



Church of the Apostles
United Church of Christ

March 2025

THE CROWN NEWS

Vol. 49 No. 3

"Worship in awe and wonder, all
you who have been made holy!"
- Psalms 34:9-10

PASTOR'S CORNER

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Let's Be Friends



@ApostlesUCC

Lent is a season of reflection that invites us to deepen our faith in Christ. This year, it begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5. As many of us navigate feelings of overwhelm and anxiety, we are embracing a Lenten focus centered on awe and wonder.

During Advent, I shared how awe and wonder can shift our perspective, helping us recognize God's abundant love and grace. To support this theme, we are offering three ways for you to actively participate:

1. Share Your Photos – We invite you to submit electronic photos that evoke wonder, meaning, curiosity, delight, connection, or self-giving. Email them to the church office at office@apostlesucc.org, and we will compile them into a

weekly slideshow to be shared during the offering. The first slideshow will debut on Sunday, March 9, the first Sunday of Lent. Please take a moment to browse your photos and share them with us!

2. Sunday Scripture Reflections – Rev. Kuhn will lead a scripture reflection session on Sunday mornings after worship in the parlor. This will be an opportunity to discuss the sermon, ask questions, and connect with fellow members in meaningful conversation.

3. Weekly Spiritual Practices – Each week, we will upload a new spiritual practice on the worship page of our website to help you engage with the weekly themes. These practices are designed to enrich your spiritual journey and bring deeper awareness to this sacred season.

We hope these opportunities will help you experience a meaningful and enriching Lent.

Blessings & Peace,

Pastor Kathryn Kuhn

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

**5
MAR**

Ash Wednesday Service at 7 PM

📍 Sanctuary, Church of the Apostles

A sacred time of reflection marking the beginning of Lent.

**8
MAR**

Community Game Night at 6 PM

📍 Narthex, Church of the Apostles

Bring your favorite board or card game and a friend.



"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."
- James 2:17

BOARD NEWS

Can we separate our religious beliefs from our political beliefs? I personally cannot. When I say the Lord's Prayer, the phrase "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" calls out to me the most. I believe that when Jesus gave his disciples this prayer, he was telling them that we are not to wait until death to live under God's will, but instead we are to create God's will on earth here and now.

I believe that the government's role is to do for the whole what cannot be done at the individual or community level. For example, providing a military that protects our national security. Helping to rebuild regions impacted by a national disaster, like a hurricane. Creating and maintaining infrastructure like the federal highway system and bridges like the Francis Scott Key Bridge. Creating agencies like the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that keep citizens safe from fraudulent practices. Providing a US Postal Service that provides services to all locations not just those locations that are profitable to serve. Just a few examples.

What is our role in creating God's will on earth here now? James 2:14-17 tells us that faith without works is dead. If we offer just prayer without physical assistance, what help does that immediately provide? In addition to our individual charitable acts, I believe that we should also be peacefully lobbying our elected officials to enact legislation that creates a world that lives into God's love and justice.

In Faith,

Cathy Kenlin (Board Treasurer)

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.



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

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

★ April 8th, 2025: The Dragon Rider by Cornelia Funke

★ May 13th, 2025: When Women Ran Fifth Avenue by Julie Satow

For More Upcoming Books
[Click Here](#)

The Apostles Craft Group is Back

Get Crafty With Us

Join us every Wednesday from 1:30-3:30 PM in Room 305 as we kick off another season of creativity. We'll be making handmade items to sell at the Craft Marketplace in November, and we'd love for you to be part of it! **Bring your ideas, your enthusiasm, and let's craft for a cause.** No experience needed—just a love for creativity! For more info, contact Bernie Fickes at berenicefickes4@gmail.com. Hope to see you there!

Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul

A Retreat to Connect with God Through Nature

Explore the deep connection between faith and nature through the lens of Celtic Christianity at *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul*, a retreat led by Rev. Kathryn Kuhn. This time of reflection and renewal will help us listen for Christ's call to hope while embracing the beauty of creation. The retreat will take place on Saturday, March 15, from 10 AM to Noon in the Youth Center and Rader Park. Come be renewed and experience God's presence in the sacredness of the earth. Scan the QR code or [Click Here](#) to Register!



Register Now!

Annual Community Garage Sale

Shop, Donate, Make a Difference!

Mark your calendars! Our Annual Garage Sale is happening on April 25th & 26th, and we need your help to make it another great success.

How You Can Get Involved:

- * **Donate Items** – We'll be accepting donations April 21-24 (exact times will be shared in next month's Crown and on our website). Start setting aside your gently used treasures now! A full list of acceptable donations can be found by [Clicking Here](#).
- * **Food Donations** – Help keep our hardworking volunteers fueled!
- * **Volunteer Your Time** – Assist with pricing, organizing, or ensuring a smooth shopping experience.

Last year, we raised an incredible \$9,450 for organizations like the UCC Disaster Relief Fund, COA Refugee Fund, Apostles Assistance Fund, Off the Streets, and TLC. Let's come together again to make a difference! Stay tuned for more details, and we can't wait to see you at this year's sale!

YOUTH

ROOTED IN FAITH

Summer Camps Await

As we continue our study of Acts and reflect on how nothing can stand in our way when we follow Jesus (Acts 5:33-39), we're already looking ahead to summer—and that means **CAMP!**

Did you know COA youth can attend **Camp Nawakwa** and **Camp Kirchenwald** for **75% off** the regular price? Thanks to generous scholarships from COA and the Penn Central Conference of the UCC, campers can enjoy a weekend, half-week, or full-week experience at a significantly reduced cost.

Several COA youth have attended **Kirchenwald**, just 20 miles north in Lebanon County—will your child be next? With programs available for **grades 1 through adult**, there's something for everyone!

Want to explore before committing? **Kirchenwald and Nawakwa Open Houses** are on **Sunday, March 16, and Sunday, April 6, from 2–4:30 PM**. Meet the staff, tour the camps, and get a glimpse of summer fun!

Visit www.lutherancamping.org for more details on open houses and summer schedules. Contact the church office for **discount codes and registration details**. **Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity!**

PRIMARY FAITH FORMATION

Learning Through Jesus' Parables



As we prepare for Lent, our Primary Faith Formation class will explore the parables of Jesus and their lessons of love, inclusion, and faith.

- ***March 2** – *Who is My Neighbor?* We'll learn how our actions reflect God's love.
- ***March 9** – *God's Table* – Everyone is invited! Our class will also host the Fellowship Table.
- ***March 16** – *Parables of the Lost* – A fun **Sweeping Relay** game!
- ***March 23** – *The Prodigal Son* – Discover how animals care for their young.
- ***March 30** – *Jesus Enters Jerusalem* – We'll recreate the joyful parade!

Join us as we journey through these meaningful stories together!



During the month of February, we were very busy at ACP! Valentine's Day celebrations brought joy as children exchanged valentines, enjoyed making themed art and crafts, and learned about kindness and friendship. Our classes also had a visit from Sardina Dental. The dental visit provided an opportunity for our children to understand the importance of oral hygiene and visiting the dentist. Our winter program, sponsored by our Parent Council, was filled with laughter as Papa Tater entertained preschoolers and staff with a funny magic show.

We are excited to have church members read to students during **Read Across America Week**! Readers are needed on March 3rd and 4th—sign-ups are available in the Narthex on the welcome table or by emailing mbiggs.acp@gmail.com to reserve a spot!

ACP BOARD MEMBERS

Breanne Cornielle (President)	Rev. Kathryn Kuhn (ex-officio)
Monica Daniels	Wende Stenman
Leah Carr	Jen Eaton
Arlene Gaudio	



@Apostles_Community_Preschool



OUTREACH



Be the Light: Support One Great Hour of Sharing

When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), you become a light for people in need—offering hope in times of disaster, relief for communities facing chronic hardships, and support that extends well into the future. Your generosity helps rebuild homes, restore lives, and create sustainable change for those who need it most.

