



St. John's UCC, Fullerton

575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052

Church Office: 610-264-8421

May 2021



Vol. 14 Issue 4

"Our Church Connection"



"He is not here, for he has risen, as he said."

- Matthew 28:6

The words on a church signboard caught my attention this week. They said: "Christ is risen. So what?" What a great question! So what? What difference does Easter really make? Maybe an even better question to ask is, does Easter make a difference? Does it make any difference if we believed we are loved beyond our wildest imaginings by a God who will not let anything - not our mistakes, not our illnesses, not our belligerence, not our busyness, not our apathy, not our grief, not our doubts, not Covid-19, not even our *death* separate us from God? Does it make any difference if we believe that we have been given new lives, forgiven of sin, and freed to be full members of the community of God's people? Does believing that Christ is risen make any difference to how we relate to our family and friends? To strangers? To people we disagree vehemently with? Does it make any difference where we live? How and where we work? How we use our free time? How much money we save? Spend? Give away?

I think the answer is that Easter makes an incredible difference in our lives --- if we let it. If we let the full impact of Christ's resurrection sink into our hearts and minds, we won't be able to help but be changed. We will, like the first believers and every believer ever since, be Easter-filled people, filled with God's Spirit and incorporated into the Body of Christ - Jesus' resurrected and ever-present hands and feet and ears and eyes and heart in this world.

That's some difference, eh?

Let us not only believe in the resurrection, but let us also allow the good news of Easter make a difference in our lives. Let's be the after-Easter people God is calling us to be. Alleluia! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Be God's,
Pastor Bonnie

Dear Members of St John's,

It was a pleasure to lead worship and preach at St John's for Pastor Bonnie on March 21. Early on, she told me I could simply lead worship from home, which was fine with me. However, once she informed me that with the new camera, I could actually lead worship in the sanctuary, I was excited. When I walked into the sanctuary Sunday morning, I was just blown away to see the set-up for Zoom

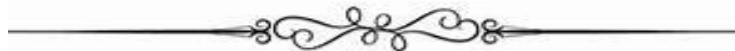


worship. In fact, I was so impressed I took a picture with my phone.

From the photo, you can see there are three computer screens and various control panels. While we were making preparations to go live, I learned about the complexities of pre-recording the music. There are two microphones, one for the organ and a second one for the vocalist, and sometimes getting those microphones to work together can be a challenge.

I knew Zoom worship with slides, pre-recorded music and live portions was complicated; however, until I came into the sanctuary on March 21st, I truly had no idea how complex it is. What a blessing that St John's has both financial and human resources to navigate all those complexities, and what a blessing that you are such a gracious congregation, forgiving the bumps in the road as we navigate the ins and outs of worshipping safely during the pandemic.

~ Becca Stephens



MEET THE CONSISTORY Kayleigh Fisher

I was a member of St. John's UCC Fullerton my whole life and it is truly an honor to take a part on Consistory. I am a 9th grade student at Whitehall High School. I enjoy playing on my sports teams for both high school and club, I play soccer and basketball. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my friends and especially spending time with my family. I was currently just confirmed in October and looking forward to continuing my faith journey in the church throughout the years.

Tuesday Talkbacks Continue

Join us every Tuesday at 2 pm for conversation and fellowship. Pastor Bonnie hosts these informal, agenda-free Zoom gatherings. It's a great place to learn new tricks about using Zoom! Use the following Zoom meeting ID with the Sunday worship passcode: 889 9327 5253. Contact the church office if you need additional information.

Do you receive St. John's "Mail Chimp" email blasts?

They are sent out periodically to provide updated information about upcoming church events. If you don't receive these emails and would like to, please provide your email address to the church office at 610-264-8421 or sjfofficesecretary@gmail.com. Thanks!

Newsletter deadline at St. John's will be the

second (2nd) Sunday of each month

Let's help save trees!! If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email as opposed by mail, please call Deb at the church office so she can add you to the email group.

Are you receiving church envelopes, but not using them? If you are giving electronically, please call the church office, so we can stop the church envelopes from being mailed to you.

Redner's Receipt Tapes

Please continue to use your Redner's card and save your register receipts for the church. We are continuing to collect them and receive money back from Redner's. Even though we have not had as many tapes turned in, we still just received a check for \$75.00. Please turn your tapes in to the church office as we will continue submitting them. This is just another way to help the church financially just by purchasing your groceries and turning in the receipts.



