



# St. Thomas Speaks

November 2024 Issue #4

The recent hurricanes in North Carolina and Florida have caused tremendous damage. Some of you have been asking what St. Thomas is doing to help. We have spoken to conference staff and have been advised that right now the best way to respond is to donate to UCC National disaster relief. Simply notate on your check "disaster relief" or Hurricane Helene relief, and we will forward the funds. (As of writing this, the online Web site for donations was not working).

Be assured that we have people on the scene involved in the cleanup and helping to just getting basic supplies such as food and water in. We will keep you informed as the situation progresses.

One of our outreach partners, MidWest Food Bank responded with several truckloads of food/ water within days of the flooding. Keep the victims and first responders in your prayers.



As someone who survived Hurricane Agnes, Andrew, Wilma, Rita, Katrina, Harvey and two daughters (one whose middle name *is* Katrina,) I can tell you the devastation you see in the picture is the least of the problems these people will face. They have nowhere to go (all the hotels are full) no water to drink yet alone bathe; ice melts, food spoils (with no way to cook it), phones are not working, electricity is days maybe weeks away, and all that's on the radio is bad news. Your children are terrified, and you are on your knees praying for help. When help comes, it feels like a miracle. And it is. That's what we are here to do. So please help in any way you can. The people in need will never forget your help and generosity. I never did.

Carol Wirth

## Election Day Café

Thank you to all the wonderful bakers who showed up with delicious desserts. We had record attendance yesterday. A special thank you to Connie Stackhouse and her team of helpers who fed us and cleaned everything up. You Rock!

With my whole heart, with my whole life, and with my innermost being, I bow in wonder and love before you, the Holy God! Psalm 103:1

## November Birthdays

1 – David Summers

2 – Patti Hanawalt

Ashley Summers

12 – Mary Hill

14 – Carol Wirth

18 – Phillip Hepler

20 – Larry Howell

22 – Christopher Hench

24 – Ray Wright

26 – Richard Koppenheffer

28 – Sarah Trite

Did we miss your birthday?  
Call or email the office.

Our restaurant nights are not only good for us (the last one brought in **\$500** to St. Thomas thanks to the generosity of the Copper Pub) but fundraisers are good for our area restaurants. What an amazing way to build a community. Thank you, Stephanie and Brian Hench, for your consistent hard work in this wonderful ministry.

### November Restaurant Fundraiser

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, November 12**, and plan to join your St. Thomas friends for some good food at Aroogas Restaurant on Rt. 22. Stop in any time, 11 am - close, and a portion of your food bill will be donated to St. Thomas. Coupon attached.

*Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.*  
*Ephesians 5:20*

### Congregational Meeting – Sunday, November 24

Our Constitution requires the congregation to meet annually to elect Elders & Deacons, treasurer(s) and to vote on a church budget. The meeting will also include updates from consistory on many facets of our church business, including the church's financials, organizational structure, pastoral transition, outreach contributions, and a glimpse into 2025 to name a few. Of course, this will be accompanied by food and other refreshments. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.



### From the Deacons: Christmas Gift for St. Thomas

As you're reflecting on God's blessings this year, consider a Christmas gift to St. Thomas UCC. Holiday cards will be in the foyers for sharing a message to your St. Thomas friends. Enclose your Christmas gift and place it in the offering plate. Cards and messages will be displayed in the new year, and gifts will go to the General Fund. This special donation can also be made via your regular offering envelope (write *Christmas Gift* on the "other" line) and through the online portal.

Thank you

## Solar Energy



Wave of the future. Our 81 solar panels are up and running. We are currently paying nothing for electricity and in fact, we are banking kilowatt hours for the future.

Let's break those numbers down:

September 2023	\$499.99
September 2024	\$ 88.02

October 2023	\$423.73
October 2024	\$100.61

And we have enough kilowatts banked to pay for November's bill. The money we are paying for electricity is for the general delivery charge which everyone has and that is nonnegotiable.

If you are interested in saving money on your home electric bills, please call the office for a referral so you, too, can start saving money.

I am looking for favorite recipes to share, tips to make life easier and suggestions for future newsletters. Please call or email Carol at the office.

## Thanksgiving Miracles Happen Every Day

Years ago, when my children were little, we had some rough times. Grocery shopping happened by the dollar amount I had in my wallet. So, one day I had seven dollars and some change. I got milk, cheese and bread. I got to the front of the store and the lines were long. So I decided on the 10 items or less lane.

