

2025 Annual Report



St. John's
FULLERTON -  UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

**We Worship, We Love, We Serve
– No Matter What!**

575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052

(610) 264-8421

www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org



Annual Meeting Agenda

February 1, 2026, 12:00 Noon

Meal

- Call to Order Paul Raszler, 2026 Consistory President
- Opening Prayer Rev. Steve Davis, Senior Pastor
- Approval of the February 2, 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes Paul Raszler
- Approval of the October 12, 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes Paul Raszler
- Approval of the November 16, 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes Paul Raszler
Consistory Election and Approval of the 2026 Budget
- 2025 Committee Reports
- Treasurer's Report Sue Weldner, Treasurer
- Estate Gift Recommendations
- Additional Business
 - Updates to the By-Laws Rev. Steve Davis
 - 2028 Deacon
- A Word from the Pastor Rev. Steve Davis
- Looking Ahead to 2026 Paul Raszler
- Adjournment

Church Officers - 2026

President	Paul Raszler 6412 Pinecrest Lane, Macungie PA 18062	484-226-7973
Vice President	Colleen Kulhamer 891 3 rd Street, Whitehall PA 18052	610-295-3221
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 2026: Paul Raszler (Elder), Kay Chryst, Bill Fink (1 year), Kirby Hower

Class of 2027: Colleen Kulhamer (Elder), Robin Brensinger, Charlotte Kerrigan, Corrina Purdon

Class of 2028: Linda Powell (Elder), Rev. Janet Boyd, Bobbi Pope, Dewey Yeatts



Our Church Staff

610-264-8421 ~ Church Office

Senior Pastor	Rev. Steven Davis	325-725-2423
Director of Music Ministries	Patrick Sandt	
Ministry Intern	Samantha “Sam” Kistler	
Office Administrator	Alison Berger Boor	
Treasurer	Susan Weldner	
Financial Secretary & Coordinating Custodian	Michelle Gutekunst	
Worship-Media Tech & Connections Newsletter Editor	Bill Castello	
Custodians	Christina Bach Geoffrey Jackson	
St. John’s Christian Early Learning Center Director	Jazmin Smith	

Table of Contents

Senior Pastor's Report	Pages 6-10
Report of the Seminary Intern	Page 11
Consistory President's Report	Pages 12-13
Membership Statistical Report	Pages 14-15
Congregational Meeting Minutes – February 2, 2025	Page 16
Congregational Meeting Minutes – October 12, 2025	Page 17
Congregational Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2025	Pages 17-18
<i>STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE REPORTS</i>	
Stewardship and Finance Committee	Pages 20-22
2025 Annual Budget	Page 23
Monthly Contributions	Page 24
Amounts Contributed per Giving Unit	Page 24
Annual Comparisons of Giving	Page 25
<i>CHURCH GROUPS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS</i>	
Altar Guild	Page 27
Christian Early Learning Center (CELC)	Pages 27-28
Crafters Group, "Keeping You in Stitches"	Pages 28-29
Faith Formation – Children	Pages 29-30
Faith Formation - Confirmation	Pages 31-32
Faith Formation – Friendship Bible Class	Pages 32-33
Faith Formation – Verso Chat Lectionary Group	Pages 33-34
Food Pantry	Pages 34-35
"Fun Raising" Committee	Pages 35-38
Healthcare Ministry	Page 39
Lady PEEPS Women's Group	Pages 39-40
The Men of St. John's	Pages 40-41
Mission Committee	Pages 41-45
Music Ministry	Pages 45-46
Personnel Committee	Pages 46-47
Property Committee	Pages 47-48
STARS Team	Pages 48-50
Visitation Committee	Pages 50-51
Wording for Constitution & By-Law Updates	Page 51

Report of the Senior Pastor- 2025

“No Matter What!”

From the January 2026 Connections Newsletter:

January's cover looks different because this moment feels different. Many congregations are navigating uncertainty, and some are even closing their doors. St. John's is choosing a clear, confident response: not shrinking back, not coasting, but stepping forward with renewed purpose and a public-facing message about who this church is called to be, in and for the community.

*That's what “**No Matter What**” means. It's a statement of identity and intention — steadfast welcome, steady compassion, and a willingness to lead with hope when it would be easier to play it safe. This January, we are looking past the traditional list of New Year's resolutions. Instead, we are making a bold commitment to the future. We are capitalizing on the incredible generosity and spirit that has brought us this far, using it to fortify our foothold in this community. We are moving forward with intention, ensuring that our legacy is one of active, dynamic faith.*

The coming year will ask something of each of us, and it will also offer a beautiful opportunity: to strengthen what has been built, to widen the circle, and to invest in what lasts. When St. John's shows up consistently — with faith, courage, and open hands — neighbors notice. And a church that is clear about its calling becomes a beacon: not just for the people already inside, but for the people still looking for a place to belong.

*Let January be a fresh beginning — grounded in gratitude, shaped by vision, and lived out together, **No Matter What!***

Our focus this year builds once again on our mission affirmation... “We Worship, We Love, We Serve - No Matter What!” Each ministry area is asked to describe how our ministry has risen above challenges and changes to grow St John's. Over the last four years, rising up from the experience of Covid-19 Pandemic shutdowns, St. John's has looked intentionally forward, renewing and expanding our connections with each other and in our community and conference areas. We've faced many challenges with staffing needs, financial support, property maintenance and changes in our membership and programming. Through all we've faced, we have shared a hopeful outlook, trusting each other and God to guide our next steps.

Serving in the Penn Northeast Conference UCC (PNEC) has been a great honor. I've helped represent St. John's by providing leadership for the Committee on Ministry Oversight Working Group, which supports clergy in maintaining their standing in the conference and denomination, as well as working with congregations and clergy where there are issues in maintaining our covenant and standards. I've participated in ministerial authorization, ordinations and installations, representing our connection with our sister congregations.

I also served on the Keystone Study Group, bringing a resolution and plan to the UCC General Synod for the unification of all four of our Commonwealth's conferences into a new

Keystone Conference of the UCC, which officially began January 1, 2026, as well as our new Mountain Valley Association. Again, being part of the General Synod delegation would not have happened without the support of our St. John's congregation. As our connectional relationships change with time, our commitment to being part of the wider Church has not wavered. With great intention and resolve, we are a United Church of Christ congregation, which is proudly Open and Affirming (ONA), welcoming ALL persons to embrace the journey of faith with us. We want every person to know the warm welcome of St. John's and to affirm our mission as...

We Worship, We Love, We Serve ~ No Matter What!

So as 2025 closes, we are not asked to become someone else. We are invited to become more fully ourselves — rooted in truth, shaped by grace, and steadied by the knowledge that we have never walked alone. As the next year opens, may we step forward gently, knowing that love has already gone ahead of us.

As 2025 fades into memory and 2026 opens before us, we carry forward what has shaped us and release what no longer gives life. We trust that the love which sustained us this year will not disappear with the turning of the calendar. God is already present in what comes next — quietly, faithfully, and without condition. Wherever the new year leads, each of us can step into it knowing that we are held, we are seen, we belong and we are loved!

Our vision helped our Consistory leadership, with Wendy Fox as our President, and Spiritual Council Elders, Wendy Fox, Colleen Kulhammer and Paul Raszler, look at how we might guide the congregation to continue to take steps forward in faith, pushing our boundaries and expanding our outreach. We've learned along the way from both successes and setbacks, and we've listened to the congregation and the Spirit. Our "No Matter What!" spirit has helped us push beyond our comfort zones and take risks to engage the community around us with hope and compassion. As we enter 2026 with Paul Raszler as our Consistory President, Colleen Kulhammer as our Vice-president, and Linda Powell as our newest Elder to our Spiritual Council, we feel blessed by God with those God has brought to lead and guide us forward.

St. John's remains a vibrant congregation where new people continue to make their faith home. Our Worship is faithful and meaningful. Our Love strives to be unconditional and resilient. How we Serve continues to change lives in our area and around the world. We continue to find creative ways to increase our outreach to children and youth in our congregation and in others. In 2025, after another successful year of Faith Formation for adults and children, we held a wonderful Vacation Bible School and resumed the new school year with Faith Formation for our kids and our Confirmation Class. We shifted for the 2025-2026 school year to partner with St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Allentown for over 100 children and youth each week to use our classrooms to support their ministry. This partnership is blessing both congregations.

In addition, we joined leaders of St. John's UCC, Fullerton, Grace UCC, Allentown, and UCC, Greenawalds, to have all three congregations support a unified Confirmation Class experience, "Growing in Faith Together," recognizing the GIFT of faith we share with each other

in Jesus Christ. Once again, this is a new way of being and doing Church together. There have been many changes, yet it is our faithful approach to ensure that our young people have a meaningful experience, whether there is only 1 or 12. God is faithful and we remain grateful for new ways of being Church.

With the additional commitment to have Samantha Kistler brought on staff for her Field Education Placement as she completes her seminary training, we are providing her the opportunity to grow in her skills and gifts for ministry. Each quarter, we shift to add a new area of experience for her. When her seminary training is complete, we have her commitment to remain in covenant with us for an additional year, and perhaps longer as she completes her work toward ordination and becoming an authorized minister in the Keystone Conference of the UCC. We are thrilled with the congregation's affirmation to support this ministry of growth for us, by intentionally using financial resources to invest in both her leadership and our children and youth.

