



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

November 2024

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Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

900 Country Club Drive
 Pittsburgh, PA 15228
 (412) 561-62612
www.shupchurch.org

Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss
revlaurastrauss@gmail.com

Karin Schein, Office Administrator
sunsethillschurch@gmail.com

Shelby Gracey, Music Director
sgracey@verizon.net

Michelle Brumfield, Nursery School
sunsethillsnurseryschool@gmail.com

A Message from Pastor Laura

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the LORD God made them all. - Cecil F. Alexander



It was as much a surprise to me as it was to the congregation when my son’s cat, Toad, attended this year’s pet blessing on September 29. How my husband, Ethan, and my son managed to fit that 17-pound ball of orange fur into a carrier, I’ll never know—but they were determined. It makes sense, though, because this cat has brought so much joy into our lives. He licks my son’s nose every morning before school, wraps himself

around my legs when I come home from the office, and we haven’t seen a single mouse in the house since he arrived! Because we love Toad, we are happy to be generous toward him - even to the point of the pet blessing!

Generosity comes naturally when it flows from love. When we love something or someone, we want to give generously. This is true not only for our family and pets but also for our church. We love the many ministries of our congregation: Days for Girls, Bible Studies, our music program, and Sunset Hills Preschool, to name just a few. Our experiences in these ministries deepen our love for the church and inspire us to be generous with our time and treasure. And from that generosity comes joy—just as God designed it. Love leads to generosity, which leads to joy.

As we enter November, we’ll reflect on this cycle of love and generosity through our stewardship campaign, “All Creatures Great and Small.” We will consider our God-given call to be stewards of all creation, from dragonflies to moss and everything in between. These reflections will guide us to think about our role as stewards of the church, called by God to give generously so that our congregation can continue sharing Christ’s joy.

In the coming weeks, you’ll receive two mailings from our stewardship team. One will include a pledge card. I hope you will embrace the joyful practice of making a pledge for 2025. We invite you to bring your pledge card to worship on **Sunday, November 24**. That evening, we’ll gather for a Thanksgiving Dinner at 5:00 p.m. to celebrate God’s abundant love for us. I look forward to seeing you there as we give thanks for our church together!

In Christ’s Joy,
 Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

Many thanks to our Chancel Choir, Campanile Bell Choir, and our bagpiper, Mychael Morohovich, for providing all our wonderful music for our Reformation Sunday celebration on October 27! If you were in worship that day, you also know that we recognized Betty Coffey for her 50+ years of ringing with the SHUP Campanile Bell Choir. Betty sadly hung up her handbell gloves at the end of our spring 2024 season. Throughout the years, Betty was a consistent and talented presence in our group (and boy, could she ring those “four-in-hand” bells!) Thank you, Betty, for your faithful commitment and your smiling face for those many years behind the bell tables! And fortunately, she’s continuing to sing



Music Director, Shelby Gracey presents Betty Coffey with recognition and a special gift during the worship service on October 27th.

with our Chancel Choir, so we’ll still be able to see her smiling face each Sunday!

Now that November is upon us, our choirs are busy preparing music for Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving, and the rapidly approaching Advent and Christmas season! The choir will sing each Sunday morning, and the Campanile Bells will ring on November 10, in honor of Veteran’s Day, as well as December 1, and December 22, with Advent and Christmas tunes. There will also be additional special music throughout the Advent season, so we hope you’ll join us for worship, to be drawn closer to God through the Word, the Message, and the Music!

Blanket Making Mission

Many thanks to all who stayed after worship on October 20 to create the five beautiful, warm fleece blankets. The blankets were delivered to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Carnegie, where they will be delivered to The Bradley Center and The Children’s Institute. Thank you for giving of your time, so children and teens who are going through a difficult time can know that someone is thinking about them!



SHUP members (from L to R), Dottie Fleming, Lynne Blanning, Shelby Gracey, Ryan Gracey & Leslie Ney



Days for Girls (DfG)

On Thursday, October 17th, Pastor Laura, Sandy Gill, Bev Knasko and Karin Schein took a trip to the Days for Girls (DfG) facility in Grove City, PA. The DfG organization was putting together emergency feminine hygiene kits for those who were affected by the recent hurricanes. Rev. Karie Charlton, the USA Special Projects Coordinator for DfG International/Pittsburgh Team put out the call for help so they could get the kits put together as quickly as possible and the DfG PA South Team showed up to work! The day was well spent and our team put together over 100 kits that were ready to be shipped!



Above: Bev Knasko, Pastor Laura & Karie Charlton with the finished kits,
 Left, Bev & Karin Schein with Karie putting the kits together.
 Below: Sandy Gill doing “Quality Control.”



