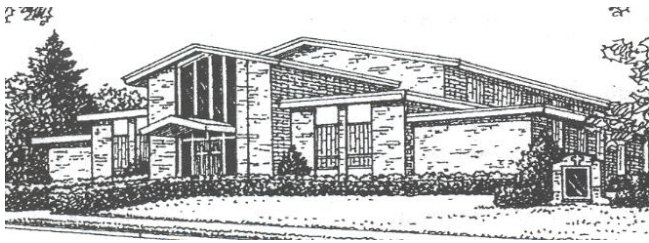


The BUZZ

Volume 32 Issue #5

MAY 2026



Lower Saucon United Church of Christ
Reverend Rebekah Thomas
1375 Third Avenue
Hellertown, PA 18055
610-838-8821

Sunday Worship 9:00 am
Sunday School 9:15 am

Lower Saucon UCC, a progressive congregation rich in history, exists to:

- Promote spiritual growth in all people of all ages
- Nurture a loving and caring Christian community
- Worship our Living God through faithful service

Lower Saucon UCC: a place to believe, belong and worship together.

2026 CONSISTORY

Alan Byerley (Pres.)	Kirk Gorkos (Treas.)
Kate Griffiths	Judy Koch
Judy Kovacs	Tim Mattes
Tony Nauroth	Lindsey Sanders (Sec.)
Tina Seifert	Paul Wilhelm (VP)

Church Office Hours
Church Office
Fellowship Hall/Kitchen

Tuesday-Thursday 9 am to 12 noon
(610) 838-8821
(610) 838-2659

Website
Church Email
Pastor's Email
Online Giving
Visit us on Facebook
Email for BUZZ Articles

www.lowersauconucc.org
churchoffice@lowersauconucc.org
pastorbecky1121@gmail.com
lowersauconucc.org/donate/
facebook.com Lower Saucon UCC
info@lowersauconucc.org

Lay Leader Schedule

Usher of the Month Judy Kovacs

Ushers/Greeters

Scripture Reader Children's Sermon Sunday School

May 3 Carlene Barrell	Cheryl Christman	Nikki Meyer	Nancy Gorkos	Diana Severn
May 10 Tina Seifert	Diana Severn	Tony Nauroth	Diana Severn	Tina Seifert
May 17 Betty Byerley	Kris Breidenbach	Lindsey Sanders	Tony Nauroth	Judy Koch
May 24 Jo Ann Sofka	Tom Sofka	Diana Severn	Josh Sanders	Lindsey Sanders
May 31 Kate Griffiths	Judy Kovacs	Paul Wilhelm	Alan Byerley	Andrea Keller

FROM PASTOR BECKY ...

Where does time go? I find myself sitting and looking out my window, taking in all of the signs of spring and wondering how it just suddenly appeared. I walked out my front door this morning and saw tulips and bleeding hearts. I have been waiting in anticipation for so long, how did I miss spring's arrival? Ok, so the truth is I know how I missed it. My calendar is overflowing with tasks for work and school. I am nearly constantly on the move. Whether that means I am running from one meeting to the next or writing a newsletter article, a sermon, or a paper for my class. I feel all of the weight of everything holding me down and wonder if I'll ever get a moment to pause and breathe.

Not that I'm complaining, because my life is full of many wonderful things. I know that most of you have similarly busy lives. You are working, volunteering, caring for family. For many of us, it never seems like there is enough time in a day. Many of us are overwhelmed with all of the things we need to get done, all of the responsibilities we have. Every now and then I steal a glimpse out my window. I watch a bumble bee hovering over a flower. I watch the trees gently moving in the wind. I pause to smile at the brightly colored flowers. And then I say a prayer for all of you, that you may find at least a moment to notice the beauty of creation amidst the busyness of this life.

In light and love, Pastor Becky



Rock-Solid Identity by Vicki Kemper

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the Lord. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. – Isaiah 51:1 (NRSV)

Identity politics – the term for political alliances based on race, religion, class, sexuality, or gender identity rather than traditional party affiliations – often gets a bad rap. People who've never had their lives cut short or their opportunities foreclosed because of who they are often have a hard time understanding why identity is so important to others.

But what about identity theology?

