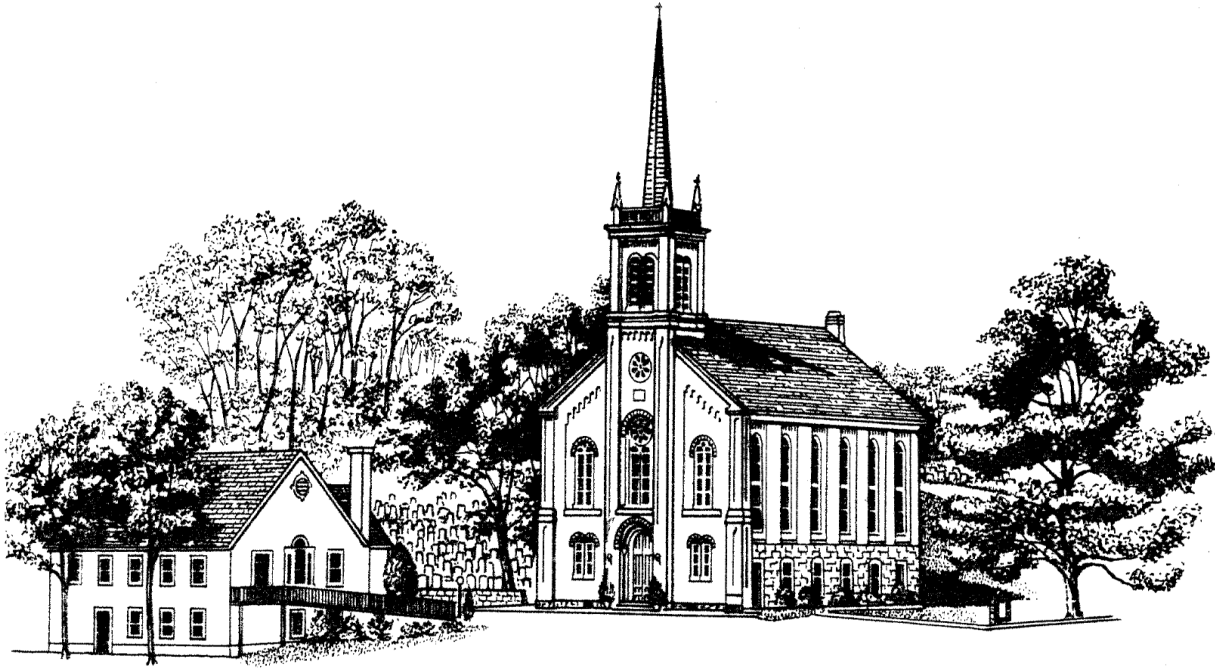


# HUFF'S UNION CHURCH ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2023



## MISSION STATEMENT

**To reach out to the world around us and share the everlasting love of Jesus Christ!**

**Making Disciples: Inside and Out.  
UCC slogan: God is still speaking.  
ELCA slogan: God's work, our hands.**

**Huff's Union Church, Inc.**

**Rev. John Steitz, Pastor  
540 Conrad Rd.  
Alburtis, PA 18011  
Office 610-845-2626 Fax 610-845-8507  
Email: [office@huffschurch.com](mailto:office@huffschurch.com)  
Website: [www.huffschurch.com](http://www.huffschurch.com)  
Facebook: Huff's Union Church**

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## **2023 UNION COUNCIL**

### **Members**

Michael Diehl  
Lisa Kauffman  
Martin Kriebel  
Lori Lanahan  
Carol Leh  
Jim Meitzler, Sr.  
Thomas Mitchell  
Matthew Schantz  
William Stoudt  
Rachel Welch  
Elaine Witman  
Theresa Woloszanski

### **Officers**

Martin Kriebel - President  
Tess Woloszanski - Vice President  
Rachel Welch - Secretary  
Jon Benfield - Treasurer

**BAPTISMS**

| <b><u>Name of Child/Parents</u></b>                         | <b><u>Born</u></b> | <b><u>Baptized</u></b> |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|
| Austin Matthew Lorish<br>...Matthew & Stephanie Lorish      | 9/4/2022           | 6/25/2023              |
| Remington Jayce Levengood<br>...Ryan & Lyndsay Jo Levengood | 11/24/2022         | 7/16/2023              |
| Paul Robert Giangiacomo                                     | 2/20/1990          | 8/16/2023              |

**MARRIAGES**

| <b><u>Names of Groom &amp; Bride</u></b> | <b><u>Date of Marriage</u></b> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Anna Hayes & Clay Swackhamer             | 6/24/2023                      |

**FUNERALS**

| <b><u>Names of Deceased</u></b> | <b><u>Date of Death</u></b> | <b><u>Date of Service</u></b> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nevin F. Hess                   | 1/15/2023                   | Private                       |
| Katie I. Danner                 | 3/16/2023                   | 3/23/2023                     |
| David L. Arner                  | 3/16/2023                   | 3/25/2023                     |
| Joyce D. Diehl                  | 3/20/2023                   | Unknown                       |
| Mae E. Hoffman                  | 3/21/2023                   | 4/7/2023                      |
| Arlene Hill                     | 4/20/2023                   | Unknown                       |
| Richard J. Muth, Jr.            | 7/7/2023                    | 7/15/2023                     |
| Lynne D. Sell                   | 8/19/2023                   | 8/24/2023                     |
| Stanley E. Geisinger            | 10/11/2023                  | 10/26/2023                    |
| David J. Leibensperger          | 11/24/2023                  | 12/1/2023                     |
| Jane A. Arndt                   | 12/8/2023                   | 1/13/2024                     |
| Lorraine Greiss                 | 12/8/2023                   | 12/15/2023                    |
| Gwen J. Albert                  | 12/9/2023                   | 12/13/2023                    |

**NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED**

| <b><u>Names of Member</u></b> | <b><u>Date Joined</u></b> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stephen Kalis                 | 7/9/2023                  |
| Trip Kalis                    | 7/9/2023                  |
| Debra Anne Romig              | 7/9/2023                  |
| Paul Robert Giangiacomo       | 8/6/2023                  |
| Karlene Ann Brintzenhoff      | 12/17/2023                |

**TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER CONGREGATION**

| <u>Names of Member</u> | <u>Date Transferred</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
|------------------------|-------------------------|

**CONFIRMATION**

| <u>Names of Confirmand</u> | <u>Date Confirmed</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jace Benfield              | 6/4/2023              |
| Maisy Christine Funk       | 6/4/2023              |
| Nicholas Jay Hunsberger    | 6/4/2023              |
| Gabriella Rose Moyer       | 6/4/2023              |
| Elijah David Richetti      | 6/4/2023              |
| Tucker Jonathan Ruch       | 6/4/2023              |

**MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total confirmed membership 2022:             | 558 |
| Additions to membership:                     | 11  |
| Deletions from Membership - Transfers:       | 0   |
| Deletions from Membership - Deaths:          | 13  |
| Moved to inactive status:                    | 0   |
| Total confirmed membership as of 12/31/2023: | 553 |
| <b>Average Sunday Worship Attendance:</b>    |     |
| Online Worship Service                       | 35  |
| Sunday by Sunday Average Worship Attendance: | 72  |

Huff's Union Church Insurance Provider: United Church of Christ Insurance Board (UCCIB)