A gallon of milk gets heavy real quick. So the man in front of me cleared out the top of his basket and offered it to me. (it was a really long line) Of course we chatted about the weather, the line, the prices and his dad who was holding onto the wagon for support. Just a nice person. We finally worked our way to the register and yes, I'm still talking and he hangs out at the end of the register. I think it's because I'm so adorable. Well, when I went to pay, the cashier said, "your friend paid the bill."

The man I met in the line paid the bill? Of course, till I pulled myself together, the two men were gone. How did they know I was short on money? How did they know that such a simple gift would bring me such joy and relief? Well, they didn't need to know, GOD KNEW! I told the cashier I only met them at the back of the line and he was shouting the story to all the other cashiers. What an Aha moment for me. As times got better, I remember those two angels and bought many things for people anonymously. Even if they had the money, how awesome to get a gift from a stranger.

As this holiday season approaches, take the time to share the love, brighten someone's day, turn a frown upside down. Time and money are important, but only LOVE triumphs overall.

Carol Wirth

## Tops

*Join us for affordable, effective Weight-loss support!*

Where: St. Thomas UCC, Fellowship Hall

When: Wednesday at 9:30 am weigh in

10:30 am Meeting

Need more info: 717-652-24-1 pt 717-652-0625

TOPS PA 0147 Harrisburg PA

**Real People. Real Weight Loss.**

# You Speak

## Great uses for Coffee Filters

1. Line a food container
  2. Use as a spoon rest
  3. Prefilter water while Hiking or backpacking
  5. Filter Cork Bits
  6. Use as regular paper
  7. Clean your dashboard
  8. Absorb excess oil
  9. Use as toilet paper
  10. Start a fire
- Reuse and Recycle!**

*Save our earth!*

## A Kid's Favorite

### Peanut Blossoms

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup margarine  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup brown sugar  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup peanut butter  
1 egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking soda  
Pinch of salt  
1 bag Hershey kisses, unwrapped  
Preheat oven to 350  
Cream margarine, brown sugar, peanut butter, egg and vanilla. Add flour, baking soda and salt. Form into small 1 inch balls (if the balls are too sticky to roll, add a little more flour). Then roll the balls in sugar. Place on ungreased cookie sheet two inches apart. Bake 11 minutes. Pull out of oven, add Hershey kiss to each cookie, place back in oven for one minute. Remove and cool. Chocolate will set given some time.

## Did you know that we have a library at St. Thomas?

Located just down from Fellowship Hall, we have a library. It's for anyone to use, with a wide variety of books and DVDs to borrow. You don't need a card, and there is no set time to return items. Just fill out the card in the back of the book and place that card in the basket on the desk. DVDs may have a sign-up sheet to fill out. There are reference-type books, fiction and even books for children, and we encourage you to use them.

### Just a few things we ask:

1. Everything has been donated. Items do not need to be brand new, but it would be appreciated if they were in good condition.
2. If you are donating an item, please place it on the desk with a note that indicates that.
3. When you return items, place them on the cart so we can put the cards back in them and reshelve them properly.

Thank You, Nick Bartholomeo & Ellen Miller



# We Speak

## Community Impact

This last quarter of the year always seems the busiest and always sneaks up the fastest. We have many opportunities for you to participate in St. Thomas's outreach efforts. You will hear more in future communications, but for now we ask you to consider the upcoming holidays. If you know of anyone/family who may be in need this Thanksgiving, please let us know. We are more than willing to make up a basket(s) of food.

\*Openings for the Linglestown **Christkindlmarkt** Living Nativity in Dec. Don't take our word for how much fun it is; ask those who have participated in past years. It really is fun! Save the date, 12/14/24.

\* 11/16/24 breakfast for **Christian Churches United Re-entry Program**. We will need help with set-up, serving and mingling with our guests, clean-up, and for an added bonus, you get to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by the reknowned chefs Doug and Missie.

The easiest way for us to share God's love is to serve others.

Thank you for the support you give to the projects Community Impact takes on.

## Advent Festival

### Items Needed:

Ping Pong Balls

Organge plastic lids on Tropicana drinks or OJ. Other colors also accepted.



