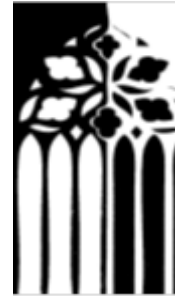


Voice of the Spire

The Newsletter of Arch Street United Methodist Church
A Reconciling Congregation



Autumn 2018

Arch Street United Methodist Church

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Building Supervisor
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Sextons
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Voice of the Spire

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Nancy Megley
Kristi Painter
Dale Shillito
Crystal Wiggins

New Directions at Serenity House

Kristi Painter

You may have heard that Serenity House, Arch Street's community center in the North Philadelphia neighborhood, has been undergoing some changes.

The entire first floor is now dedicated community center space, leaving the second and third floors for intentional community living. Carmen and I, with help from our wonderful interns Carnita and Marissa, have been hard at work transforming the first floor into functional space. The first floor now features a case management office, a meeting room with whiteboards and a projector, and a kitchen.

The redecoration is still a work in progress but we are already up and running! The Serenity House Community Center is open every Thursday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Our interns provide case management during these hours, assisting visitors with obtaining documents, applying for benefits, and other services. We also plan to host cooking classes, book studies, community meetings, and much more!

Feel free to stop by and say "hi" one Thursday when we're open. We would love to show you around!



News & People

Five Funerals and One Word: RESPECT

Janis Campbell

Don Robinson, Ida Morris, Steve Whaley, Russell Whaley, Anana Tinnhé—

In late 2018, we mourned the deaths of five members whose contributions to Arch Street UMC are a vivid nod to legendary vocalist Aretha Franklin's iconic anthem, R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

Don, Ida, Steve, Russell, and Anana each had different life stories and each offered the congregation "gifts differing," but they all were deeply connected to Arch Street.

At each memorial service, remembrances were made, tributes were shared, reflections were offered, nostalgic and humorous stories (*some previously untold!*) were recounted, and yes, tears were shed.

Tears of love for five lives that were demonstrably guided by a fundamental love of God and an unshakable commitment to respect:

Respect for others, regardless of background, race, ethnicity, or gender

Respect for the sick

Respect for the scorned and marginalized

Respect for the illiterate

Respect for those with whom they fiercely disagreed and argued

Respect for the vision and diversity of Arch Street Church

Don Robinson, Ida Morris, Steve Whaley, Russell Whaley, Anana Tinnhé—their lives exhort us to more fully commit to personal and public actions of respect. As Aretha sang ... *just a li'l bit!*



Top, L-R: Don Robinson, Ida Morris, Anana Tinnhé

Bottom, L-R: Steve and Russell Whaley

Arch Street Hosts "Resisting Racism" Event

In mid-October, ASUMC will be the venue for an intensive workshop designed for justice-seeking congregations that are dedicated to dismantling white supremacy but whose institutional structures are still white-dominant in practice.

In an evening session on Friday, October 12th and all day Saturday, October 13th, Rev. Michelle Ledder of the United Methodist Church's General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) will lead a vital conversation on resisting racism and steps a congregation needs to take to become more welcoming and inclusive.

GCORR is one of the United Methodist Church's general agencies and facilitates workshops like this one in annual conferences, local churches, and with justice-seeking communities throughout the United States.

Native American Awareness Sunday

Dale Shillito

Arch Street's annual Native American Sunday, hosted by the Native American Indian Awareness Group, will be held on November 11th, 2018. Our guest speaker at both the 8:30 and 11:00 AM services will be Ruth Anne Tickel-Logan, proud of her Cherokee ancestry. She is an enthusiastic co-leader of Arrows 215, a sister Native American group in Bucks County. Ruth Anne helped spearhead a cooperative informational tour of local high schools this past year. She is concerned about tribal rights and sovereignty on reservations, and held a successful fund-raiser for the water rights protesters at Standing Rock, North Dakota.

We hope to bring back native drums and flute as part of our worship services this year, also an honor ceremony to the Creator of us all.

Light refreshments will be served in the narthex after the 11:00 service.