**Huffs Union Church**  
**Statement of Income and Expenses**

|                            | Audited         |                  | Audited         |                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
|                            | 2022            | 2023             | 2023            | 2024             |
|                            | Actual          | Budget           | Actual          | Budget           |
| Giving                     | 170,935         | 170,090          | 196,568         | 179,150          |
| Funds from Church Groups   | 44,005          | 18,000           | 18,012          | 21,000           |
| Fundraising profit         | 10,408          | 9,860            | 16,007          | 13,910           |
| Facility rentals           | 700             | 400              | 120             | 200              |
| Interest income            | 16              | 50               | 811             | 2,715            |
| Total income               | 235,768         | 198,400          | 231,518         | 216,975          |
| Christian education        | 1,840           | 3,010            | 2,201           | 3,050            |
| Evangelism                 | 177             | 6,450            | -               | 3,500            |
| Insurance                  | 16,427          | 18,050           | 17,920          | 19,728           |
| Benevolence                | 24,582          | 33,615           | 40,881          | 23,420           |
| Ministry expenses          | 12,886          | 10,250           | 12,317          | 10,125           |
| Payroll                    | 138,326         | 179,441          | 159,814         | 185,990          |
| Pastoral expenses          | 25,179          | 36,742           | 26,304          | 28,842           |
| Professional fees          | 10,740          | 11,777           | 5,868           | 1,200            |
| Repairs and maintenance    | 51,607          | 24,099           | 27,044          | 26,852           |
| Utilities                  | 21,208          | 25,435           | 27,986          | 22,050           |
| Bank charges               | 459             | 475              | 522             | 550              |
| Search and call expenses   | 720             | -                | -               | -                |
| Total expenses             | 304,151         | 349,344          | 320,856         | 325,307          |
| <b>Operating deficit</b>   | <b>(68,383)</b> | <b>(150,944)</b> | <b>(89,338)</b> | <b>(108,332)</b> |
| Capital expenditures       | -               | (80,000)         | (15,650)        | (240,000)        |
| Transfers from investments | 70,000          | 230,944          | 150,000         | 348,332          |
| Net income                 | 1,617           | 0                | 45,012          | -                |

**Submitted by:** Jon Benfield

**Huffs Union Church****Balance Sheet**

|   | <b>Audited</b>          | <b>Audited</b>          |                       |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|   | <b>12/31/23</b>         | <b>12/31/22</b>         | <b>Change</b>         |
| <b>Designated Funds</b>                 |                         |                         |                       |
| Electronic Organ Fund                   | 1,170                   | 1,170                   | -                     |
| Capital Improvements Fund               | -                       | 11,310                  | (11,310) (a)          |
| Local Needy Fund                        | 1,330                   | 4,260                   | (2,930)               |
| Sabbatical Fund                         | 2,255                   | 2,255                   | -                     |
| Continuing Education Fund               | 985                     | 985                     | -                     |
| Missions Outreach                       | 10,621                  | 10,621                  | -                     |
| Jane Kulkua Scholarship Fund            | 2,230                   | 2,230                   | -                     |
| Special Music                           | 17,355                  | 18,000                  | (645)                 |
| Sunday School Account                   | 6,715                   | 7,107                   | (392)                 |
| Youth Group Account                     | 12,429                  | 15,429                  | (3,000)               |
| Operations Fund                         | 63,739                  | 522                     | 63,217 (b)            |
| Total Desig Funds - Truist Money Market | <u>118,828</u>          | <u>73,887</u>           | <u>44,941</u>         |
| <b>General Funds</b>                    |                         |                         |                       |
| Petty cash                              | 239                     | 251                     | (12)                  |
| Current Fund - Truist Checking          | 7,166                   | 4,760                   | 2,406                 |
| Total General Funds                     | <u>7,405</u>            | <u>5,011</u>            | <u>2,394</u>          |
| <b>Investments</b>                      |                         |                         |                       |
| Sunday School CD - Truist               | 1,529                   | 1,522                   | 8                     |
| Sunday School CD - Truist               | 1,500                   | 1,457                   | 44                    |
| Sunday School CD - Truist               | 1,448                   | 1,406                   | 42                    |
| Long-term Fund - Tiller Wealth          | 3,538,519               | 2,856,419               | 682,099 (c)           |
| Total Investments                       | <u>3,542,997</u>        | <u>2,860,804</u>        | <u>682,193</u>        |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                     | <b><u>3,669,230</u></b> | <b><u>2,939,702</u></b> | <b><u>729,527</u></b> |
| <b>Investment Balance Roll-forward</b>  |                         |                         |                       |
|   | <u>2023</u>             | <u>2022</u>             |                       |
| Beginning balance                       | 2,856,419               | 2,899,238               |                       |
| Transfers from UCC Investments          | 225                     | 409,472 (c)             |                       |
| Transfers from ELCA Investments         | 390,461                 | - (c)                   |                       |
| Interest & dividends                    | 104,131                 | 80,742                  |                       |
| Realized & unrealized gains/(losses)    | 353,515                 | (509,252)               |                       |
| Fees                                    | (16,232)                | (13,281)                |                       |
| Withdrawals (transfers to checking)     | (150,000)               | (10,500) (d)            |                       |
| Ending balance                          | <u>3,538,519</u>        | <u>2,856,419</u>        |                       |

(a) Capital improvements fund was used to pay for the water treatment system in the church.

(b) The Operations Fund was established to provide liquidity for operating expenses to avoid having to sell investments at a time when they were undervalued (i.e., in a down market). The current intent is to maintain an average balance of approximately \$60,000 in case of a market downturn.

(c) In connection with the merger of the UCC and ELCA corporations into the Union corporation, we transferred the investments owned by the UCC and ELCA corporations into the Union corporation. The UCC investments transferred in Dec-22 and the ELCA investments transferred in Q1 2023.

(d) The budgeted withdrawals from the investments for 2023 was \$231,000. Because the operating deficit was less than budgeted and because we spent less on capital expenditures than budgeted, we did not withdraw as much from the investments as budgeted. Withdrawals are from interest, dividends, and capital gains.

Audit Completed by Jane Leeser Date Feb 2024

Submitted by: Jon Benfield

## Contributions for 2023 by Category

| Dollar Amount Given | Giving per Unit |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Zero                | 211             |
| .01 – 5.00          | 3               |
| 5.01 – 10.00        | 10              |
| 10.01 – 25.00       | 29              |
| 25.01 – 50.00       | 30              |
| 50.01 – 75.00       | 21              |
| 75.01 – 100.00      | 26              |
| 100.01 – 150.00     | 19              |
| 150.01 – 200.00     | 15              |
| 200.01 – 250.00     | 10              |
| 250.01 – 300.00     | 9               |
| 300.01 – 350.00     | 1               |
| 350.01 – 400.00     | 2               |
| 400.01 – 450.00     | 5               |
| 450.01 – 500.00     | 10              |
| 500.01 – 750.00     | 11              |
| 750.01 – 1000.00    | 8               |
| 1000.01 – 1500.00   | 14              |
| 1500.01 – 2000.00   | 9               |
| 2000.01 – 2500.00   | 3               |
| 2500.01 – 3000.00   | 3               |
| 3000.01 – 3500.00   | 2               |
| 3500.01 – 4000.00   | 0               |
| 4000.01 – 4500.00   | 2               |
| 4500.01 – 5000.00   | 0               |
| 5000.01 – 6000.00   | 1               |
| 6000.01 – plus      | 6               |

**Total Giving Units**

**460**



## **Pastor John S. Steitz's Report**

### **Accomplishments over the past year:**

From a personal health perspective, 2023 was very challenging year. For your support and prayers, I am deeply grateful. I want to especially lift up Marty Kriebel and Joanne Benfield for their assistance and persistence. They carried the load I was unable to carry.

As I write this in January 2024, my health is good and I have regained most of my strength and vitality. Moreover, as we enter into 2024, Huff's Union Church is a strong and vital local church. Praise be to God!

If there is one thing I learned in 2023 that really stands out it is the need for resiliency and being adaptive in our life together as a faith community. This might be most obvious in having a team of back-up lay preachers ready to go each Sunday. However, the call to resiliency goes much deeper than this.

Resiliency calls for shared leadership. Shared leadership opens the way for people to discover and share the ministry gifts that God blesses each of us with. Throughout my pastoral ministry I have been an advocate for shared leadership, lay empowerment, and leadership development.

Ephesians 4: 11 -12 highlights shared leadership, gifts, and the role of the pastor. The role of the pastor in the early Church was to equip the saints (lay believers) for the work of ministry. This is the role pastors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to reclaim and live into.

During 2023 we needed to be resilient and adaptive in our ministry as a response to factors such as my health. In 2024 we are called to be resilient and adaptive in our ministry in more intentional and strategic ways.

My intention in 2024 is to work with lay leaders to go through the various aspects of our life together with a resiliency mindset. This orientation toward shared leadership and the sharing of gifts will help us be adaptive and faithful.

