

2024 Annual Report



Together, We Are Stronger!

St. John's UCC, Fullerton
575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052
(610) 264-8421
www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org



Annual Meeting Agenda

February 2, 2025, 12:00 Noon

Meal

- Call to Order Wendy Fox, 2025 Consistory President
- Opening Prayer Rev. Steve Davis, Senior Pastor
- Approval of the February 2, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes Wendy Fox
- Approval of the November 17, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes Wendy Fox
Consistory Election and Approval of the 2025 Budget
- 2024 Committee Reports
 - Faith Formation – Children Rev. Becca Stephens
 - Property Wayne Lichtenwalner
- Treasurer’s Report Sue Weldner, Treasurer
- Additional Business
 - Updates to the By-Laws Rev. Steve Davis
 - Youth Deacon, Class of 2025 Rev. Steve Davis
- A Word from the Pastor Rev. Steve Davis
- Looking Ahead to 2025 Wendy Fox
- Adjournment

Church Officers - 2025

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|--------------|
| President | Wendy Fox 904 Front Street, Whitehall PA 18052 | 610-442-0076 |
| Vice President | Bob Bold 4315 Sand Spring Road, Schnecksville PA 18078 | 610-393-6123 |
| Secretary | Charlotte Kerrigan 730 Third Street, Catasauqua PA 18032-2744 | 610-417-5900 |
| Treasurer | Susan Weldner 7287 Lochhaven Street, Allentown PA 18106 | 610-509-4674 |
| Financial Secretary | Michelle Gutekunst 846 5 th Street, Whitehall PA 18052 | 484-347-3629 |



Consistory Members

Class of 2025: Sharon Antrim, Wendy Fox (Elder), Kathy Roth, Tyler Shankweiler

Class of 2026: Paul Raszler (Elder), Kay Chryst, Kirby Hower, Bob Bold

Class of 2027: Colleen Kulhamer (Elder), Mike Borgman, Robin Brensinger, Charlotte Kerrigan



Our Church Staff

610-264-8421 ~ Church Office

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------|
| Senior Pastor | Rev. Steven Davis | 325-725-2423 |
| Director of Music Ministries | Patrick Sandt | |
| Office Administrator | Alison Berger Boor | |
| Treasurer | Susan Weldner | |
| Financial Secretary & Coordinating Custodian | Michelle Gutekunst | |
| Worship-Media Tech & Connections Newsletter Editor | Bill Castello | |
| Custodian | Christina Bach | |

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Report of the Senior Pastor- 2024

“Together We Are Stronger!”

St. John’s UCC, Fullerton, offers a strong and vibrant message of hope and inclusion in our community. We are known as a warm and welcoming congregation. We can take great pride in the words of guests who have become active and involved as members of this faith community, “St. John’s made me feel like I belong and am part of the family.”

During 2023 and 2024, I had the great honor of representing St. John’s as a member of the Keystone Study Group. Made up of select pastors and leaders from each of the four Pennsylvania area conferences, our task was to study, make detailed recommendations and proposed steps for the merger of the four conferences into one, The Keystone Conference of the UCC. Our rallying statement came to us as a breath from the Spirit, speaking something life-giving to us. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

This vision compelled our team and inspired other delegates as we all met together for one large event with all four areas in June 2024. St. John’s Fullerton was well represented by our Consistory President, DonnaLee Yeatts, our Youth Delegate, Tyler Shankweiler (who was also elected to the PNEC Board of Directors), and by me and our many retired clergy who participated. The Spirit of God, deeply felt and present, gave power to the presentations, filled our conversations with others from across the commonwealth, and caused us to see our shared potential and the gifts we bring to ministry. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

Our congregation has come through 2024 stronger as well. St. John’s Fullerton felt the power of being one congregation in worship together, even as we struggled with the challenges of trying to fit many Sunday activities into our morning. We found ways to accommodate faith formation for adults, children and a confirmation class. New formats and meeting times opened greater opportunities for hospitality and connections. The choices were not easy, but the unity we have felt as we worship together and have social connection time to follow has deepened our connections. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

Our worship brought us to affirm week after week our connection as the beloved community, committed to doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God. We experienced the reminders of the sacraments of baptism and communion and celebrated the saints of our community who had passed. We shared worship at the Pavilion. We celebrated our Vacation Bible School, returning to a robust, fun and yes, exhausting and fabulous time with over 35 children, volunteer support and leaders participating. We shed tears of gratitude and thanksgiving for the many ways we experienced God’s love. We shared another magnificent Service of the Nativity with guest musicians and singers joining us. There is nothing like the beauty and glory of the faces of God’s people in candlelight on Christmas Eve. We closed the year with communion, candlelight, carols and reminders of God being with us and for us! Hope

and love filled us, even when messages of hate stood outside our doors. We responded with resounding love as the open and affirming congregation we are. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

The feelings that have touched our hearts beyond our ability to express are so often found in worship. I’m grateful for the partnership in ministry I experience through the generosity and collegiality of our retired and connected clergy. We have numerous pastors and spouses who have chosen to make St. John’s, Fullerton, their faith home. While many are still actively serving other congregations and denominations from time-to-time, we’ve been blessed with the leadership of Rev. Becca Stephens with our Children’s Ministry. I’m grateful for the wise counsel and deep friendship these clergy members share with me. I want to acknowledge Rev. Dave Mohr, Rev. John Hoff, Rev. Cliff Herring, Rev. Becca Stephens, Rev. Todd Fennell, Rev. Evelyn Stupp and a few other visiting clergy who have come by to be with us in worship. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

Our beloved Pastor Emerita, Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith, provided great leadership in worship which allowed me to bring my mother from New Mexico to Pennsylvania. Becky’s spirit of partnership and deep friendship makes us not just colleagues in ministry, but always welcome friends. We were honored by her leadership in a magnificent and greatly desired Women’s Retreat this past November. The clergy of this congregation, with their prayers and affirmations, their partnership and diligent commitment to St. John’s Fullerton has so greatly added to my joy in being your Senior Minister. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

In November, I celebrated the completion of three years of ministry together with you. The time has flown by for me. Yet in the time we have shared already, we’ve become more familiar with each other’s commitments, priorities and foundational aspects of our faith. First and foremost, we are committed to being the Church, the people of God, whose love and grace is present for every person, always! We have prioritized our mission to focus on bringing people together in worship, in growing in faith, in expressing and extending God’s love into the community, and focusing intentionally on being a place of radical hospitality and welcome. These priorities have not come easily. They have cost us people and relationships, resources and energy. Yet at the heart of who we are is the foundation of God’s love through Jesus Christ. This is who we are together. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

Over the last three years we have purposefully worked to rebuild and strengthen our ministry since the hard changes we had from COVID. This has been a monumental task. The setbacks from COVID hit us hard, yet we have been resilient. We have made some significant gains: returning to collective worship and expanding our online experience to a strong and consistent outreach, renewing our connections in faith formation and social connections. We added the weekly lectionary bible study experience that has 8-10 regular participants and has received great appreciation. We still struggle to broaden our outreach in faith formation with other adults, with only one regular Sunday morning adult class, yet still adding occasional book studies during Lent or over the summer. These have been largely positive, although smaller in size.

We also still greatly struggle to have a more robust children and youth faith formation experience. With the tremendous leadership of Rev. Becca Stephens and a few extraordinary and dedicated volunteers, we have offered three different approaches to the Sunday morning program for children to try and grow their experience and participation. Our commitment to youth has remained strong with confirmation classes; however, we have greatly struggled to provide any other consistent option for our young people. This has been disappointing and frustrating. The broader congregation has given financial support, but not the volunteerism needed to make these things happen for our children and youth. Those we have do an amazing job and for the difference they are making, we are grateful. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

I’ve participated in training events and professional development to help us more deeply explore how our Open and Affirming status as a congregation helps us live out our commitment to a fully inclusive place and ministry for every person. I’ve so greatly appreciated those who have shared their questions and their struggles about what this means to them. Whether in conversations around anti-racism, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, systems of inequity and systems of privilege, I hope you’ve found me to be one with whom you can engage in conversation and know you are respected, honored and loved, whether we agree on all the issues or not. Whether we find the political, social or relational challenges easy or difficult to navigate, I’m thankful that we take seriously the covenant relationship in which we’ve promised to hold one another. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

Our onsite Worship Attendance in 2024 saw a small decrease to an average of 92. We worship together and the feeling of a more connected community has moved us to stay and enjoy our social time together as a highlight of our week. Our online Worship Attendance has an average of 44 participating unit households and continues to increase. This can be individuals, couples or families. We regularly explore ways to improve the worship experience and intentionally include those sharing and participating on Sundays and throughout the week in other locations. Worship is happening many times, in many places, and people have shared with us how significant it is to connect with their St. John’s Fullerton community wherever they may be. **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

At year-end 2024, we had a projected deficit of almost \$9,000 of income over expenses for our ministry. The generosity of the people of St. John’s Fullerton reduced the deficit to \$3,625. We increased our giving and fund raising in all other areas, but our regular weekly offerings decreased by over \$19,000. Through significant financial management and restraint where possible and a wonderful blessing of insurance to cover our elevator repair costs, we closed a difficult financial year better off than we expected. Thank you to all who give so generously and supportively for this shared ministry. Unfortunately, this still leaves us unable to add to our program and ministry staff on a consistent basis, yet we have great hopes to progress toward that goal. You make the difference! **“Together We Are Stronger!”**

St. John’s Fullerton is deeply connected in our community, with strong support for local missions, support for Phoebe Homes residents and the Valley Youth House, and Pinebrook Family Answers. Our outreach extends beyond local ministry to national crisis relief and causes

as well as international relief efforts. We are a caring community whose generosity of time, energy and financial gifts help us share again and again. **Because of YOU, our church changes lives!** This truth continues to remind us that every day, God works in and through us to share love, extend grace and experience hope in our community and around the world. We know that **"Together We Are Stronger!"**

Another incident spoke volumes to me and our community about who we are and the values of love and inclusion on which we stand in our faith. The evening of our December 22, Service of the Nativity, St. John's experienced the trauma of a man who came to "bear witness" to us with a message completely in opposition to our Open and Affirming posture as a congregation. His words of hate were intended to harm and create discomfort for anyone who came to our place of worship. He intentionally singled me out as a gay pastor, and our congregation for having me as your leader.

