



THE CROWN NEWS

Vol. 49 No. 2



"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another"
- John 13:34-35

LOVE: A CALL TO CARE & CONNECT

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Let's Be Friends



Love, in its many forms, isn't just for Valentine's Day—it's a deep and powerful force that calls us to care for one another every day of the year.

A Little Love from History. Did you know the first recorded Valentine's Day message dates back to 1415? Charles, Duke of Orleans, wrote to his wife while imprisoned in the Tower of London. In his poem he wrote "I am already sick of love, My very gentle Valentine."

What is Love? Love is an emotion, an action, a commitment. It's the bond that connects families, our friendship, and the selfless giving that shows our devotion to others. In the Bible, we find different kinds of love, each demonstrating unique

ways in which we can relate to one another.

Why is it so Hard to Love Others as Jesus Commanded? If love is so central to our faith, why is it so difficult for us to love others as Jesus commanded? Jesus' love was selfless, unconditional, and sacrificial. Through His death, He showed us the deepest kind of love—*Agape* love. *Agape* love is the sacrificial love that God has for us. *Agape* love is a deliberate choice to put others' needs before our own. As followers of Christ, we are called to embody this love in every aspect of our lives.

If we're honest, loving like Jesus is often scary because it challenges us to put others first, to forgive, and to embrace those who are "different" from us. But, as we grow in our relationship with God, and rely on His strength, we become better equipped to love others as Jesus did.

How Can We Show Love? Let's expand the celebration of love beyond this month. With intention, let us pray for the strength to love one another just as Jesus loves us. Through love, we have the power to transform lives, build stronger communities, and deepen our relationship with God and one another.

With Love, *Melissa Kosman* (Church Administrator)

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

8
FEB

Community Game Night

📍 Narthex, 1850 Marietta Ave.

Bring your favorite board or card game and a friend.

22
FEB

Pre - Lent Retreat

📍 Mountville Trinity UCC

More information is available at mountvilletrinityucc.org.



"Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance."
—Proverbs 1:5

COUNCIL NEWS

On Saturday, January 17th, the Board of COA met for the annual retreat. Our new governance structure allows the board to focus more on the dreaming and planning for the future of our congregation. We had incredibly productive conversations in breakout groups and identified our biggest dreams for the next year.

Our top three areas of focus for 2025 include a focus on marketing ourselves as a welcoming refuge for marginalized communities, "growing young" by offering programming for young families, as well as intergenerational activities, and embracing and utilizing the potential of Rader Park.

This is where you, as the congregation, come in! One of the questions discussed at the retreat was "What great idea do I have that I worry would get laughed at if I shared it?" We would like to invite you to our next Board meeting on February 17th at 7 PM in the parlor to share your wildest dreams for the park. We promise we won't laugh at you! Please call the office to let us know if you're coming. Let's pray about it together and get creative!

I would also like to remind you that if you have an idea for a new ministry team that supports our Vision and Mission, please reach out to Melissa or Pastor Kuhn to get started. If we put our energy into the things we are passionate about we can continue to make a difference in our communities.

Blessings,

Johanna Baker

Board President

JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB!

Book Club meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2 PM in the Narthex, and we'd love for you to join us! Whether you've read the book or not, you're welcome to come for engaging discussions and fellowship.



You can participate for one month, every month, or even suggest a book for an upcoming discussion! See the list of our upcoming books and meeting dates below.

For questions, contact Clara Kosmela at (717) 569-9960. Happy reading!

★ February 11th, 2025: In the Garden of the Beasts by Erik Larson

★ March 11th, 2025: The Sisters of Belfast by Melanie Maure

Winter Reflections Retreat

How do you see God working in our World?

Join Rev. Kathryn Kuhn for a time of reflection and renewal on **Saturday, February 8, 2025, from 10 AM to 12 PM** at the Youth Center (1899 Apostles Way). One month into the new year, let's pause to explore how we see God at work in the world, reflect on our trust in Him, and consider what strengthens that trust.

Light snacks and coffee will be provided. Don't miss this opportunity for thoughtful discussion and spiritual connection!

Be sure to register and save your spot, [Click Here to Register!](#)

February Mocktails & Meaning

What to Know About Judaism

Join us on **Thursday, February 20th, 2025, at 6:30 PM** for a meaningful evening of learning and connection. Our special guests, **Jamie Beth Cohen** and **Sam Schindler**, will present *"What Christians Should Know About Judaism"* and share their experiences raising Jewish children in Lancaster County. Warm up with our featured mocktail of the evening: Hot Mulled Cider.