There is hope in the world, right, and the hope is that we can all make a difference, no matter how small, and sometimes a small difference is a menstrual pad.”
 -Karie Charlton



From Finance

Stewardship Campaign

Each year we ask for your financial support so that we may continue to serve our church and support mission work. This year, our campaign is:

“All Creatures Great and Small”

You should have received a letter from Pastor Laura in late October explaining the nature of our campaign. Stewardship Campaign Appeal letters will be mailed out the beginning of November. Also, during the month of November we will have *60 Seconds for Stewardship* during the worship service.

As in prior years, we are asking that you make a pledge allowing us to



O God, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
+ Psalm 104:24

plan for the coming year. Your pledges are the foundation upon which we consider how we may best give back what God so generously provides each of us.

Giving Statements

Giving Statements were mailed out at the beginning of October. If there are any corrections/questions with your statement, please call Karin in the church office at:

(412)561-6261

Per Capita

2025 Per Capita has been assessed at \$38.11 per member. Please consider making a separate donation to cover the cost of each church member in your family. Donations that are specifically designated for Per Capita will prevent a reduction in the general budget.

...and now we wait...

ELECTION NIGHT INTERFAITH VESPER SERVICE

November 5, 2024 7pm
The Unitarian Universalist Church
of the South Hills

The Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills, Bower Hill
Presbyterian Community Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Sunset
Hills Presbyterian Church, & Temple Emanuel



Thanksgiving Dinner

Please Join Us For
**THANKSGIVING
DINNER**

Main Dish Provided
Please Bring a Side Dish
or
Dessert to Share

Sunday

November
24
2024

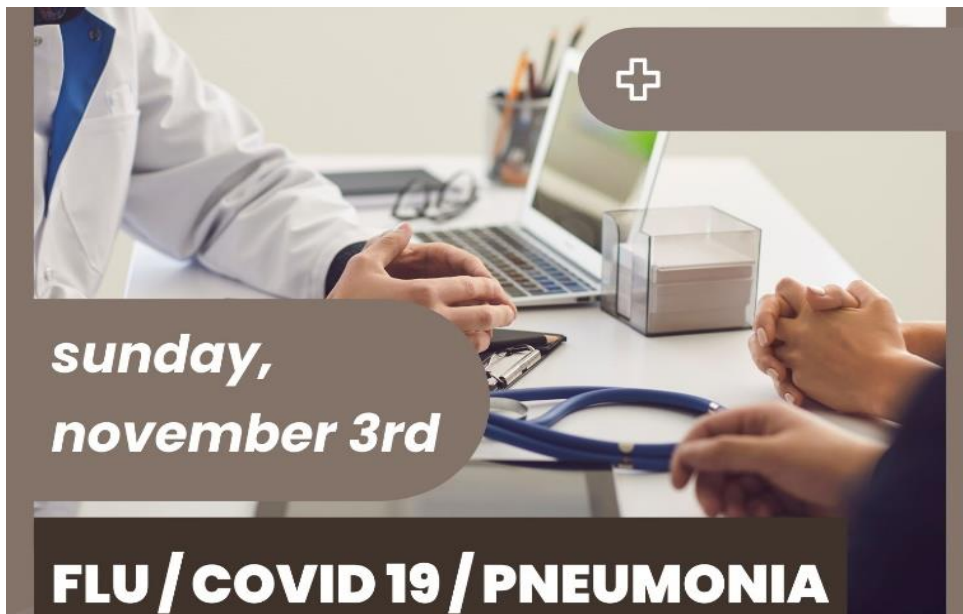
5:00 PM

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church
900 Country Club Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15228

RSVP by Nov. 15th
sunsethillschurch@gmail.com



Vaccine Clinic



*sunday,
november 3rd*

**FLU / COVID 19 / PNEUMONIA
VACCINE SHOTS AVAILABLE**

AFTER WORSHIP-FINDLEY HALL

The Congregational Care Commission has put together a Flu/Covid/Pneumonia Vaccine Clinic for members and friends of SHUP.

The clinic will be held in the Cort Room after the worship service on November 3rd. If you would like to receive 1 or more of the vaccines, you can pick up a form from the table outside of Findley Hall. The form can be filled out on the day of the clinic if you did not pre-register.

Mission Opportunity



As we did last year, during the month of December, we will be collecting small, travel-sized toiletry items (deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.) that will be distributed to Familylinks. Familylinks is an organization in the South Hills that services youth, adults, and seniors. Their mission is to positively impact lives through integrated community, behavioral, and social programs. They have recently expanded their emergency shelter capacity by 50% and are always in need of personal care items for their shelter visitors. During each of the four Sundays of Advent, stockings will be hung on the ends of the pews down the center aisle of the sanctuary. Please place your items right into the stockings when you come in for worship. The stockings will be emptied following worship each Sunday, and all items collected will be distributed to Familylinks in early January. Thank you for participating in this important mission and ministry! Perhaps we can even exceed the amount we collected in 2023!