When times are hard, says the prophet Isaiah, when you've been held down so long you no longer believe in up, remember who and whose you are. Consider where you came from. Reflect on the grace that brought you this far. When you can't find solid ground, hold tight to the One whose love never falters. Isaiah's geological metaphors are meant to bring comfort and hope to Israel's exiles: When the world tears you apart, misplaces you, misnames you, cling to the One who knows all your names and identities.

What is your go-to identity?

American? Person of faith or follower of Jesus? Black, Latinx, Asian, First Nation, or white? LGBTQIA? Male, female, or gender-queer? Poor? Republican or Democrat? Baby Boomer or Millennial? Successful? Myers-Briggs or Enneagram? Traditionalist or proud smasher of all things binary?

How does your identity – claimed or not – shape your worldview? How does your identity reflect what is important to you? To what, or whom, do you pledge allegiance?

For Isaiah, it is our identity as beloved children of God that is most important. From that, all else follows. In God, all the identities by which we are known become one whole reflection of the God who loves us.

Prayer

Rock of Ages, may I find myself in you.



Consistory Corner

LSUCC CONSISTORY MINUTES (Pending Approval)
April 8, 2026

In attendance: Kirk Gorkos, Tina Seifert, Lindsey Sanders, Paul Wilhelm, Alan Byerley, Judy Koch, Tim Mattes, Tony Nauroth, and Blue the Dog. On Zoom: Judy Kovacs Missing: Kate Griffiths, Pastor Becky Thomas

Alan called the meeting to order. Tony led a devotion on how community helps us heal. Alan led us in prayer.

Secretary's report: Lindsey presented the Secretary's report. Paul made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Tim seconded. All voted to accept.

Treasurer's report: Kirk presented the 1st quarter actual expenses vs. the 2026 budget. Tina made a motion to accept. Judy seconded. All voted to accept.

Pastor's Report: 3/9/26 – 4/5/26

Period	Hours	PCE	Notes on Activities
3/9-3/15	23	3	Consistory; Midweek Lent
3/16-3/22	21	4	Authorization Working Group; Midweek Lent; Community of Practice
3/23-3/29	24	3	Midweek Lent; HAM; Mountain Valley Board Mtg; Book Club
3/30-4/5	25	5	Holy Week; Easter Sunday
Total	93	15	

Notes:

- Final D.Min class begins 4/13
- Doctorate intensive week 5/10-5/15
- Target graduation Spring 2027
- Vacation 5/17-5/23

President's Communication:

- We received a request from Chris Lander to use our facilities to host the Mountain Valley Association Annual Meeting on November 7th. We tentatively support the idea, but we have follow-up questions for Chris to make sure we can fulfill all their needs.

Committee reports:

- Property –
 - Cut the grass
 - Planning to relocate two benches from the garden side into the serenity garden.
- Service –
 - Baking pies April 18th
 - Brought in over \$5000 in candy sales; still need to take out expenses
 - June – Moravian sugar cakes
- Christian Ed –
 - Mother's Day Craft Event – April 26th after worship
 - Rainforest Falls VBS Jun 22-25, 2026
- WISE –
- Mission –
 - April – will be packing care packages for college students
- Worship –
 - Very successful Cross Carry took place on Good Friday
 - Next meeting in June
- Supper –

Concerns from the Past:

- Servant Keeper (basic package) is running on the office computer. Ideally, we will use this program for one year and then develop our own database.
- Kirk is working on transferring the CD funds to our American Funds account.
- Kirk has reviewed the Consistory packet and will be meeting on May 6th at 6pm to make any corrections and/or approvals

Concerns for the Future:

- April 25th – Adopt a Road cleanup 9am at the Gorkos's house.
- The church will be hosting the cooking classes over the summer again.
- Compassion Sunday is April 26th. We will have a table set up with information and children available for sponsorship.
- Hellertown Heritage Day is May 16th. Tim volunteered to take the lead on manning our table.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13th at 6:30pm. Meeting was adjourned, and all joined in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsey



*** H O M E ***
HELPING OUR MEMBERS IN EMERGENCY

FUND

A good portion of the money that has been accumulating in our "**H**elping **O**ur **M**embers **E**mergency" fund was recently used. Donations to help replenish the fund would be greatly appreciated. You can give to this fund anytime simply by writing "HOME" on your church envelope. The amount you give will be credited to your church offering statement. LSUCC will also add to the HOME fund by giving 10% of all fundraising profits.