I'm so proud of how we responded to him, extending hospitality, not engaging in like manner of promoting division. Instead, it was our female clergy family, myself and a few other leaders who engaged with dignity and grace, sharing who we are as a people of love. Your warm and thoughtful messages to me that night and in the days which followed my congregational email and blog post on our website gave me great encouragement and hope. I'm grateful for who you are and who we choose to be together. **"Together We Are Stronger!"**

As we move forward in another year of ministry, we anticipate challenges and blessings, moments of grief and loss as well as celebrations and growth. The Church is alive and still speaking the truth of God's hope and unconditional love to a world and people in need. Our message rings out in all these things of God's unending faithfulness.

With your faith in action, the mission of St. John's UCC, Fullerton will thrive, because...
We Worship, We Love, We Serve ~ No Matter What!

Thanks be to God!

Yours in grace and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Steven Davis
Senior Pastor

Consistory President's Report and Spiritual Council Report – 2024

Hello members of St. John's and followers. It seems as though a year goes by so fast. What was accomplished in 2024? We have seen new faces join us during worship services, which is a blessing. Some of those people have made a commitment to St. John's and have joined our church family. The number of people worshipping online on-line has increased, too. It is pleasing to see our church attendance grow and my hope for the future is for that trend to continue. At our Annual Meeting last February, I stated, "Wouldn't 150 be nifty?" Well, we're not quite there yet, so that is something for which we will continue to strive.

In April, our Elders provided mini-sermons on 'stories of faith and witness' while Pastor Steve was helping his mother, Jackie, pack up to move to PA.

In conjunction with our Christian Education committee, Wendy Fox and I co-chaired our first Vacation Bible School (VBS) planning—something we haven't been able to do in over five years. The theme we chose was "Hometown Nazareth-Where Jesus was a kid." We had over 16 children join us for worship, storytelling, games, snacks and crafts each day of the week in mid-July. Of course, I would be remiss if I did not mention the tremendous help we had for the children of our church and our greater community. Without your help, we wouldn't have been able to pull it off. Looking forward to VBS again this summer; please consider donating a few hours of your time in the evening, whether it is only one night or all five nights. It is a lot of fun for the children and the adults.

Members of our consistory and clergy attended the Keystone UCC Conference Meeting at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center from June 7 through June 9 -- the theme was "Together We Are Stronger." What a joy it was to have four PA conferences come together to discuss the benefits of merging into one conference. The energy in that conference room was contagious. Thoughtful discussions, prayer, praise, questions and answers, worship and more prayers, prepared us for the ultimate vote by all four conferences in November. The vote passed with over 92% in favor of merging. We now wait for General Synod to review and provide their final approval.

We had a group of consistory members review our current consistory by-laws to determine where we may need to make changes as we continue to grow in our faith. Plus, it is always a good thing to check to make sure we are in alignment with those by-laws. Those changes will be voted on during the 2025 Annual Meeting.

I want to acknowledge Kay Chryst, who has started a welcome ministry filling our souls with a beverage at the beginning of service. In turn, I ask that you prayerfully consider how or where you can serve your church community. As I mentioned in our Annual Meeting in November, "If you're only at church on a Sunday morning, you may need to join a committee." Every Sunday

at the end of service, we are called to go out and serve. Jesus is calling you. Do you feel the nudge?

In closing, I'd like to thank all the outgoing consistory members for their service over the past three years: Joy Gravely, Kim Hillegass, Wayne Lichtenwalner and Fortress Chryst for her year serving as the youth deacon. These members also were the nominating committee for our new consistory members commencing 2025: Colleen Kulhamer (Elder), Robin Brensinger, Michael Borgman, and Charlotte Kerrigan as Deacons.

Although my year as consistory president has come to a close and I have concluded three years as Elder, I will be in spiritual prayer to discern my next call to service. But first, I need to take a long winter's nap.

Respectfully submitted,
DonnaLee Yeatts, 2024 Consistory President



Membership Statistical Report - 2024

Baptisms: 1

4/14/2024 Aiden Charles Kline

Weddings: 0

Confirmation: 4 5/19/2024

Gabriella Marie Ferioli

Matthew Will Buskirk

Sophia Elizabeth Pagan

Zachary William Szoke

New Members: 9

Regina Hickman 4/7/24

June McCracken 4/7/24

Pam Repetz 4/7/24

Karen Schmoyer 4/7/24

Scotty Siegfried 4/7/24

Constance Arnold 9/8/24

Geraldine Falk 9/8/24

Gracie Funches 9/8/24

Jackie Maxon 9/8/24

Member Deaths: 5

Marion Brown 1/28/2024

Freda Albright 4/10/2024

Joelene Weaver 6/29/2024

Marietta Seyfried 9/30/2024

Sandra Easterwood 11/6/2024

Removed by Request to Inactive Status or Transfer: 25

Roger Knauss – transferred to Bethany UCC – 3/15/24

Ellen Sagazio – transferred to Asbury Methodist – 5/7/24

Diane Orlowsky – transferred to Redeemer Lutheran, Allentown

William and LeeAnn Focht – transferred to Faith Lutheran

Rudolph and Kathryn Kaintz – transferred to St. Paul's UCC, Northampton

Robert and Helene Scheirer – 3/14/24

Eric and Carter Troxell – 3/24/24

Parker Christman – 3/25/24

Connor Landis – 5/15/24

Conrad and Julie Beck – 5/16/24

Kimberly Saeger – 8/7/24

Robert Saeger III – 8/7/24

Zane Saeger – 8/7/24

Dale and Susan Brinker – 8/14/24

Matthew Stoisits – 8/23/24

Timothy and Lori Silfies – 10/30/24

Myles Silfies – 10/30/24

Wilbur Kline 12/2/24

Moved to Inactive Member Status by Spiritual Council 18

Spenser Beck
Tyler Brown
Timothy and Karen Christman
Frank and Phyllis Csaszar
Michael and Kristin Jordan
MaryBeth McNicholas
Tyler McNicholas
Franklin and Natalie Reichl
Faith Schaffer
Craig and Jacquelyn Snyder
Amanda Volkert
Anne Welsh and Joseph Trippett

Summary of Membership

| | |
|---|------------|
| Active Membership Reported 12/31/2023 | 526 |
| New Members | 9 |
| Active Member Deaths | 5 |
| Removed by Request or Transfer | 25 |
| Moved to Inactive by Spiritual Council | 18 |
| Active Membership as of 12/31/2024 | 487 |

Worship Statistics: 2024

| | |
|---|----|
| Average attendance at 9:30 service | 92 |
| Online Livestream Participation Average | 23 |
| Additional Online Viewing Average | 44 |

St. John's UCC Fullerton
Congregational Meeting Minutes
Sunday, February 2, 2024

ATTENDANCE: 85 people in person, 3 online

Steven Davis, Senior Pastor

Susan Weldner, Treasurer

Call to Order – DonnaLee Yeatts

Opening Prayer – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor

Approval of the February 5, 2023, Congregational Meeting Minutes o

Motion to accept by Kathy Roth; seconded by Sharon Antrim; APPROVED.

Approval of the November 19, 2023, Congregational Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept by Marion DeMillio; seconded by Charlie Apple; APPROVED.

Visitation and Home Communion – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor

Recognizing the participation and efforts of the Visitation Committee and Consistory for their efforts in reaching out to our homebound.

Faith Formation: Children – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor – Rev. Becca Stevens is stepping back from leadership of Children's Ministry. New leadership is sought.

VP Wendy Fox gave a testimonial to the importance of the Children's Ministry.

Faith Formation: Youth and Adults – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor ¶Continuing to learn throughout the week and life's journey.

The 4 confirmands + their members were present.

The Friendship Bible Class meets in Room 201 @ 8:30.

"Fun-Raising" – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor

\$23,000 raised in 2023

Missions – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor

As a church, we gave to 16 different causes.

