

# St. John's UCC, Fullerton

575 Grape Street † Whitehall PA 18052  
www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org † 610-264-8421



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

**January 7, 2024  
Epiphany Sunday  
9:30am**

# *The Order of Worship*

## *~ We Worship ~*

**\* Those who are comfortably able, please stand**

*Welcome to St. John's UCC, Fullerton!*

*We are a place where love can grow!*

*As the music begins, please find your place and quietly center your spirit for our worship of God together.*

***Our Offering** is received as we gather for worship, with plates located on pedestals at the back. We graciously accept your gifts to God of praise and gratitude, to be presented during the service. While guests are welcome to contribute, please know there is no obligation; the financial support of our church is primarily the responsibility of our congregation members.*

***Children's Faith Formation** is integrated into the early part of our worship service in the sanctuary, including the Children's Message. The children then proceed to Room 101 for the 'Blessed to Be a Blessing' lesson. Parents are invited to accompany their children to the classroom for a brief orientation and to sign them in. Children should be picked up from Room 101 following the worship service.*

### **Music to Prepare our Hearts for Worship**

*Lullaby Jesus*

*Arr. by Gilbert M. Martin*

### **Chimes**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Steven Davis

- Welcome to Our Guests – please sign the red guest book!
- Packing Up Christmas following our Sunday Social time
- Baptismal Renewal next Sunday.
- Movie Night & Super Bowl Tailgate Party, Saturday, February 3
- Committee & Group Reports for Annual Report due next Sunday
- Annual Meeting & Potluck Lunch, February 4 following worship

### **\*Greeting and Sharing the Peace of Christ**

**One:** May the peace of Christ be with you.

**All:** **And also with you!**

**\*Call to Worship**

Liturgist: Robin Brensinger

One: O Come, Let us Adore Him, Christ the Lord!

**All: The Star in the dark sky heralded His Coming.**

One: Led by the light of the Star, the Wise Ones came to pay homage.

**All: We, too, come to the stable, seeking the infant King.**

One: Come, Arise! Shine! The Light has come.

**All: God's Light of love is shining upon us. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Verses 1,2, and 4

*found on page 3 of the bulletin*

**Call to Confession**

Liturgist: Robin Brensinger

*Composed by Bruce Prewer*

One: Wherever there is epiphany there will also be darkness: the darkness of old superstitions and dogmas which refuse to fade away easily; the darkness of pride in the half truths that have masqueraded as wisdom; the darkness of entrenched evil that hates the light and tries to dispose of it; the darkness of apathy that cannot be bothered to open the shutters.

**All: Most holy and most loving God, we admit to you and to each other, that we are creatures who either through foolishness or wilfulness often choose darkness instead of light. Here and now we surrender to you our fears and proud opinions, our short-sighted folly and our pompous wisdom, our deep seated sins and our apathy towards change and renewal. Please forgive the darkness and pain we have inflicted on others, and restore the light-starved hopes and ideals within our own souls.**

One: Trusting your grace, we earnestly pray: "Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us." Through Christ Jesus our Savior.

**All: Amen!**

*(Time for Silent Prayer)*

## Angels, from the Realms of Glory 189

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
 2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
 3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
 4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear,

you who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light:  
 seek the great De - sire of na - tions, you have seen the na - tal star:  
 sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

Liturgist: Robin Brensinger

**One:** My friends, Epiphany is good news! The Light comes not to sear and blind us but to save us. Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners. In our prayer we hear his declaration, "Yours sins are forgiven!"

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**One:** We receive our forgiveness with thanksgiving and live without shame or anxiety.

**All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ enables us. Amen!**

## Children's Message

Rev. Davis

Children and youth are welcome to come up to the chancel steps.

## \*Hymn

*We Three Kings*  
Verses 1,2, and 5

*found on page 5 of the bulletin.*

## \*Scripture Reading

*Matthew 2: 1-12*  
Scripture Reader: Regi Mohr

One: The word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## Sermon

Rev. Steve Davis

**Fully Alive!**  
**Wisdom from Howard Thurman**

## Anthem

*The Journey*  
Lloyd Larson

*~We Love~*

## Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Davis

Holy One, we come to this time of prayer sharing our little lives,  
our big problems—these we place upon Your altar,  
as we offer ourselves in prayer for these we share and name...

*Prayers of the people are shared and concludes with...*

We rejoice this day to say:

Our little lives, our big problems—these we place upon Your altar!

All of this we pray in your many names, you whose star still shines  
and guides us to your grace as you taught us to pray...

