



Church of the Apostles  
United Church of Christ

June 2025

# THE CROWN NEWS

Vol. 49 No. 6



*I give you a new commandment,  
that you love one another. Just as I  
have loved you, you also should  
love one another. - John 13:34*

## PASTOR'S CORNER

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*Let's Be Friends*



@ApostlesUCC

Before his death, Jesus gave his disciples a powerful commandment that remains at the core of what it means to be a Christian: to love one another. For many years, our church has embraced the call to be *"Sharing Christ's Love with All."* Now, as we continue to grow into God's vision for us, to be inclusive and generous, advocates for social justice and environmental care, and a safe space for those who feel afraid or powerless, we are invited to reflect more deeply.

What does it mean to be inclusive today? Who in our community feels afraid or powerless? This summer, we will focus on Scripture passages where Jesus meets those who were excluded, fearful, or marginalized. In each account, Jesus challenges the cultural and religious norms of his day to bring healing and

belonging. He teaches us that love is not about judgment or distance, but about relationship, compassion, and action.

We are living in times that call us to be more intentional, more courageous, and more vocal in our faith. As followers of Christ, we are not called to elevate some while excluding others. We are called to seek justice and love boldly. Pope Leo XIV said it beautifully: *We must seek together how to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges, engages in dialogue, and is always open to receive with open arms everyone, everyone who needs our charity, our presence, our dialogue, and our love.* In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus asked, *"Who was a neighbor to the man in need?"* The lawyer answered, *"The one who showed him mercy."* Jesus responded, *"Go and do likewise."* (Luke 10:37)

May we ask bold questions, deepen our compassion, and follow Christ's example to love without exception.

Blessings & Peace,

*Pastor Kathryn Kuhn*

# UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

**14  
JUNE**

## Sacred Habitats Walk

📍 Rader Park at 8:30 AM

Join Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake for a walk around Rader Park.

**14  
JUNE**

## Community Game Night

📍 Rader Park Pavilion at 6 PM

Bring your favorite board or card game and a friend.



## BOARD NEWS

School is out, flowers are blooming and summer is here! This month, we will see rainbow flags on display in businesses and homes. It is a reminder to me of God's promise and the beauty of God's diverse creation. As we celebrate Pride Month this June, I want to share why becoming Open and Affirming is not only an expression of Christ's inclusive love, but also essential to our future growth, especially in welcoming young families.

In today's world, young parents are seeking more than just Sunday services, they're looking for communities that reflect their values: compassion, justice, and authenticity. Many have LGBTQ+ loved ones and want to raise their children in a church where all people are treated with dignity and love. When we boldly affirm that *all are welcome regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, or background, we show that our faith is rooted not in fear, but in grace.*

Becoming open and affirming is not about politics; it's about hospitality. It's about opening our doors and hearts to those who may have been hurt by churches in the past, and creating a space where every child grows up knowing they are made in the image of God.

Even in a conservative community, standing firmly in love speaks volumes. It sets us apart as a place of refuge and hope. This isn't just a mission statement it's the Gospel in action. I believe that when we lead with love, families will come. They will feel safe, seen, and spiritually fed. And together, we will grow a church where all God's children belong.

With love,

*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.



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

★ **June 19th, 2025:** American Heroes by James Patterson & Matt Eversmann

★ **July 8th, 2025:** We'll Pre-scribe You A Cat by Syou Ishda

★ **August 12th, 2025:** Before We Forget Kindness by Toshikazu Kowaguchi

## Picnic in Rader Park

### *Celebrating 50 Years with our Community*

After worship on June 8th, head over to Rader Park for a special **anniversary picnic** filled with food, fun, and community! We'll be serving up hot dogs, chips, cookies, and ice pops, just bring yourself and a drink! All are welcome for family fun!

**Noon:** PHREDD Ukulele One Man Band



**Afterward:** Learn-to-fish session & Fishing Derby at the pond



Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy an afternoon of celebration! This free event is open to everyone. RSVPs are appreciated to help us plan for food. **Scan the QR Code to Register.** There will also be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

## Summer Office Reminder

Summer is here, and that means vacation season for our staff! With various team members taking time off over the next few months, we kindly ask that you **call or email ahead before stopping by the office** to make sure the person you'd like to see is available. For

longer conversations or specific needs, we're always happy to **schedule an appointment**.

