM**

I would like to order:

\_\_\_\_\_ Red poinsettia plants at \$9.25==\$(total price)

\_\_\_\_\_ White poinsettia plants at \$9.25 ==\$(total price)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pink poinsettia plants at \$9.25==\$(total price)



**I would like to donate my poinsettias to a shut-in \_\_Yes \_\_No**

**Given By:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

In Loving Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mail order and payment to: First Congregational-UCC, P. O. Box 217, Harford, PA 18823

**“DEADLINE December 03, 2023**





ENJOY A FEW HOURS WITHOUT THE KIDS!

# **DROP AND SHOP**

December 9th, 10:00am-2:00pm



LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED



Do you need some time for yourself to run errands, shop, or just relax? We've got you covered! Bring your kids to us and we'll keep them busy with fun activities like making cookies and crafts. Plus, they'll have the opportunity to create a special gift for a loved one.

**SIGN UP NOW**

Harford First Congregational  
5016 Creek Rd Harford PA 18823



**THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS DECEMBER 2ND.**

FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT TAMMY STOUT AT 570-396-7081



# December

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services 3 more	27 9:30am AM mtg	28 9:30am Ugly Quilts	29 10am Pastor in off 6pm Council mtg	30 10am Pastor in off 6pm Council mtg	Dec 1	2
3 7:30am Fire Co Brk 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 4 more	4 9:30am AM mtg 7pm Trustees	5 9:30am Ugly Quilts	6 11:30am KWW Ga	7 10am Pastor in off	8	9
10 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	11 9:30am AM mtg 3pm Girl Scouts	12 7:30am Men's Brea 9am Pastoral Rela 9:30am Ugly Quilts 2 more	13 10am Pastor in off	14 10am Pastor in off	15 10am Weinberg-sc 4:30pm Weinberg-	16 Wreaths Across Am
17 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services 11:15am Deacons	18 9:30am AM mtg	19 9:30am Ugly Quilts 1pm Missionary	20 No Stewardship	21 10am Pastor in off	22	23
24 Christmas Eve 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	25 Christmas Day 9:30am NO AM mtg	26 NO Ugly Quilts	27	28 No Council 10am Pastor in off	29	30
31 New Year's Eve 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	Jan 1 New Year's Day	2 9:30am No Ugly Q	3	4 10am Pastor in off 6pm Dec. Council	5	6

# January

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31 New Year's Eve 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	Jan 1 New Year's Day	2 9:30am No Ugly Quilts	3	4 10am Pastor in office 6pm Dec. Council	5	6
7 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services 11:15am Bible Study 11:20am Office	8 9:30am AM mtg 7pm Trustees	9 7:30am Men's Brethren 9am Pastoral Relations 9:30am Ugly Quilts	10	11 10am Pastor in office	12	13
14 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	15 Martin Luther King 9:30am AM mtg	16 9:30am Ugly Quilts 1pm Missionary	17 6pm Stewardship	18 10am Pastor in office	19	20
21 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services 12:15pm stewards	22 9:30am AM mtg 3pm Girl Scouts	23 9:30am Ugly Quilts	24	25 10am Pastor in office	26 3:30pm Weinberg	27
28 9am Sunday School 9:30am GATHERING 10am Services	29 9:30am AM mtg	30 9:30am Ugly Quilts	31	Feb 1 First Day of Black History 10am Pastor in office	2	3

Non-Profit Organization

US Postage Paid

Permit—#20

Montrose, PA 18801

Harford First Congregational Church –UCC  
5016 Creek Road  
PO Box 217  
Harford, PA 18823  
Tel. 570-434-2260  
Email: office@firstchurchharford.com  
Spire email: firstchurchspire@gmail.com  
Web URL: www.firstchurchharford.com  
Live Worship: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmQ-Xr0IE5xwdZS0yVs7dtg>

.....the people in darkness have seen a great light

Isaiah 9:2

*Join Us Each Sunday!!*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**DATED MAIL**

**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**



Harford First Congregational Church—UCC

Rev. Dr. William Hagenbuch –Pastor  
Home Phone: 570-434-7729  
Email: Pastor.will@firstchurchharford.com  
Office Hours: Thurs. 10-12:00

Judy Mitchell –Sec  
Hours: Monday 1:00-5:00  
Friday 1:00-5:00