Don't miss this engaging session— [Register Today](#) to secure your spot!

50th Anniversary: Save the Dates

Honoring our past and embracing our future

Celebrate 50 years of faith, fellowship, and community at Church of the Apostles with a series of special events designed to bring everyone together—mark your calendars, stay tuned for details, and join us in making this milestone unforgettable!

- **Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble Concert:** *Saturday, May 3rd, 3:00 PM* in Church Sanctuary. Experience the stunning artistry of the Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble in this special Academy concert. More information about this special concert at apostlesucc.org/concerts/
- **Celebration Dinner:** *Saturday, May 17th* at the *Bachman Center*. Enjoy a catered dinner with historical highlights, inspiring speakers, and beautiful musical presentations. Tickets for this event will be available for purchase soon.
- **Family Picnic Fun Day:** *Sunday, June 8th* in *Rader Park*. Bring your loved ones for a joyful day of fun, food, and fellowship in the beautiful outdoors.

OUTREACH



More than 38,000 acres have been burned and over 12,000 structures destroyed.

Picture by Times Colonist

Wildfires continue to devastate California, with the recent January 7th fires claiming 24 lives, destroying over 30,000 acres, and leveling 12,000 structures. Thousands of residents remain displaced as communities face the overwhelming task of re-building.

Church of the Apostles is committed to supporting those affected through the **UCC Disaster Relief Fund**. Donations can be made via offering envelopes, Realm, or Vanco. Simply scan the QR code to give directly. Together, we can bring hope and healing to those in need.

(Statistics provided by NBC News.)



February's special offering supports the **Apostles Assistance Fund**, a vital resource for helping community members in need. In 2025, your generosity has already provided shelter, heat, running water, and essential bill payments to several local individuals and families.

Every donation directly helps those facing urgent financial crises. To contribute, you can use: Vanco, Realm, or Special Giving Envelopes (extras available in the Narthex).

OUR IMPACT

\$495

For Mission to the Homeless

\$533

For UCC Disaster Relief

Donations as of Publishing



Donate Through Vanco



APOSTLES COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL UPDATES



Happy New Year! We hope you had a joyous holiday season. As we settle back into the school routine, we're excited to share some of the fun and enriching activities our students have enjoyed this month.

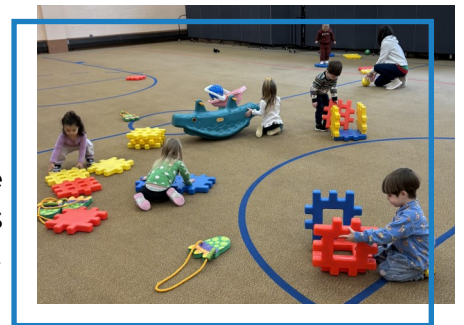


To ease into the new year, we kicked things off with **Pajama Days**, a cherished ACP tradition. On our first two days back, students and staff donned their coziest pajamas, watched a short video, and snacked on Oreo cookies. It was a relaxing and comforting way to transition back to school life after the Christmas break.

January also brought the much-anticipated **Nursery Rhyme Olympics**, a delightful event that brought classic rhymes to life. Students jumped over candlesticks like Jack, built Humpty Dumpty's wall, and even enjoyed curds and whey. This creative blend of physical activity and storytelling sparked joy and engagement, making it a highlight of the month.

As the chilly weather set in, our learning journey took an adventurous turn to the **Arctic regions of the North and South Poles**. Students explored the icy conditions of these fascinating areas, learning about the unique wildlife and environment. The freezing temperatures in Lancaster made the experience feel even more authentic!

Now, with the school year halfway through, we look forward to the exciting events and learning opportunities planned for the months ahead. Thank you for being an integral part of the ACP community, and here's to a fantastic second half of the school year!



@Apostles_Community_Preschool





A MUSICAL NOTE

With Music Director, Lars Potteiger

Saint Valentine is a figure shrouded in mystery, with his historical details blending legend and fact. He was a Christian martyr believed to have lived in the 3rd century during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius II. According to tradition, Valentine defied the emperor's ban on Christian marriages by secretly officiating weddings for Christian couples, earning his arrest. While imprisoned, he is said to have performed miraculous acts, including restoring the sight of a jailer's daughter, with whom he may have exchanged a note signed "Your Valentine" before his execution on February 14. Although no traditional or ancient songs are specifically linked to Saint Valentine, many modern songs and compositions reference his name or the themes of love and romance associated with Valentine's Day.