Last year, our congregation donated **\$2,292** to OGHS, joining a larger effort that provided over **\$500,000** for international relief and sustainable development and nearly **\$400,000** for global partner development programs.

This year, we invite you to be the light once again. To donate, use the special giving envelopes (extras available in the Narthex) or give online through [Vanco](#) and [Realm](#). Every gift, no matter the size, makes a lasting impact. Together, we shine today, tomorrow, and for years to come.

OUR IMPACT

\$577

For Apostles Assistance Fund

\$590

For Saturday Breakfast Ministry

\$1,045

For Mission to the Homeless

\$1,457

For Disaster Relief Fund

Donations as of Publishing



A MUSICAL NOTE

With Music Director, Lars Potteiger

Early in the morning
I will celebrate the light
And as I stumble through the darkness
I will call Your name by night
God of wonders beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy
"God of Wonders" - Chris Tomlin

Our Lenten services will focus on the different ways we can cultivate awe in our lives and communities. When I think of a typical Lenten practice, I imagine a time of inward reflection. Another common tradition is to give something up for the season. Because Lent is rooted in Christ's sacrifice on the cross, practices during this time are often associated with self-denial and ways we can incorporate sacrifice into our own lives.

What I appreciate about focusing on awe during Lent is that it shifts the usual perspective of the season. I tend to associate awe more with Christmas, yet there is great value in approaching each day with a renewed sense of wonder at God's creation. Personally, I would love to experience more of that in my life.

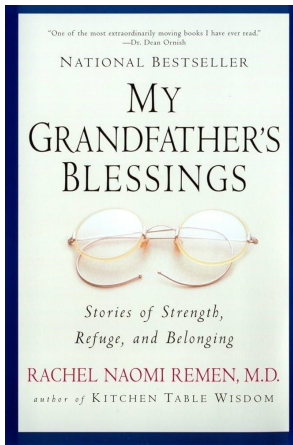
I pray that your Lenten journey is one of transformation, hope, and awe.

Peace, *Lars*



UPCOMING APOSTLES ACADEMY CONCERT

Join us for an inspiring Organ Concert by Dr. Robert Horton on March 16th, 2025, at 3 PM in the Church of the Apostles UCC Sanctuary, 1850 Marietta Ave, Lancaster 17603! Dr. Horton, a highly acclaimed organist and 1st prize winner of the 2022 AGO National Competition in Organ Improvisation, will captivate you with his performance. This free concert, generously provided by the Apostles Academy of Arts and Science, will include a free-will offering in lieu of tickets. Don't miss this extraordinary musical event!



COMPASSION TEAM'S BOOK OF THE MONTH

In *My Grandfather's Blessings*, Dr. Rachel Remen shares powerful stories about finding blessings in everyday life. In "*Blessings*," she recalls her grandfather, a rabbi, placing his hands on her head and praying aloud, acknowledging her small accomplishments. His words shaped her confidence and faith. Years later, her mother admitted, "*I have blessed you every day of my life; I just didn't have the wisdom to do it out loud.*" This touching book reminds us of the power of spoken blessings and how they can uplift and transform lives.

March Mocktails & Meaning

Church Sanctioned Anti-Trans Bigotry

Join us on March 20th, 2025, at 6:30 PM in the Narthex for an important conversation on "Finding Our Voice: Calling out Church-Sanctioned Anti-Trans Bigotry." Malinda Clatterbuck, Associate Director at the Center for a Sustainable Environment at Franklin & Marshall College, and Mark Clatterbuck, Associate Professor of Religion at Montclair State University, will lead us in exploring how we, as a congregation committed to inclusive refuge, can stand against hate and support our transgender community members.



As we engage in this meaningful discussion, enjoy our featured **Blood Orange Mocktail Cooler**. We hope you'll join us for an evening of thoughtful conversation and community.