Shorti Hoagie Coupons for sale thru the "Fun" Raising Committee.

They are \$5 each, and they do not expire - you can use them at any WAWA. They make great thank you gifts to someone who is shopping for you, or birthday presents for friends and loved ones, just about any reason at all. Support St. John's UCC Fullerton. If you are interested in any coupons, please contact Kenda Catalini @ 484-358-7453. Kenda has all coupons, none are available at the church office.

**CONFIRMATION SUNDAY - 5-02-2021 2 p.m. (rain date 5-16-2021)
In The Field of Dreams (masks required and bring your own chairs)**

***Congratulations and God's Blessing to Our Young People as They Take the Next Step
in Their Faith Journey***



ETHAN BROBST: I live with my Mom, my Dad, my brother, and my two dogs Barkley and Stella. I am in 8th grade at Northampton Area Middle School. My favorite sport is competitive swimming and I have been participating for the past four years. I am a Boy Scout in Troop 1600 at Jordan UCC in

Allentown. I am currently a Life Scout and working on my Eagle Scout Rank. I also like learning new technology and playing video games on Xbox and my Oculus Virtual Reality headset. I enjoy camping, riding a bike, and hiking. I also enjoy cooking as well.



ZOE ROTH: I am an eighth grader at Catasauqua Middle School. I play softball and field hockey. My favorite class is math. I have three pet dogs as well as a turtle.



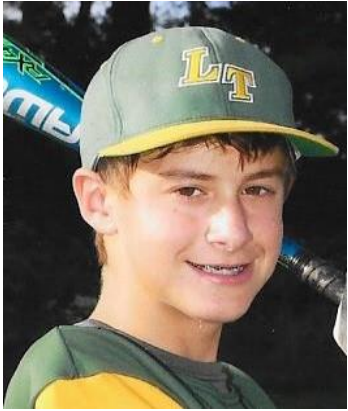
MICHAEL BAATZ: Hello my name is Michael I am 14 years old I am also 8th grade I've lived in Allentown all my life. I currently attend South Mountain Middle School in Allentown's south side. Next year I will be attending building 21 in Allentown's south side as well. Some of my favorite hobbies are fire

photography, it's where I go to fire scenes, and record fire trucks going to calls. I also have a YouTube channel with over 250 subscribers. Other hobbies that I enjoy are watching sports, YouTube, and playing video games, and hanging out with family. My future jobs is becoming a volunteer firefighter for East Salisbury Fire Company in Salisbury Township, as well as becoming an EMT for St Luke's Emergency Transport Services in Fountain Hill. Some of my favorite sports are hockey, baseball, football, and NASCAR. I have a pet hamster and a dog; some of my interests are firefighting and emergency services.



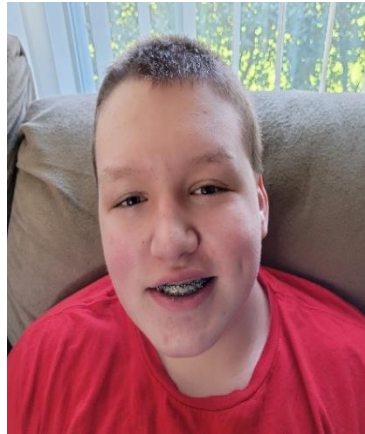
CARTER TROXELL: I am 14 years old. I am in 8th grade at Whitehall-Coplay Middle School. I play football and basketball for Whitehall as well as AAU basketball for the Lehigh Valley Wildcats. I like lifting, playing video games and water skiing. I have a mom, dad, younger sister and

younger brother. And a chocolate lab named Cooper.



infielder.

COLE BUSKIRK: Cole is a 14 year old who is in 8th grade at Northampton Area Middle School. He lives with his parents and his 10 year old brother, Matthew. His interests include baseball, basketball, and football. Currently he is playing baseball for Lehigh Township as a middle



league.

CHRIS LEIBENSBERGER: I am 14 years old, and I go to Whitehall-Coplay School District. Something I like to do, is play basketball against my 17 year old brother. I also like to play video games with friends, and also bowl in a bowling



mom and dad and my 10 year old brother, Carson. I also have a cat, Tori, a hamster, and fish.