**Submitted by:** Pastor John S. Steitz

## 2023 Union Council Highlights

**NIV Bible Verse: Acts 14:23** - Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

### Accomplishments during the past year:

#### January 9

- Election of Church Officers are as follows: Martin Kriebel, President; Theresa Woloszanski, Vice President; Jon Benfield, Treasurer and Rachel Welch, Secretary.
- The Local Needy and Gift Card Policy was being reviewed and rewritten to bring it up to date.
- The hiring of a second music person to assist Gloria was discussed.

#### February 13

- The reworked Local Needy and Gift Card Policy was adopted.
- The proposed job descriptions for Music Director and Associate Music Director were reviewed.
- The Mae Krause fund was transferred from the UCC Congregation to the Cemetery Board.
- Committees formed - Mission Endowment & Gift Receipt: Ernest Geist, Jane Leeser, Carol Leh, Emily Swackhammer; Membership Review: Pat Crossley, Pearl Hoffman, John Leeser, Kay Kriebel; New Church Directory: Leadership needed.
- DEP inspection of the water in church and chapel was discussed and a chlorination system was recommended.

#### March 13

- Reviewed and approved the second music person job description. Committee to be formed.
- Fund raising ideas reviewed, modified with R & K Subs recommended as the first fund raiser.

#### April 10

- Review of the 2018 Strategic Financial Plan was begun.
- Hiring an Associate Music Director was discussed.
- Clothing Drive for Hope Rescue Mission and Lighthouse discussed. Set for May.
- Church directory on-line program discussed. Need leadership.
- Confirmation date set for June 4, 2023, followed by a covered dish luncheon.
- April 16 Congregational meeting held. The 2022 Annual Report was accepted.

#### May 8

- The Strategic Financial Plan continued to be discussed with goals established.
- The position description of the Ministry Assistant was discussed, approved, and passed on to the Personnel Committee to advertise the position.
- The Mission Statement of Huff's Union Church was rewritten.
- Matthew Schantz was approved to join the Park Board and Cemetery Board.

## **2023 Union Council Highlights (continued)**

### **June 12**

- The Strategic Plan ranked the top three goals as:
  - a. Education Program: Michael Diehl, Carol Leh, Rachel Welch
  - b. Membership: Lisa Kauffman, Elaine Witman, Lori Lanahan, Tom Mitchell
  - c. Church Infrastructure: Jim Meitzler, Sr., Martin Kriebel, Bill Stoudt, Matthew Schantz
- Matthew and Nathan Schantz and Steven Lorish were thanked for removing the tree stumps at the park.
- Brooke Ruch has stepped forward to work on the Church Directory Project.
- The Membership Review Committee Report was received with 178 letters approved and mailed.
- July 22 is scheduled for a Church Picnic. A Pig Roast will be held on August 19.
- Vacation Bible School will be held the week of July 31 through August 4.

### **July 10**

- Gloria Adams, our Music Director, retirement letter was received. Move to hiring a replacement.
- The Strategic Plan was discussed with some recommendations being made.
- An example of the Church Directory Project was shown, and, after discussion, it was decided to place the project on hold until the Ministry Assistant was hired and the use of Realm could be explored.
- DEP approved our chlorination plan. Installation may begin.
- September 10, 2023, will be Gloria's last Sunday. Covered dish retirement celebration to be held.

### **August 14**

- Installation of the chlorination system has been completed.
- The Strategic Plan discussion continued with additional recommendations being made. The church roof was prioritized.
- Soup and R&K Sandwich sale set for September 27, 2023.
- The continuing water problem in the Chapel ladies room bathroom must be addressed.

### **September 11**

- Music Director and Ministry Assistant job search committees were established.
- An outcome of the Strategic Plan review was the need to replace/repair the church roof immediately. Estimates to be gathered.
- Members for Council Nominating Committee established: Lori Lanahan, James Meitzler, Sr., and Scott Swackhamer.

### **October 9**

- Confirmation Class will begin in January 2024.
- The proposed budget was presented to Council. Discussion will be held in November.
- Fall Congregational Meeting set for December 3, 2023.
- The change in membership status letters will be mailed after December 31, 2023.
- The Ministry Assistant applicants are being interviewed, with one having a second interview.
- Thanksgiving Eve services are planned with St. Peter's to be held at Huff's.
- A Stewardship Committee was formed. Gary Moll and Rachel Welch are members.
- Christmas Eve services will be the traditional Candle Lighting/Communion Services held at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- The Pennsylvania Dutch New Year's Wishing will be held on January 14, 2024.

## **2023 Union Council Highlights (continued)**

### **November 13**

- Gabriella Moyer was nominated to be the Council Youth Representative.
- Angela Hish was hired as the Ministry Assistant.
- The 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets were discussed and approved for presentation to the Congregation.
- The membership letters sent in July received 35 responses. Action will be taken on the remaining members at Council's January meeting.
- Huff's Church has begun live streaming our worship services.
- Roofing estimates continue to be received.
- Repair to the Park Bandshell posts was awarded to Martin Exteriors of Shoemakersville for \$2,250.

### **December 11**

- During the December 3 Congregational meeting, the 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets were approved. Aurel Arndt and James Meitzler, Jr. were elected to council for a three-year term. Two three-year terms remain to be filled.
- A report on the Church roof repairs was made, bringing Council up to date on the problems encountered obtaining estimates. The Leeland Slate Roof Repairs proposal was accepted at \$48,341 with an additional \$1,832 annual maintenance contract.
- After a brief discussion, Council approved the proposed modifications to the Sexual Harassment Policy.
- The Cemetery Board made a report requesting permission to raise burial fees. In addition, they requested permission to replace a wooden fence located at the upper side of the church side cemetery with a bronze-colored aluminum fence from Montco Fence Co. for a cost of \$3,870. Permission was granted for both requests.

**Respectfully Submitted:** Martin L. Kriebel, President

## 2023 Committees and Chair Persons

| Committee Name           | Committee Chair Person                   | Chairperson Email Address    |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Audit                    | Jane Leeser                              | jmltiki@aol.com              |
| Auxiliary                | Lisa Kauffman                            | kauffmanschildcare@msn.com   |
| Blood                    | Gary Moll                                | glmoll@cedarcrest.edu        |
| Budget                   | Jon Benfield                             | jbenfield429@gmail.com       |
| Building & Grounds       | William Stoudt                           | wpslstoudt@gmail.com         |
| Caring & Sharing         | Jane Arndt                               | janeardt298@gmail.com        |
| Cemetery                 | Eric Diehl                               | tveric289@dejazzd.com        |
| Christian Education      | Joanne Benfield                          | jobenfield1213@gmail.com     |
| Dramatized Lord's Supper | Gary Moll &<br>Frank Meitzler            | glmoll@cedarcrest.edu        |
| Equipment Oversight      | Bill Stoudt                              | wpslstoudt@gmail.com         |
| Finance & Investment     | Justin Miller                            | jmiller0107@gmail.com        |
| Gift                     | Rachel Welch                             | rahelwelch@yahoo.com         |
| Greeters                 | Jane Leeser                              | jmltiki.aol.com              |
| Historian                | Scott Swackhamer                         | swackhamer101@gmail.com      |
| Hospitality              | Tess Woloszanski                         | theresawoloszanski@gmail.com |
| Library                  | Carol Leh                                | lehcarol4@gmail.com          |
| Memorial Park            | LeRoy Leibensperger<br>& Joanne Benfield | jobenfield1213@gmail.com     |
| Memorial Park Finance    | John Leeser                              | birdmanjhl@aol.com           |
| Mission Endowment        | Ernest Geist                             | epegeist@gmail.com           |
| Mission Outreach         | Roberta Windish                          | aj.fan1@verizon.net          |
| Pastor Parish            | Michael Diehl                            | michaelediehl@gmail.com      |
| Personnel                | Jimmy Meitzler Sr.                       | pamij6@gmail.com             |
| Prayer Chain             | John Leeser                              | birdmanjhl@aol.com           |
| Prayer Partners          | John Leeser                              | birdmanjhl@aol.com           |
| Renaissance              | Tess Woloszanski                         | theresawoloszanski@gmail.com |
| Sunday School            | Rachel Welch                             | rahelwelch@yahoo.com         |
| Vacation Bible School    | Melissa Benfield                         | mbenfield429@gmail.com       |
| Worship & Music          | Kay Kriebel                              | kaykriebel@gmail.com         |
| Youth Group              | Vacant                                   |                              |

**Submitted by:** Martin Kriebel

## **Audit Committee**

**Bible Verse: Leviticus 19:36** You shall have honest balances and honest weights.

**Proverbs 11:1** A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but an accurate weight is his delight.

**Purpose:** Purpose: The Lord wants us to be accurate and honest in our business and our accounting. To be fiscally responsible we audit all financial records annually.

