

THE MUSTARD SEED



Sunday School dates for February will be the 4th & 18th. They will be held after the children's time during worship. Sunday School is for all children in grades K-12 and covers a different bible story each Sunday that the class is held. Classes include not only the bible story but often include crafts, games or other activities to make the time fun and educational for all.



Earth Awareness Day for Youth and Families - The Creation Care Team is planning an earth awareness afternoon for youth and families on Saturday, February 10th from 2-4pm. There will be an earth-themed game, earth-friendly vegan snacks, and the environmental movie, *Hoot*. Invite a friend! Please RSVP to Pam McNamara to help with preparations - pammcnamara96@gmail.com or 717-304-7394 (cell). Thank you!



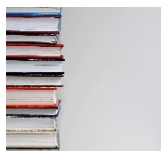
Souper Bowl of Caring – On Sun. Feb. 11, Salem UCC will participate again in this nationwide focus to tackle hunger and food insecurities. Please plan to bring to Salem your monetary donations or donations of non-perishable food items for the Caring Cupboard, such as: cereal, canned potatoes, pasta (all types), ketchup, canned fruit, meal soups (Progresso, Chunky, etc.), canned pasta (Chef Boyardee, etc.), cooking oil, sugar, Spam, jarred pasta sauce, & kidney beans.

Save the Date: “Soup for the Soul, Seeds for the Soil” The Creation Care Team, in collaboration with the Fellowship Committee, invites you to fill your bellies with homemade soup (and bread and dessert!) and your soul with fellowship on Sunday, February 11 after church.

After we eat, we will have a short presentation from a local master gardener about pollinator gardens and the benefits they can offer to our yards and the Earth. Please join us!



Volunteers are needed on **Sunday 3/3/24** to help prepare, serve, and clean up at the free meal for the public which is being served by the **Lebanon Rescue Mission**. The meals will continue to be served as “**To-Go Meals**” to the public. We will meet in the church parking lot at 2:00 P.M. to carpool as we are scheduled to volunteer **from 2:30 P.M. to approximately 6:00 P.M.** (If you can help for only part of the time, that is fine.) In addition, there are items that are needed to make the meal extra special. Please watch for more information about how to sign up to volunteer and/or to donate items for the meal. If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Vines (vineskristin1011@gmail.com). (Special Notes: If you are feeling sick (or have a cough), please volunteer another time. Due to safety issues, children must be over the age of eight to volunteer. Volunteers must wear closed toe shoes.)



The Book Club will meet Monday, February 26th 7 p.m. in the library to discuss “World of Wonders” by Aimee Nezhukumatahil. Any questions, please contact Carin Kaag. Her e-mail is cas207@yahoo.com.



In the Mailbag!

The Lebanon Rescue Mission would like to thank Salem for blessing them with our gift of \$260 to support their ministries: Men’s Ministry, Agape Family Shelter, Lebanon Free Clinic, Agape Christmas outreach to seniors, Back Dock ministry and Mobile Senior Pantry.

Bethany Children’s Home would like to thank you for your generous donation of \$226 for their General Contribution Fund to be used to directly support the youth who come to Bethany having faced trauma in their lives..

CWS thanks you for you gift of \$1,060. Thanks to your generous contribution Church World Services will be better prepared to provide emergency assistance when and where it is needed.

Bethany Children’s Home would like to thank you for your donation of general wish list items and \$190 in gift cards which helped in bringing so much Christmas joy and excitement on that special morning.

United Church of Christ Homes thanks you for your generous gifts of \$430 & \$25 which was placed into their Benevolent Fund.

Bethany Children’s Home thanks you for your generous donation of \$662.19 to their Youth Programming Fund will will directly support the youth who come to Bethany having faced trauma in their lives.



Lent begins on February 14 with Ash Wednesday. Join us in the choir room for a contemplative prayer service at 7 p.m. which will include holy communion and the sharing of ashes as a sign of repentance as we begin this important season of the church year. We’ll begin the all church theme for Lent discussed below.