UPCOMING APOSTLES ACADEMY CONCERT

Join us on February 2nd, 2025, at 3 PM in the Sanctuary for a delightful performance of *Hänsel & Gretel!* This enchanting musical confection is a **timeless tale for audiences of all ages**, featuring unruly siblings who triumph over adversity, narrowly escape a witch's clutches, and use their courage and cleverness to defeat evil. **Presented by Berks Opera Company in collaboration with Albright College**, Engelbert Humperdinck's masterpiece showcases unforgettable music that spans from charming folk songs and hymns to rich, intricate harmonies. This free concert, generously provided by the Apostles Academy of Arts and Science, will include a free-will offering in lieu of tickets.

ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL INEQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE

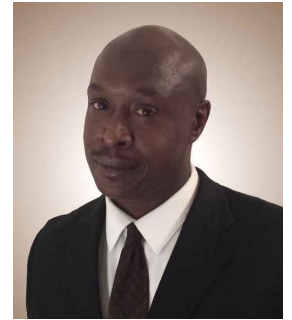
As part of Black History Month, Millersville University invites the community to an engaging and thought-provoking event addressing racial inequities and educational justice.

When: Tuesday, February 27, at 7 PM

Where: Student Memorial Center Multipurpose Room, Millersville University

This year's **56th Annual Carter G. Woodson Lecture** will feature keynote speaker Dr. David Stovall, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, exploring inequities in education and their solutions. The event will also include a community discussion on the potential impact of a reparations fund in Lancaster, led by Dr. Yasser Payne and facilitated by State Representative Ismail Smith-Wade-El.

Church of the Apostles UCC supports this vital conversation as part of our mission of inclusive refuge and compassionate justice. Let's come together to learn, reflect, and take steps toward building a more equitable future.



Featured speaker,
Dr. Yasser Payne

CELEBRATING THE GIFT OF MUSIC: UCC MUSIC FAIR

An afternoon of beautiful music awaits as choirs, instrumentalists, and other musical groups from various UCC congregations in the Lancaster and Lebanon Associations come together for a special Music Fair. Presented by the Mission and Ministry Team of the Lancaster Association UCC, this event will be held on **Saturday, February 2nd, from 2 - 4 PM** at **St. John's UCC in Denver, PA** (659 S. 4th Street, Denver, PA 17517).

The afternoon will begin at 2:00 PM with a time for fellowship and light snacks while performers set up. At **2:30 PM**, an inspiring program showcasing the talents of our local congregations will take place.



This event is free and open to the public. Come celebrate the gift of music with us and witness the amazing musical talent within our UCC community!

YOUTH

ROOTED IN FAITH

Youth Dive Back Into Acts This February

The ROOTED youth group (grades 3–8) has had an exciting and meaningful winter season! After creating a powerful video for worship in November about living as Christians, inspired by our study of Acts, the group turned its attention to the Advent season. With creativity and teamwork, we produced four worship videos, each focusing on a different Sunday of Advent. A special thank-you to Miss Judy's Primary class for helping spark some fantastic ideas!



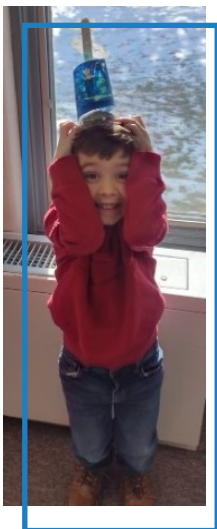
ROOTED Kitchen Takeover

From there, we ventured into new territory—literally. We explored the Apocrypha, a collection of books not included in our Pew Bibles but found in Catholic and Orthodox traditions. We uncovered stories of ancient Jewish heroes like Judith and the Maccabees and discovered how their bravery contributed to the origins of Hanukkah. Along the way, we enjoyed hands-on learning, playing dreidel and taking over the kitchen to make delicious latkes with fresh applesauce.

This February, we're excited to return to the book of Acts to continue exploring the story of the early church. ROOTED youth is where faith, fun, and community come together!