**Chairperson:** Jane Leeser

### **Accomplishments:**

Audits were completed on the treasurers' books for the year ending December 31, 2023 and 2022 for Huff's Union Cemetery, Huff's Church Auxiliary, Park Board, Mission Endowment Fund and Huff's Union Church. For Huff's ELCA and Huff's UCC books, audits were completed only for 2022, as these entities were merged into Huff's Union Church in 2023.

All records were found to be in order and correct.

Thank you to all of the treasurers for their valuable time and excellent work throughout the year. Thank you Sue Stockdale, Jim Meitzler, Sr., and Pearl Hoffman for their help in completing the audits.

**Submitted by:** Jane Leeser

## **Building and Grounds/Equipment Committee**

**Bible Verse:** Ezekiel 44: 14 - Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its chores, all that is to be done in it.

**Purpose:** The Building and Grounds/Equipment Committee is responsible for maintaining the church properties so they are attractive in appearance and are kept in good working order.

**Chairperson:** William Stoudt

### **Accomplishments during the past year:**

1. Review Agreements with service contractors
2. Review work orders on repairs
3. Review chemical analysis to steam boiler heating equipment
4. Church roof – Establish annual inspections and repairs
5. Chlorinator Installation- Conform to DEP Regulation
6. Window Assessment- Replacements in consideration
7. Elevator-5 year state requirement test completed
8. Annual fire extinguisher inspections and tests
9. Fire Alarm tested

**Submitted by:** William Stoudt

## **Caring and Sharing Committee**

**Bible Verse: Matthew 25: 10** - And the King will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

**Purpose:** The Caring and Sharing Committee supervises the Lay Visitors program, whose members visit our congregation's homebound members and those who are temporarily homebound with some volunteers qualified to offer Holy Communion. They also send birthday cards to those members age 80 and above and anniversary cards to those members married 50 years or more.

**Chairperson:** Jane Arndt

**Members:** Jane Arndt, Mabel Bittenbender, Pat Crossley, Norma Greiss, Lisa Kauffman, Jane Leeser, Rhoda Shaner, and Rachel Woodhead.

**Submitted by:** Pat Crossley and Tess Woloszanski

**Cemetery Board**

**Huff's Union Church Cemetery  
Calendar Year 2023**

**Bible Verse: Genesis 23: 6** - Bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places; none of us will withhold from you any burial ground for burying your dead.

**Purpose:** To maintain the Huff's Union Church burial grounds and grave markers.

**Officers:** Vacant, President; Eric Diehl, Vice President; Kerry Meitzler, Secretary; Martin Kriebel, Treasurer

**Members:** Robert Ruch, Matthew Schantz, Ernest Geist, William Stoudt, Terry Ziegenfuse, and Stephen Lorish

**Accomplishments for the year:**

The year 2023 has seen 13 full burials and 5 cremation burials. In addition to burials, new grave markers being set, and the weekly mowing performed, we continue to identify grave markers that need to be cleaned, reset, and replaced. This year a cleaning solution was applied to all markers in the Rauch-Hertzog Cemetery, which will remove the mold, moss, and lichen accumulated on them.

Blue Mountain Memorial and Cemetery Services repaired and reset several grave markers on the Church Yard (Old) Cemetery. We continue to investigate methods to best repair the broken markers which are yet to be repaired.

The split rail fence at the top right side of the Church Yard Cemetery is being replaced with a bronze-colored aluminum fence.

**Submitted by:** Martin L. Kriebel, Treasurer

**Huff's Union Church Cemetery Investment Activities 2023**

|                        | Hertzog<br>Fund    | Permanent<br>Fund  | General<br>Fund    |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| January 1, 2023        |                    |                    |                    |
| Beginning Market Value | \$408,873.24       | \$236,383.90       | \$117,238.69       |
| Income                 | \$10,275.30        | \$6,019.56         | \$3,480.51         |
| Disbursements          | -\$9,000.00        | -\$3,600.00        | -\$2,400.00        |
| Account Fees           | -\$4,245.84        | -\$2,482.07        | -\$1,254.00        |
| Change in Market Value | <u>\$50,171.00</u> | <u>\$31,321.99</u> | <u>\$16,511.42</u> |
| Ending Market Value    |                    |                    |                    |
| December 31, 2023      | \$456,073.70       | \$267,643.38       | \$133,576.62       |



**2023 Cemetery Board Budget**

**Huff's Union Church Cemetery Finances**

|   | <b>Audited<br/>12/31/2022</b> | <b>Audited<br/>12/31/2023</b> | <b>2024<br/>Budget</b> |                         |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Check Book Balance Jan. 1</b>        | 12,155.09                     | 20,375.04                     |                        |                         |
| <b>Income:</b>                          |                               |                               |                        |                         |
| Investor's Trust - Hertzog Fund         | \$9,000.00                    | 9,000.00                      | 6,000.00               |                         |
| Investor's Trust - Permanent Fund       | \$3,600.00                    | 3,600.00                      | 3,600.00               |                         |
| Investor's Trust - General Fund         | \$2,400.00                    | 2,400.00                      | 2,400.00               |                         |
| Sale of Lots                            | \$2,700.00                    | 6,600.00                      | 3,000.00               |                         |
| Sale of Vaults                          | \$2,075.00                    | 0.00                          | 500.00                 |                         |
| Grave Opening Fees - Full Burial        | \$1,800.00                    | 3,900.00                      | 2,000.00               |                         |
| Grave Opening Fees - Cremation          | \$5,750.00                    | 1,800.00                      | 2,000.00               |                         |
| Saturday Burial Surcharge               | \$675.00                      | 750.00                        | 700.00                 |                         |
| Sallie Bechtel Fund                     | \$1,159.02                    | 0.00                          | 1,200.00               |                         |
| Mae Krause Fund - Even Years Only       | \$0.00                        | 1,100.00                      |                        | Transfer from UCC       |
| Miscellaneous Income                    | <u>\$0.00</u>                 | <u>0.00</u>                   | <u>0.00</u>            |                         |
| <b>Total Funds Available</b>            | <b>\$41,314.11</b>            | <b>\$49,525.04</b>            | <b>\$21,400.00</b>     |                         |
| <b>Expenses:</b>                        |                               |                               |                        |                         |
| Mowing and Trimming                     | \$12,000.00                   | 15,000.00                     | 15,000.00              |                         |
| Gas and Oil                             | \$2,056.79                    | 1,526.43                      | 2,000.00               |                         |
| Equipment Maintenance & Repair          | \$1,367.10                    | 1,369.87                      | 1,750.00               |                         |
| Perm Fund - 80% of prior year Lot Sales | \$0.00                        | 7,741.00                      | 2,000.00               |                         |
| Snow Removal                            | \$0.00                        | 0.00                          | 300.00                 |                         |
| Esterly Vault Company                   | \$1,625.00                    | 0.00                          | 750.00                 |                         |
| Parking Lot Line Maintenance & Repair   | \$830.00                      | 600.00                        | 600.00                 |                         |
| Topsoil, Fertilizer & Lime - Even Years | \$0.00                        | 0.00                          | 0.00                   |                         |
| Holding for Wall Replacement/Repair     | \$0.00                        | 11,885.00                     | 0.00                   | \$15,000 Total Holdings |
| Mae Krause CD Established               | \$0.00                        | 1,100.00                      | 0.00                   |                         |
| Tombstone Repairs/Replacements          | \$2,800.00                    | 0.00                          | 2,500.00               |                         |
| Mulch - Odd Years                       | \$0.00                        | 0.00                          | 0.00                   |                         |
| Miscellaneous Expenses                  | <u>\$260.18</u>               | <u>101.32</u>                 | <u>250.00</u>          |                         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                   | <b>\$20,939.07</b>            | <b>\$39,323.62</b>            | <b>\$25,150.00</b>     |                         |
| <b>Check Book Ending Dec. 31</b>        | <b>\$20,375.04</b>            | <b>\$10,201.42</b>            |                        |                         |

## Children, Youth, and Faith Formation Ministry

**Acts 8:30-31** *Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. The man replied, "How can I unless someone teaches me?"*

**Purpose:** Provide variety of faith formation opportunities to children, teens, families, and adults in Church and Community by enabling teachers/leaders and inviting, connecting, teaching, and supporting each individual wherever they are in their own faith journey.