As with every year, St. John's has seen some members move to other areas and faith communities; we have removed some who have not maintained their membership covenant requirements over the last two years; some who have been received into the Church Triumphant; and received some who have chosen to make St. John's UCC, Fullerton, their place to **Worship, Love and Serve - No Matter What!** With three opportunities to take part in a Connections Class, we received 16 persons in 2025 into our faith family who are participating and finding their place of support for our ministries. Still others are actively participating who have not yet made the decision to unite with us. With the anticipated closure of our sister congregation, St. John's UCC, Mickleys, in the Fall of 2026, we know others will be making the decision to become part of area congregations. We know some will be looking closely at the vibrant life we experience here at St. John's UCC, Fullerton.

As a congregation with an increasing homebound membership, we have relied on the compassion and serving of some amazing women who join me in being part of our Visitation Committee, along with a few Consistory members who help share communion with our homebound. This ministry of connection and love makes a huge difference since we still have only one clergy person for our Congregational Care ministry. These laypersons sharing their care and support means so much to our most senior members of St. John's. I'm so thankful for these partners in hospitality, reminding our congregation that whoever you are and wherever you may be on life's journey, they still belong and are loved by our larger community of faith.

Sunday worship continues to create meaningful and growing connections as the beloved community, committed to doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God. We have celebrated our baptismal covenant with Christ as God's beloved family. We have rejoiced with families presenting their youngest and adults reaffirming their faith in Christ. We have shared in the great mystery of faith in Holy Communion as we receive and become the Body of Christ for our community and world. We have celebrated lives and grieved with families as beloved and cherished friends have been received into God's eternal loving embrace. We have

shared in different styles of worship, in different locations – indoors, outdoors at the Pavilion, with other congregations – all to celebrate the love of God in Jesus Christ which unites us.

St. John's remains a place with diverse viewpoints and expressions of how best to share our faith in an ever-changing world, yet we remain committed to being together, not in spite of our differences, but because of them. We share and appreciate what each person brings to the full life and ministry of our community. We are unashamedly progressive about many things. We insist on being a congregation whose welcome and affirmation of all people is genuinely experienced. We are thoughtful and respectful of our theological diversity and grateful for the person of Jesus, the love of God, and the power of the Spirit that continues to move us forward. We are financially responsible with the resources God provides through you, our members, and seek to be the best stewards possible to ensure a place of hope and faith for generations to come.

With all kinds of experiences in worship, study, fellowship, missions, and great fun, St. John's has felt the hand of God touch our hearts in countless ways. 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, Rev. Dave Mohr, Rev. John Hoff, Rev. Cliff Herring, Rev. Todd Fennell, Rev. Dennis Schappel, Rev. Bob Stephens, Rev. Janet Boyd, Rev. Evelyn Stupp and of course, our beloved Pastor Emerita, Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith. These gifted and amazing leaders and members have made my leadership more effective, and I'm grateful for their friendship and support.

This past November, I noted the completion of my fourth year of ministry with you. As Easter 2026 approaches, I will have been honored to serve at St. John's UCC, Fullerton, longer than I have been able to serve in any congregation throughout my almost 40 years of ministry. Noting the United Methodist appointive system that moved clergy every three years or so, I've been so blessed in the United Church of Christ to share my gifts and to grow in my ministry because of you. You've empowered a faithfulness and authenticity in my ministry which I had not known until March 7, 2015 when I was first authorized as a minister in the UCC.

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. **We Worship, We Love, We Serve – No Matter What!**

I've so greatly appreciated those who have shared their questions and their struggles about what the changing world of being Church today means for us – what it means to you in particular – individually and collectively. Whether in conversations around anti-racism, voting,

climate change, hunger in the Lehigh Valley, fair funding for education across the Commonwealth, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, systems of inequity and systems of privilege, we have learned that we can have conversations and engage with each other, knowing we 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. **We Worship, We Love, We Serve – No Matter What!**

People near and far are joining us for worship, sharing in our love, and serving God, through our St. John's Fullerton community wherever they may be. Thank you to all who give so generously and supportively to this shared ministry. We also cannot express enough how grateful we are as a congregation for people who have invested not only their time, talent and treasure with regular faithfulness, but also for those who give in greater abundance remembering St. John's in their estates with gifts which will support this vital ministry in our community in foundational ways. With the incredible generosity of Adrienne Kiesbar through her estate, this simple and humble woman shared a portion of her investments over her lifetime to bless St. John's with a gift of \$762,000. The Committee on Stewardship and Finance, as well as the Consistory, are bringing a recommendation to the congregation to retain \$425,000 of that gift in our Endowment Fund. The balance would fund projects to enhance vital property updates and facilities improvements, along with funding areas of our program ministries and technology outreach, and support to help us with our annual giving through the 5% proceeds from our Endowment toward our general operations. "Thank you!" to Adrienne seems insufficient, yet we will faithfully seek to celebrate her generosity with each of these projects and through her support which will bless generations.

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 because 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

Report of the Seminary Intern

Personal Reflection

As I reach the halfway point of my internship, I honestly can't believe how quickly this first semester has gone. My time with the congregation of St. John's, Fullerton has been a real gift, and I am deeply grateful for the warmth, kindness, and trust you have shown me. From worship to conversation to the everyday moments of church life, you have welcomed me in and made space for me to learn, try new things, and grow into my call to ministry. I continue to be thankful for the ways you share your stories, your questions, and your faith so generously.

Looking ahead, I'm excited for the semester to come and for all that it will hold. I anticipate graduating from seminary this May, and this spring I'll be taking two courses that connect closely to the ministry I'm learning alongside you. One, *Engaging the Questions*, focuses on how we talk together about challenging religious, ethical, and social issues with honesty, curiosity, and care. The other, *Leading Future Faith Communities*, explores how churches can remain rooted in their identity while adapting creatively to a changing world. Both courses feel especially meaningful as I continue learning what it means to serve faithfully in communities like St. John's.

I'm especially grateful that this congregation has been such a living classroom for me. Your openness to conversation, reflection, and shared leadership has shaped my learning in ways no textbook ever could. I'm thankful for your patience, your encouragement, and your willingness to walk together through both questions and hopes, and I truly look forward to continuing our life together in the months ahead.

As I think about the year to come — both here at St. John's and in the next steps of my ministry — I find myself returning to a verse that has become a gentle guide for me: "*The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps*" (Proverbs 16:9). It reminds me that while we make plans and set goals, faith invites us to stay open to where God may be leading next. This verse helps me hold the future with trust rather than certainty, and with gratitude for the people who help me listen for God's direction along the way. I'm thankful to be walking this season with you, learning together how to notice and follow where God is already at work among us.

Thank you for the kindness, support, and shared ministry you offer so freely — I'm grateful to continue this journey with you in the year ahead.

Samantha Kistler

Consistory President's Report and Spiritual Council Report – 2025

Hello members of St. John's. Wow, what a year and how fast it went!

What was accomplished in 2025?

We continued with our Home Communion. We had another member of Consistory join the team that goes out to our homebound members to give them communion.

In January the updated By-Laws were presented to Consistory and approved. They were then presented to the congregation at our Annual Meeting in February.

In June we confirmed three new youths, Adian Hannis, Nicholas Santee & Lucas Williams.

In July DonnaLee Yeatts and I co-chaired our second Vacation Bible School. The theme was "Egypt - Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace." This year we tried doing it from Sunday to Thursday. We had about 12 children join us. We had worship, story time, crafts, snacks and music each evening. We had wonderful help. Hoping to do another VBS in 2026 and with even more help. Please consider this, even if you can only do one evening that week.

Pastor Steve and Tyler Shankweiler attended the General Synod meeting in July. They voted for the merger of the four Pennsylvania area conferences of the UCC into a new Keystone Conference which begins January 1, 2026.

In July the Elders reached out to the congregation to give us feedback on what is good and what "needs improvement" in the church. We had a wonderful response and after meeting with Pastor Steve we started the "Ask the Elders/Pastor" during Fellowship Hour. We did this for the months of September through November. There is talk about bringing that back in 2026 but maybe on a quarterly basis. More to come from the 2026 Elders.

In August we welcomed our Field Education Member in Discernment Samantha "Sam" Kistler. She has been a wonderful addition to Faith Formation for our young children and Sunday services.

In October, St John's was given a wonderful gift from Adrienne Kiesbar. Ms. Kiesbar passed away January 28, 2025, and in her will she bequest St John's a large sum of money. We were able to put a down payment for upgrading our elevator that will be done Spring/Summer of 2026. The Consistory approved the suggestion from the Stewardship and Finance committee to move \$425,000 into the Endowment. In early 2026 Consistory will be making decisions on what to do with the remainder of the money.

I'd like to thank all the outgoing Consistory members for their service over the past three years: Sharon Antrim, Kathy Roth and Tyler Shankweiler. We unfortunately didn't have a youth member, so finding one is a goal for 2026.