## More Than Just A Sale

### *How Our Annual Garage Sale Makes a Difference*

Thanks to the generosity of our church community and the incredible work of our volunteers the April Garage Sale was a tremendous success, raising **\$7,064!** With additional funds carried over from last year's sale, our Garage Sale Team has thoughtfully allocated the proceeds to bless others in meaningful ways:

- **\$3,532** to Church of the Apostles
- **\$1,000** to the Apostles Assistance Fund
- **\$350** to the UCC Disaster Relief Fund
- **\$500** to the Refugee Assistance Fund
- **\$800** to Samaritan's Purse
- **\$500** to Power Packs
- **\$200** to Water Street Mission
- **\$200** to Milagro House

This effort wouldn't have been possible without the **340 volunteer hours** generously given by members of our community. Thank you to everyone who donated, shopped, and served, your time and support are helping transform lives near and far!



# YOUTH

## ROOTED IN FAITH

### *Life Lessons From The Book of Acts*

**ROOTED** in Faith (4th–8th grade Christian Formation) just wrapped up our year-long study of Acts, which chronicles the early church after Jesus's ascension. Though 2,000 years have passed, the disciples' experiences still offer meaningful lessons:

**Does God let bad things happen to good people?** (Acts 6:8–8:8) Bad things happen all the time—pandemics, losses, hardship. When things look hopeless, don't blame God—look for the bigger picture. Stephen's death devastated the disciples, but it led them to spread Jesus's message far beyond Jerusalem.

**Who's REALLY in charge—God or us?** (Acts 5:33–39, 8:1, 9:1–30) We like to think we're in control, but God often has other plans. Saul tried to stop The Way—until God chose him to be its biggest champion! Living as Jesus's followers isn't always easy, but if we're on God's side, no one can stop us.

**Who gets invited to the party?** (Acts 9:43–10:48) In a world of "Us vs. Them," we need to remember Jesus died for *everyone*. Sometimes even the disciples forgot, but as the late Pope Francis said: "todos, todos, todos"—everyone is welcome under Jesus's big tent.

We'll share what we've learned in a short movie during worship on June 1. For a feature-length film on these themes, check out *Soul Surfer* (2011), which we watched at our final class on May 18. ROOTED returns in September!

## SUMMER FAITH FORMATION

### *Exploring God's Truth Through Science*

Starting June 15th, our primary Faith Formation class will move outside to Rader Park for an exciting summer series: "Exploring God's Truth Through Science."

Have you ever marveled at the wonders of creation? This hands-on, nature-based series invites children to explore the beauty, order, and creativity of our world, each a reflection of God's character. Through lessons on light, air, water, earth, and more, we'll discover how science reveals God's presence and purpose.

Here's a look at what's coming up:

- \* **June 15** – *Let There Be Light*: Learn about God's creation of light and make your own sun catcher.
- \* **June 22** – *Guest Speaker Lisa Sanchez*: Join Lancaster Parks' own naturalist for a special interactive presentation.
- \* **June 29** – *The Layers of Air*: Discover how God gives us just what we need. We'll play with bubbles and try a fun talc experiment!

Join us every Sunday at 10 AM in Rader Park. Friends are always welcome. Let's explore God's creation together!



CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES UCC

# TERRIFIC TUESDAYS



**Pollinators in Rader Park**

June 17 - Bees

June 24 - Butterflies

July 1 - Caterpillars

July 8 - Presentation by Lisa Sanchez



**Free  
to All**



**For 3-10  
Years Old**



Scan QR Code to Register  
More Info: [apostlesucc.org](http://apostlesucc.org)

# OUTREACH

## 50 ACTS OF KINDNESS: A YEAR OF GIVING BACK

As part of our 50th anniversary celebration and in the spirit of living out our mission and vision, Church of the Apostles is excited to launch a yearlong initiative: **50 Acts of Kindness**.

For 50 years, this church has been a place of blessing for individuals, for families, and for the wider community. Now, in gratitude and joy, we want to offer **50 Acts of Kindness** back into the world around us.

### OUR IMPACT

# \$652

Strengthen the Church

You are invited to take part in this campaign by choosing one or more acts of kindness to complete during our celebration year. Acts range from the simple to the creative: write a thank-you note to a teacher, cook a meal for someone who needs a boost, or hand out bottles of water to un-homed neighbors on a hot day. We've even left a few slots open, so you can dream up your own unique way to share love and compassion.

Donations as of Publishing

To participate:

- Pick up an "act tag" in the **narthex**
- Sign up on the sheet provided
- Take a picture (if you can!) while doing your act
- Email your photo and a brief note to [admin@apostlesucc.org](mailto:admin@apostlesucc.org)

Throughout the year, we'll share these moments in our newsletters and on social media to celebrate the many ways our church is living out Jesus' command to "love your neighbor."

Let's bless our community one act at a time. Together, we can turn kindness into a movement.