stewardship report

March Income

\$9,161.00	Current Expenses
332.00	Benevolences
4759.00	Fundraising
338.00	Facilities Use
<hr/>	
\$14,590.00	Total

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 2	Carol Reichard
May 6	Steve Donchez
May 7	Faye Johnson
	Lindsey Sanders
May 10	Diana Severn
May 12	Deanna Spengler
May 14	Douglas Laubach
	Zachary Lysek
	Ivy Mattes
May 25	Elaine Kantor
May 29	Karyl Treese



MAY ANNIVERSARYS

May 15	Randy & Mary Koder
May 17	Rick & Darlene Repash
May 26	Silas & Debbie Rodenbach
May 31	Nick & Danika Spengler



If you, or your family members, were omitted from the celebration lists please accept our apologies and contact the church office to see that the information is updated.

Our church family wants to share in your joys and sorrows. Hospitals and care facilities do not notify churches or share information, so please contact the church office with information about family members who are hospitalized, in care, or would welcome prayer for any reason. We'd also like to share your joys so be sure to let us know those as well.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS **ATTENTION GRADUATES**

If someone in your family is graduating, please email the information about their degree and future plans along with a photo to the church so we can celebrate your accomplishments in our June issue of the Buzz.

Family Game Event

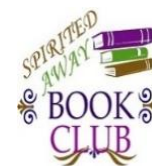
May 9, 2-5 PM

All are welcome to join us as we enjoy the pleasure of friendly, family competition playing games together. Bring your favorite game along or learn a new one. It's all part of the fun. Pickle Ball remains one of our game options.



SPIRITED AWAY BOOK CLUB

Come escape with us as we explore books that will nourish your Spirit! We will be discussing, *Too Blessed to Stress* by Alli Hoff Kosik and *Forward* by Dr. David



Jeremiah in May & June. We have invited Alli to join us for the evening and are awaiting news of her availability to determine which evening we will discuss her book. We meet at LSUCC on the last

Thursday of the month at 7pm. Join us for one or all the books!

CHRISTIAN SERVICE NEWS

Grocery Gift Cards



Sign up for June Gift Cards by May 17 with delivery scheduled for Sunday, May 31. The Church earns 5% of the amount we sell. If there are any

questions please see or call Gerrie Koch. You can sign up for cards in the side hall, Fellowship Hall or by phoning Gerrie or the church office.



Paint Like Bob Ross Event

May 16, 3 PM

Sign up today for this or any other up-coming class online at

<https://www.letsaintapicture.art/>.

There are a limited number of seats available in each class. Share the information with your friends and neighbors. It's really a lot of fun and you may discover a talent you never knew you had. The cost is \$60 and all supplies are included except a roll of paper towels.

SHOO-FLY PIES

Shoo-fly pies will be baked on May 9. The price is \$12.00 and pies can be picked up from 10am – Noon.

Pies should be pre-ordered on the sign-up sheet posted in the side hall or Fellowship Hall or you can call Gerrie (610-838-9350) or the church office by May 6.



EVANGELISM & MISSION NEWS

Fellowship Hour

- May 3: Koch
- Jun 7: The Yard Sale Crew
- July 5:

Thank you to the Gorkos family for providing breakfast for our Palm Sunday celebration. You can sign up to sponsor a Sunday Fellowship Hour on the side hall bulletin board. Contact Tina Seifert if you have questions.

ALLIANCE STAMP MINISTRY



Please continue to be on the lookout for the envelopes you receive with stamps.

Just trim your used envelope postage so there is 1/3 inch of paper surrounding the stamp, and then drop them in one of the collection containers located in the Narthex or Fellowship Hall. If you want to know more about this ministry visit: https://youtu.be/jb8Ew38PypQ?si=fhYeM_YiOpeLkqNF

Make a

JOYFUL NOISE

Our JOYFUL NOISE campaign raised \$37.00 in March for the Hellertown Area Ministerium Crisis Fund. In May the money collected will support Phoebe Ministries.



S.T.A.R.-Serving to Aid & Restore

With the closing of the Bethlehem Emergency Shelter, S.T.A.R. has had many requests for TENTS, SLEEPING BAGS, and BACKPACKS – they almost always welcome:

Hospitality items-

- Body wash
- Shaving cream (m&w)
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant (m&w)
- Toilet Paper
- Tissues (Individual packs)

Clothing-

- Socks (m&w)
- Underwear (m&w)
- Thermals (m&w)
- Hats (m&w)
- Gloves (m&w)

Clothing can be new or gently used. Cash donations are welcome as well. We will deliver any items brought to LSUCC.