## We Three Kings of Orient Are 233

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are, bear - ing gifts we trav - erse a - far,  
 2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,  
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I, in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;  
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;  
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;

field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.  
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.  
 prayer and prais - ing, voic - es rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God on high.  
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

*Refrain*

O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,

west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

WORDS and MUSIC: John H. Hopkins, Jr. (1820-1891), alt.

KINGS OF ORIENT  
8.8.8.6.Ref.

## The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come.**

**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen**

## Sacrament of Holy Communion

*Please sign the communion book in the back of the church  
if you have not done so at a service of communion in 2024.*

**We Are an Inclusive Community!**

**In the United Church of Christ, we observe an**

**“Open Communion.” ALL persons are welcome to receive  
the gifts of God’s grace and love with us at the table.**

**In The UCC, ALL means ALL!**

## The Invitation to Receive

**One:** Holy are you, Eternal One. You sit above, through, and within the circle of the earth, setting light into being, casting the stars in the sky, founding the evolving earth and all that dwell within it.

**All:** **Limitless is your power, and great is your wisdom. You look upon the lowly as your most cherished creatures. You visit upon the downtrodden with presence, grace, and the promise of eternal justice. You sent to us your own child, Jesus, who reached into unexpected places, calling women beyond the limits of their times, equipping men for nurturing love, and welcoming children into your holy embrace.**

**One:** Dear God, you transform. You transform all that is before you so that at the touch of your grace, we are never the same.

**All:** **You bring light to all peoples, Light to the nations, Light into our hearts, Light on your Way.**

One: We pray for your Spirit. Transform, illumine, bless. Make these ordinary gifts of bread and cup into the extraordinary presence of Christ with us.

**All: In so doing, hold us as your own, renew us as your people for the sake of the world you love.**

## **Words of Institution and Consecration**

### **Sharing the Meal**

*The elements will be passed in the pew, and we will receive the bread and eat at the same time, then the cup passed and all drink together.*

One: The body of Christ, given for us.

**All: Amen**

One: The cup of our salvation, given for us.

**All: Amen**

### **Music During Communion**

*What Child is This*

*found on page 8 of the bulletin*

*Introduction, Verse 1 as element of bread is received.*

*Instrumental, Verse 2 as element of wine/juice is received.*

*Instrumental, Verse 3 as the elements are returned to the table.*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Rev. Davis

**All: We have been fed, Holy One, by your presence. We have been led, Eternal One, by your light. May we bask in this glow now and forevermore. Amen.**



## What Child Is This

184

Em D/F# G D Em Am/C B

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Ma-ry's lap is sleep-ing?  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come peas-ant, king, to own him;

Em D/F# G D Em Am B Esus Em

Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet, while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?  
 God Chris-tian, fear: for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.  
 the King of kings sal - va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.

*Refrain*

Bm G D Em Am/C B

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;  
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
 Raise, raise the song on high, the Vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

Bm G D Em Am B Esus Em

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!  
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!  
 joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Ma - ry!

WORDS: William C. Dix (1837-1898)

MUSIC: English melody, 16th c.; arr. Christmas Carols New and Old, 1871

GREENSLEEVES

8.7.8.7.Ref.

# Offering Our Gifts, Tithes and Offerings to God



Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness in supporting the ministry of St. John's UCC!

## \*Doxology

## Christmas Doxology

### Christmas Doxology

(tune: *United Methodist Hymnal* no. 229)

G D G C D7 G

Glo-ry be to God the Fa-ther, glo-ry be to Christ the Son, glo-ry

D G C D7 G C Am

to the Ho-ly Spir-it, glo-ry to the Three-in-One. Here we of-fer to you

D Bm Em Am D C

glad-ly all the gifts that you im-part, as we

G C D7 Em C G C D7 G

glo-ry in your Pre-sence, giv-ing from a grate-ful heart.

WORDS: Brenda J. Heard  
 MUSIC: Traditional Polish melody

W ZLOBIE LEZY  
 8.7.8.7.8.8.7.

