

## LINK 'N' TOWER

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and United Church of Christ  
Rev. Melanie Lawrence-Caldwell, Pastor

Volume 116, Number 5

June, 2016



Summer is quickly coming upon us with warm, humid weather, cookouts, graduations, and vacations. For me, it also includes some sort of march and festival to shout out to the world that I am not ashamed of who I am and stand with those who are different, like me. In other words, I attend some sort of Pride parade.

My first parade was in San Francisco in 1979. I was stationed in Sacramento (Air Force) so I thought it would be far enough away from spying eyes. I didn't know what to expect, but I knew I had to attend, I had to feel normal and accepted for just one day...and it was heaven! For that one day, for the first time in my life, I felt okay. I felt part of something good. I felt normal. One year after that I was asked ever so politely by the powers that be to resign my position in the Air Force or face court-martial. At the age of 19, feeling ever so powerless and helpless, I took the easy way out (in my mind) and took the honorable discharge. I have lived with that decision every day of my life.

I have never talked about this experience with anyone outside my inner circle because I felt so ashamed. I also felt so very angry that all of a sudden I was not worthy of wearing that

USAF uniform, I was not a full fledged citizen of the country I was born in. A few years later AIDS broke out and with it renewed hate and ostracism of LGBT people, especially the men. I had friends and acquaintances getting sick, dying. I learned that we (LGBT) had to stick together to help those afflicted because so many had families and friends turn backs and walk away. I learned what it was to be a part of a community.

So every year, I find a Pride parade or festival to attend. This year, Collenbrook United Church is marching in the Philadelphia Parade. I pray I will be surrounded by many of my Collenbrook family to help support those who are still struggling to find acceptance, to find worth, to know that it is okay to be who God made them, and me, to be.

Pat Lawrence-Caldwell  
Chair, ONA/ML Committee

### **Valley Youth House (PRIDE)** (June MOM)

PRIDE provides housing and supportive services for homeless LGBTQIA youth. Youth are provided a safe place to be themselves and gain support to make the typical transitions that occur during late adolescence and early adulthood. **Sheltering Pride** is a fund raising campaign that currently serves 25 youth in the Philadelphia area with housing for a year with other support. The hope is to double the number of youth served in this way because the need is so great. National studies show that although the national average of homelessness is 5%-7% of the population, it is 40% for homeless youth who identify as LGBTQIA. The need is great so give generously this Pride month.



June is pride month and with it comes parades, festivals and celebration. For Collenbrook it means participation for the first time in the Philadelphia **Pride Parade June 12<sup>th</sup>**. We will meet here at the church at **8 am** for some quick coffee, doughnuts and fellowship, then begin our way to the parade route in downtown Philadelphia. The parade route is a little over a mile long so for those who cannot walk that distance, a vehicle or float will be provided so come join us, show your support and celebrate with us the unique lives God has given each of us.

### **SUMMER FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES**

There is a lot planned this summer for us to gather and fellowship. There will be a Brownie sundae Sunday on **June 26th** after church with sugar free options; A Motown concert at Rose Tree Park on Wednesday, **July 6<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30; In September we will do a Philadelphia Mural Tour. Plans are still being made for the August event so stay tuned.

### **OTHER STUFF**

There are always volunteer opportunities at Collenbrook: from singing in the choir, ringing a bell or two in the handbell choir, helping to set up or clean up after the community dinners to cleaning the sanctuary...there is always something to do.

### **CHURCH INFORMATION**

Pastor Melanie is typically in the office from Wednesday through Saturday. Please call the church or drop in during those days if you would like to speak with her. It is always a good idea to call ahead just to make sure she is available. Please remember there are times when she is out of the office during these days working on church or denominational business. Pastor Melanie's usual days off are Mondays and Tuesdays. Please respect this time by not emailing or texting her unless it is an emergency or it's something that needs immediate attention.

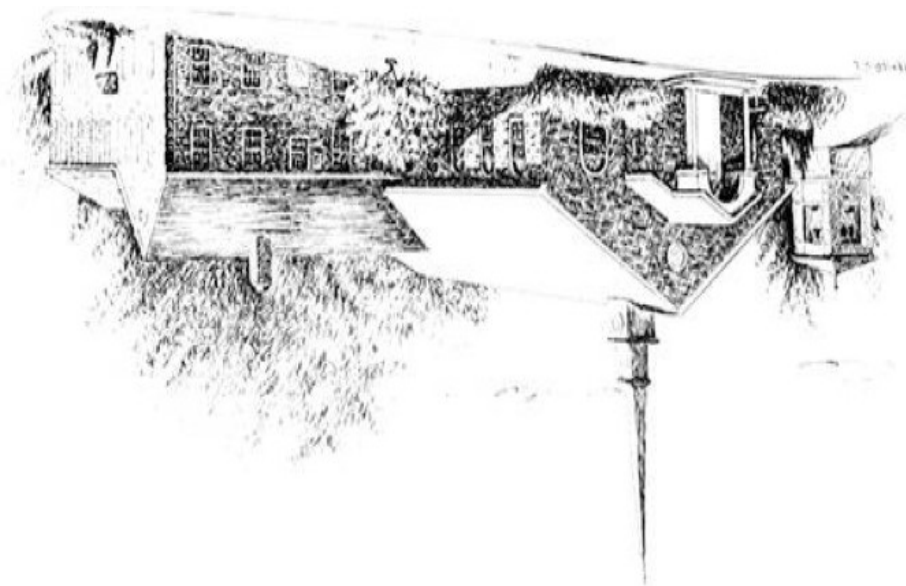
Collenbrook United Church, 5290 Township Line Rd., Drexel Hill. PA 19026  
Phone: 610.789.9590  
[www.collenbrook.org](http://www.collenbrook.org)  
[info@collenbrook.org](mailto:info@collenbrook.org)

### **IMPORTANT JUNE DATES**

12TH – Pride parade 8am church gathers at Collenbrook  
14<sup>th</sup> - Council  
26<sup>th</sup> - Brownie Sundae Fellowship event  
29<sup>th</sup> - Community Dinner

## COLLENBROOK UNITED CHURCH CALENDAR APRIL 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1  7-10pm Podowan	2  3pm AA
3 9:30-Choir Reh 10:30- WORSHIP  1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	4	5	6 12:30-bible study  6:30 Bell Choir	7 7pm-bible study  7pm AA	8  7-10pm Podowan	9  3pm AA
10 9:30-Choir Reh. 10:30- WORSHIP  1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	11	12	13 12:30-bible study  7 pm-bible study	14  7pm AA	15  7-10-pm Podowan	16  3pm AA
17 9:30-Choir Reh 10:30- WORSHIP  1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	18	19  7 pm-Council Meeting	20 12:30-bible study	21  7pm AA	22	23 <b>9am Yard cleanup</b>  3pm AA
24  <b>10:30</b> 1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	25	26	27 12:30-bible study	28 <b>5-7 COMMUNTY DINNER</b>  7:15 ONA/ML meeting	29	30



[www.collbrook.org](http://www.collbrook.org); [info@collbrook.org](mailto:info@collbrook.org)

COLLENBROOK UNITED CHURCH

5290 Township Line Road

Drexel Hill, PA 19026

FIRST CLASS MAIL