Lastly, I want to thank you all for allowing me to be your president this year. Hopefully your expectations of me were met.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Fox, 2025 Consistory President



Membership Statistical Report - 2025

Baptisms: 3

5/11/2025 Elizabeth Fox Reck
Margaret Fox Reck
9/14/2025 Jett Anthony Stoudt

Weddings: 1

11/23/2025 Corrina Marie Schneck and Jeffrey Robert Purdon

Confirmation: 3 6/1/2025

Aiden James Hannis
Nicholas William Santee
Lucas George Williams

New Members: 16

Rev Janet Boyd	2/2/25	Bruce Laudenslager	5/18/25
Jean Fennell	2/2/25	Karen Laudenslager	5/18/25
Rev Todd Fennell	2/2/25	Jeffrey Purdon	5/18/25
Sherri Gangwere	2/2/25	Beverly Rumble	5/18/25
Geoffrey Jackson	2/2/25	William Rumble	5/18/25
Rev. Dennis Schappell	2/2/25	Amanda Stettler	5/18/25
Rev. Bob Stevens	2/2/25	Susan Stettler	5/18/25
Todd Cocivera	5/18/25	Patti Skvoretz	9/21/25

Member Deaths: 18

Adrianne Kiesbar	1/28/25	Madeline Slivka	6/19/2025
Owen Eberhart, Jr.	3/9/2025	Ronald Glass	8/15/2025
Marilyn "Jean" Piskula	3/16/25	Emma Kuczek Repp	9/6/2025
Sandra Diefenerfer	3/24/2025	Ron Eichman	9/13/2025
Nancy Bowman	3/27/2025	Roberta Haberern	9/22/2025
Arline Yoder	3/27/2025	Larry Albright	11/11/2025
Jean Litzenberger	4/12/2025	Rev. David Mohr	12/4/2025
Michael Kulhamer	5/3/2025	Robert Bold	12/22/2025
(not a member)		Shirley Abel	12/22/2025
Gayle Mihulec	6/6/2025	Clarence Biehn	12/24/2025

Removed by Request to Inactive Status or Transfer: 9

Mark Snyder – 4/2
Mr. and Mrs. George Romberger – 5/8
Mike, George and Roberta Borgman, transferred to St. John's, Laurys Station – 5/22
Sandra Nagy, transferred to St. Paul's, Walnutport - 8/18
Mark and Tammy Yura, transferred to Zion's Stone Church of West Penn Township – 9/11

Moved to Inactive Member Status by Spiritual Council 29

Susan Imboden	Stephanie Batdorf
Ryan Brobst	Jason Loch
Michelle Brobst	Matthew Loch
Ethan Brobst	Rebecca Loch
Grant Brobst	Jacob Verba
Stacy Sommer	Karly Myers
Gregory Sommer	Katelyn Orłowsky
Audra Sommer	Sarah Schaffer
Emilie Dumbach	Matthew Sommer
Virginia Hess	Judith Sommer
Ted Hess	Aiden Sommer
James Leibensperger	Austin Sommer
Andrea Leibensperger	Jillian Sommer
Michael Leibensperger	Lori Yocco
Christopher Leibensperger	

Summary of Membership

Active Membership Reported 12/31/2024	487
Confirmed	3
New Members	16
Active Member Deaths	18
Removed by Request or Transfer	9
Moved to Inactive by Spiritual Council	29
Active Membership as of 12/31/2025	450
Active Membership with adjustment from new database	401

Worship Statistics: 2025

Average attendance at 9:30 service	87
Online Livestream Participation Average	37
Additional Online Viewing Average	83

St John's UCC Fullerton

Annual Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2025 12:00 PM

- **Call to Order – Wendy Fox**
 - 66 members, 10 non-members, total 76
- **Opening Prayer – Steve Davis, Senior Pastor**
- **Approval of the February 2, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes – Wendy Fox**
 - Motion to accept by Bob Bold; seconded by Kathy Roth; APPROVED – 66 yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions.
- **Approval of the November 17, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes – Wendy Fox**
 - Motion to accept by Carol Raszler; seconded by Constance Arnold; APPROVED – 81 yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions.
- **2024 Committee Reports**
 - Faith Formation – Children Rev. Becca Stephens
 - Rotating Leadership
 - Please come and support this wonderful education mission!
 - Property Wayne Lichtenwalner
 - Looking for ways to expand accessibility.
- **Treasurers Report**
 - Ended 2024 with approx. \$42,000 in the General Fund, with a net loss of \$3,200.
- **Additional Business**
 - Updates to the By-Laws Rev. Steve Davis
 - Motion to accept by Consistory; APPROVED – 66 yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions.
 - Consistory Vacancies Rev. Steve Davis
- **A Word from the Pastor** Rev. Steve Davis
- **Looking Ahead to 2025** Wendy Fox
- **Adjournment**
 - Motion to accept by Bob Bold; seconded by Colleen Kulhamer; APPROVED.



Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

Elevator Modernization Project

October 12, 2025

Following the morning worship service, congregation members remained to vote on the motion from the Stewardship and Finance Committee to authorize funding for the **Elevator Modernization Project** proposed by the Property Committee. The quote from Reading Elevator would secure a price of \$122,204, with 20% down in accepting the contract. It is estimated that additional work to prepare the elevator mechanical room will be done by a separate contractor, estimated to be between \$25,000-30,000. Funds for completion of this project will be paid from the Kiesbar Estate gift.

The motion did not require a second as it came from the committee. After a couple of clarifying questions about the scope of the project and the benefit to the congregation, the motion was **unanimously** approved.

Respectfully submitted in the absence of the recording secretary,
Rev. Steve Davis



St. John's UCC Fullerton

Fall Congregation Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2025, 11:00 am

Wendy Fox - Meeting was called to approve the 2026 budget and the new 2028 Consistory members.

Pastor Steve – prayer

Sue Weldner - presented the 2026 budget to the congregation. Budget lines were reviewed, comparing 2025 vs 2026. Expenses are expected to increase in most areas, including health benefits (which are still unknown). It was suggested that a 3% increase from the Congregation in their giving will be needed to help meet the monthly expenses for 2026. The Keisbar Bequest was also discussed. The finance/stewardship committee will be reviewing the many

suggestions on uses for this new fund to help with upgrading the Church building. We want to be thoughtful and purposeful to honor Ms Keisbar with her monetary donation. More information to follow at the February 8, 2026, congregational meeting. A motion to approve the budget was made, seconded and approved.

The 2028 Consistory members were brought to the congregation for a vote. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Incoming members of Consistory and Elder are:

Elder: Linda Powell

Consistory: Bobbi Pope, Mike Aggripine, Janet Boyd

Finishing their term are:

Elder: Wendy Fox

Consistory: Sharon Antrim, Kathy Roth, Tyler Shankweiler



Stewardship and Finance Reports



2025 Stewardship & Finance Committee Report

Committee Members: Kirby Hower (Chair), Pastor Steve Davis, Jim Ebert, Bill Fink, Brian Fisher, Michelle Gutekunst (Financial Secretary), Tom Moyer, 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 financial support of all we do here at St John's, Fullerton!

In 2025 we saw a 6% increase in offerings from the congregation! Overall, income from all our various sources increased 3.4% from the previous year.

While we continued to closely manage our expenses in 2025, we did see an approximate 4.5% increase in spending. Our total spending in 2025 exceeded our plan by about \$6,500 – mainly due to unanticipated increase in cost, occurrences of snow removal, and salting.

Below is a summary of the results for 2025:

	Actual	Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$303,433	\$300,934
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$(307,357)	\$(300,940)
NET LOSS FOR 2025	\$(3,924)	\$-
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JAN 2025	\$37,272	
ENDING FUND BALANCE DEC 2025	\$33,349	

As we move into 2026, we have planned for a 10% increase in our budget. Along with general rising costs, we've increased the budget for snow removal. And we've added a part-time pastoral staff position. We encourage all members to do what they can to support that increased giving goal.

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

Mission funds: All our Mission giving is directly a result of specific designated mission contributions by the Congregation. Total Mission giving for 2025 was \$24,360. Details are included in the Mission Committee's report.

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 2025, we have \$42,000 available

for use with Consistory approval. An additional \$15,000 is earmarked for specific purposes, based on donor designations.

Property funds: At the end of 2025, we have \$17,000 available for larger property expenditures and significant, unplanned maintenance needs. During 2025 we utilized Property funds for several projects:

- \$2,035 Fox Hall bathroom repairs
- \$1,220 Fox Hall lighting upgrade to LED (will save in future electric costs)
- \$3,195 air conditioning repairs
- \$1,250 landscape cleanup, weeding, pruning

The Congregation approved the use of approximately \$150,000 from the Adie Keisbar bequest to be used for the modernization of the elevator. We expect that work to occur during the summer of 2026.

The Consistory approved an additional \$165,000 from the Adie Keisbar bequest to be set aside for future projects in 2026, to be reviewed, aligned and approved during the coming year.

We also have \$54,400 in the Pavilion fund. \$43,850 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 2025 was \$80,930. We continue to encourage giving toward the payment of our Pavilion mortgage.

For 2025, our income and expenses for the Pavilion were:

	2025	2024
Pavillion Donations	2,973	5,373
Furnace Loan Repay	-	5,571
Pavillion Rentals	1,650	1,250
Interest Inc	1,586	1,768
Income	6,209	13,962
Mortgage	5,382	5,382
Utilities	978	1,016
Lawn Mowing	-	-
Snow Plowing	1,026	2,715
Supplies	618	89
Garden Maint	-	1,500
Advertising	-	-
Expenses	8,005	10,703
Net	(1,796)	3,260

Endowment funds: at the end of 2025, we have \$996,675 in our Endowment fund. In 2025 we had two bequests added to our Endowment: \$5,000 from the Rarich family, in remembrance of Timothy Ott, and \$425,000 of the Adie Keisbar bequest was approved by the Consistory to be added to our endowment funds. In 2025, we gained approximately \$81,000 in interest, dividends, and market value growth. We supported our General Fund operations with \$23,300 in income distributions for the year. The generous additions to our Endowment in 2025 will begin to benefit future years with increasing annual income distributions.

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!