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**\*Prayer of Dedication**

Liturgist: Robin Brensinger

**All: God of Light, we present these gifts with love. We rejoice in our ability to share, but long to do more. Help us to be like the magi and carefully plan the gifts we bring you. May we not be satisfied with what is enough, but instead be inspired to do more. May these gifts be used so others may know the hope that is found in you. In your name, we pray. Amen.**

*~ We Serve ~*

**\*Closing Hymn**

*As with Gladness Men of Old*  
Verses 1, 3, And 4

*found on page 11 of the bulletin*

**\*The Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Postlude on Dix*  
Arr. by Noel Rawesthorne

*When the altar candles have been extinguished, our time of worship is concluded and our service in the world continues. The Benediction and Postlude send us out to be the people of God in our community.*

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**Our Worship & Faith Formation Sunday Schedule**

**8:30am Adult Faith Formation**

- Friendship Sunday School Class

**9:30am Worship / Children's Faith Formation**

- with Sunday Social time following worship

**11:00am Confirmation Class and other Youth**

## As with Gladness

1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing  
 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped to that low - ly  
 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at that man - ger  
 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - ery day keep us in the

star be - hold; as with joy they hailed its light,  
 man - ger bed, there to bend the knee be - fore  
 rude and bare, so may we with ho - ly joy,  
 nar - row way; and when earth - ly things are past,

lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright, so, most gra - cious  
 him whom heaven and earth a - dore, so, may we with  
 pure and free from sin's al - loy, all our cost - liest  
 bring our ran - somed souls at last where they need no

Lord, may we ev - er - more your splen - dor see.  
 will - ing feet ev - er seek the mer - cy seat.  
 treas - ures bring, Christ, to you, our heaven - ly King.  
 star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.

WORDS: William C. Dix (1837-1898), alt.  
 MUSIC: Conrad Kocher (1786-1872)

DIX  
 7.7.7.7.7.

## Attendance – December 31

Onsite – 83 Online - 18

### Serving in Worship Leadership

#### January 7

Liturgist – Robin Brensinger  
Ushers – Consistory  
Acolyte – Open

Scripture Reader – Open  
Worship Tech – Elijah Fox  
Social Hour Host – Colleen Kulhamer

#### January 14

Liturgist – Nancy Bowman  
Ushers – Charlotte Kerrigan,  
Karen Stoitsits  
Acolyte – Open

Scripture Reader – Robin Brensinger  
Worship Tech – Bill Castello  
Social Hour Host – Open

### In Our Prayers

Please remember in your prayers all those who are ill, in our area hospitals, or otherwise in need of prayer: Clarence Biehn, Samuel, Nick and Amanda Devaney, Tracey Glass, Geraldine Keim. Joey Raszler, Dale Serfass, Tessa, Zoey and Aiden.

Continued prayers for those suffering from natural disasters across the world as well as the war against Ukraine by Russia, and the war between Israel and Hamas, and the Palestinian people. Pray for all the innocents killed and suffering in Gaza. Pray for actions to change policy and practice.

Continued prayers for those in our military, especially Dominic DeMilio.

If you or a family member is admitted to the hospital, tell them you are a member of St. John's or use the church code, **473**.

If you have someone for us to remember in prayer, please contact the church office.

### ST. JOHN'S SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship for 2024 is now available for anyone wishing to sponsor the following: Altar flowers are \$25.00 a vase, Bulletins are \$20, Wheat Basket, where the donation will go to the Food Pantry, is \$15, and the monthly newsletter is \$100.00. Please contact the church office for additional information or to sign up!

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

Articles for the Annual Report are due to the church office by Sunday, **January 14<sup>th</sup>**. Your report should address the theme: “Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives.” If you are a committee chair, you need to turn in a report! Any questions, call the office.

## **WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY**

For January, we will be collecting canned corn, canned fruit and spaghetti sauce. A shopping cart can be found in the coatroom area by the sanctuary where you can place your food donations. Monetary contributions are always accepted and can be forwarded to the church office or by online or text giving. If you would like to volunteer at the food pantry, please contact Gary Black at 484-274-2405 or email at [gary.t.black@outlook.com](mailto:gary.t.black@outlook.com).

## **GRIEF SUPPORT ~ HEALTHCARE MINISTRY**

You are invited to attend a grief support group at Asbury UM Church, 1533 Springhouse Rd., Allentown on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 1pm in the upper-level Parlor and is led by Rev. Evelyn Stupp, Asbury’s Pastor of Bereavement and Care Ministries. Please contact her at [estupp@asburylv.org](mailto:estupp@asburylv.org) or 610-428-9095 for more details and to indicate your interest. The next support gathering is **Tuesday, January 23**.

## **GET YOUR APPLEBEE’S COUPON**

Applebee’s “Burgers for a Cause” are still available for \$10 each. They do not expire and can be used at any Applebee’s in the Lehigh Valley. The coupon entitles you to any hamburger on their menu and fries. See Kenda Catalini or contact her at (484)358-7453 or email at [kpcatalini@aol.com](mailto:kpcatalini@aol.com).