CONNOR STRAUSS: I am an 8th grader at the Whitehall-Coplay Middle School. I play baseball and basketball for the middle school. I also hope to play football for the high school next year. My other hobbies besides sports are playing video games, building LEGO's, and reading. I live with my



*Thank
You...*

- I would like to thank Pastor Dave for the visits he made after my recent knee replacement and to the other fellow members who sent me well wishes.

Gary Weaver

- I wish to Thank You for the prayers and the cards you sent to me. Nancy was most thankful for the card shower she received at Christmas.

Ron Eichman

- To Our Friends at St. John's,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$290.36 to the Sixth Street Shelter. We sincerely appreciate the partnership of friends like you as we help families improve their stability, self-sufficiency, resilience, and quality of life. The Shelter has been serving families with children who are experiencing homelessness for over 30 years. You are an important part of our work, and we are truly grateful for your involvement and support.

Thank you,
Kristine Blasco, Director
Sixth Street Shelter.

- A Note from Rev. Alan Miller (former PNEC Conference Minister and member of St. John's) as published in PNEC's "This Week in PNEC" - April 1, 2021

"I would like to offer my words of gratitude for all of the cards and prayers sent to me since the diagnosis of my autoimmune encephalitis. Although the disease has wiped away my memories of many things that I did; I still remember the people and their words or care and prayers have meant the world to me."

Peace,
Alan

On the recommendation of the Re-Opening Task Force, the Consistory of St. John's UCC Fullerton approved the opening of the church building for in-person hybrid worship services (in person and Zoom) starting on May 16, 2021. Sunday worship services will continue to be held at 9:30; reservations must be made for in-person attendance. Guidelines (See "Ten Commandments for Indoor In-person Worship on Page 7) must be followed at all times as we are taking cautious steps to assure the safety of all.

Need help deciding if it's appropriate for you to attend in-person worship? Check out the decision tree on Page 8 for some helpful guidance!

Marion DeMilio, Consistory President



TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR INDOOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP (Safety Guidelines)

"Hear, O people of St. John's, the statements and ordinances that I am addressing to you today; you shall learn them and observe them diligently... so that it may go well with you and your children forever!" - Deuteronomy 5:1, 29, adapted

- 1.** Thou shalt wear a mask and maintain social distancing at all times.
- 2.** Thou shalt not socialize, hug or shake hands inside the church building.
- 3.** Though shalt enter and exit via the Grape Street sanctuary or elevator entrances. Ushers will show you to your physically-distanced assigned seats.
- 4.** Thou shalt not bring food or drink into the church building.
- 5.** Thou shalt deposit your offering in the offering plate in the back of the sanctuary, but thou shalt carry your coat and personal belongings with you to your assigned seat.
- 6.** Thou shalt know that the church nursery will NOT be open.
- 7.** However, thou shalt also know that the bathrooms WILL be available and hand sanitizer will be abundant!
- 8.** Thou shalt not sing during worship.
- 9.** Thou shalt be prompt! The doors will be closed at 9:30 sharp.
- 10. Thou shalt make a reservation...**

...by contacting the Office Administrator, Deb Hoffman, either by phone, 610-264-8421, or by email, sjfofficesecretary@gmail.com between 8:30 and 3:00 Monday through Friday.