Register by Scanning the QR Code or by [Clicking Here!](#)

Introducing the Compassion Team

Barbara Achtermann

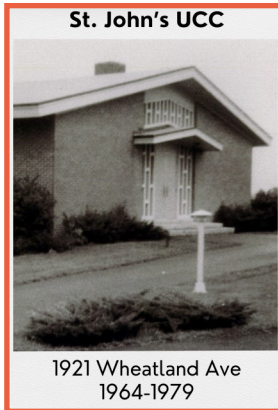


Barbara is a pastor's kid and a clergy widow. She is the mother of Mark and Karl and grandmother to Willow, Tommy, and Josh. Her professional background includes work in public assistance, medical social work, and school social work, during which she earned a Master's in Education in Counseling alongside Joyce Smedley. She later supervised 16 case managers serving individuals with developmental delays but found she preferred more direct, face-to-face interactions. This led to roles in admissions counseling and teaching at

HACC, as well as supporting individuals transitioning from welfare to work—particularly those entering non-traditional career fields—through both HACC and Lancaster County Career and Technology Centers. In her free time, she enjoys discovering new adventures through reading and observing birds and flowers.

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

SNAPSHOTS OF OUR HISTORY: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



Before 1700, there were German, French, and Swiss Reformed families in the Lancaster area. The first church was formed in the early 1700's with a log structure constructed in 1736. The growth from then was like the acorn planted in fertile soil, which after a century or two becomes a giant oak.

We members of the Church of the Apostles need to remember our important part in that process of growth.

After 114 years, in 1850, when language differences were becoming problematic, the English-speaking younger section withdrew to form St. Paul's Reformed Church. Twenty years



later, when First (Reformed) Church had adopted the English language, newly-arrived German immigrants in the congregation withdrew to form St. John's Reformed Church. First Church contributed \$5,000 for the building of their church on the corner of Orange and Mulberry Streets, and while the edifice was being built, 1870-72, St. John's German-speaking Sunday School met in the basement of First Church.

Then after another 105 years, St. John's, which in 1965 had moved to Wheatland Avenue, and St. Paul's, merged to form the Church of the Apostles. Meanwhile, the Congregationalists of New England, originating from Puritan England (1620) had merged with the German Reformed Church to form the new United Church of Christ (1958).

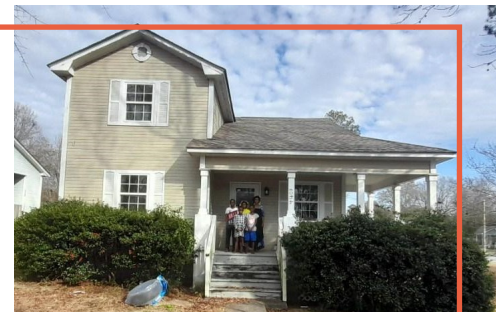
It's an amazing story of adaptation to changing times and shifting populations, covering 359 years.

- From the COA Newsletter, 1977

A NEW BEGINNING: GENERINA FAMILY UPDATE



The Generina family—mom Mlasi and children Jango, Salome, Toshe, and Auser—have successfully moved to Georgia and into a new home with plenty of space for everyone! Mlasi has also secured a job, helping them settle into this new chapter of their lives. While we celebrate their progress, we continue to support the Bilombele family here in Lancaster. If you'd like to contribute to the Refugee Fund, donations can be made via check, cash, or online through Vanco. [Click Here to Give.](#)



March Birthdays

3.2 Pat Sullenberger*
 3.2 John Wallach
 3.3 Betsy Bischoff
 3.5 Judy Jarvis
 3.9 Susan Shaak
 3.10 Anya Sheffer
 3.11 Scott Moore
 3.13 Marty Holmes*
 3.14 Max Koehler
 3.14 Kathleen Stoyer
 3.16 Pat Shane
 3.16 Peter VanBuskirk
 3.17 Jean Cunningham*
 3.18 Hunter Hackenburg
 3.18 Sharon Schaeffer
 3.19 Chris Bracken
 3.20 Mara Pakalnins
 3.21 Jan Baker
 3.22 Milt Gockley*
 3.22 Erik Laymon
 3.23 Luci Stoltzfus
 3.27 Randy Morrison
 3.27 Caroline Rice
 3.29 Loris Cunningham
 3.30 Gary Brown
 3.31 Nathan Moore