**Facilitators:** Rachel Welch and Joanne Benfield. We are thankful for all who serve in the many ways below.

### **ACTIVITIES AND PARTICIPANTS IN 2023 GENERALLY INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:**

**A-CHILDREN'S MINISTRY - Proverbs 22: 6** *Train children on the right way and they will not stray.*

**\*Sunday School:** During the 10:30 Worship Service, children come to the front pew for a message. On the first Sunday of each month, children return to sit with their family. Other weeks children preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade gather with teachers for Sunday School using multi-age curriculum. Teachers volunteer to teach for different months. About 5-10 children attend.

**Sunday School Teachers and Helpers:** Among the teachers and helpers who share in this ministry: Rachel Welch, Lea Kline, Julie Brought, Stephanie Diehl, Rochelle Schantz, Jon Benfield, Tess Woloszanski, Melissa Benfield, Kara Benfield

**\*Children's Message during Worship- Volunteers provide weekly message:** Stephanie Diehl, Tess Woloszanski, Kara Benfield, Breanna Watkins, Jon Benfield, Gary Moll, Meghan Richetti, Melissa Benfield, Gabriella Moyer, Julie Brought, Joanne Benfield

**\*Easter Story Egg Hunt** – Despite rain, Egg Hunt held in the Sanctuary on Saturday before Palm Sunday. About 70 people including 40 children attended. Kids colored Holy Week crosses and heard about the real reason we celebrate Easter. With generous donations, about 600 eggs prepared.

**Egg Hunt help:** Meghan Richetti, Bowie, Magdalena, & Elijah (Bunny) Richetti, Tess Woloszanski, Bea Fogel, Lisa Kauffman, Lucy Grampp, Gabriella Moyer, Nicholas, Jackson, & Emily Hunsberger

**\*Vacation Bible School** – 5 days in Park, Bible story, craft, science activities. See separate report.

**\*Children's Activities at July Picnic** – Beth Ciccarone set up self-directed games and activities

**\*Children's Christmas Musical Program "Christ the King of Christmas"**- 10 children rehearsed during Sunday School and weekly rehearsals for this lively music program celebrating the birth of Jesus directed by Kara Benfield. Helpers: Melissa Benfield, Breanna Watkins, Joanne Benfield

**B-YOUTH/TEEN: Timothy 4: 12** *Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*

**\*Confirmation class**-Generally designed for grades 6-9, six students were confirmed on June 3, 2023. Mentors and families provided support. Coordinators - Tess Woloszanski and Lisa Kauffman

**C-ADULT: Acts 5:42** *And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.*

**\*Adult Sunday School** - about 3-6 adults gather every Sunday at 9:15. Facilitators include Mabel Bittenbender, Elvin Keiser, Gary Moll

**\*Lay Bible Study**-5-10 adults gather once/month on Saturday for Bible Study and lunch. Facilitators include Jane Arndt, Lea Kline and others.

**D-ADMINISTRATION: I Corinthians 14:40** *All things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.*

**\*Zoom meetings** to enable more participation in planning

**\*Child Protection** - Update PA required Child Protection Clearances and comply with 2 Adult Rule

### **DURING 2024 EXPAND ACTIVITIES INCLUDING POSSIBLY THE FOLLOWING:**

-Begin Christian Family Support Group for parents, grandparents, and caregivers to learn and share information about growing the Christian faith in the family. Coordinator, Stephanie Diehl

-Movie night

-New confirmation class organize in January 2024 with about 7 students. Confirmation ceremony planned for May or June 2025.

**Submitted by:** Joanne Benfield

## Constitution and By-Laws Committee and Merger Update

**Bible Verse: Ephesians 4:16** - Under Christ's control all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love.

**Purpose:** To finalize documentation of Huff's Union Church Inc as remaining corporation of merger of Huff's UCC and Huff's ELCA and to assist with understanding and compliance of Constitution and By-laws.

**Background:** The new Constitution and Bylaws of Huff's Union Church was approved on 3/13/2022. On 9/25/2022, Huff's Union Inc., Huff's UCC Inc., and Huff's ELCA Inc. approved the Plan of Merger to merge into one remaining corporation Huff's Union Church Inc. All documentation was properly signed and sealed by the officers of each corporation. Attorney Keith Strohl prepared the documents required to submit the merger to the PA Dept. of State for approval with 12/31/22, as the effective date of merger.

### In 2023 following done:

- Completed transfer of checking and investment funds from Huff's UCC & ELCA to Huff's Union
- Researched steps with UCC Conference and ELCA Synod to show the legal name of this congregation as Huff's Union Church Inc. in all denomination records
- On 7/17/2023 Attorney Strohl advised that he received confirmation that the Pennsylvania Department of State documented the merger of Huff's UCC and Huff's ELCA into Huff's Union Church Inc.
- With the confirmation of the merger by the Pennsylvania State Department, the duties of Officers of Huff's UCC and Huff's ELCA ended. We appreciate the service of the final officers:
  - Huff's United Church of Christ Inc: Rachel Welch, President, Julie Brought, Vice-President
  - Jim Meitzler, Sr, Secretary; Gary Moll, Treasurer
  - Huff's Evangelical Lutheran Church Inc: Lisa Kauffman, President; Ann Taylor, Vice President, Jane Arndt, Secretary; Tom Mitchell, Treasurer
- The Council of Huff's Union Church Inc. continued to "live into" and function under the new Constitution and Bylaws.

### Plans for 2024:

- Finalize documentation through denominations for IRS tax exemption status for Huff's Union Church Inc. under the UCC/ELCA group exemption.
- Obtain PA Sales Tax Exemption Certificate for Huff's Union Church Inc and cancellation of the sales tax exemption certificates on record for Huff's UCC Inc. and Huff's ELCA Inc.

**Submitted by:** Joanne Benfield

## **Dramatized Lord's Supper**

**Bible Verse: Matthew 28:19** - Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Accomplishments during the past year:**

The Passion Play was not presented in 2023.

## Financial and Investment Committee Report

**Bible Verse: Proverbs 21: 5** - The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.

**Purpose:** The Committee's responsibility is to oversee the management and investment of the Long Term and Capital Improvement Funds. These funds were created to hold unrestricted monies other than the Mission Endowment Funds donated to the Church for investment and ultimate use to fund Church programs, projects and other needs.

**Members:** The committee will consist of 5 active voting members appointed by council and include non-voting members represented by the Council President, Treasurer, and Pastor. 2022 members of the committee included Chair Justin Miller, Vice Chair - Aurel Arndt, Robin Diehl, Scott Swackhamer, and David Funk as voting members and Council President Martin Kriebel and Church Treasurer Jon Benfield as non-voting members. The position of committee secretary remains vacant.

**Chairperson:** Justin Miller

**Accomplishments:** 2023 finished strong, with the stock market (S&P 500) increasing over 11% in the final quarter and up 26% for the year. The S&P 500 finished the year at 4,769 only 27 points away from the all-time high of 4,796 set in early 2022. The strong run in stocks was largely due to a recovery in tech stocks (up over 50% for the year) and the Federal Reserve signaling that they are done with interest rate hikes. In fact, it's likely that the next move is to lower rates. Bonds also had a good year, increasing by 5.31% as measured by the Bloomberg Aggregate Bond Index. The Huffs Church investment portfolio was up 14.59% for the year.

Lower interest rates would be a welcome sign for investors as both stocks and bonds have historically performed well in a declining interest rate environment. Of course, the decline in interest rates will only happen if inflation remains under control. At this point, it appears that inflation is under control as it continues to trend lower.