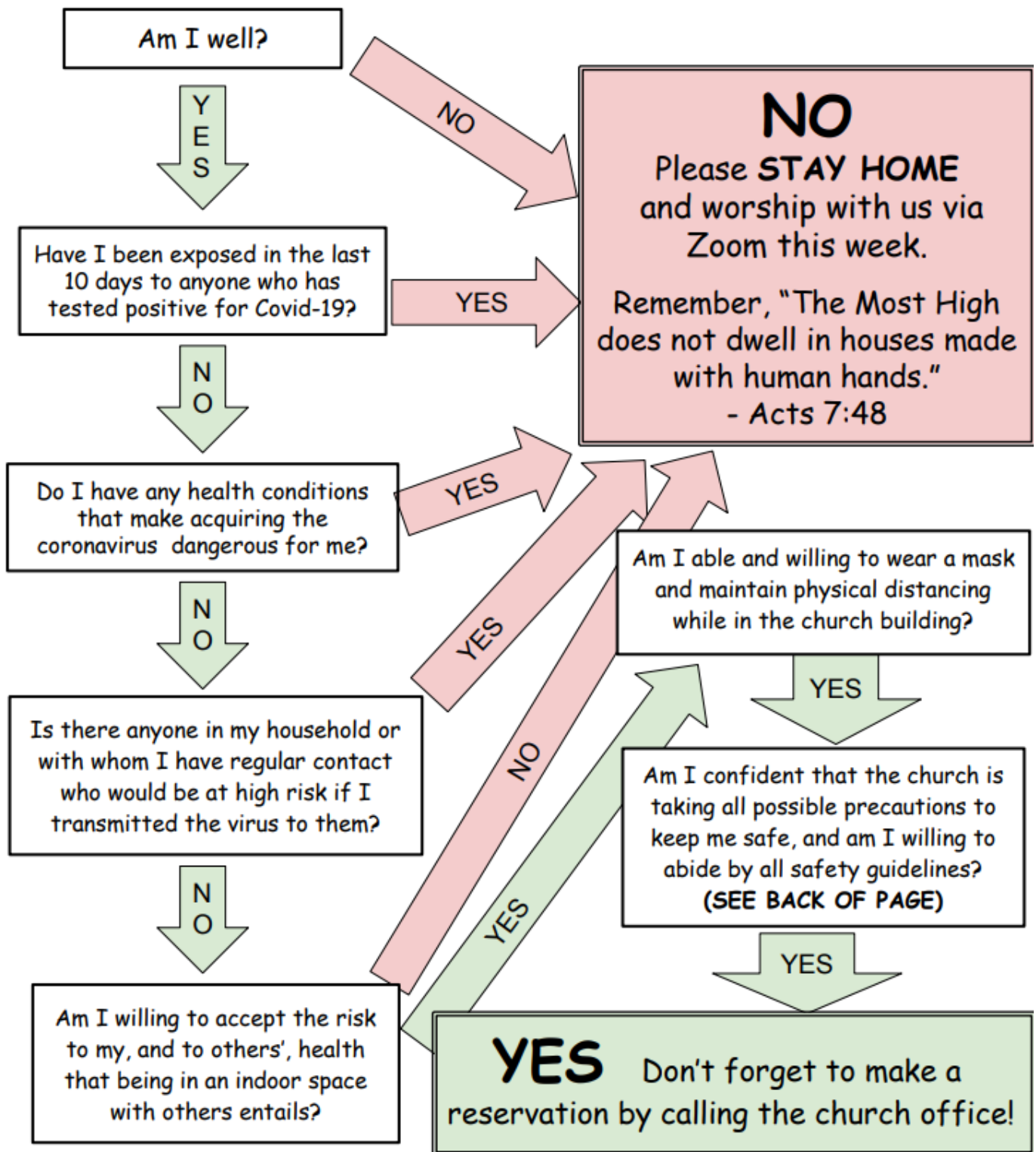
Reservations will be accepted in the order received beginning at 8:30 am each Monday only for the upcoming Sunday. Emails with an earlier time stamp will not be accepted.

Emailed reservations will receive an email confirmation.

Required information for a worship reservation includes the names of the people in your family who will be attending, a phone number, and an email address (if available).

Note: Attendance records will be kept for two weeks in case contact tracing becomes necessary.

Is it appropriate for me to attend indoor, in-person worship at St. John's UCC (Fullerton) this week?



Whitehall Food Pantry Donation Drive-By

Date: Saturday, May 8, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon

Place: St. John's UCC – Grape St. Parking Lot



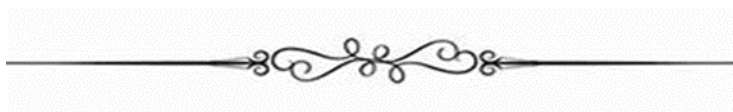
Items Needed:

(Canned goods and prepackaged items only)

Peas	Peaches	Hamburger Helper	Cereal
Corn	Pears	Spam	Pancake Mix
Red Beets	Pineapple Slices	Chicken	Pancake Syrup
Kidney Beans	Apple Sauce	Tuna Fish	Tea Bags
Mixed Vegetables	Jelly	White or Brown Rice	Coffee
Carrots	Peanut Butter	Macaroni & Cheese	Canned Milk
Baked Beans	Soups	Spaghetti/Pasta Sauce	Jello
Sweet Potatoes	Mayonnaise	Pasta/Noodles	Crackers
Instant Potatoes	Salad Dressing		

All groceries must be unopened and not past expiration dates. Any other non-perishable items as well as monetary donations are always accepted.