## From Baby Bottles to Backpacks

### *Supporting Students in Lancaster*

As our LGH Baby Shower ministry wraps up, we're already turning our hearts toward the next opportunity to bless our community, Back to School! This summer, Church of the Apostles is once again participating in the **Great School Supply Giveaway at Clipper Stadium**, which serves students in the School District of Lancaster. We've been asked to collect **folders** and **glue sticks**, and we're happy to join in this meaningful effort.

Starting mid-June, our Caring Cart in the Narthex will shift from baby items to school supplies. All donations should be in by **August 3rd** to ensure they're included in the giveaway. As you see back-to-school deals popping up in stores, consider grabbing a few extra items to help local kids start the school year off strong. Thank you for your continued generosity and love for our neighbors!







# A MUSICAL NOTE

With Music Director, Lars Potteiger

Our worship series for June and July will explore how we, as a church, can more fully live out our mission to be an inclusive place of welcome, especially for those who feel like outsiders. As I reflect on this, I recall moments when I've felt like an outsider—and times when I may have made others feel the same. At different points, we can be both the cause and the remedy. As the Church, we are called to be a place of welcome for all. One of my favorite contemporary hymns that captures this spirit is "Gather Us In" by Marty Haugen, which we often sing as a reminder of our calling to inclusivity and hospitality.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

This hymn was written by Marty Haugen in 1982. A liturgical composer affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Haugen composed the hymn to reflect themes of inclusivity, unity, and communal worship. Drawing on biblical imagery of light, hope, and belonging, the hymn invites all people—regardless of background or status—into the worship space as equals, gathered by God's love. This hymn's engaging melody and socially conscious lyrics have made it a staple in many Christian hymnals, especially for services centered on welcome, baptism, and community.

Peace,  
Lars



## UPCOMING APOSTLES ACADEMY PERFORMANCE

Experience a captivating fusion of music and astronomy on **June 19th at 7:30 PM** at Church of the Apostles. This free **Astral Harp** concert, part of the Apostles Academy of Arts 2025 Summer Concert Series, features stunning space imagery by former planetarium operator Kevin and cosmic-inspired harp performances by award-winning harpist Janet. This event is **free to attend**, with a **freewill offering** taken in lieu of tickets. Don't miss this **unforgettable journey** through the stars!

## Bernhardt-Elmer Scholarship Winner

### *Congratulations Benjamin Stoltzfus*

Benja has been awarded the Bernhardt-Elmer Scholarship to support his college education. This fall, he will begin his studies at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, where he plans to major in Biology.

"I've always had a scientific fascination and I like learning about living things," Benja shared.

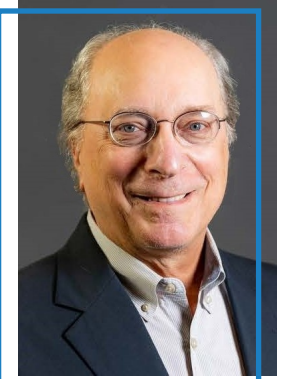
A familiar and faithful presence at Church of the Apostles, Benja has volunteered at the garage sale, Wacky Wednesday, and is often found working behind the scenes in the sound booth.

## June Mocktails & Meaning

### *The Underground Railroad in Southeastern PA*

Church of the Apostles UCC invites you to our next **Mocktails & Meaning** session on **Juneteenth, Thursday, June 19, 2025 at 6:30 PM**, focusing on the Underground Railroad in Southeastern PA and key moments from our nation's first civil rights movement. Our guest speaker, **Randy Harris**, brings decades of experience in historic preservation and heritage tourism. A partner in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and founder of Origins of the Underground Railroad heritage tours, Harris has helped secure national recognition for more than 20 Underground Railroad sites across Pennsylvania. He currently works with the upcoming **Stevens & Smith Center for History and Democracy**, set to open in 2026.

Enjoy meaningful conversation and this month's signature drink the **Blue Lagoon Mocktail**. Register now to attend, **Scan the QR Code**.



**Apostles Community Preschool wishes you and your family a summer full of sunshine, smiles, and safe adventures! Enjoy every moment!**





## LIVING OUR MISSION: JENNIFER EATON

Each month, we invite you, our congregation and community members, to share how you're embodying our vision and mission of **inclusive refuge, compassionate justice, and environmental advocacy**. This month, we're shining a light on Jennifer Eaton, a dedicated COA member for 39 years, who's making a difference by advocating for the visually impaired. Read below to learn how she's leading with compassion and purpose.

### Which volunteer roles do you have at COA?

Currently I serve on the Property Committee and I'm an Apostle Community Preschool Board Member. In the past I've been involved with the Education Commission, Implementation Team, Christmas in the Country, and I served on Council.

### What volunteer work do you do outside of COA?



In addition to Susquehanna Valley Team River Runner, I'm also a member of the Mountville Lions Club serving in multiple leadership roles throughout the years.

