

## **Faith Connection Story – Shiloh, Danville**

Love of Neighbor isn't something that Shiloh, Danville just does; it is part of their culture. It has become so much a part of who they are that they were nominated (not by a member of their church) and selected to receive the Robert N. Pursel Distinguished Citizen Award from the Danville Area Community Foundation.

According to Joann Benjamin, the Robert N. Pursel Distinguished Citizen Award was designed to honor a distinguished citizen in the Danville community. *“They should possess the high ideals of citizenship, service and those qualities of character exemplified in the life of Robert N. Pursel in whose name this award is made. The award is to recognize individuals who have made significant meritorious contributions to the Greater Danville Area in the way of volunteer and or community service.”* This year, Danville Area Community Foundation is honoring an organization as well and have chosen Shiloh United Church of Christ!

Shiloh United Church of Christ, Danville is always busy with a parking lot full of cars. They are heavily involved in the Danville area, embracing the belief that *“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here: Jesus never turned anyone away and neither do we. God’s doors are always open.”* Shiloh exhibits this from the moment you walk up to the church with bright doors that exclaim, *“God’s Doors are Open to All”* and *“Refugees Welcome.”* Their signage outside also reads *“We Support our Transgender Troops.”*

Shiloh is extremely active in extending this welcome. They were instrumental in getting a PFLAG support group (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) group registered in Danville and have participated in the Annual Northeast Regional LBGTQ Conference at Bloomsburg University. Additionally, they sponsor a candlelight vigil for Transgender Remembrance Day each November.

When the Muslim Congregation in Danville was denied meeting space, Shiloh offered space for them for worship, prayer and fellowship. Shiloh has also provided space for many years for a girls’ Islamic Sunday School. They hosted a “Get to Know Your Neighbors” dinner to help build relationships between the two congregations and continue to look for ways to partner in the community.

Building on this commitment to be Open and Welcoming to all people, Shiloh hosted a community dance for residents with mental and physical and mental challenges. These dances are open to everyone and they are hoping they will become a regular, quarterly event.

Shiloh United Church of Christ is a close-knit church but they also encourage other community organizations and associations to gather for worship. They support and serve as a gathering place for WIC check distribution, The Le Leche League, TOPS, Girl and Boy Scouts, AARP tax preparation, Life Flight training, Penn State extension training classes, election polling, AA groups, NA and Al-Anon groups and sports organizations. They are supporting Montour-Columbia County non-profit initiatives to raise awareness of treatment options for drug addictions. Additionally, they assist Danville-Riverside Food Bank and Feed-a-Friend food banks with space, volunteers, equipment and fund raising through the CROP Walk.

Shiloh has an actively involved congregation that works to support their local Mission of the Month, from ASPCA, Gatehouse, Sunnybrook Park, Bethany and Hoffman Homes, Devitt House, Thomas Beaver Free Library, Women’s Shelter, Ronald McDonald House and House of Care. They also offer

opportunities to participate in missions outside the local community, including Heifer India Project, Kans for Kenya, Christmas Gifts for Lakota Indians and Church World Service.

When the Youth and Arts Theatre Project produced *Avenue Q – School Edition*, Shiloh financially sponsored one of the puppets and invited cast members to learn about the social justice issues that are raised in the play. They are active in Living Last Summer (Lent/Holy Week), community fellowship (Strawberry Festival, Indoor Yard Sale), DRAMA (Danville-Riverside Ministerial Alliance) and the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.

*“We have much to celebrate at Shiloh Church of Christ. We are actively living out Jesus’ command to love God and neighbor. We are passionate about demonstrating radical hospitality and are courageous in speaking out for justice”* reflects Pastor Mary Schmotzer. She looks forward to Shiloh being awarded and recognized on November 18, 2017.



Linda Hamati > Young Artists' Theatre Project of Danville  
July 23 at 11:14am

"Avenue Q: School Edition" is all about community, and today Shiloh Church showed us what real community looks like. Thank you for having us and for your continued support!

SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST'S  
**SPECIAL NEEDS DANCE**  
DATE: SUNDAY MAY 21, 2017  
TIME: 3PM - 5PM  
LOCATION: SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
900 BLOOM ST. DANVILLE  
COST: FREE

SPRING HAS SPRUNG AND THE SHOWERS OF APRIL HAVE LEFT BEHIND COLORFUL MAYFLOWERS. COME CELEBRATE THIS BEAUTIFUL CHANGE OF THE SEASON WITH A DANCE. SHILOH IS INVITING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR LOVED ONES TO JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF MUSIC AND DANCE. LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED. CALL SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AT 510-875-1943 FOR MORE INFORMATION. THIS IS PART OF OUR ADA ACCESSIBILITY TO ALL INDICES.



These beautiful ladies just made 106 jars of strawberry jam for the Shiloh Strawberry Festival on Saturday, 4-6:30pm! Hope to see you there!



See Photos 17 of Danville, unless noted on the Photo Church of Christ in Danville