Enter on Grape St. and leave by the rear alley. Please adhere to Covid-19 guidelines—wear a mask and maintain 6 ft. distancing. If you have any questions, please contact Jean McGonigle, chair of the Mission Committee, or Gary Black, St. John's liaison to the food pantry.



GIFT CARDS FOR SALE!

Since our Gift Card Bingos have been cancelled due to covid-19, the Fun-Raising committee has decided to sell the gift cards we had purchased for those Bingos. The following gift cards are available for purchase:

\$50 Applebee's, Sheetz, LL Bean, Kohl's, Chili's or On the Border, Lowe's, Dave & Busters, Movie Tavern by Marcus, and Macy's.

\$150 Amazon.

If you are interested in purchasing any of these cards, please call **Tom Moyer (610-432-3372)** or e-mail tommoyer54@gmail.com. Checks should be made to St. John's UCC.

Text-to-Give!

Here's another way you can make secure donations to St. John's via your smartphone! Text the amount you want to donate to (844) 935-3593 - it's a free call! The first time you do this, you will be led through a step-by-step process to set up your giving account and make payments via a credit card or direct debit from your checking account. For future donations, all you will need to do is text the amount of your donation to that number. (Note from Pastor Bonnie - I have that phone number saved on my phone as "Give" so I don't have to remember the phone number!) All donations made via text-to-give will be included on your end-of-the-year giving statement.

You can also text funds to the same number to see a list of funds to which you can donate to, then text the amount you want to give, space, and fund name to donate to a specific fund. Unspecified donations received through text-to-give will go to the St. John's UCC General Operating Fund. Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of St. John's!

St. John's Prayer Chain Committee

Did you know St John's has a prayer chain group, currently with about 15 members? If you are interested in keeping others in prayer, we are always welcoming new members to join us. Please contact [Kim Hillegass](mailto:Kim.Hillegass@stjohns.org) at [610-360-7895](tel:610-360-7895) or kim1257@aol.com and we will gladly add you to the group. Most of our communications are done by email when requests come in but calls will be made to members who don't have an email address. Please join us.

In need of prayers for you or someone you know? You can contact the Office or Pastor or Kim to have someone added to our list.

JUST ANOTHER WAY TO HELP YOUR CHURCH

I am currently scheduling the scripture readers for St. John's services. I know there are more people that have read the scriptures in the past and would like to add you to the list of people that I already have. The scriptures can be read via Zoom or in person once we resume in-person services. Please either call me at 610-443-0161 or email me at cstauffer206@aol.com. I currently contacted everyone with the available opportunities via email.

This is a very easy way to assist your church....Be the Church....No Matter What!

Cheryl Weaver

Mission Moment!

“Strengthen the Church” – Renew!



The **Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering** reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations.

By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. **Enclosed with this newsletter is a special offering envelope for Strengthen the Church which will be received in worship on May 23. If you receive this newsletter by email, please consider contributing by mailing in your donation to the church office or giving on-line or by texting.**

* * *

The Mission Committee has scheduled a **Whitehall Food Pantry Donation Drive-By for Saturday, May 8, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon in the Grape St. parking lot.** Be sure to read the article in this newsletter as to what canned goods and pre-packaged food items are needed. **Monetary donations are also accepted.**



* * *

The Mission Committee continues with our **Mask Ministry** to offer to our St. John's Family the opportunity to receive a hand-sewn face mask during the pandemic. **Contact Carol Raszler** at 610-393-7572 or craszler@aol.com to place an order and arrange for delivery—first come, first served. There is no charge, but we do ask that you consider making a donation to St. John's (please mark your donation "Mask Ministry").

* * *

Another season of preparing breakfast meals for the **Jubilee Breakfast Ministry** at Zion's UCC in Allentown came to a close the end of April. This ministry provided a hot meal and warm hospitality to the homeless, the working poor, and anyone in need of food. **Thank you to Nancy Dougherty** for organizing and serving at these events. The breakfast ministry will start up again in November. **If you are interested in volunteering, contact Nancy** at 610-760-8361 or email her at nancydough@msn.com.