## **REDNER’S SAVE-A-TAPE**

Thanks to all of you who bring in receipts from Redner’s. They do have some guidelines we need to follow. The whole receipt, and it needs to say Save-A-Tape. If you are not a member of Redner’s Save-A-Tape program, please join – then make sure you use your customer card as you check out. If you use a charge card and do not want any numbers to show on the receipt, you can black them out. Thanks for your support.

## **GENERAL DISASTER RELIEF FUND FOR UKRAINE**

War didn't stop with the holidays. As the war in Ukraine reaches its third year, we are grateful to the UCC, along with their partners in Ukraine, for their commitment to continue giving humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian people. If you would like to make a contribution to UCC National for its work in the Ukraine, please mail your donation into the church office, place it in the offering plate, or contribute online or by text. You can also find General Disaster Fund envelopes on the table in the lounge area. Be sure to put "Ukraine Relief Fund" in the memo section.

## **MOVIE NIGHT & SUPER BOWL TAILGATE PARTY**

Regardless of what team is going to the Super Bowl this year, we have a celebration planned with a Movie and Tailgate Party. Join us on **Saturday, February 3**, down in Fox Hall for another family fun event. Bring a covered dish for the meal starting at 6:00 pm. The movie "80 for Brady" will be shown at 7:00 pm. We suggest you bring a comfortable lawn chair for watching the movie. Donations of cans of soup are also requested for the "Souper Bowl of Caring" fundraiser for the Whitehall Food Pantry. **Look for the sign-up sheet posted in the lounge area and plan on coming.** If you have any questions, please see Bill Castello or Carol Raszler.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## MONTHLY OFFERINGS

DECEMBER 2023

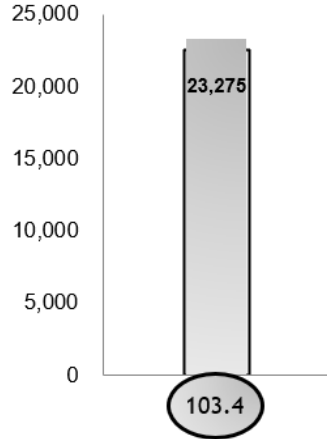
Overall	
Overall Target	22,500.00
Overall Total	23,275.17
Overall Percent	103.4%

Last Week	
Start:	12/28/23
End:	1/3/24
Total:	2,570.00

<i>Amt needed to reach Target</i>	
DECEMBER 2023	(775.17)

### Progress

- Overall Target
- Overall Total



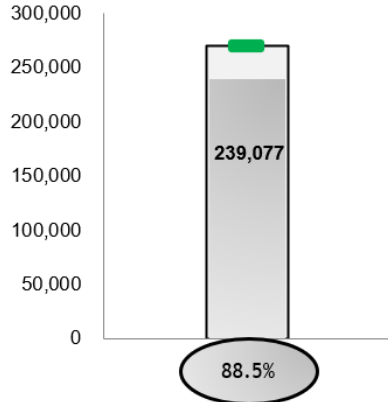
## YTD OFFERINGS

DECEMBER 2023

Overall	
Overall Target	270,000.00
On Track Target	270,000.00
Overall Total	239,077.09
Overall Percent	88.5%

### Progress

- Overall Target
- Overall Total
- On Track Target





## Church Calendar for the Week of Jan 7<sup>th</sup> through Jan 14<sup>th</sup>

Sun 1/7	8:30 am	Friendship Class
	9:30 am	Worship/Communion
	9:30 am	Faith Formation
	10:30 am	Social Hour
	11:00 am	Confirmation
Mon 1/8	6:00 pm	Personnel
Tues 1/9	10:30 am	Visitation Committee
	1:30 pm	Staff Meeting
	6:30 pm	Stewardship and Finance
Wed 1/10	9:00 am	Verso Chat
	6:30 pm	Zumba
	6:30 pm	STARs
	7:00 pm	SAA Recovery Group
Thurs 1/11	6:30 pm	Mission Committee
	7:00 pm	Choir
Sat 1/13	9:00 am	Zumba
Sun 1/14	8:30 am	Friendship Class
	9:30 am	Worship – Baptism of Christ Consistory Installation
	9:30 am	Faith Formation
	10:30 am	Social Hour
	11:00 am	Confirmation

## OUR STAFF

Senior Pastor	Rev. Steve Davis srpastor@sjuccf.org
Director of Music Ministries	Patrick Sandt music@sjuccf.org
Office Administrator	Alison Berger Boor officesecretary@sjuccf.org
Treasurer	Sue Weldner sbweldner@gmail.com
Financial Secretary & Coordinating Custodian	Michelle Gutekunst (FS) financialsecretary@sjuccf.org (CC) custodians@sjuccf.org
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