Thank You

Bear Pastor Laura,

We are neighbors who just enjoyed hosting our baby shower in Findley Hall. Thanks so much to you, the Board, Karin, Jody, and Ya Ya (the maintenance person from Friday night) for helping us to have such a perfect venue.

We wanted to mention how much we enjoy the twice daily concerts from your wonderful bells. On national and religious holidays, they seem especially meaningful.

With love and appreciation for being such wonderful neighbors,

Marie Sonnet & Bob Berklich

Dear SHUP,

Thank you so much for the "Twists and Turns" curriculum. We hope this donation will help bless your VBS and other ministries.

*Pam Koppes
Laboratory Presbyterian*

Dear SHUP,

Thank you for all of the prayers and the beautiful flowers. I am doing well.

In the Name of Jesus,

Harriet Ross

November Information

Adult Sunday School **9:00 am – Cort Room**

The class will continue to meet on Sunday mornings. For the month of November, the class will be studying *The Difficult Words of Jesus*, a Book Study by Amy-Jill Levine.

Fellowship Hour **First Sunday of the Month**

We will continue to hold fellowship after the worship service on the first Sunday of every month. If you would like to host one Sunday, please sign up on the sheet outside of Findley Hall.

Sunday Worship **10:15 am**

If you are not able to join us in person, a video of the service will be posted to our YouTube channel on the Monday after the service: [Sunset Hills Church - YouTube](#). You can get a copy of the bulletin by clicking on the link on the homepage of our website www.shupchurch.org.

Findley Hall Bible Study **Monday – 1:00 pm**

The Findley Hall Bible study will continue to meet every Monday.
If you would like to learn more about this study, please contact Jody Colby at jody.colby@verizon.net.

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study **Tuesday – 1:00 pm – Cort Room**

The class will continue to meet every Tuesday. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Carole McCullough at (412)343-5758.

Yoga **Tuesday – 5:30 pm - Crystal Hall**

Instructors from BreaheIn2It Yoga will have class every Tuesday in November.
To sign up or learn more, please visit: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

Campanile Bells Rehearsal **Tuesday - 6:30 pm**

Bells will have practice every Tuesday evening.

Peanuts Square Dancing Club **Tuesday - 7:00 pm**

The Peanuts Square Dancing club will meet in Crystal Hall. Everyone is welcome, no partner or previous experience is needed. There is a cost of \$5/class.

Chancel Choir Practice **Tuesday - 7:30 pm**

The Chancel Choir will have practice every Tuesday in November.

Days for Girls **Wednesday – 10:00 am**

Days for Girls will continue to meet in Wilson Hall every Wednesday.

Tai Chi **Wednesday – 6:30 pm**

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will hold classes every Wednesday in November.
If you are interested in learning more about these classes, please contact Gurney at: gurneybolster@gmail.com.

Scheduling a Meeting with Pastor Laura

If you would like to meet with Pastor Laura to discuss a matter that is **not** a medical or pastoral care emergency, please reach out to her. You can contact her via email at revlaurastrauss@gmail.com or by calling the church office at (412)561-6261 to schedule a meeting.
Dropping in to say “hi” is always appreciated, but scheduling a meeting ensures that Pastor Laura can dedicate the necessary time to your discussion if needed.

Office Closed

The Church office will be closed from Wednesday, Nov. 27th through Friday, Nov. 29th.

Nursery School Closed

The Sunset Hills Nursery School will be closed from Wednesday, Nov. 27th through Monday, Dec. 2nd.