Update on Façade Repairs

Russ Alexander

One of our Trustees' duties, as stewards of God's building, is to protect public safety. We previously reported on our duty to comply with the City of Philadelphia's façade inspection requirement.

In August 2017, after a two-day inspection, the Trustees received a draft report from the engineering firm we hired. Their findings:

1. The three decorative masonry architectural details on the Arch Street side ("finials") must be removed.
2. The spire requires a hands-on inspection that can only be performed from a 250-foot crane.
3. Several other items separate from the two items above, identified during the August inspection, must be repaired.

Church Council accepted the Trustees' recommendation that we invest approximately \$250,000 in these projects, and Council decided to fund the work with a loan from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference loan fund secured by the ASUMC endowment. Now we are pleased to report that:

1. Our loan application was approved and funded.
2. We removed the finials on time and on budget. Yes, the engineers were glad we did because their condition was indeed poor!
3. We completed the repairs to the rest of the façade.
4. We have applied for a permit to perform one of the three crane inspections of the spire in October.

Assuring the public safety of the building requires an ongoing program and investment to assure the continued safety of the façade into the future. This is true not only because of our duty as stewards of the public safety, but because from now on we must provide a new façade inspection report to the City of Philadelphia every five years.

Please support this project with your donations and prayers. Your contribution should be marked "Façade repair fund." We also intend to pursue other sources to help fund this work. Thank you for your support and please contact any of the Trustees with any questions.

POWER's Voter Campaign

Nancy Megley

If it's fall, it must be time to Get Out the Vote!

Arch Street's POWER Local Organizing Committee (LOC) set two goals for this year's voter engagement work: (1) ensure that Arch Street is a "100% Voting Congregation" and (2) reach out to the Serenity House community to encourage everyone to vote in November.

We spent a busy September registering voters at the 8:30, 11:00, and Grace Café services; at the Unity Fellowship and Tea & Talk, which use our space; and at Serenity House (see the story about the successful Labor Day BBQ on page 7). The result was 35 voter registrations—some for address changes but mostly new voters!

In October, we will knock on doors and make phone calls in the Serenity House neighborhood to remind people about the election and make sure they have a plan to vote on November 6th. Ward 37, Division 11, where Serenity House is located, has a new polling place and we will make sure folks knew where they need to go to vote.

Finally, the LOC will take part in Arch Street's Indoor Trick & Treat on October 27th with candy for the kids and a voter information table and 'voting booth' with sample ballot for the adults.

Rev. Hynicka heard this on an NPR radio program: "Voting is a learned behavior." If you voted when you turned 18, you are likely to be a lifelong voter; if not, you are likely to skip elections. By reaching out to people who aren't in the habit of voting, POWER is trying to change that dynamic. The LOC thanks Arch Street's many volunteers who are part of this important work.

Our New Sexton: Mike Parson

Darlene DiDomineck



This fall, Arch Street welcomed a new sexton to our staff family. Mike Parson comes to ASUMC with a wealth of experience in the community and a long history of volunteerism with Project HOME and St. John's Hospice.

Mike is passionate about caring for communities and ensuring that all who enter our doors are received with respect and a welcoming smile. Frank Jones, our beloved Building Manager, said this of Mike: "I'm excited to have another member of the sexton team that is passionate about our creative and challenging ministry."

Frank first met Mike when he was contracted to assist with repairs at Serenity House. Frank was so impressed with his professionalism, attention to detail, and care for the building that he invited him to interview for a staff sexton position. Mike will predominantly work on Sunday afternoons assisting with Grace Café.

Be sure to drop by the church on a Sunday afternoon and welcome Mike to the Arch Street family. And while you are here, be sure to volunteer for Grace Café!

Columns

Minister's Message



Rev. Robin Hynicka,
Senior Pastor

In our geographic context, Fall brings special attention to trees—the changes that take place right before our eyes are amazing! During the Sunday sermon on September 16th, I used Psalm 1 to make the point that those who follow Jesus are like trees: they grow in stature and give generously. Trees have a lot to teach us. Here is some tree wisdom from Morgan Mann Willis:

I believe in the honesty of trees. I, like many, look at the anatomy of trees as one of nature's examples of successful organizing that realizes that our power is in our ability to both be fiercely centered and grounded but also infinitely

reaching towards our unique source of energy, light and growth.