Worship and Music – Linda Apple

Alter Guild & Worship and Music Committee folded into one.

WE ENDED THE YEAR 2023 IN THE BLACK!

Personnel Committee – Personnel Manual Updates

Bob Bold, Consistory Class of 2026

Motion to accept by Sharon Antrim; seconded by Rick Borgman; APPROVED.

We must think of them as those who we have helped.

Unleash What is Possible

Motion to accept by Wendy Fox; seconded by Rick Borgman; APPROVED.

Consistory Election and Approval of the 2024 Budget

2023 Committee Reports

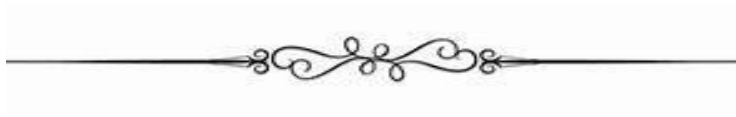
Treasurer's Report – DonnaLee Yeatts

Additional Business

A Word from the Pastor Concerning the Removal of Members from Active Status

Looking Ahead – 2024 – DonnaLee Yeatts

Adjournment



St. John's UCC Fullerton
Fall Congregation Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2024, 11:00 am

- **Call to Order – DonnaLee Yeatts**
 - 81 present
- **Opening Prayer – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor**
- **Presentation of 2025 Proposed Budget – Sue Weldner, Treasurer**
 - Offerings are trending down – in total, the income budgeted is \$300,000
 - Asking for a 4% increase in giving
 - Question by Paul Raszler: Are offerings down because of the absence of 'passing the plate?'
 - There is no correlation between passing the plate and an increase in giving.
- **Motion to accept 2025 Proposed Budget**
 - Motion to accept by Kathy Roth; seconded by Joy Gravely; APPROVED – 81 yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions.

- **Introduction, Nomination, and Affirmation of 2025-2027 Consistory members:**
 - Thank you to: DonnaLee Yeatts (Elder), Joy Gravely, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Kim Hillegass (Deacons), and Fortress Chryst (Youth Deacon)
 - Nominated Consistory Members: Colleen Kulhamer (Elder), Mike Borgman, Robin Brensinger, Charlotte Kerrigan (Deacons), with a TBD Youth Deacon.
 - Motion to accept by Pete Mohr; seconded by Sharon Antrim; APPROVED – 81 yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions.
 - Continuing Consistory Members: Sharon Antrim, Wendy Fox, Kathy Roth, Kay Chryst, Bob Bold, Kirby Hower, Paul Raszler, Tyler Shankweiler
- **Good News of St. John's – DonnaLee Yeatts & Rev. Davis**
 - Electronic Giving
 - Children's Faith Formation – Recognizing Rev. Becca Stephens for her leadership
 - Vacation Bible School
 - Music Ministry – Recognizing Patrick Sandt for his leadership
 - Recognizing the 3rd anniversary of Rev. Davis's acceptance
 - Church Staff
 - Consistory – Home Communion
 - Family
- **Adjournment**
 - Motion to accept by Grace Mohr; seconded by Diana Beck; APPROVED.



Stewardship and Finance Reports



Stewardship & Finance Committee – 2024

Committee Members: Pastor Steve Davis, Jim Ebert, Bill Fink, Brian Fisher, Michelle Gutekunst (Financial Secretary), Kirby Hower (Chair), Tom Moyer, Susan Rarich, John Viglione, Sue Weldner (Treasurer)

A big Thank You to all committee members for all they do to support the work of this committee! Also, Thank You to the congregation for their on-going support. However, in 2024 we did see a 4% drop in overall income. Offerings from the congregation dropped 8% from the previous year, ending the year at \$220,000.

We continued to closely manage our expenses in 2024. As in previous years, our actual spending is below the budget for the year.

Below is a summary of the results for 2023:

| | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Budget</u> |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|
| TOTAL INCOME | \$293,175 | \$319,342 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | <u>\$(296,800)</u> | <u>\$(304,376)</u> |
| NET LOSS FOR 2024 | <u>\$(3,625)</u> | |
| BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JAN 2024 | <u>\$46,311</u> | |
| ENDING FUND BALANCE DEC 2024 | <u><u>\$42,686</u></u> | |

As we move into 2025, we have budgeted a 4% increase in giving. We encourage all members to do what they can to support that increased giving goal. We would love to be able to support further growth, particularly in our children's ministries, with a pastoral staff position. However, that will require financial support much higher than our current levels.

In addition to our General Fund, we have other financial resources: Restricted funds, Property funds, Endowment funds.

Restricted funds: these are monies given for a specific purpose, or they have been set aside by Consistory for "special needs, rainy day funds." At the end of 2024, we have \$35,000 available for use with Consistory approval. An additional \$10,000 is earmarked for specific purposes, based on donor designations. All our Mission giving is considered Restricted funds, as the congregation designates their giving in this area. Total Mission giving for 2024 was \$20,495. Details are included in the Mission Committee's report.

Property funds: at the end of 2024, we have \$14,000 available for larger property expenditures, significant, unplanned maintenance needs. During 2024 we utilized this money for several projects:

- \$800 parking lot line painting
- \$5,760 roof repair
- \$7,605 bell tower masonry repair

We have also begun a fund for Elevator Modernizations. At the end of 2024, we have \$4,540 in this fund. The Property Committee estimates for all modernization needs are in excess of \$115,00. We encourage the congregation to continue to contribute to this fund as they can. And we will continue to align with the Property Committee on timing of the modernization work, other options we may have for funding this project.

We also have \$56,240 in the Pavilion Fund. \$42,265 of this is invested to provide an income stream to support the monthly pavilion related expenses. We have a 30-year mortgage for the Pavilion construction – the outstanding balance at the end of 2024 was \$82,430.

For 2024, our income and & expenses for the Pavilion were:

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|
| Pavillion Donations | 5,373 | 6,690 |
| Furnace Loan Repay | 5,571 | 9,091 |
| Pavillion Rentals | 1,250 | 1,100 |
| Interest Inc | 1,768 | 497 |
| Income | 13,962 | 17,378 |
| Mortgage | 5,382 | 5,382 |
| Utilities | 1,016 | 1,089 |
| Lawn Mowing | - | 2,250 |
| Snow Plowing | 2,715 | - |
| Supplies | 89 | - |
| Garden Maint | 1,500 | 800 |
| Advertising | - | 1,037 |
| Expenses | 10,703 | 10,558 |
| Net | 3,259 | 6,819 |

Endowment funds: at the end of 2024, we have \$508,925 in our Endowment Fund. This continues to provide approx. \$23,000 annual income to our General Fund. In 2024, we gained approx. \$60,000 in interest, dividends, and market value growth.

The S&F Committee will continue to review our monthly financial results – sharing regular updates with the congregation, to keep us all informed, giving each of us the opportunity to support as we can!

2025 Annual Budget

2025 Final Budget

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Actual | Actual | Actual | Actual EST | Budget |
| OFFERINGS | \$ 239,287 | \$ 230,906 | \$ 239,077 | \$ 219,638 | \$ 229,134 |
| RENTAL INCOME | \$ 15,916 | \$ 15,404 | \$ 15,074 | \$ 16,514 | \$ 17,000 |
| FUNDRAISING INCOME | \$ 5,834 | \$ 10,919 | \$ 23,837 | \$ 25,767 | \$ 25,000 |
| ENDOWMENT INTEREST | \$ 21,084 | \$ 22,680 | \$ 23,164 | \$ 23,592 | \$ 23,300 |
| FLOWERS INCOME | \$ 1,777 | \$ 3,171 | \$ 1,995 | \$ 2,584 | \$ 3,000 |
| CHRISTIAN ED INCOME | \$ 510 | \$ 1,005 | \$ 1,171 | \$ 1,178 | \$ 1,000 |
| SPECIAL GIFTS & TRANSFERS | \$ 2,315 | \$ 5,308 | \$ 2,332 | \$ 3,902 | \$ 2,500 |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$ 296,231 | \$ 289,392 | \$ 306,650 | \$ 293,175 | \$ 300,934 |
| | | | | | |
| PASTORAL SERVICES | \$ 119,953 | \$ 135,685 | \$ 125,672 | \$ 122,369 | \$ 123,102 |
| STAFF SALARIES | \$ 101,745 | \$ 103,643 | \$ 97,389 | \$ 107,922 | \$ 112,457 |
| PROPERTY | \$ 30,862 | \$ 31,415 | \$ 35,753 | \$ 37,686 | \$ 36,850 |
| PARISH PROGRAMS | \$ 23,490 | \$ 29,392 | \$ 33,925 | \$ 28,554 | \$ 28,525 |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | \$ 299,459 | \$ 300,136 | \$ 292,738 | \$ 296,531 | \$ 300,934 |
| | | | | | |
| NET | \$ (3,228) | \$ (10,744) | \$ 13,912 | \$ (3,356) | \$ - |