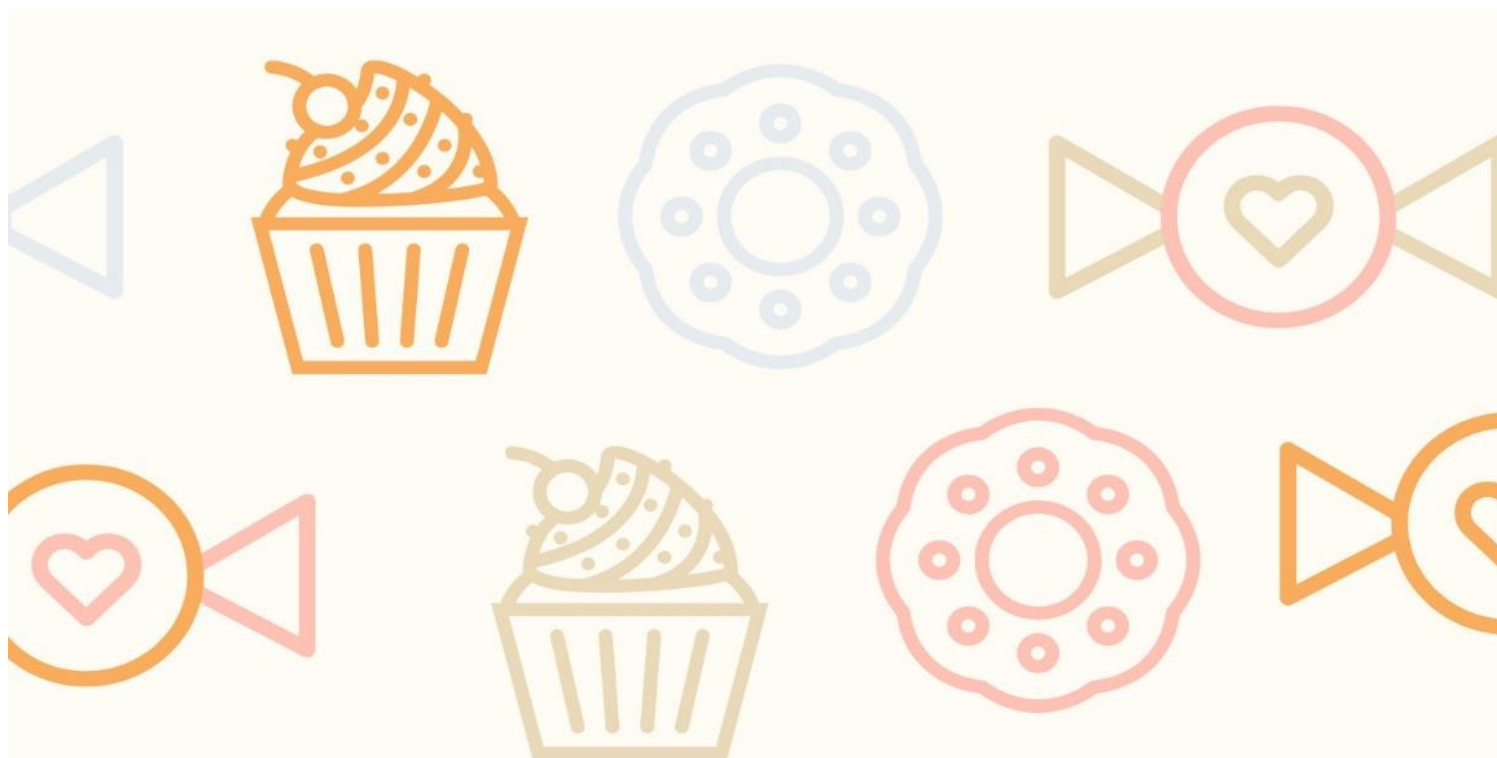
ANNUAL DEACON

Cookie Sale

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 7
10 AM - NOON

Sunset Hills UP Church
900 Country Club Drive

shupchurch.org



CALLING ALL BAKERS

*Want to Be Part of
Our Cookie Sale?*

Saturday, December 7th
Annual Deacons Fundraiser

SIGN UP ON THE SHEET OUTSIDE OF FINDLEY HALL.

Drop-off your donations in the kitchen on:
Friday, Dec. 6th from 9am - 3 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Saturday, Dec. 7th from 8 - 9:30 am

Sunset Hills UP Church

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

FREE NIGHT OF FUN

DONATIONS ACCEPTED

14 December

900 Country Club Findley Hall

5 pm to 8 pm

Visits with Santa!



Games!



Crafts!



Breakfast for Dinner!



Entertainment



REGISTER AT:
SHUPCHURCH.ORG
OR
REVLAUSTRAUSS@GMAIL.COM

VOLUNTEERS *NEEDED*

Hurricane Relief Mission Trip

to

Hot Springs, North Carolina

May 31 – June 6, 2025

experience **MISSION**

Over the past decade of responding to natural disasters through relief mission trips, **Experience Mission** has learned the best thing they can do as a short-term mission organization is to be ready to show up as the recovery period begins in the coming months.

This is where SHUP comes in! We will be joining Experience Mission for on the ground hurricane relief work in Hot Springs, NC and the surrounding area from May 31 - June 6, 2025.

Schedule

May 31st – Driving to Hot Springs, NC

June 1st – Worship/Recreation/Evening Orientation

June 2nd – June 5th Morning Prayer/Spend Day at Work Sites/Evening Reflection & Worship

June 6th – Driving Home



Cost: \$495/Person + Help with Gas

ONLY 9 SPOTS AVAILABLE



Provided:

- Coordination with Work Sites
- Lodging
- Meals
- Devotional Materials

Please Bring:

- Air Mattress
- Sleeping Bag
- Snacks
- Clothing that can be ruined

Register to Pastor Laura

email: revlaurastrauss@gmail.com

or

Phone: (412)561-6261