Lent All-Church Study and Theme – Just as we did in Advent, we have chosen an all-church theme for Lent: *Love God, Neighbor, Enemy*. Using a curriculum and worship resources from the “Follow Me” program, our Sunday School classes for adults and children/youth, as well as our worship services will focus on the same topic each week and study scriptures focused on that theme. The planners of this time thought this would be a good topic for us, as we continue to live in a world where it seems we’re expected to pick a side and dig in our heels for that side. But we know that Jesus calls us to love God with our whole being, love our neighbor as ourselves, and pray for those we may categorize as our enemies, “others” or “them.” So, this Lent we’ll study those teachings of Christ and others in our scriptures to help us reset our hearts on our love for God and for all people. The themes for the weeks ahead

will include, Love Extravagantly, Serve a Stranger, Show Mercy, Wash Another’s Feet, Be Courageous, and Live Peaceably.



Girl Scout Cookies Sale return in March! Look for local Girl Scout troops to begin their annual Girl Scout Cookies sale from 9a – 3p in the Salem UCC parking lot on Saturdays starting on March 9 through April 6 (except Easter weekend on March 30), weather permitting. Come out and support the important education and leadership building programs of the Girl Scouts in our area while purchasing a tasty treat!

Council Meeting Minutes

From December 11, 2023 – Hybrid Format

Present: Shirley Beck, Pat Steely, Louise Adams, Beth Gingrich, Dwight Hein, Jim Flanagan, Ron Cline, Tara Jankouskas, Tom Peiffer, Talie Kaag (Hybrid), Kristin Vines (Hybrid), Melissa Kreider (Hybrid), Faith Bicksler, Joan Alger, Jared Cooper, Cindy Umberger (Hybrid), Matt Kaag

Absent: Barb Kauffman

Meeting Call to Order – Shirley Beck at 7:00 PM

Opening Devotions – Shirley Beck

Approval of Agenda for tonight's meeting - approved by Unanimous Consent

Secretary's Report – November 13, 2023 - Council Minutes approved by Unanimous Consent

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer's report through November 30, 2023 - approved by Unanimous Consent

Discussions on Funding of 2023 benevolences shortfall vs budget. Give 15% of December's Revenue to our benevolences rather than pay to budgeted numbers.

Pastor's Report - Pastor Dwight gave an oral pastoral report.

Letter from Lebanon Association – ad paid for by Lebanon Association for our church in the Merchandiser in joint with Trinity UCC.

Old Business:

Nominations for Council – Approved at Fall Congregational Meeting Sunday Nov 26th

Nominees for two-year term through 2025 – Joan Alger, Faith Bicksler, Jared Cooper, Tom Peiffer (2nd term) and Cindy Umberger. Youth Representative one year term Talie Kaag.

Update on Emergency Boiler Repairs / Improvements – no additional action or upgrades

Discussion on Possibilities for Church Coaching/Planning

Met with Mike Gibbs and Paul Nickerson

Need to get a better understanding of our Facebook viewer statistics

Observation that attendance is higher on Sundays in which Sunday School for children is offered.

Council should consider taking on a more strategic role.

Annual leadership retreat recommended in January

Plan for a meeting on January 15, 2024 - specifically devoted to this topic

Discussion on Church Sanctuary Accessibility

Accessibility within the sanctuary – front left pew of sanctuary by choir loft and rear pews on both sides. Makes sanctuary more accessible for funerals. Take proposal to January 2024 Congregational Meeting.

Front Door/Bell Tower Doors – seeking estimate on fully ADA accessible front door.

New Business –

Officers for 2024 Council Discussion – will be discussed at January meeting.

Vice-President and Secretary positions open

Treasurer – Tom Peiffer

President – Matt Kaag

Committee Reports

Building, Grounds, Cemetery: Ron Cline and Tom Peiffer

Despite Elevator repair, was not working again.

Need to schedule a follow up drop test for the elevator

Estimate of \$375/Year for Lebanon Valley Pest Control for attic review in early summer for bats

Continue with Tom Brown (Price Rite) for Snow removal and Loffreda for lawn care

Trimming of six trees

Will remove the rubber inside the communion cup holders since the new earth friendly communion cups do not fit.