**Newsletter articles due by November 24.**

## Baskets of Thanks

November's Mission Support is Baskets of Thanks. This is our opportunity to share with others in gratitude for the abundances we have. We will be having a food drive and ask that you bring in non-perishable items for holiday meals. This includes items such as instant potatoes, canned green beans, canned cranberry sauce, canned gravy, pie shells, canned pumpkin, canned hams, canned fruit, boxed stuffing, canned sauerkraut. We stress canned items as the food banks are unable to accept glassed items. We will be collecting foods for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years meals. The drive will continue into the new year, as Food Banks typically see a 70 % drop off in donations after the holidays.

The Community Impact team is also willing to make up actual food baskets. (Wanda Shaffer) If you know of anyone who might be in need of a basket, please let us know and we will see that they receive one. **All names remain confidential.**



**I will give thanks to the Lord because of His righteousness  
I will sing the praises of the name of the Lord Most High. Psalm 7:17**



A big THANK YOU to you who have already contributed to the gift request of a donation to purchase gift cards for residents of our UCC HOMES.

For those who would like to contribute, you may see me or place your check in the offering plate. Checks made out to St. Thomas, memo UCC HOMES Christmas gifts.

Thank you for your generosity to let residents who have no families know they are not forgotten.

Your UCC HOMES representative -  
Marilyn Beistel

## Save the Date

- November 5 – Election Day & Café, 7a-6p
- November 12 – Morning Coffee, 10a
- November 12 – Fundraiser at Aroogas - all day
- November 16 – Re-entry Breakfast
- November 24 – Annual Congregational Mtg.
- November 28-29 – Office Closed
- December 1 – Communion, Tree lighting
- December 8 – Advent Pageant & Festival 9a
- December 10 – Lifeline 8-4
- December 13 – Aveanna Gifts due
- December 14 – Christkindlmarkt, 10-4
- December 25 & 26- Office closed
- January 1 – Office closed

***God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*** Psalm 46:1

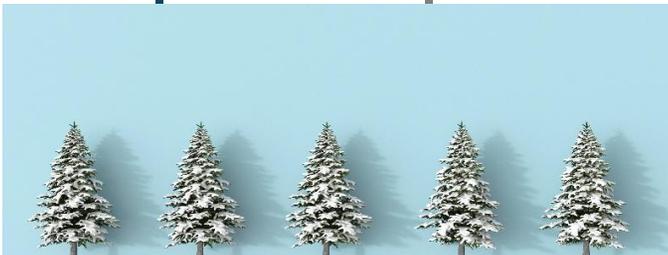
*Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*  
St. Teresa of Ávila

In the time since the storms made landfall, the United Church of Christ Global HOPE team has been in regular communication with conference staff of the Southeast, Southern, and Florida conferences, ecumenical partners in disaster recovery, and response coordination. If you want to know how you can help, money can be donated through St. Thomas or to the UCC website. Be the body of Christ with your thoughts and prayers.

Other ways to help are Crisis Cleanup Phone Banking, Hygiene and Cleanup Bucket Assembly, and many more. Contact PCC's Disaster Relief team chairs Bill and Ellen Matten at [beathomemd@comcast.net](mailto:beathomemd@comcast.net) to learn more.

# November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Communion Girl Scts, 6p	4 Dulcimers 9-12 Elders 6:45 Scouts 6-9p	5 Election Day Election Café Using stove	6 TOPS 9-12	7 Bells 6p Choir 6:45p	8	9 PCC, 9-noon FH
10 Girl scts, 6p	11 Dulcimers 9-12 Hospitality 6p	12 Morning Coff, 10a Deacons 6:30p Restaurant fundraiser at Aroogas on Rt. 22	13 TOPS 9-12	14 Rock Club, 6p Bells 6p Choir 6:45p	15 PCC, 9-4 FH	16 Re-entry Bkfst 7-noon, FH Using stove
17 Girl Scts, 6p Card Min 1-3p	18 Dulcimers 9-12 Comm Imp, 2p	19	20 TOPS 9-12	21 Bells 6p Choir 6:45p	22	23
24 Congregation Meeting Girl Scts, 6p	25 Dulcimers 9-12 Consistory 6:45	26 Hist Pres 7p	27 TOPS 9-12	28 Office Closed Happy Thanksgiving	29 Office Closed	30 Hang Wreaths Put up tree



December 1- First Sunday in Advent

Lighting of the Christmas tree