* * *



Thank you to everyone who contributed \$801.80 to our special offering for One Great Hour of Sharing. OGHS enables the UCC to reach people and communities in crisis—those affected by natural disasters, refugee displacement, and poverty.

Happy Spring St. John's!

The Healthcare Committee at St. John's was formed to educate and assist our members adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle, mentally, physically and emotionally. We all know if we eat healthy foods and keep active physically, it will add to our longevity. However, did you know that the simple act of being kind has great benefits to our health?

We all have been taught the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would want done unto you. Research has shown that we are biologically wired to be kind and we can get better at it with practice and repetition. Sometimes, due to outside influences and the stress of everyday life, we can lose this inherent ability. Kindness and empathy help us to relate to other people and have more positive relationships with friends, family and even perfect strangers we encounter in our daily lives.

Doing nice things for others boosts the feel-good hormone serotonin in your body. Serotonin is the neurotransmitter responsible for feelings of satisfaction and well-being. Just like exercise, altruism releases endorphins, which results in a "helper's high". So go ahead and volunteer, help someone in need, take someone out for lunch or hold the door for someone. It may be the pick-me-up you need!

Kindness eases anxiety. Social anxiety is associated with a low positive affect [PA], a factor that can significantly affect psychological well-being and adaptive functioning. Positive affect refers to an individual's experience of positive moods such as joy, interest and alertness. Researchers found that participants who engaged in kind acts significantly increased in PA that were sustained over 4 weeks of study.

Making others feel good can warm your heart, but did you know that you can actually affect the chemical balance of your heart by simply doing something kind? Kindness releases the hormone oxytocin which causes the release of a chemical called nitric oxide in blood vessels. This chemical dilates or expands the blood vessels, reducing blood pressure. According to Health.com, you are at greater risk of cardiovascular disease if you don't have a strong network of family and friends. When you are kind to others, you develop strong, meaningful relationships and friendships.

Helping others lets you get outside yourself and take a break from the stressors in your own life, and this behavior can make you better equipped to handle stressful situations. Engaging in prosocial behavior might be an effective strategy for reducing the impact of stress on emotional functioning.

Inflammation in the body is associated with all sorts of health problems such as diabetes, cancer, chronic pain, obesity and migraines. According to a study of adults aged 57-85, volunteering manifested the strongest association with lower levels of inflammation due to the release of oxytocin as a result of acts of kindness.

I find that kindness abounds at St. John's. The Covid Pandemic has kept us physically apart leaving us feeling a little shell-shocked this past year. Maybe soon we can meet again in person. Until then, join the Zoom service that is provided every Sunday. Remember to stay kind; it's good for you!

Diane Buss - Healthcare Ministry

MAY MUSIC NOTES



Love Divine, All Loves Excelling is a fine text written by Charles Wesley in 1747. Wesley, the “sweet singer of Methodism”, wrote more than 6,500 hymns and was skilled at interweaving literary and scriptural images.

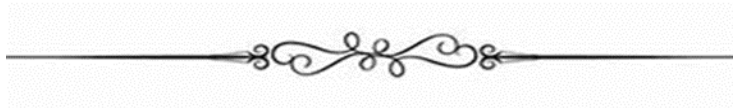
Touching various elements of Christian doctrine, *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* extols the love of God as expressed in the incarnation of Christ. The text also emphasizes the truth that the Spirit of God dwells in the temple or body of each believer and each believer should grow in the grace of our Lord.

The tune *Beecher* was written by John Zundel in 1855.

I remember singing this hymn when I was in my early teens. It made me feel joyous and happy that God loved me and it made me feel like dancing. Let God’s love dominate your heart, mind, and will. Love God as God has loved you.

Musically,

Gail



GROCERY GIFT CARDS

Weis and Giant gift cards are available for purchase in various denominations. The church receives a percentage on each one that you purchase. If interested, please contact Debbie in the church office 610-264-8421.