Christian Education: Jim Flanagan

Did not meet, Next Meeting January 23, 2024

Fellowship: Matt Kaag – Carols for the Cupboard to take place December 17th, Christmas Eve social

Finance Stewardship: Tom Peiffer, Beth Gingrich – Pat Young, Financial Secretary shared the results of the Consecrating Stewards, 24 cards received - 12 increase, 8 stayed the same, 3 no name, 1 decrease.

Membership: Tara Jankouskas, Tom Peiffer

Next Meeting Dec 26, 2023

Campbelltown Tree lighting, Sold some cookbooks, \$226 collected, will be donated to Bethany Children's Home.

Jan Peiffer will update church sign as needed

Tom Peiffer is working on updating member directory

Missions: Pat Steely, Kristin Vines

Did not meet, Next meeting January 30, 2024

Creation care – hoping to have event 2/11/24

Moyer Fund: Barb Kauffman, Shirley Beck

Meeting 1/27/24

PACC & Interfaith Manor: Tom Peiffer - PACC will meet next on January 30, 2024

Women's Fellowship – Shirley Beck –did not meet.

Pastoral relations – Louise Adams – Despite attendance and finances the spirit at Salem is good.

Music & Worship – Melissa Kreider Has not met since our last Council meeting.

Youth Fellowship – Tallie Kaag –Raised \$150 advent breakfast, annual snowtubing event in January 2024.

Open Comment: :

Meeting Adjournment at 8:30 PM by Unanimous Consent

Closing: Mitzpah Benediction

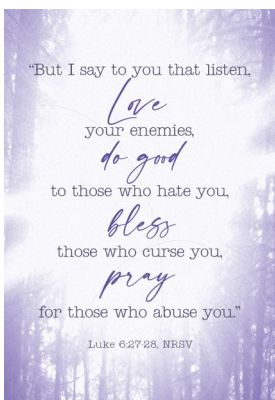
Next Meeting – January 9, 2024 - 7pm EST

February

Saturday	February 3	Moyer Fund 9 a.m. in Church Library
Sunday	February 4	Family Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Sunday School after Children's Time
Monday	February 5	Membership Committee 7:30 p.m. on Zoom
Tuesday	February 6	Women's Guild 10 a.m. Kitchen Worship & Music Committee 7 p.m. Hybrid
Saturday	February 10	Earth Awareness Day for Youth & Families 2-4 p.m. Basement Area
Sunday	February 11	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Super Bowl of Caring Creation Care Team Luncheon & Program after Worship
Monday	February 12	Salem Council Meeting 7 p.m. - Hybrid
Wednesday	February 14	Ash Wednesday Service 7 p.m.
Sunday	February 18	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. First Sunday in Lent with Communion Sunday School after Children's Time
Sunday	February 25	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Monday	February 26	Book Club 7 p.m. Church Library

*All Worship Services will also be livestreamed on Facebook Live and our web page
www.salemucccampbelltown.org*

Ground rules for love



In *Let Me Be a Woman*, missionary Elisabeth Elliot writes about the “ground rules” for “how this thing called love really works — in a marriage, in the world.” Her list reflects many of the principles found in 1 Corinthians 13, the Bible’s love chapter.

- This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience. It looks for a way of being constructive.
- Love is not possessive.
- Love is not anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own ideas.
- Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage.
- Love is not touchy.
- Love does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad ... when truth prevails.

• Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that stands when all else has fallen



WORSHIP SCRIPTURES

February 4, 2024

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

February 11, 2024

Transfiguration Sunday

2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

February 18, 2024

First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

February 25, 2024

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38

March 3, 2024

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians I:18-25
John 2:13-22

March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jerimiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

March 24, 2024

Palm/Passion Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19, 29
Mark 11:1-11

March 31, 2024

Easter

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
I Corinthians 15:1-11
John 20:1-18

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4 Tyler Comarnitsky
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23 Ashley Gottier
24 Steven Garrett
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3 David Mease
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6 Kay Flory
6 Isabelle Ott
7 Kelly Angelo
7 Christopher Moyer
8 Karley Smith
9 Alicia Grimes
11 Margaret Smith
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14 Louise Adams
16 Lee Ann Ream
16 R. Isaac Weidler
20 Anthony Davis
23 Renee Bordlemay
23 Alexander Gingrich
25 Audrey Schaeffer
26 Richard Yeckley
27 Faith Bicksler
28 Susan Aungst
30 Tyler Binkley
31 Jeannie Berlin

Spring training for Christians



The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season “spring training for Christians.” This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God’s favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in on Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we’ll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

Hebrews describes spiritual discipline as challenging in the moment but yielding righteousness later. The writer urges us, “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees ... so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed” (12:11-13, ESV). May the spring training of Lent strengthen and heal us all.

SALEM COLLECTIONS -

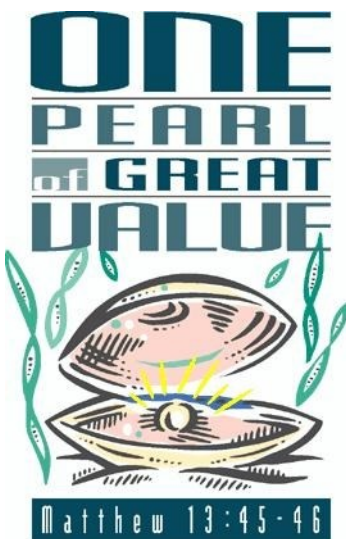
The Caring Cupboard is a community food pantry, that has grown into a community necessity, that currently serves over 350 families living primarily in the Palmyra and Annville-Cleona School Districts. Products to be given to the Caring Cupboard may be placed on the designated shelves found at the end of the northwest hallway of Salem Church.

Pop Tab Collection Program (Matt Waller) Ronald McDonald House. The collection of aluminum beverage tabs began in 1996. The aluminum tabs are sold to a local recycling company and their proceeds help with daily operating expenses at the Ronald McDonald House. The generous amount from the tabs collected has been very beneficial to the House and the families they serve. They are averaging \$1,000 monthly just from these tiny tabs. You can help raise money by pulling tabs from any aluminum container. Pop Tabs may be placed in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance.

Redner's Cash Register Receipts (Cindy Steger) By using the Save-A-Tape card you picked up at Customer Service Desk each time you purchase merchandise at Redner's Warehouse Markets, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape customer receipt. When you come to Salem Church, place your **entire register/sales receipt (DO NOT CUT!)** in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance. Salem Church will receive a check for 1% of the total amount of tapes submitted, excluding items controlled by the government, such as tax, milk and tobacco products.

Clothing Recycling Old clothing and material that are too worn to use can be recycled? If possible, take to an H&M Store (they give you a coupon for each bag!), otherwise put it in the box in the west narthex and we'll take it for you. Thank you!

Writing Tool Recycling You can recycle old writing tools – crayons, markers, pens, and pencils? Staples Store will recycle these items as well as many other items (check their website!). Feel free to take to a Staples or place in the "Crayola marker" collection tube on the windowsill in the west narthex. Thank you!



Invaluable!

"The kingdom of heaven," said Jesus, "is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45-46, NRSV).

In 2021, the Good News Network reported that a crab fisherman in Thailand stumbled upon a valuable Melo pearl while cutting up a snail for lunch. In wonder, he brought it to his brother to verify the discovery. "My family had been fishing for generations," said Prasarnphon Phunwan, "but I believe our fate is about to change because of my lunch." Several months prior, another fisherman had been offered \$351,000 for a similar pearl.

Likewise, God's priceless love immeasurably alters our eternal fate. If we fully comprehended the value of that love, we'd give up everything to obtain it. But the greater wonder is that we don't have to buy it. God gives it to us as a gift! Whether we seemed to encounter Jesus by chance or someone joyfully shared the Gospel with us, our Savior is the merchant who "sold all that he had" — even his life. So priceless is salvation! So valuable are we!

—Heidi Hyland Mann