Monthly Contributions – 2024

| MONTH | CURRENT EXPENSES | MISSIONS OCWM | PROPERTY NEEDS | ELEVATOR FUND | PAVILION FUND | TOTAL |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| January | \$ 15,458.00 | \$ 1,424.00 | \$ 939.00 | \$ 40,044.00 | \$ 384.00 | \$ 58,249.00 |
| February | \$ 15,322.98 | \$ 951.00 | \$ 615.00 | \$ 25.00 | \$ 340.00 | \$ 17,253.98 |
| March | \$ 22,328.00 | \$ 1,287.00 | \$ 749.00 | \$ - | \$ 360.00 | \$ 24,724.00 |
| April | \$ 13,590.33 | \$ 941.33 | \$ 656.34 | \$ - | \$ 290.00 | \$ 15,478.00 |
| May | \$ 17,488.00 | \$ 1,030.00 | \$ 692.00 | \$ 56.65 | \$ 356.00 | \$ 19,622.65 |
| June | \$ 17,634.00 | \$ 990.00 | \$ 849.00 | \$ 440.00 | \$ 435.00 | \$ 20,348.00 |
| July | \$ 18,391.66 | \$ 1,090.67 | \$ 629.67 | \$ 430.00 | \$ 335.00 | \$ 20,877.00 |
| August | \$ 15,931.00 | \$ 989.00 | \$ 729.00 | \$ 565.00 | \$ 210.00 | \$ 18,424.00 |
| September | \$ 16,804.00 | \$ 1,261.00 | \$ 864.00 | \$ 803.00 | \$ 400.00 | \$ 20,132.00 |
| October | \$ 13,069.00 | \$ 784.00 | \$ 924.00 | \$ 385.00 | \$ 850.00 | \$ 16,012.00 |
| November | \$ 17,134.00 | \$ 1,179.00 | \$ 679.00 | \$ 525.00 | \$ 425.00 | \$ 19,942.00 |
| December | \$ 22,271.00 | \$ 1,249.00 | \$ 1,018.00 | \$ 655.00 | \$ 395.00 | \$ 25,588.00 |
| TOTAL | \$ 205,421.97 | \$ 13,176.00 | \$ 9,344.01 | \$ 43,928.65 | \$ 4,780.00 | \$ 276,650.63 |

Amounts Contributed Per Giving Unit - 2024

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| \$5,000 + | 10 |
| \$4,000 to \$4,999.99 | 5 |
| \$3,000 to \$3,999.99 | 11 |
| \$2,000 to \$2,999.99 | 17 |
| \$1,000 to \$1,999.99 | 32 |
| \$ 500 to \$ 999.99 | 29 |
| \$ 100 to \$ 499.99 | 69 |
| \$.01 to \$ 99.99 | 54 |
| No Contribution | 260 |

Please know that all gifts to St. John's, both large and small, are appreciated and valued. Thank you for all you do for St. John's UCC Fullerton.

Annual Comparisons of Giving - 2024

ENVELOPE TITLE
COMPARISONS

| | <u>2020</u> | <u>2021</u> | <u>2022</u> | <u>2023</u> | <u>2024</u> |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Current Expenses | \$ 236,087.04 | \$ 225,122.26 | \$ 214,085.84 | \$ 222,772.47 | \$ 205,421.97 |
| Donation for Envelopes | \$ 296.00 | \$ 310.00 | \$ 232.00 | \$ 214.00 | \$ 199.00 |
| Communion | \$ 2,161.50 | \$ 876.00 | \$ 2,615.00 | \$ 2,196.00 | \$ 2,242.00 |
| Ash Wednesday | \$ 602.00 | \$ 251.00 | \$ 564.00 | \$ 292.00 | \$ 275.00 |
| Lenten Envelopes | \$ 996.00 | \$ 935.00 | \$ 732.00 | \$ 625.00 | \$ 835.00 |
| Lent Folders | \$ 685.00 | \$ 750.00 | \$ 790.00 | \$ 854.00 | \$ - |
| Maundy Thursday | \$ 180.00 | \$ 205.00 | \$ 539.00 | \$ 377.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| Good Friday | \$ 225.00 | \$ 320.00 | \$ 85.00 | \$ 399.00 | \$ 305.00 |
| Easter Sunday | \$ 1,435.00 | \$ 1,766.55 | \$ 1,509.00 | \$ 1,521.00 | \$ 1,346.00 |
| Mothers' Day | \$ 185.00 | \$ 130.00 | \$ 254.00 | \$ 180.00 | \$ 160.00 |
| Fathers' Day | \$ 75.00 | \$ 150.00 | \$ 128.00 | \$ 280.00 | \$ 163.00 |
| Thanksgiving | \$ 415.00 | \$ 462.80 | \$ 791.00 | \$ 297.00 | \$ 380.00 |
| Advent | \$ 671.00 | | \$ 780.00 | \$ 75.00 | \$ - |
| Christmas Eve | \$ 910.00 | \$ 3,992.55 | \$ 2,492.00 | \$ 1,329.00 | \$ 2,041.00 |
| Missions (OCWM)* | \$ 19,250.95 | \$ 17,616.30 | \$ 14,815.90 | \$ 12,823.00 | \$ 13,176.00 |
| Property Needs | \$ 11,633.00 | \$ 12,430.50 | \$ 8,228.60 | \$ 8,966.00 | \$ 9,344.01 |
| H.E.L.P.+ | \$ 1,493.00 | \$ 1,809.00 | \$ 2,035.80 | \$ 1,681.00 | \$ 1,689.12 |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL | \$ 277,300.49 | \$ 267,126.96 | \$ 250,677.14 | \$ 254,881.47 | \$ 237,877.10 |

*Our Church's Wider Mission

+Heat, Electric, Lights, Power



*Church Groups
&
Committee Reports*



Altar Guild – 2024

2024 saw the new concept of our Altar Guild come to life. After meeting in August of 2023, it was decided that the Worship Committee would morph more into an altar guild versus an actual committee. Patrick would assist this transition by setting up the flowers and lighting candles prior to service, with the members of the altar guild assisting with votives, cleaning up after worship, flower distribution to families, and changing out altar linens when necessary.

Some highlights of the year for the Altar Guild consisted of the following:

- Preparations for Holy Week's decorations, the Service of Shadows, the many flowers and beautiful resurrection flowered cross made Easter even more joyful.
- The decorations for Pentecost created a vibrant celebration for our Confirmation Class.
- There were many new Fall additions to add to our chancel and windows' beauty.
- The All Saints Remembrance candles for those who passed in 2023-2024 were deeply meaningful to family members who received them with our love.

As a new year begins, the Altar Guild members will be going to a weekly schedule published in the bulletin. New members are always welcome and encouraged to become involved with this organization. As an organization vital to the "behind the scenes" work of our church, we continue to make an impact to the community of St. John's with the beauty of our sanctuary.

Patrick Sandt, Director of Music Ministries/Organist
Rev. Steven Davis, Sr. Pastor



Christian Early Learning Center (CELC) – 2024

The Christian Early Learning Center at St John's UCC Fullerton is a program offering classes to 3–5-year-olds. We run Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. We started the school year with 14 Students and now currently have 17 students enrolled.

Throughout the year we have focused on academics such as the alphabet, letters, letter sounds, numbers, and shapes, along with crafts, learning letters and colors in sign language, learning how to share, taking turns and following directions. We have a well-rounded group of students.

We have been able to maintain an in-person classroom without wearing masks, by cleaning daily and making sure we are all washing our hands correctly.

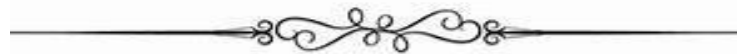
We are currently working on bringing more students to our school for stronger revenue. We did

increase revenue this year by extending hours from 9-12:30 pm to 9-2 pm and we raised the tuition for both classes. With the number of students and interest for future students, we are looking to add a second assistant to our team.

We are looking forward to growing the preschool program to its greatest potential.

We have had requests to add more days to our schedule which would require more employee(s). This will be investigated for next year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jazmin Smith, Director



Crafters Group – 2024

“Keeping You in Stitches”

The Crafters Group had a successful year in 2024. We welcomed three new crafters this year who helped with many of our projects.

It is with deep gratitude that we would like to thank the following people who made items throughout the year: Joy Gravely, Ruthann Hallman, Regina Hickman, Emma Kuczek, Regi Mohr, June McCracken, Emilie Moyer, Carol Raszler, and Karen Schmoyer. We would also be remiss if we didn't thank the many people who made prayer shawls and prayer squares this past year.

Our crafts are available for purchase all year long. However, the following scheduled events took place during 2024 and produced the following sales:

| Dates | Events | Sales |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Month of January | Post Christmas Sales | \$ 95.00 |
| March 10 & March 17 | Easter & Spring Sales | \$ 427.25 |
| August 10 | Community Yard Sale | \$ 92.25 |
| November 2 | Craft & Vendor Fair | \$ 306.00 |
| December 1 & December 8 | Fall & Christmas Sales | \$ 294.00 |

The bowl cozies continued to be our bestseller this year. New items included purse-size shopping bags, jar openers, larger tissue box covers, and pot handle mitts.

The crafters looked for a new name other than the Crafters Group. Thank you to Amy Feidler for suggesting “Keeping You in Stitches” and to all the others who offered suggestions.