2026 Budget

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
OFFERINGS	\$ 230,906	\$ 239,077	\$ 219,638	\$ 232,992	\$ 262,710
RENTAL INCOME	\$ 15,404	\$ 15,074	\$ 16,514	\$ 21,406	\$ 21,000
FUNDRAISING INCOME	\$ 10,919	\$ 23,837	\$ 25,767	\$ 19,811	\$ 20,000
ENDOWMENT INTEREST	\$ 22,680	\$ 23,164	\$ 23,592	\$ 23,300	\$ 34,663
FLOWERS INCOME	\$ 3,171	\$ 1,995	\$ 2,584	\$ 2,731	\$ 3,000
CHRISTIAN ED INCOME	\$ 1,005	\$ 1,171	\$ 1,178	\$ 964	\$ 1,000
SPECIAL GIFTS & TRANSFERS	\$ 5,308	\$ 2,332	\$ 3,902	\$ 2,230	\$ 2,200
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 289,392	\$ 306,650	\$ 293,175	\$ 303,434	\$ 344,573
PASTORAL SERVICES	\$ 135,685	\$ 125,672	\$ 122,639	\$ 123,381	\$ 156,007
STAFF SALARIES	\$ 103,643	\$ 97,389	\$ 107,922	\$ 110,592	\$ 113,516
FAITH FORMATION	\$ 615	\$ 1,605	\$ 766	\$ 1,073	\$ 1,250
BUILDING SERVICES	\$ 31,415	\$ 35,753	\$ 37,686	\$ 43,958	\$ 44,125
PARISH PROGRAMS	\$ 27,672	\$ 29,936	\$ 25,211	\$ 26,372	\$ 27,675
FUNDRAISING TITHE	\$ 1,104	\$ 2,384	\$ 2,577	\$ 1,981	\$ 2,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 300,136	\$ 292,738	\$ 296,800	\$ 307,357	\$ 344,573
NET	\$ (3,228)	\$ 13,912	\$ (3,624)	\$ (3,923)	\$ -

Monthly Contributions – 2025

MONTH	CURRENT EXPENSES	MISSIONS OCWM	PROPERTY NEEDS	ELEVATOR FUND	PAVILION FUND	TOTAL
January	\$ 15,948.00	\$ 985.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 555.00	\$ 245.00	\$ 18,483.00
February	\$ 17,792.29	\$ 1,123.00	\$ 1,418.00	\$ 727.00	\$ 265.00	\$ 21,325.29
March	\$ 18,159.32	\$ 1,107.00	\$ 1,015.91	\$ 495.00	\$ 245.00	\$ 21,022.23
April	\$ 20,024.25	\$ 952.00	\$ 709.00	\$ 560.00	\$ 165.00	\$ 22,410.25
May	\$ 21,961.69	\$ 741.00	\$ 867.00	\$ 455.00	\$ 205.00	\$ 24,229.69
June	\$ 21,332.00	\$ 1,098.00	\$ 828.00	\$ 458.00	\$ 165.00	\$ 23,881.00
July	\$ 16,469.56	\$ 803.00	\$ 664.00	\$ 635.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 18,721.56
August	\$ 17,887.00	\$ 1,026.00	\$ 718.50	\$ 960.00	\$ 185.00	\$ 20,776.50
September	\$ 15,656.97	\$ 884.00	\$ 884.00	\$ 585.00	\$ 165.00	\$ 18,174.97
October	\$ 15,134.00	\$ 871.00	\$ 733.00	\$ 545.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 17,403.00
November	\$ 18,039.55	\$ 971.00	\$ 785.00	\$ 643.00	\$ 205.00	\$ 20,643.55
December	\$ 14,503.00	\$ 832.00	\$ 1,002.00	\$ 155.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 16,692.00
TOTAL	\$ 212,907.63	\$ 11,393.00	\$ 10,374.41	\$ 6,773.00	\$ 2,315.00	\$ 243,763.04
					Cross Check	\$ 243,763.04



2025 Amounts Contributed Per Giving Unit

\$5000 +	14
\$4000 to \$4999.99	8
\$3000 to \$3999.99	13
\$2000 to \$2999.99	10
\$1000 to \$1999.99	41
\$500 to \$999.99	32
\$100 to \$499.99	89
\$.01 to \$99.99	78
No Contribution	229

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 - 2025

ENVELOPE TITLE COMPARISONS					
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Membership Giving	\$ 225,122.26	\$ 214,085.84	\$ 222,772.47	\$ 205,421.97	\$ 212,907.63
Donation for Envelopes	\$ 310.00	\$ 232.00	\$ 214.00	\$ 199.00	\$ 210.00
Communion	\$ 876.00	\$ 2,615.00	\$ 2,196.00	\$ 2,242.00	\$ 3,881.30
Ash Wednesday	\$ 251.00	\$ 564.00	\$ 292.00	\$ 275.00	\$ 335.00
Lenten Envelopes	\$ 935.00	\$ 732.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 835.00	\$ 1,472.50
Lent Folders	\$ 750.00	\$ 790.00	\$ 854.00	\$ -	\$ -
Maundy Thursday	\$ 205.00	\$ 539.00	\$ 377.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 189.00
Good Friday	\$ 320.00	\$ 85.00	\$ 399.00	\$ 305.00	\$ 279.00
Easter Sunday	\$ 1,766.55	\$ 1,509.00	\$ 1,521.00	\$ 1,346.00	\$ 1,099.00
Mothers' Day	\$ 130.00	\$ 254.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 673.00
Fathers' Day	\$ 150.00	\$ 128.00	\$ 280.00	\$ 163.00	\$ 70.00
Thanksgiving	\$ 462.80	\$ 791.00	\$ 297.00	\$ 380.00	\$ 200.00
Advent		\$ 780.00	\$ 75.00	\$ -	\$ -
Christmas Eve	\$ 3,992.55	\$ 2,492.00	\$ 1,329.00	\$ 2,041.00	\$ 3,342.00
Missions (OCWM)	\$ 17,616.30	\$ 14,815.90	\$ 12,823.00	\$ 13,176.00	\$ 11,393.00
Property Needs	\$ 12,430.50	\$ 8,228.60	\$ 8,966.00	\$ 9,344.01	\$ 10,374.41
H.E.L.P.	\$ 1,809.00	\$ 2,035.80	\$ 1,681.00	\$ 1,689.12	\$ 967.00
TOTAL	\$ 267,126.96	\$ 250,677.14	\$ 254,881.47	\$ 237,877.10	\$ 247,392.84



*Church Groups
&
Committee Reports*



Altar Guild – 2025

The Altar Guild continues to serve as a quiet yet essential ministry within the life of the church. Through faithful preparation, thoughtful care of the sanctuary, and acts of devotion, this ministry supports worship and reflects God's beauty and presence among us.

WE WORSHIP: The primary calling of the Altar Guild is to prepare the sanctuary for worship, ensuring that each service is reverent, welcoming, and prayerfully grounded. This year marked an important transition with the appointment of Corinna Purdon as the new Altar Guild Chair. Her leadership and dedication have brought renewed energy and vision to the ministry. Throughout the year, the Altar Guild made thoughtful updates to church decorations and décor, enhancing the beauty of the sanctuary and supporting the liturgical seasons of the church year. Each detail—from altar linens to seasonal colors—was carefully considered to help draw the congregation more deeply into worship.

WE LOVE: The work of the Altar Guild is an expression of love for God and for the church community. This love was evident in the ongoing care given to the sanctuary space, creating an atmosphere that feels sacred, peaceful, and inviting.

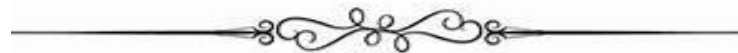
One meaningful addition this year was the placement of candles on multiple windowsills throughout the sanctuary. These candles serve as a visible symbol of prayer and devotion, inviting members of the congregation to participate more fully by offering prayers during worship and throughout the week.

WE SERVE: The Altar Guild serves faithfully behind the scenes, often unseen but always impactful. Their ministry supports clergy, musicians, and worship leaders while providing the congregation with a space that honors God and encourages reverence.

Altar Guild is grateful for the opportunity to serve and for the continued support of the congregation. As we look ahead, this ministry remains committed to worshipping faithfully, loving generously, and serving humbly to the glory of God.

Corinna Purdon, Chair of Altar Guild

Patrick Sandt, Assistant Chair of Altar Guild



Christian Early Learning Center (CELC) – 2025

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 from 9-2pm. We have been able to

maintain an in-person classroom. We started the school year with 18 Students and now currently have 19 students enrolled.

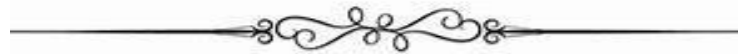
Throughout the year we have focused on academics such as the alphabet, letters, letter sounds, numbers, shapes and simple ASL, along with crafts, learning letters and colors in sign language, learning how to share, taking turns and following directions. We have a well-rounded group of students.

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

We are currently working with two classrooms with a head teacher in each and one assistant. We have most students staying from 9-2 for the higher rate of \$240 a month. (15 out of 18). Students that stay 9-12:30 pay \$200 a month.

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 employees. This will be looked into for next year after some research is done about PA laws and regulations.

Respectfully submitted,
Jazmin Smith, Director



Crafters Group – 2025

“Keeping You in Stitches”

St. John’s Crafters Group, “Keeping You in Stitches,” had another successful year in 2025. It is with deep gratitude that we would like to thank the following people who made items or donated supplies throughout the year: Joy Gravely, Ruthann Hallman, Regina Hickman, Emma Kuczek, June McCracken, Regi Mohr, 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.

It is with sadness that we note the passing in September of our long-time crafter Emma Kucezk. Emma, even at age 102, still crocheted our T-towels and over the years sewed together our pot scrubbers.

Our crafts are available to purchase all year long. However, the following scheduled events took place during 2025 and produced the following sales:

Dates	Events	Sales
March 16 & March 23	Easter & Spring Sales	\$ 374.00
April 6	Additional Easter Sale	\$ 123.00
May 25	Miscellaneous Sales	\$ 67.00
November 8	St. John's Bazaar	\$ 396.00
November 30 & December 7	Christmas Sales	\$ 296.00

The bowl cozies, available in three sizes, continued to be our bestseller this year. Other popular items included tissue box covers, tank covers, T-towels, and our 12-bean soup mix.