Our committee met throughout the year to review the investments and the needs of the church. Tiller Private Wealth (formerly Youngs Advisory Group) serves as the investment advisor. Distributions from the portfolio were suspended in 2022 due to the decline in the markets. Instead, the church's money market portfolio was used to allow markets time to recover. As markets recovered in 2023, distributions restarted. In 2022, the committee worked on designing a Financial Management Policy (FMP) which council approved. One of the goals of the policy was to aggregate church funds for more efficient management of the overall church investment portfolio. That aggregation was completed in early 2023, as funds were added from the Huff's United Church of Christ portfolio.

**2023 in Review:** As mentioned previously, the Huffs Church investment account ended the year up 14.59%. The investments underperformed the benchmark by 2.08%. Rebalancing adjustments were made throughout the year to maintain a risk level consistent with the church's goal of income with moderate growth. The committee approved a recommendation by Tiller to move a portion of the portfolio into a managed individual bond portfolio which increased the overall yield, lowered costs, and locked in higher interest rates. Both dividend and interest income increased substantially in 2023 with the higher interest rate environment (up 52% from 2022). A reflection of account activity can be found in the Huff's Union Church Annual Report.

We welcome comments and questions on this report and appreciate all feedback. We look forward to reporting results of our continuing investment activity during 2024 and beyond.

**Submitted by:** Justin Miller

## Gift Report

**Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 16: 17** - All shall give as they are able, according to the Blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

**Purpose:** The Gift Committee gathers suggestions for needed or desired items for Huff's Church, evaluates these suggestions, passes them to Union Council for approval, then provides a brochure listing these items and their prices to those who wish to donate a specific item to the church.

**Chairperson:** Rachel Welch

### Accomplishments during the past year:

During the past year, there were no donations made to the church. There were no additions to the Gift brochure.

**Submitted by:** Rachel Welch

## Greeter Report

**Bible Verse: Hebrews 13:1-2** - Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

**Purpose:** The Greeter Committee helps promote hospitality in our church. To accomplish this mission, we encourage members of our congregation to be greeters, providing them with information on welcoming both newcomers and regular attendees.

**Chairperson:** Jane Leeser

**Greeters:** Last year's greeters were: Aurel and Jane Arndt, Dena and Maisy Funk, Pat Crossley, Lucy Grampp, Norma Greiss, Jim and Pam Meitzler, Kerry and Lucy Meitzler, Jim Jr. and Laura Meitzler, Lisa Kauffman, Eric and Robin Diehl, Martin and Kay Kriebel, Tom Mitchell, Paul Giangiacomo, Breanna Watkins, Wayne and Bea Fogel, Ann Taylor, Tess Woloszanski, Elaine Witman, Charles and Carol Zwoyer, Sue Stockdale, Roberta Windish, Bea Miller, Lisa Mohammedein, Barb Kreiser, Deborah Rogers, Bob Ruch, Tucker Ruch, Nicholas Hunsberger, Gabriella Moyer, Mary Szilli, Pearl Hoffman, Pauline Reinhard, Gary Moll, Rachel Welch, and John and Jane Leeser.

### Accomplishments during the past year:

Greeters welcomed people to the church services throughout the year and will continue. Thank you to all the people who volunteered to be greeters.

**Submitted by:** Jane Leeser

## Historian

**Bible Verse:** *Psalms 71: 18* - So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come.

**Purpose:** Our congregation's history needs to be preserved and historical records maintained so we may know our past and see how it might impact our present and future.

**Chairperson:** Scott Swackhamer

**Accomplishments:** There was nothing new added this year. I am hoping to get more members this year. Please contact Scott Swackhamer if you are interested.

**Submitted by:** Scott Swackhamer

## Hospitality

**Bible Verse:** *Luke 10: 38* - Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

**Purpose:** The Hospitality Committee seeks to make members and guests feel welcome at Huff's Church special worship services by serving them refreshments. Members of this committee supervise and set up for covered dish dinners, as well as for special programs.

**Chairperson:** Tess Woloszanski

**Accomplishments during the past year:** There were no events for the year 2023.

**Submitted by:** Tess Woloszanski

## Huff's Church Auxiliary

**Bible verse: Isaiah 58:10** - If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Huff's Church Auxiliary is to work for the betterment of the Christian Church, to provide Christian services and monies to Huff's Union Church and its members.

**Chairperson:** Lisa Kauffman

### Accomplishments during the past year:

The Auxiliary held numerous fundraising events this year: 2 oyster pie sales, red beet sales, 2 soup and sandwich sales, 2 summer picnics, and 1 pig roast.

Oyster pie sales March 25th and October 21<sup>st</sup> were successful. Profit from the March sale of \$3,272 and the profit from the October sale \$3,303.15 for a total of \$6,575.15.

Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> picnic - Profit of \$307.30. Unfortunately, the amount of work outweighed the profit. We will not be holding this fundraiser in 2024.

July 22<sup>nd</sup> picnic- Our efforts for this fundraiser were met with a profit of \$5,164.

Pig Roast Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> - We were able to raise \$1,441 on a beautiful summer day.

Soup and sandwich sales were held twice in 2023 for a total profit of \$1,855.50. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 203 subs and 78 pretzel sandwiches were sold for a profit of \$621.75. 39 quarts and 6 pints of soup were sold for a profit of \$315. Total profit was \$947. On Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, 173 subs and 81 pretzel sandwiches were sold for a profit of \$571.50. 23 quarts of soup and 32 pints were sold for a profit of \$337. Total profit for this fundraiser was \$908.50.

Red beets were made on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Profit from this fundraiser was \$685.00.

The Auxiliary was able to raise funds through the multiple fundraisers with the help of our long-time members, new members and the youth of our congregation.

**Submitted by:** Deb Romig, Secretary



### Huff's Union Church Auxiliary 2023 Financial Report

|   | <b>Audited<br/>2022</b> | <b>Audited<br/>2023</b> |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Check Book Balance January 1</b>   | \$8,328.68              | \$7,904.21              |
| <b>Income:</b>  |                         |                         |
| Reimbursement for church picnic   | \$1,539.35              | \$325.00                |
| Reimbursement for pig roast   | \$952.33                | \$0.00                  |
| Reimbursement for oyster pies   | \$5,911.19              | \$7,080.52              |
| Meals for outside groups  | \$86.00                 | \$135.00                |
| Miscellaneous income  | \$150.00                | \$0.00                  |
| Sale of canning jars  | \$115.00                | \$0.00                  |
| <b>Total Income</b>   | \$8,753.87              | \$7,540.52              |
| <b>Total Funds Available</b>  | \$17,082.55             | \$15,444.73             |
| <b>Expenses:</b>  |                         |                         |
| Trash collection (includes half of 2024)                                      | \$208.02                | \$482.00                |
| Propane gas for chapel  | \$92.45                 | \$0.00                  |
| Supplies - Church Picnic  | \$1,539.35              | \$0.00                  |
| Supplies - Pig Roast  | \$952.33                | \$0.00                  |
| Supplies - Oyster Pie Sales   | \$5,911.19              | \$7,020.71              |
| Change for July Church Picnic   | \$325.00                | \$325.00                |
| Contributions to Huffs Union General Fund                                     | \$0.00                  | \$0.00                  |
| Chapel Floor cleaning and polishing   |                         | \$634.49                |
| Miscellaneous   | \$150.00                | \$0.00                  |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>   | \$9,178.34              | \$8,462.20              |
| <b>Check Book Ending December 31</b>  | \$7,904.21              | \$6,982.53              |
| <b>Church Donation through Radcliffe<br/>and Redner's Save-a-Tape Program</b> | \$385.21                | \$634.05                |

Respectfully submitted:  
Kay M. Kriebel, Treasurer

## **Library Report**

**Bible Verse: Proverbs 23: 12** - Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.

**Purpose:** The Church Library's mission is to provide literature and information that will encourage, teach, or strengthen the Christian faith while remaining true to the beliefs of Huff's Church.

**Chairperson:** Carol Leh

**Members:** Carol Leh, Elvin Keiser, Sharon Muntz and Mary Szilli

### **Accomplishments during the past year:**

The library invites you to browse and borrow items. We have books, audio books, Contemporary Christian music, some popular Christian movies, and also a children's collection housed in the next door Sunday School room.