Psalm 1 and the words from Morgan Mann Willis inspire me to reflect deeply on how to be both rooted/grounded and reaching way beyond what I already know and feel. In the last issue of the *Spire* we highlighted the nuts and bolts of the Sanctuary Revisioning project. In this space, I want to celebrate the forthright communication the congregation shared at the several Sanctuary Revisioning presentations. I believe in the honesty of you all—thank you for your honesty.

That honesty, however, is complicated. Some honestly don't want any more pews to be removed, and others honestly want them all to go. Some honestly want the elevator project to add accessibility to our space, and others honestly see that desire to add accessibility best addressed by widening the chapel hallway door that leads to the sanctuary and using the open space to accommodate wheelchairs and all kinds of other "freedom of movement" activities. Some say the financial resources aren't available. Others say the money will come.

The "honest truth" is, we don't agree and we all feel strongly about what we feel is right. Did I tell you? I like it when things get complicated because that means there is a true community involved. The challenge is to view the complications as an opportunity for generating interdependence, not competition. Adrienne Maree Brown in her book *Emergent Strategy* shares: "The idea of interdependence is that we can meet each other's needs in a variety of ways."

In the spirit of interdependence and community building, the input phase—gathering comments and weighing in regarding the sanctuary revisioning process—continues into October. In addition, Church Council is seriously weighing the idea of engaging an expert facilitator to lead us in a vital community conversation that will honor our interdependence, present expert insight, engage us in finalizing the details of a project, and prioritizing our resources.

We are like trees planted by flowing water; we bear fruit in every season, and our leaves never wither; everything we do will prosper. —Psalm 1

Sing with the Love of God in Your Heart

James Dell'Orefice

We often come to church hoping that our thoughts and ruminations about God, his begotten son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will come into focus. Sometimes we come to church just to make a connection with the positive and spiritual atmosphere of a sanctuary. There are times we need spoken or unspoken spiritual uplifting to help guide us on a righteous path through life. Whatever the reason that motivates us to travel a distance to hear the Word and worship the Almighty, we expect to leave motivated, spiritually revived, and enjoying a renewed relationship with Jesus.

I believe that part of the structure the Church presents in its official service program, along with the modifications and insight that the preacher sees fit to implement, are meant to guide us on the path of Faith renewal.

As a musician paying my dues in the secular world, I've come to see and understand the profound effect that music has on people. At its best, it gives the listener a brief moment of respite from the everyday routine of trying to survive.

Having music with poignant and relevant lyrics at church services enhances the

experience of a reverent, respectful encounter and gives us the devout insight we have come to seek.

The question I pose is this: How do we make the most of this marriage of relevant lyrics and supportive melodies that we call hymns, or in a more contemporary genre, Praise and Worship songs?

The answer is simple:

Sing with the love of God in your heart!

News from The Center

Darlene DiDomineck

The Center–Philadelphia seeks to connect people through creativity, compassion, and community engagement to generate and sustain resources; to produce and preserve community spaces; and to assemble and organize creative people, to inspire social change, and to launch a monumental movement of the human spirit. Grace Café and Serenity House are two of those ministries. Be sure to read about the exciting new programming at Serenity House in this edition of the *Spire!*

Grace Café is continuing to expand our community resourcing this season. We welcomed a second case manager to the team. Marissa Merced is a Behavioral Health student at Community College of Philadelphia. Marissa joins Carnita Wash-

ington, who has served Grace Café since January 2018. Carnita completed her Bachelor of Social Work degree at Alvernia University and is now a Master of Social Work student at Temple University. They offer case management services at Arch Street on Mondays and Wednesdays (10:00 AM–3:00 PM), Serenity House every Thursday (10:00 AM–4:00 PM), and Sunday afternoons at Arch Street (2:30–5:30 PM). Be sure to drop by, say hello, and congratulate Carnita on her graduation from Alvernia!