*90+ Birthday's

March Anniversary's

3.1 Frank & Teresa Wilson
 3.11 Dustin & Melissa Koehler
 3.16 Kenneth & Bonnie Medved
 3.18 Stephen & Gail Noland*
 3.21 Gary & Ginny Brown*
 3.22 Chris & Karen Braun

*50+ Anniversary

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

Dear Friends of Kathy Barto at Church of the Apostles,

We'd like to thank you for your concern and care for Mom. We (and Mom) so appreciate your cards. Since she's not able to correspond with you, we wanted to let you know that she's comfortable and content, still has a pleasant demeanor and wit, but she is slowing down. She greatly enjoys your cards and reads them over repeatedly. Thank you again for caring for her.

Love,

Ken & Lisa Barto

For Kathy's current address please call the church office at (717) 392-5718

	January 2025	January 2024
YTD Revenue	\$38,008.54	\$37,818.79
YTD Investment Transfers	\$0	\$0
YTD Operating Expenses	\$60,176.29	\$51,401.62
Net YTD Operating Income	-\$22,167.75	-\$13,582.83

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY: WAYS TO GIVE & SERVE

Earn Money for COA While Buying Groceries!

Shop & Support Our Ministries

Did you know you can support Church of the Apostles just by doing your regular grocery shopping? Through our Grocery Card Program, we earn **5% back** on every card purchased for Giant, Stouffer's, and Weis grocery stores. If you're already shopping at these stores, why not help the church at the same time?

Grocery cards are available in \$50 increments, and Karen Culp is our current coordinator. To place an order or learn more, contact Karen at donkarenculp@aol.com. Every little bit adds up—thank you for supporting COA!

Fill the Baskets

Easter Egg Hunt Donations

Our Annual Easter Egg Hunt is just around the corner on **April 12th**, and we need your help to make it a fun and exciting event for the children in our community! We are collecting **Easter eggs, candy, and pre-stuffed eggs** to ensure a joyful experience for all. Please consider bringing in a bag of candy or eggs and dropping them off in the designated collection bin.

For more details about the hunt, [Click Here](#). Thank you for helping us make this year's event a success!

A New Approach to Food Donations

Shifting Our Efforts to Better Serve the Community

Our food bank has officially closed as we are no longer receiving requests, and much of our food would expire before it could be used. While we work on establishing a system to transport donations to the **Hempfield Food Pantry** and other local food banks, we kindly ask our congregation to **refrain from bringing food donations** to the church. Instead, please consider dropping off items directly at a food bank near you.

If you'd like to assist with transporting donations to **Hempfield Food Pantry**, please contact our church administrator, **Melissa**, at admin@apostlesucc.org. Your support ensures food reaches those who need it most!

Urgent Help Needed: Money Counters

Can You Step In?

We are in desperate need of volunteers to help count collections on Monday mornings. This is a vital step in managing our church's finances, and right now, we only have three volunteers who are overwhelmed from carrying the load alone. **The task is simple, but the need is great!** If you can spare some time on Monday mornings, please reach out to the Finance Office at finance@apostlesucc.org. Your help would make a huge difference!

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.

WEBSITE UPDATES

Pardon Our Dust

Exciting changes are coming to the Church of the Apostles website! We're working behind the scenes to create a more user-friendly and welcoming online experience for both our members and new visitors. During this time, you may notice some pages shifting or looking a little different—thank you for your patience as we make these improvements.

We can't wait to share the refreshed website with you soon! Stay tuned for updates and, in the meantime, feel free to reach out to the office if you have trouble finding what you need.