For the year we had sales totaling \$1,214.50. A total of \$134.90 was taken out for expenses (supplies). **The final profit for the year was \$1,079.60.** At the end of the year any monetary profit from the craft sales is given back to St. John's. The Mission Committee designated the profit to be given to the Property Fund in 2024.

Hands are needed not only to knit, crochet, or sew but also to assemble, cut, glue, stuff, and label. There is a spot available for anyone no matter what your skill level is or what you might wish to do. All projects are worked on out of the home; we do not meet on a regular basis. We supply the materials; you supply the hands! New ideas are always welcomed and encouraged.

Thank you to all those who participated in 2024 and to everyone who purchased our items over the course of this past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Raszler
"Keeping You in Stitches" Leader



Faith Formation, Children – 2024

When our Faith Formation program for children was restarted in September of 2022, following the pandemic recess, we began again by focusing on young children aged 4 through grade 2. By September of 2024 those who had been in grade 2 in 2022, were now in grade 4. Focusing exclusively on younger children was no longer feasible. Also, there was a desire afoot to make use once again of the theatre for the children, which is located down the hall from the Faith Formation classroom.

With those objectives in mind, we decided to use the *Holy Moly* curriculum which includes:
Bible stories for the children in sequential order
a video for each lesson
work sheets for K-2 and grades 3-5
We all watch the video together and afterwards divide into the two age groups.

I am pleased to report that this approach is holding the interest of the older children, and we have engaged two additional classroom helpers.

I want to express my appreciation to classroom leaders:

Kim Hillegass

Wendy Fox

DonnaLee Yeatts

and classroom helpers:

Jen Rarich

Susan Rarich

Michelle Gutekunst

Staci Pagan

Fortress Chryst

Also, a big thank you to Jesus Pagan and Bill Costello for their technical support in revitalizing the theater.

After four years of offering my professional expertise as a volunteer—including the year I co-led the 2021-2022 confirmation class—I am “retiring” from volunteer leadership effective May 25th, 2025.

As I see it, the 2025-26 program year for Children’s Faith Formation will present the following challenges:

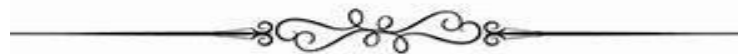
Devising a plan for new leadership

Continued focus of the expanding age range

Recruiting more classroom volunteers so that ideally each volunteer will be in the classroom but one Sunday a month.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev Becca Stephens



Faith Formation, Confirmation – 2023-2024

On May 19, 2024, Pentecost Sunday, we confirmed four young people and welcomed them to the journey of faith in covenant with all the St. John’s UCC, Fullerton, family. This is always a great joy and blessing to celebrate this spiritual marker in the lives of our young people and their families. Many thanks and expressions of gratitude are shared with Linda Powell and Wayne Lichtenwalner who share support, preparation and leadership week after week, and have done so for many years. Also thank you to those who served as mentors to the confirmands, helping them to navigate all of their requirements and have additional adults whose life of love and service to Christ are shared.

Confirmands

Matthew Buskirk
Gabby Ferioli
Sophia Pagan
Zachary Szoke

Mentors

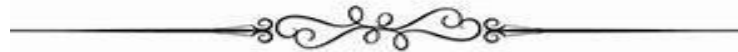
Glenn (Jake) Buskirk
Dave Wetherhold
Paul Raszler
Bill Fink

As the young people completed their requirements, besides participating in congregational life, they had the opportunity to participate in community outreach activities, worship with other faith traditions and create their own unique faith statements.

As classes drew to a close, we emphasized the importance of participating in the life of the congregation. We were always thrilled to have the extended family members share in the faith formation and growth of our confirmation class.

For the 2024-2025 Confirmation Class year, we have three young men (Aiden Hannis, Nicholas Santee, Lucas Williams) sharing with us in the Affirming Faith curriculum and participating each week in lessons, worship, and activities of service, witness and growth. The parents and mentors of this year's confirmation class are showing up to share their lives and faith, and participating in making the confirmation experience more personal and valuable. We look forward to receiving these young people on Pentecost Sunday, June 8, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev Steve Davis, Sr. Pastor



Friendship Bible Class – 2024

This Adult Faith Formation Class (Sunday School) meets at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday morning from September to the end of May in Room 201. The class averages between 15 to 18 participants on any given Sunday. Anyone is invited to stop by for a cup of coffee, refreshments, and to join in the conversation.

Under the leadership of Tom Moyer, different members teach each week and offer a variety of topics including Bible stories and characters, scriptures, family traditions, current events, and much more. Thank you to Nancy Bowman, Kay Chryst, Tom Chryst, Bill Fink, Kirby Hower, Tom Moyer, Paul Raszler, and Tyler Shankweiler for teaching and leading the class discussions this past year.

At the end of the Sunday School year, the class came together for its Annual Luncheon on Sunday, June 2, at the Deitsch Eck Restaurant in Lenhartsville. A good time was had by all as we looked forward to the summertime and our class resuming in September.

The class held its Annual Picnic at Bill Fink's campsite near Mertztown on Saturday, August 17. It was a time for fun and fellowship, with feasting on a lot of delicious food, conversation, fishing, and playing games. The day ended with a gathering by the campfire. Class members and friends could also bring their tents and camp for the weekend.

Throughout the year, the Friendship Bible Class served as hosts for the Social Hour after worship and for the evening Soup and Bread Dinner during Lent.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Moyer
Friendship Bible Class Leader



Faith Formation, Verso Chat Lectionary Group – 2024

"Verso" is the Latin word meaning "conversation." Our lives long for conversation and significant and meaningful connection, with God and each other.

Pastor Steve and nine to twelve of our faith family meet every Wednesday morning from 9 to 10 a.m. on ZOOM to discuss the scriptures following the Vanderbilt University common lectionary that will be the basis for upcoming sermons. We receive the selected readings a week in advance of our meeting and again the day before by e-mail. This provides time to read and study scriptures. Several group participants prepare additionally by reading commentaries relative to the scriptures, bringing these thoughts to the informal discussion. Questions are welcomed in an open, accepting environment, guided by Pastor Steve. We learn one another's views and life events that have influenced our perceptions, creating strong bonds of connection among us. Each week we open our lives to the ancient words that still share the timeless truths of God's desire to be in a relationship of love with us.

Find the link to the Vanderbilt University Lectionary by searching with your favorite search engine; we are in Year C. The ZOOM meeting link can be found on St. John's UCC Fullerton website home page under the Verso Chat heading under the "Church Happenings" near the bottom of the home page.

Please consider joining us! There is no obligation for attendance, drop in whenever you are able. Each week is its own contained set of scriptures for review and sharing.

Food Pantry – 2024

The Whitehall Food Pantry, located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall, had another successful year in 2024. Donated food and items received from Second Harvest Food Bank are selected and packed into boxes and bags on the 1st through the 4th Monday mornings of each month. The packed items are then distributed to approximately 200 local families per month in the respective evenings.

St. John's has about 20 excellent volunteers who donate their time and energy on the 4th Monday of each month. New volunteers are always welcome. Volunteers are needed in the morning from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to sort food supplies and stock shelves. Volunteers are also needed in the evening from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to distribute food to pantry patrons.

In February, in observance of football's Super Bowl, the church participated in the "Souper Bowl of Caring." With a goal of collecting 250 cans of soup, we were overwhelmed to have received 368 cans of assorted soups. In addition, we also received \$245.00, which was collected in soup pots after worship by our Confirmation Class.

The Whitehall Food Pantry, along with pictures, was featured in St. John's April newsletter. It highlighted the work of our volunteers and the gratitude of the pantry's patrons. It also inspired two church members to join in helping at the pantry once a month.

From July 15 to July 19, St. John's held its Vacation Bible School. The theme was "Hometown Nazareth—Where Jesus was a Kid." Fox Hall was decorated to resemble a marketplace. One of the activities was to collect food for the food pantry. A total of 22 cans and 10 non-perishable items were received from the children, their families, and VBS leaders.

For the holiday meals, we collected canned fruits, canned vegetables, and canned sweet potatoes for Easter; 180 boxes and bags of stuffing mix for Thanksgiving; canned corn, canned sweet potatoes, and cake mixes for Christmas. The pantry also handed out grocery gift cards to purchase turkeys and hams.

A shopping cart to place donated food items can be found in the coat room by the sanctuary. For 2024 a multitude of assorted food items were collected. We received \$3,375.00 in monetary donations, and \$15.00 for sponsorship of the wheat basket on the altar in worship. What incredible generosity. We contribute the second most amount of the four churches that serve the pantry. Please keep up the good work for this very necessary service we provide. God is good, all the time.

Thank you to everyone who donated food items or monetary contributions over the course of this past year. We have a great group of volunteers and have a lot of fun. Feel free to join us. Call me anytime at (484) 274-2405.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Black
Whitehall Food Pantry Liaison

“Fun-Raising” Committee – 2024

The fundraising events scheduled by the “Fun-Raising” Committee in 2024 contributed greatly to the financial needs of the church. Our events offered a time of fun, fellowship, and outreach not only to our members but also to our community. The “Fun-Raising” Committee met 12 times in 2024 with both in-person meetings in Room 201 and with Zoom meetings.