For the year we had sales totaling \$1,256.00. A total of \$31.49 was taken out for expenses (supplies). **The final profit for the year was \$1,224.51.** 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 2025 to be used towards the purchase of a new kitchen stove in 2026.

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 2025 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 – 2025

Faith formation at St. John's has been a meaningful and joyful part of our life together this year. We have spent time working through stories from the Old Testament, including figures like Esther and Samuel, and reflecting on what their stories teach us about faith, courage, and listening for God. During the Advent season, our focus turned to the story of Christ's birth, giving us space to wonder together about hope, waiting, and God's presence among us.

As the new year begins, our focus will shift to the New Testament as we begin exploring the life and ministry of Jesus. Each week, about 5–8 children gather for faith formation, bringing curiosity, honesty, and great questions into our time together. If you know of children who might enjoy joining us, they are always welcome.

Faith formation is very much a shared ministry, and we are always glad to welcome people who would like to help lead or assist on Sunday mornings. Whether through teaching, helping with activities, or offering an extra set of hands, support makes a real difference. Looking ahead, we will also begin preparing for Vacation Bible School, which continues to be an important and joyful part of our ministry with children and families.

Pastor Steve and I have also been spending meaningful time with our joint confirmation class, which includes students from St. John's UCC, Fullerton, Grace UCC, and UCC, Greenawalds. This group has been a joy to work with, bringing thoughtfulness, energy, and openness to each conversation. Together, we have been exploring big questions of faith in ways that invite curiosity rather than easy answers. Our conversations have ranged from topics like the Trinity, often one of the more challenging ideas to wrap our heads around, to talking about how we pray and what it means to speak honestly with God. These discussions have created space for students to ask real questions, share their own experiences, and grow more comfortable expressing what they believe and what they are still figuring out.

We are really looking forward to the time ahead with this group as we continue to explore faith together, deepen relationships, and support one another in this important season of growth. It has been a gift to walk alongside such thoughtful, engaged, and faithful young people.

Overall, faith formation continues to be a place of learning, curiosity, and connection at St. John's. I am grateful for the ways this congregation supports young people as they grow in faith and for the many hands and hearts that help make this ministry possible. It is a joy to be part of this work, and I look forward to all that the coming months will bring as we continue learning, wondering, and growing together.

Samantha Kistler



Faith Formation: Confirmation Ministry (2024–2025)

On **June 1, 2025**, our congregation joyfully celebrated the Confirmation Class of three youth, welcoming them more fully into the life of faith and covenant shared by the St. John's UCC, Fullerton, community. This milestone is always a profound blessing, marking both growth in faith and the ongoing promise of God's Spirit at work in the lives of our youth and their families.

We extend deep gratitude to **Linda Powell** and **Wayne Lichtenwalner**, whose faithful leadership, preparation, and encouragement week after week have shaped this ministry for many years. Their consistent presence and care are a true gift to our congregation. In recognition of over 10 years of partnered leadership with pastors, we honored Wayne and Linda by presenting new Confirmation Bibles for the 2025-2026 class in their names.

We are also thankful for the mentors and other congregation members who walked alongside the confirmands, helping them navigate the requirements of the program while sharing their own lived faith and commitment to Christ.

2024–2025 Confirmands and Mentors

- **Aiden Hannis** — Bonnie Strauss
- **Nicholas Santee** — Michael Kern
- **Lucas Williams** — Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith

Throughout the year, confirmands participated actively in the life of the congregation while also engaging in community outreach, worship experiences with other faith traditions, and the creation of personal statements of faith. These experiences encouraged them to explore what they believe, how they serve, and where they see God at work in the world.

As classes concluded, particular emphasis was placed on the importance of ongoing participation in congregational life beyond confirmation. We were especially grateful for the involvement of extended family members, whose presence enriched the faith formation journey and strengthened intergenerational connections within the church.

Looking Ahead: Confirmation Class of 2025–2026

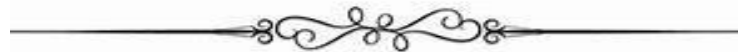
For the **2025–2026 Confirmation year**, we are collaborating with two other UCC congregations, Grace UCC, Allentown, and UCC, Greenawalds, since we had only one person who wanted to participate. Combining leaders and resources, we are walking alongside 12 young people and young adults, in a new model for sharing our faith together, using the UCC *Affirming Faith* curriculum as our guide. Together they participate in lessons twice each month that began in October 2025 and will conclude September 2026. If this model proves to be effective, we will continue it for a second year together. Lessons, worship, and other faith affirming activities focus on **service, witness, and spiritual growth** for each participant.

In the 2024-2025 year, and again for this new model for 2025-2026, parents and mentors have been deeply involved, generously sharing their time, stories, and faith. Their participation has made the confirmation experience more personal, meaningful, and relational for these young people.

We look forward with anticipation to receiving these new confirmands scheduled for our Confirmation Sunday on September 20, 2026, celebrating once again the movement of the Holy Spirit in the lives of our youth and the wider church.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Steve Davis, Senior Pastor
Samantha Kistler, Seminary Intern



Friendship Bible Class – 2025

The 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 12 to 15 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 organizational 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, Sherri Gangewere, Kirby Hower, Tom Moyer, and Paul Raszler for teaching and leading the class discussions this past year.

It is with sadness that we note the passing of one of our teachers, Nancy Bowman, in March. Nancy shared many interesting, memorable, and inspiring lessons over the many, many years she taught. The class also felt the loss of former members Larry Albright, Emma Kuczek, and Arline Yoder, who due to health reasons or transportation issues, were unable to attend classes in recent years.

At the end of the Sunday School year, the class came together for its Annual Luncheon on Sunday, May 18, at the Deitsch Eck Restaurant in Lenhartsville. A good time was had by all as we looked forward to the summertime and our classes resuming in September.

The class held its Annual Picnic at Paul and Carol Raszler's cabin near Schuylkill Haven on Saturday, August 16. Besides feasting on a lot of delicious food, fishing, and playing games, it was a time for fun, conversation, and fellowship. The day ended with a gathering by the

campfire. Class members and friends could also bring their tents and camp for the entire weekend.

Throughout the year, the Friendship Bible Class served as hosts for the Social Hour after Sunday worship and for the Wednesday evening Soup & Study sessions during Lent.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Moyer, Leader
Carol Raszler, Secretary
Friendship Bible Class



Verso-Chat: A Faith Formation Lectionary Group – 2025

Verso is a Latin word meaning *conversation*, and great conversation is at the heart of this ministry. Our lives are shaped by meaningful dialogue: with God, with Scripture, and with one another. Verso-Chat exists to nurture that kind of holy conversation, creating space for curiosity, listening, and faithful connection.

Each Wednesday morning from 9:00–10:00 a.m. on Zoom, Pastor Steve gathers with six to ten members of our faith family for an open, welcoming conversation centered on the lectionary readings that will ground the upcoming Sunday sermons. The group follows the Vanderbilt University Common Lectionary (now in Year A), engaging Scripture with attentiveness and expectation.

Participants receive the selected readings one week in advance and again the day before the meeting by email, allowing time for prayerful reading and reflection. Some members choose to go a step further, consulting commentaries and other resources and bringing those insights into the discussion. No preparation is required from previous weeks to participate, as our curiosity and openness are always enough to create a good conversation.

Verso-Chat is intentionally informal and invitational. Questions are welcomed. Diverse perspectives are honored. Pastor Steve gently guides the conversation, while participants share how Scripture intersects with their own life experiences. Over time, these honest exchanges have fostered deep relationships and strong bonds of trust, reminding us that faith is formed not only by what we believe, but by how we listen to and learn from one another.

Week by week, we open ourselves to ancient texts that continue to speak timeless truth, revealing God's enduring desire to be in loving relationship with us and with the world. This year, we were deeply saddened to lose one of our most faithful and enthusiastic participants,

Nancy Bowman. Her contributions to the group always shared something new and inspirational to start our conversation. In a note to Pastor Steve, she wrote:

“Verso-Chat has changed how I hear Scripture. The conversations help me slow down, listen more deeply, and discover how God is still speaking through these ancient words and through one another. It’s become a meaningful part of my week.” — Nancy Bowman

There is no obligation or long-term commitment. Each week stands on its own, so participants are welcome to drop in whenever they are able.

Please consider joining us for Verso-Chat — a place where Scripture comes alive through conversation, community, and the Spirit’s still-speaking voice.

Submitted by Rev. Steve Davis



Food Pantry – 2025

The Whitehall Food Pantry, located at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall, had another successful but challenging year in 2025. 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 pleased to have received 354 cans of assorted soups. In addition, we also received \$160.00, which was collected in soup pots after worship by our Confirmation Class.

St. John’s Ministry Fair was held on Sunday, September 21, during the Social Hour following worship. Members could check out the posters of the various committees, including the food pantry, and speak to the volunteers who come to help at the pantry every month.

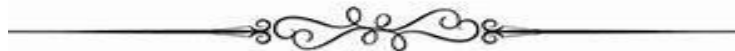
From October into November, the U.S. federal government shut down as Congress failed to pass appropriations legislation for 2026. Funding for various programs was withheld. Families faced hardships with no SNAP payments coming in (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

– formerly food stamps). Food pantries found themselves in the same situation. The Mission Committee made an urgent plea in November for everyone to consider giving extra financially to the food pantry. We were very pleased that the congregation responded with \$1,657.49 in contributions in just that one month. With those funds, it was possible for the pantry to purchase grocery gift cards for their patrons for their Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. In addition, members helped surpass our goal of 180 boxes of stuffing mix for the holidays by donating 259 boxes of stuffing mix.