The Wellness Clinic is back up and running on Sunday evenings during the Grace Café dinner. We give thanks to the Hospital of University of Pennsylvania (HUP) for a generous donation to cover

nursing supplies! A monthly volunteer-led legal clinic will return for a second season. The legal clinic is open the last Sunday of each month and assists individuals with a wide range of legal services.

This fall, we'll be working to expand our programming with children and families. Be sure to join us for our First Annual Indoor Trick & Treat on Saturday, October 27th from 5:00–7:00 PM. This is a *free* family-friendly event dedicated to creating a safe trick-or-treating experience for families in the Philadelphia area. Invite families in your neighborhood to join us for an evening of fall fun, crafts, games, and candy!

Reconciling Update

Nancy Megley

This summer and fall, the Reconciling United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania (RUM-EPA) participated in three important LGBTQIA events in Philadelphia.

First was the annual Pride Parade on Sunday, June 10th. Then in early August, Reconciling volunteers were at the Convention Center for the 2018 Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference, the nation's

largest symposium dedicated to an extensive array of matters such as Sexuality, Wellbeing, Aging, Transgender Sexual Health, and Transgender Health. The third was Outfest's annual block party in the Philadelphia gayborhood at 13th & Locust Streets on Sunday, October 7th.

Our witness at these events is an important opportunity to reverse some of

the negativity and even hate that the LGBTQIA community and their allies have experienced interacting with the church. For those of us who have marched in the Pride Parade or staffed a literature table at the Trans Wellness Conference or Outfest, it is humbling to be greeted with thanks and joy for just showing up on behalf of a religious organization.

Our History: Rev. Haney Reorganizes

Dale Shillito, Arch Street Historian

Using the Conference study group's recommendations and his own ideas, Rev. Haney began his tenure at Arch Street by reorganizing and involving the congregation in church work.

Rev. Haney recognized that too many of Arch Street's lay leaders were becoming burned out by having too heavy a load placed on their backs. He spread that burden by rotating usher and collection counter crews, starting a volunteer choir,

and creating outreach teams and a lay leader staff.

A group of volunteers were assembled to produce a monthly newsletter, called *Voice of the Spire*, which was distributed not only to members but to nearby hotels and apartment houses by the outreach team.

Rev. Haney visited high-rise apartment houses to engage new residents and others looking for a church. He himself

lived in an apartment complex of four 19-story buildings called Park Towne, near the Art Museum. He welcomed many of his neighbors.

One neighbor, Virginia Ross James, rode with the pastor to church on Sundays. She continued as a generous donor to the church until her death at age 105.

Events

United Methodist Events and Other Observances

Sat Oct 6: "Exploration 2018," Emilie UMC Levittown
Conference event for those who sense God's call to ordained ministry
(<https://www.epaumc.org/conference-calendar/exploration-epac-board-of-ordained-ministry-recruitment-event/>)

Sun Oct 7: World Communion Sunday
Special offering provides scholarships for U.S. racial- and ethnic-minority students and international students

Sat Oct 20: Conference UMW Annual Meeting & Celebration, Lansdale UMC (contact Mary Ann Repsher, rep164@frontiernet.net)

Sun Nov 6: All Saints' Sunday

Sun Nov 25: UM Student Day
Special offering provides scholarships and loans for students attending United Methodist-related and other accredited colleges and universities

Fri Dec 1: World AIDS Day

ASUMC Calendar

Please check the "Events" tab on our website (www.archstreetumc.org) for the latest calendar activities.

Sat Oct 27: ASUMC Annual Charge Conference

Sat Oct 27: ASUMC First Annual Indoor Trick & Treat

Sun Nov 11: ASUMC Native American Sunday

Sat Nov 17: Nationalities Service Center Thanksgiving Celebration

Thurs Nov 22: Thanksgiving (office closed Nov 22 and 23, AA will meet Nov 22)

Sat Dec 15: Eliza Shirley Christmas Party

Mon Dec 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tues Dec 25: Annual Christmas Breakfast for the Homeless (office closed Dec 25 and 26)

United Methodist Women meet the second Sunday of the month immediately after the 11:00 AM service. The *Native American Indian Awareness Group* meets the third Sunday of the month at 12:30 PM. Refer to the weekly "What's Happening" bulletin for exceptions to these dates.