This year our fundraisers realized a profit of \$25,766.90. The practice of tithing 10% of the profit from all our fundraisers for Mission Outreach continued in 2024. The tithing at the end of the year amounted to \$2,576.70, which the Mission Committee distributed equally between the Lehigh Conference of Churches and Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley.

On February 4, a Ministry Fair was held in Fox Hall following the Annual Meeting. Posters from all the committees were on display, and the “Fun-Raising” Committee members could meet and greet people in the congregation after worship on a given Sunday.

St. John’s is known for providing many delicious things to eat with our fundraisers. Our food sales this year were:

- Pastie Sale – Pickup Thursday, April 25 & Sunday, April 28. We introduced two new pastie selections to choose from, which were well received.
- Nut & Fruit Sale – September through November. It is one of our biggest fundraisers.

Dine and Donate Events and Give-Back Sales from various merchants were held in 2024. A certain percentage of the money from all sales was given back to St John’s. They included:

- Drizzle Ice Cream (Schnecksville) – Thursday, June 27.
- Grove Street Pub (Catasauqua) – Wednesday, May 8.
- Copperhead Grill (Allentown) – Thursday, August 15.
- P. J. Whelihan’s (Bethlehem) – Monday, October 21.
- Boscov’s “Friends Helping Friends” Coupons – Tuesday, October 22.
- Applebee’s “Burgers for a Cause” Coupons – Twice in 2024.
- 2024 Lehigh Valley SaveAround Books – Beginning of 2024.
- 2025 Lehigh Valley SaveAround Books – Late Fall 2024 continuing into 2025.

For the fun and social end of our events, we held the following:

- St. Patrick’s Gift Card Bingo – Friday, March 15.
- Basket Social & Bake Sale – Saturday, May 4 & Sunday, May 5 with 121 baskets.
- IronPigs Baseball Party Porch – Sunday, May 26.
- Flag Day Gift Card Bingo – Friday, June 14.
- Ocean City, New Jersey, Bus Trip – Saturday, June 22.
- Ice Cream Social & Cash Bingo – Saturday, July 13. Drizzle Ice Cream truck and 50/50 cash bingo at the pavilion.
- Phillies Baseball Ticket Sale – Friday, July 26.

- IronPigs Baseball Grandstand – Tuesday, August 6. Rained out due to Hurricane Debby and the game was eventually canceled.
- Community Yard Sale – Saturday, August 24, at the pavilion.
- Annual Road Rally & Dinner at Nazareth Diner in Nazareth – Sunday, October 20. Thank you to Tom and Emilie Moyer for once again organizing this 28th year tradition.
- Craft and Vendor Fair – Saturday, November 2.
- Turkey Tango Gift Card Bingo – Friday, November 8.

Under the organizational leadership of Tom Moyer, our bingos this year were rousing successes not only because of the profits earned, but because it brought people of the church and community together once again. The bingo events are our biggest fundraisers, making a net profit of \$16,510.01 from the three Friday night bingos that were held. Food, beverages, and baked goods were available to purchase, most of which were donated. Thank you to Pastor Steve and Paul Raszler for serving as the “callers” and to Bill Castello for his computer knowledge and producing an electronic bingo display board.

We would be remiss if we did not thank Kenda Catalini for chairing the Craft and Vendor Fair on November 2. It afforded the opportunity for St. John’s crafters “Keeping You in Stitches” to promote and sell their vast assortment of craft items.

The following Family Fun Nights were held in 2024:

- Super Bowl Tailgate Party & Movie Night – Saturday, February 3. Participants wore clothing of their favorite football teams. A covered dish meal was served followed by the movie “80 for Brady.” Everyone was asked to bring cans of soup for the “Souper Bowl of Caring,” which were donated to the Whitehall Food Pantry.
- Family Supper & Movie Night – Saturday, December 7. Donations of assorted soups, breads, and desserts provided a meal followed by the Christmas movie “Polar Express.” A visit from Santa was also part of the activities, thanks to Rick Borgman.

Throughout the year the congregation continued to save Redner’s tapes and purchase grocery gift cards from Giant and Weis markets. We again held our RaiseRight (formerly Scrip) Gift Card Sale in December with \$8,825.00 in gift cards being purchased by our members and friends for the holidays. We thank Tracey Glass and Tom Moyer for ordering the Weis gift cards; Barb Thomas for ordering the Giant gift cards; Tracey Glass and Carol Raszler for coordinating the RaiseRight gift cards; and Karen Stoisits for tallying and submitting the Redner’s sales tapes.

The committee is always looking for new ideas and events that are both enjoyable and profitable for the church. We invite anyone to join the “Fun-Raising” Committee and share your ideas. Our thanks go to Mike Borgman, who volunteered to lead this committee as chairperson. Words of appreciation go to Bill Castello for all his great technological skills and ideas in creating wonderful bingos and Family Fun Nights. It is with regret that we accepted the resignation of Kathy Haggerty in June, and we thanked her for her service to the committee.

Members who served on the “Fun-Raising Committee were Mike Borgman (Chairperson), Ginny Brokenshire, Bill Castello, Pastor Steve Davis, Amy Feidler, Brian Fisher, Tom Moyer, Carol Raszler (Secretary), and Brian Strauss.

We appreciate and thank ALL the many other volunteers who helped whenever needed for this committee and for the many food, beverage, basket, and tricky tray donations this past year. Last but not least, thank you to everyone who financially supported and participated in all our fundraisers in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Raszler
“Fun-Raising” Committee Secretary



Healthcare Ministry - 2024

The objective of this committee is to promote the spiritual and physical well-being of St. John’s congregation.

We sponsored two Walking Challenges this year, one in Spring and one in Fall. We brought many people from our congregation together to enjoy the health benefits of walking. As of 2024, St. John’s Walkers totaled 52,713,048 steps which is 23,428.00 miles. Join us again in 2025.

In December, we all enjoyed the festivities throughout the month at St. John’s.

We continue to monitor first aid kits and the AED. If you need any medical equipment, please contact Ginny Brokenshire or anyone on the committee.

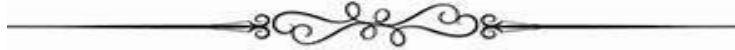
We continue to send sympathy cards to family members who lost a loved one. One month later, we follow-up with bereavement information. Pastor Evelyn Stupp has been hosting a bereavement group the 4th Tuesday of each month at Asbury Methodist Church. All are welcome.

We committee members are here to help but would appreciate suggestions from you as to what you need from us. Please feel free to contact any committee member.

We look forward to serving you in 2025. We always welcome new members.

May you all be blessed with good health throughout 2025.

Committee members: Sharon Antrim, Linda Apple, Diana Beck, Ginny Brokenshire (chairperson), Marion DeMilio, Pam Repetz, Linda Smith, Evelyn Stupp



Lady PEEPS Women's Group – 2024

Welcome to St. John's wonderful world of women! We are called the Lady PEEPS Women's Group which stands for Positive Extraordinary Encouraging Prayerful Sisters. We gather monthly in Fox Hall from September to May, usually on the third Tuesday evening of the month with a planned theme for the night.

Our theme could include a guest speaker, a biblical story, a movie, arts and crafts, science, games, cooking, holidays, hot topics or going back in time! This fabulous group of ladies has met together since 2015 and is still going strong. We even gathered on ZOOM during COVID and then outside a few times to stay safe. All ladies ages 18 to 118 are welcome here! Oh, and did I mention food? The ladies take turns supplying refreshments each month, which is always a welcome treat.

This monthly gathering has become a safe place for women to reach out to each other, share in our joys and sorrows, learn and pray together, share some goodies and laugh...always we laugh.

This past year our themes included learning about Round Tuits and procrastination in January. Our Pastor Emerita Becky Beckwith led our February meeting on the story of Ruth. In March Pastor Cliff Herring and Janet Ebert told us the story of how they met in a hospital. It was tea party time with DonnaLee Yeatts in April when she taught us how to pair Tea and Chocolate - yum! Our last meeting of the season was our guest speaker Jeannette Eichenwald, who spoke about Israel's past and into the future. This timely subject was very educational and gave us a better understanding of the Middle East and the conflicts there.

After our summer break we came back in September and back to the Middle East. Our guest speaker was Amal "Amy" Assaf who was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon and then came to live with her family in Brooklyn, New York. Once again, this amazing story has come to us when so much conflict is happening in the Middle East.

October's meeting was a Chosen movie on Mary Magdalene with discussion to follow.

November we were thankful for fun, food and friends as we did some science experiments and created works of art. There was quite a bit of laughter during this interesting evening together.

Our last meeting of 2024 was the story of Jesus birth which is part of the Chosen series as well.

The friendships that have been made, the stories and the prayers these women have shared and the evenings of being together, relaxing and knowing this is a safe place is priceless. Together we are definitely stronger!