A shopping cart to place donated food items can be found in the coatroom area next to the sanctuary. For 2025 a multitude of assorted food items were collected. During the year, we requested items missing from the pantry shelves but that were in demand and in need: pancake mix, pancake syrup, jelly, juice, coffee, baked beans, canned fruit, and instant potatoes. Other grocery items were always welcomed. We received a total of \$4,575.49 in monetary donations for the year. What incredible generosity! Please keep up the good work for this very necessary service we provide.

Thank you to everyone who donated packaged and canned groceries and/or monetary contributions in 2025. We have a great group of volunteers and have a lot of fun doing this kind of mission work. It is very rewarding knowing we have helped people who face a food shortage crisis and seeing how appreciative they are for the food we've given them. You can contact me anytime at (484) 274-2405 if you would like to learn more about the pantry and ways you could help there.

Gary Black
Whitehall Food Pantry Liaison



“Fun-Raising” Committee – 2025

The fundraising events scheduled by the “Fun-Raising” Committee in 2025 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 2025, offering both in-person meetings in Room 201 and Zoom meetings.

Members who served on the “Fun-Raising” Committee were Amy Feidler (Chairperson), Ginny Brokenshire, Bill Castello, Pastor Steve Davis, Brian Fisher, Jacke Maxon, Tom Moyer, Carol Raszler (Secretary), Lori Stocker, Karen Stoisits, Brian Strauss, and Barb Thomas.

This year our fundraisers realized a gross profit of \$19,810.90. The practice of tithing 10% of the profit from all our fundraisers for Mission Outreach continued in 2025. The tithing at the

end of the year amounted to \$1,981.08, which the Mission Committee designated to be distributed equally between the Lehigh Conference of Churches and the Whitehall Food Pantry—each receiving \$990.54.

On Sunday, September 21, a Ministry Fair was held in Fox Hall after worship. Posters from all the committees were on display, and the “Fun-Raising” Committee members could meet and greet and talk about the workings of the committee. We were pleased to have Jackie Maxon and Lori Stocker sign up and join our committee.

Dine and Donate Events and Give-Back Sales from various merchants were held in 2025. A certain percentage of the money from all sales was given back to St John’s. They included:

- Red Robin Restaurant (Allentown) – Monday, January 13.
- Texas Roadhouse (Trexlerstown) – Monday, March 10.
- P. J. Whelihan’s Pub & Grill (Bethlehem) – Monday, September 15.
- Grove Street Pub (Catasauqua) – Wednesday, October 15.
- Boscov’s “Friends Helping Friends” Coupons – Wednesday, October 22.
- Applebee’s “Burgers for a Cause” Coupons – Twice in 2025.
- 2025 Lehigh Valley SaveAround Books – sale extended from November 2024 into June 2025.
- 2026 Lehigh Valley SaveAround Books – sale began in November and extends into 2026.

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

- Mardi Gras Gift Card Bingo – Friday, February 28.
- Phantoms vs. Penguins Hockey – Sunday, March 16.
- Kentucky Derby Gift Card Bingo – Friday, May 2.
- IronPigs vs. Bisons Baseball Party Porch – Sunday, May 25.
- Basket Social & Bake Sale – Saturday, May 31 & Sunday, June 1.
- IronPigs vs. RailRiders Baseball Grandstand – Tuesday, August 5.
- Halloween Gift Card Bingo – Friday, October 17.
- 29th Annual Road Rally – Sunday, October 19. Dinner destination took us to Hometown Restaurant in Breinigsville. Thank you to Tom and Emilie Moyer for once again organizing this tradition.
- St. John’s Bazaar – Saturday, November 8.

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, March 27 & Sunday, March 30.
- Pastie Sale – Pickup Thursday, October 2 & Sunday, October 5.

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 three Friday-night bingo events were our biggest

fundraisers, making a gross profit of \$11,207.44. Food, beverages, and baked goods were available to purchase, most of which were donated. We also had 50/50 drawings and tricky trays to bid on. 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.

Besides the bingos, our other two big fundraisers were the Basket Social and Bake Sale and St. John’s Bazaar, both co-chaired by Amy Feidler and Carol Raszler. The Basket Social and Bake Sale was held for two days on May 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and on June 1 before and after worship. Thank you to the many people who donated baskets, gave money for the committee to purchase and assemble baskets, or baked items for the bake sale. We were fortunate to have 97 baskets and gift cards available for people to bid on with 61 winners out of 152 participants. The event earned a gross profit of \$3,182.00.

The committee tried something new this year in scheduling the St. John’s Bazaar on Saturday, November 8, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For a few months ahead of time, the congregation was asked to bring in new or used items they no longer needed or wanted. Departments were organized which included: appliances & small furniture, books & CDs, Coca Cola memorabilia, dishes & glassware, household décor, jewelry, knick knacks, linens, pots & pans & kitchen utensils, purses, seasonal décor, toys & games & puzzles & sports equipment. For the entire week before the Bazaar our group of 29 volunteers sorted, priced, and set out displays of the items received. Bill Fink and his crew made food available to purchase for lunch, and people made items for the candy and bake sale. Our crafters, “Keeping You in Stitches,” had a booth selling their craft items. At the end of the day, customers could come back and fill a grocery bag with any leftover items of their choice for \$5. Under the leadership of Gary Black and his fellow volunteers, any remaining items were taken to Good Will and to the Salvation Army. Some of the books were taken by Amy Feidler to the free library boxes located in neighborhoods throughout the Allentown area. Leftovers of soup, chili, BBQ, candy, and baked goods were then sold the next day before and after worship. This event proved to be a huge success, earning a gross profit of \$2,669.53, which did not include the craft sales.

The following Family Fun Nights were held in 2025:

- Super Bowl Tailgate Party & Family Feud Night – Saturday, February 15. The event was postponed from February 8 due to inclement weather. Participants wore clothing of their favorite football teams. The menu included chili, cornbread, dessert, and beverage. Everyone was asked to bring cans of soup for the “Souper Bowl of Caring,” which were donated to the Whitehall Food Pantry. Teams were formed and played Family Feud.
- Comedy Night & Meal – Saturday, April 26. People came for a lasagna meal, bread, salad, dessert, and beverage. Several people volunteered to be comedians and told jokes or funny stories. Clips of old Carol Burnett and Ellen DeGeneres shows were shown. The laughter and fun poured over into the next day for Holy Humor Sunday at worship.

- Movie & Ice Cream Night – Saturday, December 6. Choices of ice cream and toppings, popcorn, snacks, and beverages were served as members watched the hit movie “Wonka.”

It was with regret that we had to cancel our bus trips to Ocean City, New Jersey, on June 28 and our bus trip to New York City, New York, on December 13 due lack of response and not having enough seats reserved to fill a bus. We hope to have a better response to our bus trips in 2026.

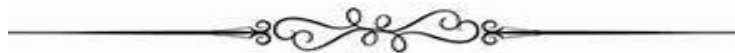
Throughout the year, the congregation continued to save Redner’s tapes and purchase grocery gift cards from Giant and Weis markets. We thank Tracey Glass and Tom Moyer for ordering the Weis gift cards; Barb Thomas for ordering the Giant gift cards; and Karen Stoisits for the awesome task of tallying and submitting the Redner’s sales tapes. All three together brought in a total gross profit of \$1,124.30.

We held our RaiseRight (formerly Scrip) Gift Card Sale in December with \$8,915.00 in gift cards being purchased by our members and friends for the holidays. We thank Karen Stoisits for compiling the orders along with Carol Raszler. The profit for this sale amounted to \$416.72. 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. Words of appreciation go to Bill Castello for all his great technological skills and ideas in creating wonderful bingos, family fun nights, and displays on the big screen in worship promoting our fundraising events.

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 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Feidler (Chairperson)
Carol Raszler (Secretary)



Healthcare Ministry - 2025

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 2025, St. John's Walkers totaled 70,443,539 steps which is 31,308.240 miles. Join us again in 2026.

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 2026. We always welcome new members.

May you all be blessed with good health throughout 2026.

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



Lady PEEPS Women's Group – 2025

Lady PEEPS Women's Group – 2025 The St. John's Lady PEEPS (*Positive Extraordinary Encouraging Prayerful Sisters*) Women's Group meets for fellowship from September to May. This monthly meeting, usually a Tuesday evening in Fox Hall, has become a welcoming place for women to gather, prayerfully share both joys and sorrows, learn and laugh. All ladies ages 18 and up are welcome to participate!

In order to focus on family commitments and her other leadership roles at the church, Colleen Kulhammer stepped down from leading the PEEPS group in June 2025. Colleen had overseen the program since it started in 2015. Regina Mohr agreed to step into the leadership role, with the assistance of interested members.

PEEPS meetings in 2025 were:

Jan. 21 - Guest Speaker Jeanette Eichenwald shared the journey of her parents, her father's imprisonment in a German concentration camp and the menorah that went with him.

Feb. 18 - Guest speaker Vicki Poole, founder of Connection Ubuntu, a computer skills training and technology support program in Africa

March 18 - "Life on a Roller Coaster" Guest speaker Rev. Cliff Herring, rollercoaster enthusiast

April 22 - Guest speaker DonnaLee Yeatts "The World of Honey and Tea"

May 10 - Saturday lunch gathering at Olive Garden in Whitehall

May 20 - Celebrate! Theme "Back to the 1980s"

Sept 23 - *Welcome Back! Now what?* Participants share ideas for future PEEPS meetings and activities

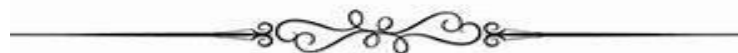
Oct. 21 - Game night and snacks

Nov 18 - Guest speaker Samantha "Sam" Kistler, St. John's Ministry Intern

Dec 17 - Lunch gathering at City View Diner

Note: In considering the schedules and daytime-driving preferences of many of our members, the Lady PEEPS may plan to get together during daylight hours at a local place of interest in addition to/in place of evening meetings at the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Mohr



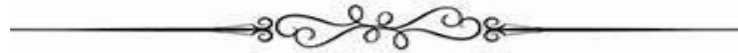
The Men of St. John's – 2025

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, Todd Fennell, Cliff Herring, David Mohr, and Dennis Schappell took turns to lead discussions on a variety of faith issues. We usually average about 12 men in attendance.