MAY BIRTHDAYS



1	Jean Gilbert	17	Lucille Schneck
3	John Bennett	18	Wesley Christman
3	Justin Brosious	18	Sandra Nagy
3	Corey Rapchak	19	William Roth, Sr.
4	Nancy Bennett	20	Barbara Hoderman
4	Tammy Christman	21	Thomas Moyer
5	Brittany Daiellio	21	Ricardo Venanzi
8	Robin Brensinger	22	Ronald Eichman
8	Robert Czekner	22	William Wasley, Jr.
9	Barbara Marinkovits	23	Gary Bruder
9	Kimberly Saeger	23	Edith Crews
10	Bailee Neitz	23	Jamie Kulhamer
11	Craig Hanzl	25	Paul Brobst
11	Hunter Miller	25	Sandra Glass
11	Robert Schlenker	26	Landon Troxell
12	Cynthia Kern	27	Seth Bergeris-Cortright
12	Elaine Lentz	27	Bruce Miller
13	Ryan Szoke	27	Tara Roth
14	Donald Brensinger	28	Spenser Beck
14	Grant Brobst	28	David Newton
14	Josef Raszler	28	Amy Romberger
14	Timothy Silfies	28	Teresa Schwenk
14	Lucas Williams	29	Davi Erney
15	Nancy Dougherty	30	Judith Barron
16	Jared Holderman-Adams	30	Parker Christman
16	Kristin Jordan	30	Danielle Powell
16	Judith Sommer	30	Tammy Yura
16	Cole Troxell		
17	Jennifer Rarich		

MAY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES



5/02/1992	Lee Ann & Robert Lopez	5/22/2010	Ashley & Ricardo Venanzi
5/03/2008	Craig & Lauren Schutts	5/22/2016	Roger & MaryAnn Knauss
5/04/2002	Joseph & Kenda Catalini	5/23/2009	William & Laurie Dovico
5/07/2011	James & Janet Ebert	5/24/2015	Michael & Kristin Jordan
5/08/1999	Keith & Wendy Fox, Jr.	5/24/2015	Jesus & Staci Pagan
5/08/2010	Justin & Casey Brosious	5/25/1974	Ernest & Candra Zellner, Jr.
5/12/1979	Frank & Karen Stoitsits	5/25/1979	James & Charlotte Kerrigan
5/12/2012	Thomas & Julia Gross, III	5/25/1986	John & Susan Weldner
5/16/1984	Bruce & Rosemary Hess	5/25/2013	Eric Lord & Jennifer Rarich
5/17/2003	George & Jill Williams	5/30/1982	Alan & Lisa Weiner
5/18/1968	Gary & Shirley George	5/31/2002	Steven & Sandra Nagy
5/20/1978	Ned & Barbara Bateman	5/31/2008	Samuel & Adele Yoder



DEATHS

- 3-15-2021 Ruth Wittman - next of kin: Robert Wittman, Jr. 1500 Hamilton St., Apt 1D, Allentown, PA 18102
- 3-20-2021 Nancy Eichman - next of kin: Ronald Eichman 2202 Second Ave., Whitehall, PA 18052
- 4-08-2021 Marie Fatzinger - next of kin: Mark Snyder 67 Spring St., Pottsville, PA 17901

We are updating our data base, and asking if you could please complete the form listed below, and return it either via email to sjofficesecretary@gmail.com, or mailing it to the church office at 575 Grape Street; Whitehall, PA 18052.

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, FULLERTON			
MEMBER INFORMATION			
Household Information		Todays Date: _____	
Mailing Label (how mail to your household will be addressed)			
Name: _____			
Address: _____			

City, State, Zip: _____			

Household Member Information			
Please list <u>all</u> members of the household, and complete the applicable information for each.			
First Name			
Preferred First Name			
Title (Dr., Mrs., Ms. Mr., etc.)			
Middle Name			
Last Name			
Suffix (Jr., Sr., etc.)			
Maiden Name			
Email Address			
Mobile Phone			
Work Phone			
Member?			

Date Joined			
Birth Date			
Grade in School (current, or last completed)			
Occupation/Profession			
Baptized (date)			
Confirmed (date & place)			
Marital Status (date, if married)			
Emergency Contact			
Emergency Phone #			
<i>If anyone in household has an alternate address for a portion of the year (eg. College student, summer or winter Home)</i>			
Person's Name			
Alternate Address			
Dates From & To			