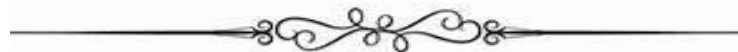
Colleen Kulhamer



The Men of St. John's – 2024

The men of St. John's continued to meet for breakfast and fellowship on the first Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. Over the course of the year, Reverends Steve Davis, Becky Beckwith, George Eckstein, Cliff Herring, David Mohr, Don Quayle and Becca Stephens took turns to lead discussions on a variety of faith issues. We usually average about 12 men in attendance. All men from St. John's are invited to join us and are encouraged to bring a friend.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Bold
Men's Breakfast Leader



Mission Committee – 2024

Our St. John's Family continued to generously support all our Mission Outreaches this past year—locally, in Pennsylvania, across the United States, as well as around the world.

Our committee met six times in 2024—all by Zoom. Those who served on this committee were: Gary Black, Pastor Steve Davis, Marion DeMilio, Kim Hillegass, Jean McGonigle, Carol Raszler (Secretary), and Cindy Reck. Various members served as chairpersons at our meetings.

The following Mission Projects were carried out by the Mission Committee in 2024:

➤ CLIMATE HOPE POSTCARD CAMPAIGN: UCC National's Environmental Justice Ministries instituted a postcard campaign again this past year to address the climate situation across the globe. Over 200 "Vote for Climate Hope" postcards were sent out in the September newsletter and in the bulletin for the congregation to voice their concerns. The postcards could either be given back to St. John's to record or members could post online. Disappointingly, only five postcards were returned; however, many more could have been registered online without our knowledge. A UCC delegation will meet with members of Congress on Valentine's Day of 2025 to share concerns on climate initiatives.

➤ CROP WALK: The CROP Walk was held on Sunday, October 13, at 1:30 p.m. The 10K and "Golden Mile" routes began at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, located at 140 S. Ott St. in Allentown. Thank you to Amy Feidler, Donna Held, Cindy Reck, Jennifer Rarich and son, Rowan, Susan Rarich, and Karen Stoitsits for participating in the walk. Contributions from our members amounted to \$1,390.00. The event teamed up with St. John's Healthcare Ministry for its fall Walking Challenge.

➤ EARTH DAY: Through the April newsletter, the congregation was informed of the importance and history of Earth Day, which was celebrated on Friday, April 22. Founded in 1970 by Senator Gaylord Nelson and inspired by protests of the 1960s, Earth Day began as a teach-in on the environment. Our members were given ways to take care of our planet dealing with climate change, air and water pollution, erosion, recycling, renewable fuels, and energy efficient cars. Climate awareness was noted during the Social Hour following worship on April 21 thanks to a display by Colleen Kulhamer.

➤ GENERAL DISASTER RELIEF FUND: The aftermath of Category 4 Hurricane Helene in late September, followed almost two weeks later in October by Category 5 Hurricane Milton, left over \$200 billion in damage to Florida, Georgia, both Carolinas, Virginia, Tennessee, and on up the East Coast. Almost 300 lives were lost. As a result, St. John's participated in aid through Church World Service and collected items for CWS's Clean-Up Bucket Kits. Partnering with three other churches (Christ UCC in Lowhill, Good Shepherd UCC in Boyertown, and St. John's ECLA Church in Whitehall) each church was responsible to collect several items (16 total) to go in the buckets. For St. John's, we looked for donations of buckets, scrub brushes, dishwashing

gloves, and 6-9 oz. non-aerosol insect repellent. At the end of 2024, St. John's had received \$1,739.00 in donations which will be used to purchase bucket supplies and send monetary contributions to CWS and to UCC National's Hurricane 2024 Relief Appeal. We also received \$150.00 in contributions from Old Zionsville UCC in Zionsville, PA. Contributions and supplies are still being requested by the Mission Committee and the Confirmation Class into 2025.

➤ ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR DISASTER RELIEF: St. John's contributed \$95.00 from January to July with funds given to UCC National's Middle East Support Fund. Since the war began on October 6, 2023, we have given a total of \$135.00 to UCC National.

➤ MINISTRY FAIR: After worship and after the Annual Meeting on February 4, a Ministry Fair was held in Fox Hall. Posters describing the various committees at St. John's were on display. The posters and committee members could meet and greet members of the congregation after worship on the remaining Sundays in February.

➤ MITTEN TREE PROJECT – "OPERATION SANTA": A Christmas tree was put in place at the back of the sanctuary in the beginning of November where members selected paper mitten ornaments and made monetary contributions towards Phoebe Ministries and/or Valley Youth House. A total of \$1,935.00 was received and disbursed as follows:

- Phoebe Ministries – Phoebe is a multi-facility organization specializing in healthcare, housing, and support services for the elderly. Donations were received in the amount of \$865.00. The funds were used to purchase gift certificates for Phoebe's beauty salon and barber shop and for Phoebe's gift shop.
- Valley Youth House – VYH's mission is to help all youth who have been abused, have run away, or are homeless. Donations were received in the amount of \$1,070.00. The funds were used to purchase Christmas gifts on their client's "wish list."

➤ UKRAINE DISASTER RELIEF: St. John's contributed \$155.00 from January to July with funds given to UCC National. Since this war began on February 24, 2022, we have given over \$6,400.00 in funds to Ukraine through Project HOPE, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, UCC National, and World Central Kitchen.

➤ WHITEHALL-COPLAY HUNGER INITIATIVE COMMUNITY MEAL: In order to alleviate hunger, free meals were offered to anyone on the first Sunday and third Tuesday of every month from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at various locations in the community. Although St. John's was not in a position to provide a meal, anyone could volunteer to help at whatever church is sponsoring the event.

➤ WHITEHALL-COPLAY SCHOOL DISTRICT BACKPACK & SCHOOL SUPPLIES: School supplies were collected with a drive-by at the church pavilion on July 20. The congregation donated 1,246 school items. It included 20 backpacks, 10 calculators, 31 boxes of crayons, 84 markers, 74 notebooks, 216 pens, 363 pencils, 129 pocket folders, and many other items. Your donations helped the needy school children in Whitehall as well as the school district itself with educational supplies for the school year.

➤ WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY: The food pantry is located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall. Our congregation supplied food during the year, contributed financially, and sent volunteers to help at the pantry. Under the leadership of Gary Black, about 20 volunteers helped on the fourth Monday of each month to sort, stock shelves, and hand out food items to the pantry's patrons. A story about the food pantry along with pictures was published in the April newsletter.

For the month of February, 368 cans of soup and \$245.00 were collected for the "Souper Bowl of Caring." We surpassed our goal of 250 cans of soup. Then in July, during Vacation Bible School week, 22 cans of food and 10 non-perishable food items were collected.

Canned fruit, canned vegetables, and canned sweet potatoes were collected for the Easter meal. We received 180 boxes or bags of stuffing mix for the Thanksgiving meal. Canned sweet potatoes, canned corn, and cake mixes were collected for the Christmas meal. Monetary contributions were used to purchase gift cards for turkeys or hams during the holidays.

Thank you to everyone who donated canned and packaged groceries in 2024. Your monetary donations for the year amounted to \$3,375.00 and an additional \$15.00 for sponsorship of the Wheat Basket at worship.

In 2024 St. John's continued to maintain our "5 for 5" status with UCC National thanks to the generosity of our members. The Mission Committee coordinated the following special offerings:

➤ OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION: Our congregational gifts give financial support to a wider UCC ministry through our Penn Northeast Conference and through national settings. Among other things, it funds the work done at our local conference. It invests in programs needed to keep local UCC churches strong. It assists in pastoral placement and education for church leaders. It exposes youth to retreats and regional and national youth events. Contributions were received all year long and totaled \$13,176.00 at the end of December.

➤ CHRISTMAS FUND: This fund provides direct financial help to retired and active UCC authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses and includes pension and health supplementation. Contributions of \$550.00 were received in December.

➤ NEIGHBORS IN NEED: One-third of the NIN's offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and two-thirds is administered by the Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Contributions of \$220.00 were received in October.

➤ ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: OGHS supports partners in countries with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development; emergency relief; refugee ministries; and both international and domestic disaster response. Contributions of \$435.00 were received in March.

➤ STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH: Strengthen the Church supports church growth; pastoral and lay leadership development; and youth and young adult ministries within the conference. Contributions of \$125.00 were received in May.

The St. John's Crafters group, "Keeping You in Stitches," was hard at work all year long making craft items to sell (see their report). The total profit from this year's sales amounted to \$1,079.60. The Mission Committee designated the 2024 profit to be given to St. John's Property Fund for elevator and other property repairs in 2024.

It is the policy of St. John's to give 10% in tithing from our fundraisers to Mission Outreach. This past year the 10% tithing amounted to \$2,576.70, which was divided equally among the following charities or organizations:

- Lehigh Conference of Churches – \$1,288.35. The LCC includes 140 congregations and faith-based organizations. They seek to unite people through community services, ecumenical ministry, and advocacy for social justice. LCC is located at the former Dubbs Memorial UCC in Allentown.
- Turning Point of Lehigh Valley – \$1,288.35. Turning Point is a safe place where survivors of domestic and intimate partner abuse and their children can find refuge. Their mission is to eliminate domestic and intimate partner abuse through empowerment, education, and engagement.