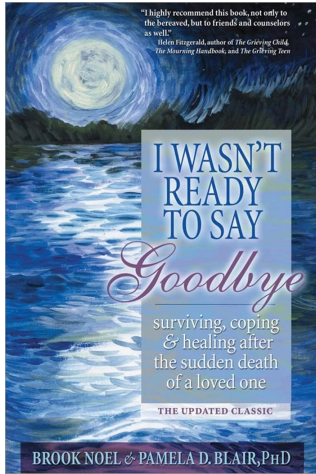
PRIMARY FAITH FORMATION

February Highlights



Here's a look at what's coming up in Primary Faith Formation this February:

- **Feb. 2:** *Love Your Enemies* – The children will explore this theme and create heart art to represent the love we're called to share.
- **Feb. 9:** *Souper Bowl Collection* – The children will collect donations to benefit the **Apostles Downtown Breakfast Ministry**, an impactful local outreach that serves those in need. During worship, we will also have member, Julie Berkow, explain the ministry's work, offering a great opportunity to teach our youngest apostles about our vision of compassionate care and service to others.
- **Feb. 16:** *Jesus Invites Us to Learn* – Children will engage in a "Set the Table" relay to reflect on Jesus' invitation to learn and grow with Him.
- **Feb. 23:** *Jesus Cares for Us* – The children will create paper lilies as a symbol of Jesus' care for us.



COMPASSION TEAM'S BOOK OF THE MONTH

Sudden loss can turn life upside down, leaving us struggling to navigate a new reality. In *I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye* by Brook Noel and Pamela D. Blair, readers will find compassionate guidance on coping with unexpected grief. This insightful book offers practical advice for supporting friends experiencing loss, freeing them from the burden of asking for help. It also includes a dedicated chapter on helping children cope with grief.

Homemade Latkes

On January 26th, the Rooted in Faith class for grades 3-8 kicked off 2025 with their first kitchen takeover! Here's one of the recipes they created - give it a try at home!

Potato Latkes with Onion

- 2 lbs Russet Potatoes
- 1 Medium Onion
- 3 Eggs
- 3 T Flour (Sub 3T Cornstarch for GF)
- 1 T Salt
- Cooking Oil

1. Grate potatoes and onion into a colander over a bowl. Squeeze out excess moisture, letting it drain into the bowl. Set the colander on a plate to catch any remaining moisture.

2. Let the liquid in the bowl settle, then pour off the water, leaving the starch at the bottom.

3. Beat eggs into the starch, then mix in flour/cornstarch and salt. Add the potato-onion mixture and combine.

4. Heat oil in a pan over medium-high heat (or 350°F for an electric skillet). Form small handfuls of the mixture, squeeze out moisture, place in the pan, and flatten slightly.

5. Cook a few minutes per side until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and serve hot with applesauce, sour cream, or feta.



Introducing the Compassion Team

Ellen Schellenberger

Ellen Schellenberger is a charter member of Church of the Apostles. She holds a Master of Education degree in Counseling Education from Millersville University and has over 35 years of experience working directly with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as those with mental health concerns. Ellen has served as the Executive Director of The Arc of Lancaster County and as a Navigator for the Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers Association.

Thank you to the Compassion Team for being a supportive resource for our members!

February Birthdays

- 2.1 Nils Stenman
- 2.3 Brody Moore
- 2.4 Kelley Brown
- 2.4 Nick Bravo
- 2.4 Jill Craven
- 2.5 Larry Frable
- 2.6 Marianne Deaner
- 2.6 Susan Stirling
- 2.7 Dale Marx
- 2.8 Judy Klunk
- 2.9 Joy Angevine *
- 2.9 Lisa Ann Sweigart
- 2.10 Kathy Johnston
- 2.13 Cole Kendig
- 2.13 Dorothy Freeman
- 2.14 Mary Ellen Bachman *
- 2.14 Miles Clausen
- 2.15 Emerson Brown
- 2.16 Joe Bahling
- 2.16 Nora Bravo
- 2.18 Michele Wherley
- 2.23 Deb Aukamp
- 2.25 Ceciliy Hull
- 2.27 Rasma Pakalnins *

*90+ Birthday's

February Anniversary's

No February Anniversary's

WORSHIP FLOWER SPONSORSHIP

Enhance our worship with the beauty of flowers by sponsoring them in honor or memory of a loved one. To sponsor, email office@apostlesucc.org or complete a form in the Church office. The suggested donation is \$60, but any amount is appreciated.