Please continue to support both of our area Food Banks. Monetary donations can be made through your church

offering or directly to: New Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church, ATTN: Food Bank, 3233 Apples Church Road, Bethlehem, PA 18015, or the Emergency Food Bank at Word of Life, ATTN: Food Bank, 3221 Bingen Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18015.

LSUCC QUILTERS

Our quilters are getting ready to pin in this year's raffle quilt. They meet each Tuesday from 9 AM to 3 PM. They are gearing up to participate in Hellertown/Lower Saucon Heritage day and several craft events over the summer. New members are always welcome. No experience necessary. Just a willingness to learn. Quilt raffle tickets are attached at the end of this Buzz. They are available in larger quantities by contacting the Church office.





This club meets at Elaine Kantor's home, usually monthly. They will be reading, *The Woman in Suite 11* by Ruth Ware and *When We Had Wings* by Ariel Lawhon. For date and time



information please see Martha Sterling or Elaine Kantor.



JOINT YOUTH MINISTRY

A meeting of a joint group of youth in 7th to 12th grade will be held monthly at First UCC. For further details contact Pastor Becky.

Cooking Classes

Phoebe Partnership

Thank you to everyone who donates or helps make items. Phoebe staff and residents appreciate our efforts. Donations of large print puzzle, word-search and fill-in books, adult coloring books, small boxes of crayons or colored pencils are always welcomed by the residents.



Look for a collection basket in the side hall. If you'd like to do some simple sewing to help create prayer items or if you knit, crochet or have extra yarn—any colors, prayer blankets size 3' x 3', are being made for our ministry at Phoebe Richland.

Yarn and/or blankets can be dropped off at church or someone can pick them up.

Questions? Call or text Cheryl at 610-657-1787

Summer Cooking Camp

 <p>June 22-26 BEGINNER BITES Ages 6-8 \$275</p>	 <p>July 6-10 BAKING ACADEMY Ages 10-15 \$275</p>
 <p>July 27-31 SUMMERTIME EATS & TREATS Ages 7-10 \$275</p>	
 <p>August 10-12 DECORATING & TREAT MAKING Ages 10-15 \$165</p>	 <p>August 13-14 ITALIAN FAVORITES Ages 10-15 \$110</p>

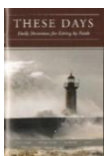
ALL CLASSES ARE HELD AT LOWER SAUCON UCC IN HELLERTOWN 9AM-12:15PM

To Register: Lauramysweets.com

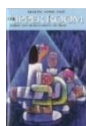
WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

Daily Devotions

The new "These Days" & "Upper Room" are in. If you want one dropped off to you, call or email the church. If



you are more techno-savvy and would like a free Stillspeaking daily devotional message delivered to your email inbox



visit <http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/daily-devotional/>

LOWER SAUCON CHURCH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Although this cemetery is now an independent non-profit, it was once owned by our congregation. Many of the ancestors of our congregation are buried there, perhaps some of yours. The Board would like to remind you that grave sites are still available at reasonable rates. For more information check the posting on our bulletin board or for assistance please contact, Kathy J Kline at 610-419-0264 or Justina McCardle at 610-838-6784.



LSUCC has been invited to participate in the Heritage Day Activities. We expect our quilters will display their talents as they did last year. We would also like to set up a booth that features our church congregation's long history in the development of our community. If you'd like to help, let a member of Consistory know.



Letter dated April 7, 2026

Dear Keystone Members and Friends –

*Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side."
(John 20:27a NRSV)*

Post-resurrection appearances by Jesus are a strange mix of the spiritual (disappearing after speaking) and the physical (eating fish). The episodes read as ephemeral and solid at the same time. Their mysterious nature makes them some of my favorite passages in the gospels. The encounter with Thomas is no exception. What I love about Thomas is his desire to experience the full physicality of Jesus as the crucified one. And perhaps we don't really think about how odd that is. One would imagine that resurrection implies total

transformation, unlike the resuscitation of a corpse (e.g. Lazarus). We might assume that full transformation surely would include healing those wounds from the crucifixion, wouldn't it? And yet the resurrected Jesus appears to the disciples with unhealed wounds and all. When I read the account of Thomas, I always think of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (of Moravian fame). Zinzendorf recounts a story from St. Martin of Tours: as St. Martin was walking, Jesus appeared on the road, and the Saint was breathless at Jesus's radiance and glory. He called Martin's name and indicated he should admire Jesus's glory. At which time, voicing a suspicion, Martin demanded, "Where are your wounds?" and the Christ figure was revealed to be the devil. The devil, Zinzendorf believed, will try to lead us astray by appearing to us as Jesus, but without wounds. And we will be tempted to follow false representations of Jesus full of glory.