Birthdays

October

1 - Jackson Krueger
3 - Emi Starr
5 - Joan Ferron
10 - Nicola Jefferson
11 - Sylvia Rose Kim, George Logan
15 - Kalolaine Tapealava
18 - Pat Taylor
19 - Nemahun Tucker
20 - Terry Whaley
22 - Tolu Ogunkeye Ajise
23 - Janis Campbell
24 - Yema Tucker
26 - Joe Gutman
28 - Charles Fry, Siafa Lewis
31 - Katie Donnelly

November

2 - Gaspar Santos
3 - Daniel Timmerman
4 - Joe Kalil
6 - Gwendolyn Beatty
10 - Ray Mount
11 - Cathy Minecci, Abel Wediongo Adungy
12 - Francisco Santos
16 - Savannah Mae Lindquist, Danyale Small
17 - Molly McNeill
19 - Pamela Thomas
20 - Dorothy Twiggs
22 - Phil Gressman, Serafim Santos
24 - Rev. Robert Booker, Mary Crawford
25 - John Kitterell, Sue Kruse, David Mordell
28 - Myrna Brown, Patti Manuel
30 - Debra Wood

December

2 - Regina Bedell
4 - Aaron Carson
6 - Kobina Amissah
16 - Fornati Bedell, Elizabeth Lexa, Bob Reeves
19 - Gladys Ackerman, Heather Warley
20 - Alice Ming
22 - Carol Jones, Steve Raytek
24 - Stephanie Ann Carroll Carson, Magumbu Chritelle
25 - Janice Ciampa
26 - Nathaniel Collazzo
28 - Juanita Campbell Ford
29 - Barbara Prince
30 - Zoey Bonfante
31 - Jonathan Liu

Serenity House Treats the Neighborhood

Crystal Wiggins

Hey guys!!!! The Labor Day Barbecue at Serenity House was a success!

With the tireless efforts of Arch Street’s Serenity House staff and our POWER Local Organizing Committee (LOC), who co-sponsored the September 3rd event, the community at large showed an extensive amount of gratitude as they expressed their appreciation for the invitations while enjoying hot dogs and burgers fixed by Arch Street’s very own Pastor Robin Hynicka. Deaconess Darlene DiDomineck stood as hostess for the children at the arts and crafts table, while their parents attended a meet-and-greet by Serenity House staff and church members. Pageant winner Ms. Pennsylvania elegantly graced us with her presence to encourage voter registration for young adults. By the end of the day, our LOC volunteers had helped 9 Serenity House neighbors register to vote.

Outreach participation by the members of Arch Street UMC and our POWER volunteers proved that standing together in faith and unity for the greater good always brings the best out of anyone that’s willing to put forth the effort. I was proud to be a part of it. Keep a lookout for more upcoming events sponsored by Arch Street UMC and our POWER LOC in the near future!



Top: Arch Street’s POWER volunteers helped sign people up to vote at the Serenity House Labor Day BBQ.

Bottom: Volunteers and guests at the BBQ shared cake and best wishes for Pastor Robin on his birthday—September 4th!

(Photos courtesy of Betsy Connor)





Voice of the Spire

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POSTMASTER: Return undeliverable pieces to Arch Street United Methodist Church, 55 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Future Dates

- New Year's Day
January 1
- Human Relations Day
January 20
- Martin Luther King Jr.
Day of Service
January 21
- President's Day
February 18
- World Day of Prayer
March 1
- Ash Wednesday
March 6
- Daylight Savings Time
March 10
- UMCOR Sunday
March 31

Read past issues of *Voice of the Spire* and follow events at our website:
www.archstreetumc.org

Arch Street United Methodist Church

• ALL FAMILIES WELCOME! •

CENTER CITY'S INDOOR TRICK & TREAT



Join us to celebrate fall, family fun, & candy!
Arch Street UMC
55 N Broad St. Phila. PA 19107

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27TH
5-7 PM**



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