It is with sadness that we mention the passing in December of both Bob Bold and Rev. David Mohr. Bob was instrumental in the formation of the Men's Breakfast and leadership of the group over the past ten years. He was responsible for getting the speakers and reserving the

restaurant for our meetings. Rev. Mohr was one of our speakers and provided interesting lessons and discussions over the course of several years. Both members will be sorely missed.

As 2025 comes to a close and we move ahead in 2026, we invite all men from St. John's to join our monthly gathering for breakfast and fellowship and encourage you to bring a friend.



Mission Committee – 2025

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 2025—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. We also welcomed Emma Rarich to the committee to learn more about Pinebrook Family Answers and how we could include this non-profit in our mission giving. Various members served as chairpersons at our meetings.

The following Mission Projects were carried out by the Mission Committee in 2025:

➤ CROP WALK: The CROP Walk was held on Sunday, October 19, 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. A thank you goes to Karen Stoitsits for participating in the walk. Contributions from our members amounted to \$922.00. The event teamed up with St. John's Healthcare Ministry for its fall Walking Challenge.

➤ GENERAL DISASTER RELIEF FUND: The United States experienced several disasters throughout the year including wildfires, hurricanes, and floods. The ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia also found our members responding to the needs of the Ukrainian people. Listed below are the following Disaster Relief Funds to which St. John's contributed:

- HURRICANE DISASTER RELIEF: The aftermath of Category 4 Hurricane Helene in late September 2024, followed almost two weeks later on October 4 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. St. John's sent \$1,050.00 in donations to UCC National for hurricane relief. St. John's also participated in aid through Church World Service and attempted to collect items for CWS's Clean-Up Bucket Kits from 2024 into 2025. While the response wasn't what we hoped for in bucket supplies, we never had enough of the required items to complete the bucket kits. The committee decided not to purchase any of the missing items but

that better use of the monetary contributions would be to send the remaining \$869.00 directly to CWS for them to purchase the necessary bucket supplies and help pay for shipping and processing costs. The few bucket items we did receive either remained at St. John's or were given to other non-profits.

- CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES DISASTER RELIEF: Unprecedented in size, speed, and destruction, raging wildfires occurred in California in February. Many homes and businesses were burnt to the ground; entire neighborhoods were wiped out; and lives were lost. The fires were exacerbated by drought conditions, low humidity, a build-up of vegetation from the previous winter, and hurricane-force Santa Ana winds. Because of our members, contributions amounting to \$1,585.00 were received and sent to UCC National. In addition, we learned from our former Visitation Pastor, Rev. David Quinn, that his son's family lost their home and belongings in the wildfires, and \$900.00 in donations from members were given to the family.
- "SEVERE STORMS" DISASTER RELIEF: In July, Texas and other parts of the country experienced catastrophic flooding resulting in loss of homes, businesses, and property. Many lives were lost including campers and counselors at Camp Mystic, a Christian summer camp for girls. St. John's members again responded by sending \$685.00 to UCC National. Additional funds were received by the end of the year, and \$130.00 will be sent to UCC National the beginning of 2026.
- UKRAINE DISASTER RELIEF: Our outreach for this war effort ended in December 2024; however, an additional \$50.00 was received in 2025 and was sent to UCC National for Ukraine Relief. This war began on February 24, 2022, when Russia attacked Ukraine. As the war rages on today, we pray for a just and equitable peace.

➤ MINISTRY FAIR: After worship on September 21, a Ministry Fair was held in Fox Hall during the Social Hour. Posters describing the various committees at St. John's were on display. Each committee had a spokesperson to share the function of their committee with the congregation.

➤ "OPERATION SANTA" – MITTEN TREE PROJECT: 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 Pinebrook Family Answers. A total of \$1,045.00 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 \$955.00. The funds were used to purchase gift certificates to Phoebe's beauty salon and barber shop and to Phoebe's gift shop for Phoebe's residents.
- PINEBROOK FAMILY ANSWERS – Through Pinebrook's "High Fidelity Wraparound Program," which assists youth and their families experiencing poverty and mental health issues, donations were received in the amount of \$590.00. The funds were used to purchase

Christmas gifts on their client's "wish lists" and they were able to take the youth bowling for a fun-filled event over the holidays.

- PINEBROOK FAMILY ANSWERS EASTER BASKETS: In April the congregation generously donated Easter baskets filled with candies, goodies, widgets, and other items for the children and youth attending the "High Fidelity Wraparound Program" at Pinebrook.
- 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 during the month of July and with a drive-by on July 19. The congregation donated over 1,900 school items. It included 21 backpacks, 3 calculators, 990 sheets of loose-leaf notepaper, 15 boxes of crayons, 348 pencils, 42 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.

For the months of January into February, 354 cans of soup and \$160.00 were collected for the "Souper Bowl of Caring." We surpassed our goal of 250 cans of soup. We also joined forces with the "Fun-Raising" Committee on February 8 to have a Super Bowl Tailgate Party & Family Feud Night where people were also asked to bring in cans of soup.

For the Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, we received 259 boxes or bags of stuffing mix. We surpassed our goal of 180 boxes.

Thank you to everyone who donated canned and packaged groceries in 2025. Your monetary donations for the entire year amounted to \$4,575.49. A critical time happened from October 1 to November 12 when the federal government shut down due to Congress failing to pass appropriations legislation for the 2026 fiscal year. Vital programs like SNAP (food stamps) were disrupted, forcing millions in the United States to turn to food pantries for emergency food. In November, because of this crisis, we initiated a special offering campaign to encourage people to give more financially towards the pantry and \$1,657.49 was received.

In 2025 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, OCWM 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 \$11,393.00 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 \$470.00 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 \$365.00 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 \$440.00 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 \$260.00 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 \$1,224.51. The Mission Committee designated the 2025 profit to be given to St. John's Property Fund to be used towards the purchase of a new kitchen stove in 2026.

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 \$1,981.08, which was divided equally among the following charities or organizations:

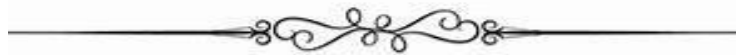
- LEHIGH CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES – \$990.54. The LCC is a joint ministry that includes 145 congregations and faith-based organizations. They provide essential services to the community focusing on hunger, homelessness, and mental health. They also provide free meals at their soup kitchen, assist former inmates as they return to society, and promote unity among the faith communities. LCC is located at the former Dubbs Memorial UCC, 457 Allen St., in Allentown.
- WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY – \$990.54. Due to cutbacks in federal funding in October and November, the food pantry was in need of contributions in order to purchase food for their patrons who depend on the food pantry for their groceries. Volunteers from St.

John's participate the fourth Monday of every month to sort, stock shelves, and distribute food to the pantry's patrons. The food pantry is located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd., in Whitehall.

When St. John's held the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on November 24, the free-will offering received was given to the Northampton Food Pantry and the Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative. Over \$150.00 was received in offering.

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 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Raszler (Secretary)
Mission Committee



Music Ministry - 2025

*Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.
Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.
Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,
praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.*

The Music Ministry of St. John's continues to be a vital expression of faith, fellowship, and service within our congregation and beyond. Through worship leadership, shared community life, and outreach, the ministry reflects the heart and mission of St. John's.

WE WORSHIP: Music remains central to our worship life, offering prayer, proclamation, and praise through song. This year was one of meaningful growth. The Bell Choir joyfully welcomed one new member, bringing the ensemble to seven dedicated ringers. Likewise, the Chancel

Choir experienced significant growth, welcoming four new members and now standing at 26 voices strong. Yes, nine new members over three years! It's a director's dream come true!

Together, these musicians enrich our worship week after week, supporting congregational singing and offering choral pieces that deepen our encounter with God. Their commitment, preparation, and shared ministry continue to strengthen the worship experience at St. John's.

WE LOVE: The Music Ministry also seeks to build community through fellowship and shared experiences. In February, we celebrated our first annual Music Ministry Spaghetti Luncheon, a joyful mid-morning of food, laughter, and connection that brought members together in a new and meaningful way. In October, we hosted our first annual Music Ministry Breakfast, creating another opportunity for fellowship, gratitude, and reflection. These gatherings strengthened relationships within the ministry and affirmed the joy of serving together as one body.

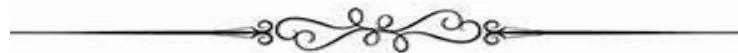
WE SERVE: At its core, the Music Ministry is a ministry of service. It represents the voices of St. John's—offering song as a witness to faith, hope, and love. Through worship leadership, special services, and seasonal celebrations, the ministry serves the congregation with dedication and humility.

Looking beyond our walls, the Music Ministry is also committed to giving back to the wider community. This year, we celebrated our fourth annual Service of the Nativity, an evening truly meaningful for the church and community. In 2026, plans are underway for the first-ever Hymn Festival Concert at St. John's, an event intended to invite the community into worship through shared song, scripture, and praise.