The Mission Committee is always looking for more people to join our committee. If you've wondered how you can be a part of this committee, please contact any committee member.

Thank you to everyone in our congregation who supported our Mission Outreaches in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Raszler
Mission Committee Secretary



Music Ministry - 2024

Music has always been a universal language. It is something that brings people from all walks of life together. From the hymns we sing, to the anthems the choir prays, music is a universal prayer for all.

The Music Ministry in 2024 has continued to show growth. The choir continues to inspire not only myself but seeing the joy it brings to its members is a reward in itself. This year, we were truly blessed to welcome to the choir a total of 4 new members, bringing our choir to 24! Instead of focusing on change, this year we have focused on the importance of dynamics and telling the stories of the words on the page, in addition to learning various techniques when it comes to singing. The Bells of St. John continue to always impress me, especially when difficult pieces get thrown their way, and they excel beyond words in learning them! The growth of the music ministry, although not always in numbers, but talent and teaching, continues to amaze me on so many levels.

St. John's had the opportunity to experience the Lehigh University Choral Music Program under the direction of Dr. Steven Sametz in March 2024. It was a truly inspirational afternoon of music. The afternoon concluded with refreshments in appreciation of the students' hard work. This year, we hope to be welcoming Moravian Academy's Handbell Choir as these gifted students share their talents with us.

It was with great joy and excitement that St. John's held its third annual "Service of the Nativity" on Sunday, December 22, 2024. Our choir once again combined with members of Christ Church UCC, Bethlehem, and Sacred Heart Church of Bethlehem to form a 34-member choir, in addition to enhancing the beauty of the music with guest instrumentalists and our very own Bell Choir. This was truly a highlight of 2024 for the music ministry and a beautiful way to begin the Christmas season.

As we embrace a new year, the possibilities for the music ministry are endless, but we need YOU and YOUR support to keep going! Maybe 2025 is the year for you to get involved? Maybe it's time to become a member of the bell choir or adult choir?

I continue to thank and give gratitude to this church and the members of the music ministry. It is through your support, encouragement, and dedication, I am able to see dreams and ideas come to life!

Musically Yours,
Patrick Sandt, Director of Music Ministries/Organist

Personnel Committee - 2024

The Personnel and Procedures Manual was reviewed, revised and approved by the Consistory.

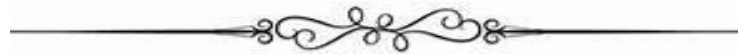
The Committee brainstormed ways in addition to monetary compensation to show support for the staff. All staff members were visited by a Committee member to offer support.

We were saddened to receive Bob Czekner's decision to retire. St. John's UCC, Fullerton, won't be the same without his meticulous care of the facilities. We welcomed Sean Hartman's temporary custodial support.

Discussion took place regarding prioritizing staff and programming needs.

The Pastoral and Congregational Rating Guide was developed and distributed to the Congregation. Twenty-nine responses were received. The results were presented in the newsletter.

Members of the Committee: Pastor Steve Davis, Paul Raszler (Chair), Sharon Czekner, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Carole O'Connell, Brian Strauss, Dewey Yeatts



Property Committee - 2024

This past year the Property Committee members came together to oversee the installation of the new elevator pump and components to get the elevator back up and running. We also oversaw repairs to the roof above the coat room.

With the donation of a zero-turn mower, members are able to mow the grass around the church and the field of dreams. With this we were able to save the cost of hiring a landscape company to do this job.

The steps were painted by the alley entrance to help preserve them. In addition, there was re-pointing done to the bell tower to help preserve it.

New contracts were established for both electricity and natural gas usage. A boiler inspection was performed and a contract put in effect for further inspections. Semiannual kitchen inspections were completed along with the required fire inspections.

All these things keep us busy throughout the year. We also maintain other things like replacing light bulbs and light fixtures, minor plumbing repairs and replacing faucets, etc. Thanks to the congregation members who came out in August to weed and plant flowers; this was very much appreciated.

The Property Committee is declining in members. The members we have either have full-time employment or other commitments. If anyone has any interest in being a part of the Property Committee, please get in touch with any of our committee members listed below.

Charlie Apple, Gary Black, Bill Castello, Bob Czekner, Pastor Steve Davis, Michelle Gutekunst, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Pete Mohr and newly added Bruce Pope.



STARS Team – 2024

(St. John's Technical and Artistic Resources)

Introduction

The St. John's, UCC, STARS Team, tasked with overseeing the technical and artistic resources of our church, has made tremendous strides in enhancing the worship experience and supporting the vibrant life of our congregation. This year, we embraced the theme "Together, we are Stronger!" and focused on improving our audio-visual capabilities, ensuring that all church activities, from Sunday services to community events, were more engaging, professional, and accessible. The following report highlights our key achievements and initiatives throughout the year.

Key Achievements

1. **Enhanced Live Stream Capabilities with OBSBOT Tail Air Cameras:** In response to growing demand for high-quality livestreaming, the STARS Team invested in three **OBSBOT Tail Air cameras** to provide multiple camera angles during livestreamed services. These cameras will elevate the quality of our broadcasts, offering dynamic, professional coverage that enhances the worship experience for both onsite and online congregants. With these new camera angles, our livestream will feel more engaging, immersive, and reflective of the energy in the sanctuary.
2. **New Surround Sound System for Children's Ministry:** Recognizing the need for a more immersive audio experience for our children's ministry, the STARS Team successfully installed a **new surround sound system** in the St. John's movie theatre. This upgrade ensures that our young attendees have a more engaging, clearer, and exciting auditory

experience during their Faith Formation time, making it easier for them to stay focused and fully enjoy this experience. The surround sound system also supports the various special events we hold, amplifying the overall audio experience for the whole congregation.

3. **Exclusive Laptop for Children's Faith Formation:** To streamline and simplify video presentation for Faith Formation, the STARS Team set up a dedicated **laptop** exclusively for the St. John's movie theatre. This laptop is used to display videos and digital content during children's Faith Formation, ensuring that the technical side is as smooth and professional as possible. It has proven to be an invaluable resource for the educators and children alike, providing consistent, high-quality multimedia presentations.
4. **Migration to ProPresenter for Service Production:** In an effort to improve the overall presentation of our services, the STARS Team made the decision to migrate from PowerPoint to **ProPresenter**, a more powerful and professional software option. ProPresenter offers greater flexibility, streamlined workflows, and a more refined approach to live service production. This migration has enabled our team to create visually stunning slideshows, manage lyrics and sermon notes more effectively, and integrate multimedia content more seamlessly. The transition to ProPresenter has been a game-changer in enhancing the quality and professionalism of our worship services.
5. **Audio-Visual Support for Church Events:** Beyond Sunday services, the STARS Team has provided essential technical support for a variety of church events, including **Bingo nights, movie nights**, and other community gatherings. We have set up and operated audio-visual equipment for these events, ensuring that they are fun, engaging, and run smoothly. Our team's efforts help make these events more enjoyable for attendees, contributing to the church's mission of fostering fellowship and connection.

Collaborating for Success

The success of these initiatives would not have been possible without the collaboration, dedication, and hard work of the STARS Team members. From purchasing new equipment to setting up and maintaining systems, the team's commitment has been integral to providing high-quality audio-visual resources that support the mission of St. John's, UCC. Together, we are stronger because we work as a unified team, combining technical expertise, creativity, and a shared passion for enhancing our church community's experience. Our team's accomplishments this year reflect the collective effort and vision to continually improve the ways in which we connect, worship, and serve together.

Looking Ahead

As we look toward the future, the STARS Team is excited about the potential for even more innovative upgrades and improvements. We are exploring ways to enhance the online worship experience, integrate new technologies, and further support the diverse programming at St. John's, UCC.

We are particularly focused on:

- **Expanding the livestream capabilities** to include additional camera setups and specialized equipment.
- **Upgrading video production tools** for an even more polished online presence.
- Continuing to support a **wide range of events** with top-tier audio-visual resources.

Conclusion

The STARS Team has played a vital role in advancing the technical and artistic resources at St. John's, UCC, empowering us to connect more effectively with our congregation and community. We are proud of what we have accomplished this year, and we look forward to continuing to serve the church with excellence, creativity, and teamwork. **Together, we are stronger!**

Thank you to all the volunteers, staff, and supporters who make our work possible. Here's to another year of collaboration, innovation, and growth!

Team Members: Bill Castello, Pastor Steve Davis, Wendy Fox, Elijah Fox, Jesus Pagan, DonnaLee Yeatts

St. John's, UCC, STARS Team

Your Technical and Artistic Partners in Worship and Fellowship



Visitation Committee - 2024

The Committee continues to keep in touch with the 30+ members of the Congregation who are homebound. We contact each one monthly by a visit, a phone call or a note.

Christmas gift bags were prepared for each homebound member and were delivered to bring joy and the knowledge that they are still valued members of St. John's UCC, Fullerton.

Committee members: Pastor Steve Davis, Sharon Antrim, Emma Kuczek, Jean McGonigle, Betty Millham, Grace & Dave Mohr, Carole O'Connell, Barbara Seeds.