Contributions can be made via check, cash, Vanco, or Realm.



SPONSOR THROUGH VANCO

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

DANIEL FICKES



MEMORIAL FUND DONATION BY DONNA CARR

IN HONOR OF

NANCY STEGER



MEMORIAL FUND DONATION BY GRANDSON, MICHAEL STEGER

	December 2024	December 2023
YTD Revenue	\$386,813.74	\$376,808.70
YTD Investment Transfers	\$291,940.00	\$349,772.47
YTD Operating Expenses	\$699,496.12	\$685,478.41
Net YTD Operating Income	-\$20,742.38	\$41,102.76

Join the Holy Communion Team

Serve in Worship and Grow in Faith

Are you looking for a meaningful way to deepen your connection with our church community? Consider serving alongside Pastor Kuhn during Holy Communion!

We're currently composing the Communion schedule for the upcoming months and invite all baptized members of Church of the Apostles to take part in this sacred role. No prior experience? No problem! New servers will receive clear, written directions to guide them.

If you're interested in serving, please reach out to our scheduler, Louise Zabel, at ldvilla@comcast.net or 717-984-6604.

February & March Tuesday Tussles w/ God

Exploring 1 Corinthians

Join us for Tuesday Tussles With God as we dive into Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth. Written in the mid-1st century BCE, this powerful text addresses challenges that feel surprisingly relevant today. From divisions within the church to themes like grace, love, spiritual gifts, and the body of Christ, Paul's words invite us to reflect on what it truly means to be the church.

We meet in Burkholder Chapel at 10:30 AM on Tuesday mornings throughout February and March. To receive study materials in advance, register by contacting Apostles UCC at 717-392-5718 or office@apostlesucc.org.

Bring your curiosity and join us for thoughtful and lively discussions—no question is off-limits!

Discover our New Leadership Page

Get to Know the People and Teams Driving Our Mission Forward

As we embark into 2025 with a new governance structure, Church of the Apostles UCC is excited to share a resource to help members and guests better understand the roles and work of our leadership. We've launched a new leadership page on our website to provide insight into how our board, committees, and teams bring our vision to life.

Visit apostlesucc.org/lay-leaders/ to learn more about our Board President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. You'll also find an overview of each committee and team, along with details about how they contribute to our mission of *Inclusive Refuge, Compassionate Justice, and Environmental Advocacy*. Each listing includes the team leader and staff liaison, making it easy for you to connect.

If you're curious about a specific team, have an idea for a new initiative, or want to get involved with an existing group, we encourage you to reach out to our church administrator, Melissa, at admin@apostlesucc.org.

Explore the many ways our leadership is working to build a stronger, more vibrant church community—and discover how you can be part of the journey!

STAFF

Senior Pastor

Rev. Kathryn Kuhn

Church Administrator

Melissa Kosman

Communications Coordinator

Paityn Nissly

Finance Coordinator

April Fisher

Music Director

Lars Potteiger

Adult Choir Director

Nathan Sheffer

Children's Choir Director

Elizabeth Stoltzfus

Technology Specialist

Jaben Jury

Property Manager

Eric MacLaren

Sexton

Larry Rongione

Sexton 2

Tasha MacLaren

To contact our staff directly visit apostlesucc.org/staff

SHARE YOUR STORY

Be featured in the next Crown Newsletter!

We want to hear from you! Share how you're living out our Vision & Mission, making an impact in our community, or contributing to our ministries. To submit your story, email the Communications Coordinator, Paityn Nissly, at office@apostlesucc.org by the 15th of the month for consideration in the next issue. Space is limited, but we'll do our best to feature as many articles as possible.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Let us Pray with You!

We are honored to pray for you through life's ups and downs. You can share your prayer requests on your connection card during Sunday services or email them to office@apostlesucc.org. Please let us know if your request can be shared or should remain private for our prayer chain. Together, we lift our hearts in prayer to support and encourage one another.

LIFT YOUR VOICE TO GOD

February Hymn Sing - All Are Welcome!

Join Music Director, Lars Potteiger, for an uplifting Hymn Sing on Sunday, February 23rd, at 3 PM in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to celebrate in song and community—don't miss this joyful event!

Church of the Apostles UCC
1850 Marietta Ave
Lancaster, PA 17603

office@apostlesucc.org