The Music Ministry is deeply grateful for the continued support, encouragement, and participation of the St. John's congregation. As we look ahead, we remain committed to worshipping faithfully, loving generously, and serving joyfully—all to the glory of God.

Musically Yours

Patrick Sandt,
Director of Music Ministries



Personnel Committee - 2025

The staff at St. John's remained steady in 2025 except for one custodial position, which had to be replaced and filled twice this past year after the retirement of Bob Czekner in 2024. We thank Sean Hartman for filling in during the first three months of 2025 and Michelle Gutekunst

and Christina Bach for helping to keep our church clean and well-maintained throughout the year.

Michelle also conducted interviews and training of our custodial staff while the Personnel Committee called the references and talked to some of the candidates. In September we welcomed Geoffrey Jackson to the vacant St. John's custodial staff position.

We were fortunate to have Samantha "Sam" Kistler join us as our Ministry Intern in August. She is currently enrolled as a Master of Ministry student at Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem. She works primarily with the children and youth of the church as well as participating in Sunday morning worship services and other activities.

The Personnel Committee continued to meet and be available for the rest of the staff throughout the year.

Those who served on the Personnel Committee were Paul Raszler (Chair), Carole O'Connell (Secretary), Pastor Steve Davis, Sharon Czekner, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Brian Strauss, and Dewey Yeatts.

Paul Raszler (Chair)
Personnel Committee



Property Committee - 2025

The property committee had a busy and challenging year. From painting the sanctuary to changing light bulbs we try, along with the custodial staff, to keep our house of worship in tiptop shape.

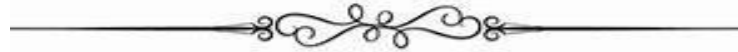
The biggest and most important task was getting approval to sign the contract and make the down payment for the elevator upgrade. I would like to thank Wayne Lichtenwalner for all the hours and hard work involved in getting this major job done.

Other jobs include replacing floor tiles in the learning center, new water coolers to replace the old ones. Estimates are being studied to upgrade the electrical system and new carpeting in the sanctuary.

With last summer's extreme weather, landscaping was a real challenge. Trying to keep the grounds looking good in that heat showed we serve no matter what. This led to contracting someone to do the job.

Anyone interested in painting, doing minor handyman tasks or just helping with ideas or projects to keep our house of worship beautiful and safe join us on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm.

Committee members: Bruce Pope (Chair), Charlie Apple, Constance Arnold, Gary Black, Bill Castello, Bob Czekner, Pastor Steve Davis, Michelle Gutekunst, Geoffrey Jackson, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Pete Mohr, Adam Rarich



STARS Team – 2025

(St. John’s Technical and Artistic Resources)

Introduction

The St. John’s UCC STARS team oversees the technical and artistic resources that support worship, programming, and community life within the church. As we move through 2026, our work is guided by a simple commitment: *No Matter What*. No matter the age of our systems, the complexity of the work, or the constraints of time and budget, the team remains focused on providing dependable, thoughtful, and high-quality technical support for worship and fellowship.

Over the past year, the STARS team has made steady progress through visible upgrades and important behind-the-scenes planning, laying the groundwork for continued improvements in the year ahead.

Key Achievements and Ongoing Work

Enhanced Live Stream Capabilities

In response to the ongoing demand for high-quality livestreamed services, the STARS team invested in three OBSBOT Tail Air cameras to provide multiple viewing angles and more dynamic visual coverage. These cameras enhance the overall professionalism of our broadcasts and better reflect the life and movement of the sanctuary for online participants.

To maintain real-time video during worship, the cameras are connected using physical cables instead of operating wirelessly. Wireless connections can cause slight audio and video delays, while direct cabling keeps everything properly synchronized.

The cabling required for this setup will be completed in-house by the STARS team as part of our broader infrastructure improvements. Full implementation of the wired camera system is planned for Spring 2026.

Audio Enhancements for Children’s Faith Formation

This past year, the STARS team focused on improving the media environment used for children’s faith formation. Updates to the sound system in St. John’s Movie Theater have created clearer, fuller audio that supports storytelling, music, and video-based learning. These improvements benefit both weekly programming and special events, helping children remain engaged and focused.

Dedicated Technology for Faith Formation

To support consistency and ease of use, the team established a dedicated laptop specifically for children’s faith formation programming. Maintaining a single, reliable system has reduced setup time, minimized technical interruptions, and allowed educators and volunteers to focus on content rather than troubleshooting.

Continued Use of ProPresenter

The STARS team continues to build on the successful transition to ProPresenter for worship service production. This platform supports improved visual consistency, smoother transitions, and more effective integration of multimedia content. Ongoing refinement of ProPresenter workflows has strengthened service presentation and increased flexibility during live worship.

Audiovisual Support Beyond Worship

Beyond Sunday services, the STARS team provides audiovisual setup and support for a wide range of church and community events, including bingo nights, movie nights, and special gatherings. This behind-the-scenes work helps ensure events run smoothly and remain welcoming, accessible, and engaging for all participants.

Infrastructure Improvements

The STARS team is actively working to strengthen and modernize the church’s technical infrastructure. In December, the team consulted with Lehigh Electric, who located original paperwork and drawings from 1978 related to the installation of the dimmer panel that provides power to the overhead sanctuary lighting. Access to this documentation has been essential for understanding the existing system and planning responsible upgrades—no matter what future changes are required.

Over the past year, several energy-efficient and modern lighting and technology updates have been installed throughout the building, with additional improvements planned. Multiple vendors have consulted with the STARS team to help evaluate options for updating key lighting and sound systems, offering guidance that supports both short-term improvements and long-range planning.

Looking Ahead in 2026

During 2026, the STARS team plans to begin incorporating vendor recommendations that will further enrich the worship experience in the sanctuary. The focus remains on thoughtful, mission-driven improvements that enhance worship, music, and congregational participation—no matter what challenges arise related to budget, scheduling, or infrastructure limitations.

Technical Booth Redesign

Plans are underway to redesign the technical booth at the rear of the sanctuary. A new platform and enclosure are being designed to support a flexible desk arrangement that accommodates two to three people at a time. This redesign will improve workflow, ergonomics, visibility, and collaboration for those supporting worship and special events.

In addition, space reclaimed from Pastor Steve's office—originally a secondary doorway—will be repurposed to house new rack-mounted equipment. This change will improve organization, accessibility, and long-term maintainability of the church's technical systems.

Stewardship and In-House Work

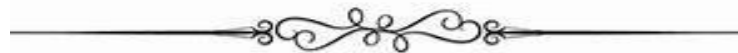
The team evaluated proposals from an outside company to run new cabling required for upcoming upgrades. After receiving a quote that was determined to exceed a reasonable cost, the STARS committee decided to complete this work in-house. By doing so, the church will save a significant amount of money while maintaining control over quality and scheduling—demonstrating careful stewardship and adaptability, no matter what constraints we encounter.

Collaboration and Conclusion

This work reflects the dedication and shared expertise of the STARS team, along with the support of volunteers, staff, and partners who make this ministry possible. Together, we remain committed to serving St. John's UCC with care, creativity, and responsible stewardship. In 2026 and beyond, no matter what challenges arise, we will continue to support worship and community life with intention and excellence.

Team Members

Bill Castello, Pastor Steve Davis, Wendy Fox, Elijah Fox, Jesus Pagan, Donna Lee Yeatts
St. John's UCC STARS Team — technical and artistic partners in worship and fellowship.



Visitation Committee - 2025

The Committee has been busy this year with making personal visits, making phone calls, and sending cards to our homebound residents. Our mission is to assure them that we haven't forgotten them. Each contact we make is appreciated.

We were busy preparing the annual Christmas goodie bags for each resident and delivering them before Christmas. During these visits we shared stories and laughs. They all thanked St. John's UCC, Fullerton for remembering them.

Toward the end of the year, we were saddened by the passing of a number of our members.

If you would like to join our committee, please contact one of the members or the church office.

Visitation Committee members: Sharon Antrim, Pastor Steve Davis, Jean McGonigle, Betty Millham, Grace Mohr, Carole O'Connell, Barbara Seeds, and Lori Stocker.

Wording for Constitution & By-Law Updates:

Motion to Adjust Language for each of the following sections to update the Name of the Conference and the Association for our governance structure of St. John's Constitution and Bylaws.

The Congregation shall be a member of the **MOUNTAIN VALLEY ASSOCIATION** of the **KEYSTONE CONFERENCE** of the United Church of Christ, **or their successor entities.**

ARTICLE III - POLITY

This Church shall be a **part** of the United Church of Christ and shall sustain that relationship to the national church and the General Synod by affiliation as a local church of the **Penn Northeast Conference.**

ARTICLE VIII - PROPERTY

Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift, or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution may be transferred to the **Penn Northeast Conference** of the United Church of Christ or any of its succeeding bodies. Since this is not required by the General Synod, the congregation may, during its discussion of such possible dissolution and in consultation with the **Penn Northeast Conference** Minister, decide by congregational vote to transfer all or portions of its assets to a qualifying not-for-profit organization (or organizations) qualifying for tax-exempt status pursuant to section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

SECTION 3 - PASTOR(S)

As soon as a pastoral vacancy becomes known, it shall be reported to the Conference Minister. An interim minister or supply pastor approved by the **Penn Northeast Conference** shall be sought and secured to temporarily fill the pastoral vacancy. This person shall be approved by Consistory.

SECTION 3 – A -SEARCH COMMITTEE

2 The Pastoral Search Committee shall seek the counsel of the **Penn Northeast Conference Placement Committee.**

SECTION 3 – B -THE CALL

3. When a Senior Pastor is elected, the Pastoral Search Committee shall work with the Senior Pastor and the **Penn Northeast Conference** to schedule and hold a service of installation.