Anyone who is a member of the congregation can borrow items from the library. Please sign your name to the card (in books it will be on the back page unless otherwise indicated, on other items it will be in the pocket on the cover or stuck in the case), print the date you borrowed the item, and leave the card in the wooden file box on the library table. Please return the item as soon as you are done with it so others may enjoy it.

Thank you for your support of the library.

**Submitted by:** Carol Leh

## Memorial Park Report

**Bible Verse: Isaiah 4:6** - It will serve as a pavilion, a shade by day from the heat, and a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.

**Purpose:** The Park Board oversees opening and closing of the park property, including preparing for both summer and winter use, and cleans and repairs equipment, buildings, and furnishings as need.

**Members:** Joanne Benfield (Secretary), John Leaser (Treasurer), LeRoy Leibensperger, (Chairperson), Keith Rauenzahn, and Matthew Schantz. In addition to Park Board members, the following are just some of the folks who extended extra efforts to help with water treatment, park set-up and maintenance in 2023: Aurel Arndt, Scott & Lisa Kauffman, Kay & Marty Kriebel, Jim & Pam Meitzler, Emily Ziegenfuse, and apologies to those missed being named, but all efforts are appreciated!

### Accomplishments during the past year:

#### Following events were scheduled in the Park in 2023:

|                            |                           |   |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Family Easter Egg Hunt     | Vacation Bible School     | June afternoon picnic after Worship Service |
| 7 Outdoor Worship Services | Church & Community Picnic | August Pig Roast                            |
| Ice Cream Truck (Evening)  |                           |   |

### Activities of the Park Board with the help of many volunteers include:

Coordinate major cleaning of all buildings in Spring, clear leaves & branches, cleaning buildings & bathrooms through the summer, purchase paper supplies and propane gas, maintain and repair buildings and equipment, set up & storage of tables & benches, check park before and after each event, preparation for winter.

### Projects completed or worked on during 2023 in addition to smaller maintenance and repairs:

- Researched various solutions to support bandshell posts that have some deterioration. Agreed on Martin's Exterior Shoemakersville proposal to install two white powder coated 3/16" angle iron 30" long on all the pavilion posts and fastened with carriage bolts for \$2250.
- Monthly water testing done of Park well. During summer months, water is tested from Park refreshment stand. After Park water system is drained, then monthly testing is done in Schoolhouse Office. Shock treatment was done to Park well when turned on before first Park event and other treatment as needed.
- Installed Lockbox provided by Emelie Ziegenfuse so those who need to have access to the Park buildings can easily get keys
- Emergency Ice cream freezer repair thanks to Tapler Heating & Repair

### Great Appreciation and Thanks to all who helped with caring for the Park including:

- All volunteers including "behind the scenes" folks who pick up sticks throughout the summer, make repairs, cleaning fryers, and turn on and shut down water system and appliances for season
- The project coordination, and financial assistance from Council, Property Comm, and Cemetery Board
- Mowers taking care of lawn spring cleanup, mowing, trimming, filling in, fall leaf cleanup
- Emelie Swackhamer covers cost to preserve a healthy Ash Tree in the Park from Ash bore devastation

**Anyone is welcome to join in when work dates are announced.**

### Future Projects:

- Complete installation of supports on bandshell posts by Martin's Exteriors
- Park bench repair/replacement
- Bandshell mesh repair
- Refresh playground mulch and replace some of the swing seats
- Pump Septic system every 3 years

## Memorial Park Report (continued)

- Agreement with Pennsylvania DEP for continued use and improvements to the well in the Park in compliance with DEP regulations.
- Electric upgrades in refreshment stand and restrooms
- Continue to encourage people to bring own lawn chairs to move away from park benches

**Funds for repairs and improvements in 2023** received through donation and support from Union Church.

**The Park is available for use by any individual church member** who is at least 18 years old to host a private invitation event such as family reunion, birthday party, anniversary parties, showers, graduation/award parties. No smoking or alcohol. Park is available for private events from May 1 through first weekend in October and scheduled around Church activities. Representative(s) of Church may be on the property during the event and it is expected that the User and all guests will comply with the representatives' requests and directions regarding use of facilities.

**Requested Use Donation:** \$60 for use up to 7:30PM, after 7:30PM-\$80. Events shall end at least by 9PM. Use Donation and Rules may be revised depending on the specific nature of an event. Contact Church Office to schedule an event.

**Submitted by:** Joanne Benfield

## Huff's Church 2023 Memorial Park Board Report

|                                  |            |             |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Checking Account Balance:        | 1/1/2023   | \$ 5,691.79 |
| Expenses:                        |            |             |
| Met-Ed                           |            | \$ 609.88   |
| Test (Suburban Water Test)       |            | 86.61       |
| Tapler & Son (Ice Cream Freezer) |            | 284.20      |
| Total Expenses:                  |            | \$ 980.69   |
| Checking Account Balance:        | 12/31/2023 | \$ 4,711.10 |
| Savings Account Balance:         | 1/1/2023   | \$ 8,557.09 |
| Interest                         |            | \$ 1,040.47 |
| Savings Account Balance:         | 12/31/2023 | \$ 9,597.56 |
| CD's                             | 1/1/2023   | \$33,482.05 |
| Total CD's                       | 12/31/2023 | \$33,482.05 |

**Submitted by:** John Leeser, Treasurer

## Mission Endowment Committee Annual Report - 2023 <sup>1</sup>

**Bible Verse: Colossians 3: 23-24** - Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.

**Overview:** The Endowment Committee manages the assets of the Endowment Fund and oversees the contributions of funds available for various outreach programs in our community. When the funds accumulated over \$50,000, each year 4% of the fair market value of the investment will be pulled from the fund and distributed. Any earnings of the fund, in excess of the 4% distributed, are held in the fund for future years.

Distributions shall be in the various categories of mission and ministry in which the congregation is engaged that is not underwritten by annual giving and will serve as a means of extending and enhancing the church's program beyond the regular budget. Categories include:

1. Christian Education
2. Community Service & Outreach
3. Wider Missions of the UCC & ELCA
4. Capital Improvements
5. Annual operating expenses (Limited portion during temporary or difficult circumstances)

**Chairperson:** Ernest Geist

**Committee Members:** Ernest Geist, Jane Leeser, Carol Leh, Kerry Meitzler, Jim Meitzler, Jr., and Emelie Swackhamer.

### Items the Endowment Committee completed in 2023:

1. Audit Committee reviewed the 2022 Endowment Records.
2. The committee has distributed a total of \$4309 across 11 organizations:  
*United Church of Christ - Maui Relief Fund, Lutheran Disaster Response, Boyertown Area Multi-Service, The Open Link Multi-Service, Friends, Inc., Grace Lutheran Church, Food Cupboard, Helping Harvest Food Bank, Berks Encore - Meals on Wheels, Allentown Rescue Mission, Opportunity House, and Hope Rescue Mission*

### Financials:

Vanguard Account:      \$115,715.74 Fund value at the end of 2022  
                                      \$119,590.24 Fund value at the end of 1Q2023  
                                      \$124,568.18 Fund value at the end of 2Q2023  
                                      \$120,750.23 Fund value at the end of 3Q2023  
                                      \$127,657.35 Fund value at the end of 2023

The Committee has committed to disburse \$4830.00 in 2024. This value reflects 4% of the fund value at on 30-Sept-2023.

### In the 2024, Endowment committee plans include the following:

- Monitor the investment portfolio and remove 2023 funds for distribution when needed.
- Distribute \$4830.00 to suitable organizations based on 4% of the fund value on 30-Sep-2023.
- Audit Endowment records for 2023

**Submitted by:** Kerry Meitzler, Treasurer

<sup>1</sup>At the December 16, 2021, Congregational Meeting, the Congregation voted to remove the Endowment Fund from the Huff's Union Church Constitution and to rename it the Mission Endowment Fund, in order to emphasize the purpose of the fund.

## **Mission Outreach and Special Projects**

**Bible Verse:** *Galations 6: 9* – *And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

**Purpose:** Our church offers numerous opportunities for reaching out in our surrounding communities. Kindly consider how you reach out to contribute.