### What aspect of volunteering do you find the most fulfilling?

The smiles, whether they are on the faces of student's with vision loss, veterans, or even on the faces of parents realizing that blindness is NOT a barrier to adventure.

### Why do you continue to volunteer?

I continue my volunteer work with Team River Runner because they have given me a seat at their table to advocate for individuals with vision loss and the ability to educate communities across the country about what individuals with vision loss are capable of if given the opportunity.

### What is a fun fact about you?

When I was younger I had not just one but two imaginary friends, I guess you could say my spark for creativity and outside of the box thinking started early for me.

### Which famous person (past or present) would you volunteer with?

I'll keep the theme going with having two people, former President Jimmy Carter and Queen Elizabeth I.



## June Birthdays

6.1 ~ Pam Smith  
 6.2 ~ Darrell Schock  
 6.3 ~ Mark Reinhardt  
 6.4 ~ Tim Stirling  
 6.5 ~ Debby Walburn  
 6.6 ~ George Alspach  
 6.6 ~ Les Helmeczi  
 6.6 ~ Alexa Neiderer  
 6.6 ~ Dot Lippart  
 6.7 ~ Ann Berkow  
 6.8 ~ Violet Koehler  
 6.10 ~ Barb Golden  
 6.10 ~ McCoy Rohrbaugh  
 6.12 ~ Wilma Klingler\*  
 6.18 ~ Luke Bahling  
 6.19 ~ JoAnn Kerst\*  
 6.19 ~ Carol Gabriel  
 6.23 ~ Kathy Zerby  
 6.23 ~ Bill Hager  
 6.27 ~ Skeeter Carr  
 6.27 ~ Chase Rampaul  
 6.29 ~ Laura Bender  
 6.29 ~ Karen Braun  
 6.29 ~ Mike Schaeffer

\*90+ Birthday's

## June Anniversary's

6.3 ~ Mike & Sharon Schaeffer  
 6.5 ~ Karen & Ken Whittington  
 6.7 ~ Nils & Wende Stenman  
 6.9 ~ Jack & Cathie Oliphant\*  
 6.9 ~ Larry & Judith Frable\*  
 6.14 ~ Joe & Christina Bahling  
 6.14 ~ Roger & Janice Morris\*  
 6.20 ~ Chris & Brenna Bracken  
 6.21 ~ John & Barbara Wylie\*  
 6.21 ~ Kate & Kerry Kendig  
 6.27 ~ Jere & Joyce Baker

\*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](mailto:office@apostlesucc.org)

or complete a form in the Church office. The suggested donation is \$60, but any amount is appreciated.



SPONSOR THROUGH  
VANCO

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

## A Special Thank-You from the Bender Family

Dear COA family,

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude for the prayers, cards, and meals you so generously provided during our recent cancer journey. Your support as a church family brought us great comfort and strength. The love and care you showed allowed us to focus on healing and cherish our time together, especially over the delicious meals you shared with us.

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ during this time.

The Bender Family

	April 2025	April 2024
YTD Revenue	\$139,145.35	\$144,316.46
YTD Investment Transfers	\$0	\$0
YTD Operating Expenses	\$218,086.18	\$225,218.37
Net YTD Operating Income	-\$78,940.83	-\$80,901.91

# Finding Home: New Members Share Their Journey to Church of the Apostles

## Wanda Bomberger

Wanda, formerly Wanda Shaeffer and daughter of Doris and Lynwood Shaeffer, grew up at Church of the Apostles. She has returned to the church because she felt she "needed it" and is now enjoying re-connecting with the community and worshipping alongside fellow members.

## Duke & Carol Gabriel

Duke & Carol Gabriel were searching for a church home that would warm their hearts and they found it at Church of the Apostles through the music, the pastor, and the love and respect shown to everyone.

## Dot & Dennis Lippart

Dot and Dennis first came to Church of the Apostles in search of a church home for an elderly friend who needed a barrier-free space. Though their friend passed away shortly after, they discovered something unexpected. A welcoming community where everyone is accepted, regardless of where they are on their spiritual journey or their social standing. For Dot and Dennis, Church of the Apostles has become a true *sanctuary*.

## The Szalczyk Family

Mark and Erin met in Leesport, PA, and now live in the Hempfield area with their 12-year-old twins, Keeghan and Kyleigh, both proud Apostles Preschool grads. Their family stays busy with school, sports, and time at the beach.

They chose to return to Church of the Apostles because of its welcoming spirit and commitment to being a safe, judgment-free place to grow in faith and feel closer to Jesus.

**A new member luncheon is being planned for September 2025 following worship—a great opportunity for new members to meet the congregation and get to know one another!**



# 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