Why do the wounds matter? They matter because they demonstrate Jesus's true humanity. He entered into and understood human pain. Jesus knew grief and despair. He knew the beauty and limits of human flesh, and he knew ultimate torture and suffering in his own body. The wounds from the crucifixion remind Thomas (and us) that God embraced human physical existence and overcame human death. In Jesus' resurrected appearance he was imperfectly perfect. All our wounds, limits, suffering and physicality are recognized by the one who also suffered. And we will be embraced in his Kingdom as we too are made imperfectly perfect. As one who has struggled with (and against) my physical self, this brings me comfort and hope. Thomas understood the wounds mattered for his faith to be complete. Grant that we may as well.

**Peace,
Carrie**

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call
Transitional Executive Conference Minister
Keystone Conference UCC

A special thank you to Betty Byerley & Tony Nauroth for acting as proof readers.
PLEASE SUBMIT ANY INFORMATION FOR THE BUZZ BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH TO
info@lowsauconucc.org
I WILL REPLY SO YOU KNOW I RECEIVED IT.



Books Are Fashionable

Join us for a one-of-a-kind fashion show featuring local authors with the designer sharing fashion tips and the publisher sharing writing tips. Vendors, entertainment, food trucks and more!

Middle School Gym
2097 Polk Valley Rd.

Hellertown

Date:

Saturday, May 16th
2:00PM- 4:00PM



Purchase Tickets!

Proceeds to benefit a local school

Mention LSUCC when you buy a ticket and the church will receive \$1 per ticket sold.

Search-A-Word Puzzle

Based on Proverbs 23:22-24 (NRSV)

R G F M R E H T A F Q K G O
 Q N I M X W H N L R X U R R
 Y I N N Y J M I E S E X E V
 B D S A G S S H J U S T A P
 S N T A E T T J U T I R T C
 U A R R E O Y A H T W E L W
 O T U N M F U K N O H J Y E
 E S C E R O B H Y G M O S H
 T R T A V Q N K Y E L I S T
 H E I I K Q E V G B P C Q U
 G D O E B E G E T S G E G R
 I N N G J N Y W E W V X L T
 R U B O M M H D T R G F A I
 X C M O D S I W C P F X D B

Proverbs 23:22-24

Listen to your father who **begot** you, and do not **despise** your **mother** when she is old.

Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy **wisdom**, **instruction**, and **understanding**. The father of the **righteous** will **greatly** rejoice; he who **begets** a **wise** son will be **glad** in him. Let your **father** and mother be glad; let her who **bore** you **rejoice**.



Holy Week & Easter 2026

OUR CALENDAR PAGE

Please see

<https://lowersauconucc.org/our-calendar/>

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Worship at 9:00 am
Sunday School at 9:15 am

\$1 each or \$5 for 6

- 1st Prize Original Design, hand Quilted Queen Size Quilt
- 2nd Prize Crochet Afghan
- 3rd Prize \$100 Giant Gift Card
- 4th Prize \$50 Home Depot Gift Card
- 5th Prize \$50 Braveheart Gift Card
- 6th Prize \$50 Copperhead Grille Gift Card
- 7th Prize \$25 Kohl Gift Card
- 8th Prize \$25 CVS Gift Card
- 9th Prize Hand Knit Throw
- 10th Prize 6 qt Slow Cooker
- 11th Prize 2 Slice Toaster
- 12th Prize Handmade Hat & Mittens

Drawing: December 6, 2026

Sept 19 Shoofly Pie
Nov 24 Pumpkin & Pecan Pie
Easter & Christmas Candy

View our website for future fundraisers and church events.

Thank You! Good Luck!

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Quilt Raffle Drawing
December 6, 2026

Name _____

Phone _____

Seller _____

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Hellertown, PA 18055
610-838-8821

Quilt Raffle Drawing
December 6, 2026

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Seller _____