**Chairperson:** Roberta Windish

**Accomplishments:** Nothing has been done for 2023.

## **Pastor Parish Team**

**Bible Verse:** *Romans 14: 19* - Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building.

**Purpose:** The Pastor Parish team addresses concerns of the pastor, fosters a mutual caring and harmonious relationship between the congregation and the pastor, and evaluates various ministries of the church for effectiveness and continuing relevance

**Chairperson:** Michael Diehl

### **Accomplishments during the past year:**

The Pastor Parish Team did not meet in 2023.

Pastor John and I met several times to discuss this committee and we are still working to get this off the ground in 2024. Currently the only member of the team is myself. If you are interested in joining the pastor parish committee, please reach out to Pastor John or myself directly.

**Submitted by:** Michael Diehl

## **Personnel Committee**

**Bible Verse:** *2 Chronicles 34: 12-23* - The people did the work faithfully. Over them were appointed the Levites... to have oversight. Other Levites, all skillful with instruments of music, were over the burden bearers and directed all who did work in every kind of service... and some of the Levites were scribes, and officials, and gatekeepers.

**Purpose:** Develop and recommend personnel policies to the Council. Recommend for budgeting the compensation and benefits for the Pastor within the guidelines of the denomination in which the Pastor holds ministerial standing. Prepare new employment documents, develop performance feedback procedures and forms, receive reports of potential employment policy violations. At the request of Executive Committee, Pastor, or Council-assigned staff supervisor, the Personnel Committee may assist in other matters including but not limited to compose and clarify job descriptions, gather salary information from outside organizations, assist with advertising of positions, advise on difficult personnel matters, and sit in on disciplinary conversations with employees.

**Chairperson:** Jim Meitzler, Sr.

**Members:** Julie Brought, Kathy Welch, Tom Mitchell, Bob Ruch and Jim Meitzler, Sr.

### **Accomplishments for the past year:**

We received evaluations for Huff's Administrative Assistant, Edwina H. Fox and Media Specialist, Robert Arner.

We welcome our new Ministry Assistant, Angela Hish.

We appreciate all that our support staff does to make the behind-the-scenes work for our congregation run smoothly.

**Submitted by:** Jim Meitzler, Sr.

## Prayer Chain Committee

**Bible Verse: *James 5: 13-14*** - *Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.*

**Purpose:** The Prayer Chain members receive prayer and praise requests from church members and friends and offer these to God in prayer. Each month a Prayer Letter is sent to all of the members listing those people in need of prayer. Weekly updates, as needed, are also provided, and emergency requests are sent out immediately. The Prayer Chain always welcomes new members.

**Chairperson:** John Leeser

### Accomplishments during the past year:

The Prayer Chain continues to be a vital part of the Huff's Church prayer ministry. If you have a relative, friend, neighbor, or colleague who needs prayer, please contact John Leeser, other members of the Prayer Chain, or call the church office.

### Thank you to all the Prayer Chain members who faithfully served in 2023:

|                  |                    |                   |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Jane Arndt       | Monica Hallman     | Lisa Mohammedein  |
| Minerva Arner    | Lisa Kauffman      | John & Kathy Moll |
| Julie Brought    | Elvin Keiser       | Carol Petroske    |
| Pat Crossley     | John & Jane Leeser | Bob & Brooke Ruch |
| Joan Gouldner    | Marion Miller      | Rhoda Shaner      |
| Lucille Grampp   | Tom Mitchell       | Bill Stoudt       |
| Elizabeth Haines | Gary Moll          | Rachel Woodhead   |

**Submitted by:** John Leeser

## Prayer Partner Committee

**Bible Verse: *James 5: 6*** - *Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.*

**Purpose:** The Prayer Partners are church members who volunteer to pray each day for one year for one to three other participating church members or families. Signups are usually in the spring of each year.

**Chairperson:** John Leeser

**Submitted by:** John Leeser



## Profile Team

**Bible Verse:** Jeremiah 29: 11 - For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

**Purpose:** The Church Profile Committee was formed to gather information to answer some questions about our church, to help us to discern where we believe God is working right now, and what God might be inviting us to do in the future.

**Members:** Julie Brought, Lisa Kauffman, Martin Kriebel, Breanna Watkins, and Rachel Welch

**Accomplishments during the past year:** Committee was inactive in 2023.

**Submitted by:** Julie Brought

## Renaissance Committee

**Bible Verse:** *Isaiah 43: 18b* - I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth. Do you perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

**Members:** Joanne Benfield, Tom Mitchell, Tess Woloszanski (Chairperson)

**Purpose:** We recognize that our church needs to change with the times in order to stay relevant, and so we are charged with determining how best to accomplish this goal while continuing to honor important Huff's Church traditions.

**Accomplishments:** Has not met since 2021

**Submitted by:** Tess Woloszanski

## **Vacation Bible School**

**Bible Verse: Proverbs 22: 6** - Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.

**Purpose:** To provide an engaging, interactive experience for our children to learn about God and other bible heroes and how they, too, can be everyday heroes.

**Chairperson:** Melissa Benfield

**Members:** Rev John Steitz, Breanna Watkins, Paul Giangiacomo, Alayna Watkins, Kayla Schultz, Stephanie Diehl, Lea Kline, Dale Heffner, Madison Heffner, Joanne Benfield, Tom Mitchell, Kara Benfield, and Jon Benfield; the youth assisting this year were Max Benfield, Bowie Richetti, and Ely Longacre.

### **Accomplishments during the past year:**

This year the VBS theme was Hero Hotline – Called Together to Serve God. Our program was based on the bible verse, “So let’s strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up” (Romans 14:19). This year’s program was attended by 23 children and youth. It was held outside in the park from July 31 through August 4, and the young superheroes and the super staff had an awesome time!

Daily activities included storytelling, music, arts and crafts, science, and games. Pastor Steitz also taught the children how to say The Lord’s Prayer. To kick off the week, actual heroes from our local community came to educate our young superheroes about fire safety. The Hereford Firefighters talked to our children, allowed them to explore the firetrucks, demonstrated how to put a firefighter’s protective gear on, and sprayed the kids with firehoses.

Our mission project this year was to collect money for the Hereford Fire Company. We collected \$250.00.

**Submitted by:** Melissa Benfield

## **Worship and Music Committee**

**Bible Verse: Psalm 33: 2-3** - Praise the Lord with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

**Psalm 96: 9a** - Worship the Lord in holy splendor.

**Purpose:** The Worship and Music Committee assists the pastor and the music director with the preparation of worship services, with special focus on appropriate music. The committee helps plan special worship services throughout the year and arranges for guest musical groups. The committee also provides for the needs of the choirs and sees that the musical instruments are maintained.

**Chairperson:** Kay Kriebel

**Members:** Pastor John Steitz, Gloria Adams, Jane Arndt, Julie Brought, Kay Kriebel (Chair), Carol Leh, Ann Taylor, Rachel Woodhead.

### **Special Events during the past year:**

The Longswamp New Year's Wish in the PA Dutch dialect was presented during the worship service on January 8, 2023.

Ash Wednesday service with administering of ashes was held on February 22nd. No Lenten services were scheduled. A Good Friday service was held on April 7th.

The American Legion Honor Guard from Topton came on Memorial Sunday, May 28, and did a ceremony at the cemetery to honor all those who served in our armed forces.

Outdoor worship services during July and August were held in the Park on the second, fourth, and fifth Sundays.

Gloria Adams announced her retirement as music director and was honored during the church service on September 10. Following the service, a covered dish was held with a special decorated cake for Gloria. She agreed to continue as an interim music director, playing for all church services and leading the Senior Choir.

Huff's hosted a combined Thanksgiving Eve service on November 22 with St. Peter's Union Church.

The children presented a Christmas program during the 10:30 worship service on December 10.

On Christmas Eve, the children sang at the 4:00 service, while the Bell and Senior Choirs participated in the 8:00 PM service. There were also several congregation members who individually provided special music during both Christmas Eve services.

We want to thank all the volunteers who helped throughout the year, in so many ways, to make our worship services special with their talents and work.

**Submitted by:** Kay Kriebel