St. John's UCC, Fullerton

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

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
World Communion Sunday

October 4, 2026
9:30 am

We Worship

We are proudly an Open & Affirming (ONA) Congregation of the Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ!

You are WELCOME HERE!

Our Offering *is received as we gather for worship, with plates located on pedestals at the back. We graciously accept your gifts of praise and gratitude to God, 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.*

Sunday Social *is a time to gather for light refreshments and a time for connection, visiting, making new friends, and building relationships. Join us in Fox Hall following worship each Sunday, hosted by various congregants and groups.*

Children's Faith Formation *begins in the early part of our worship service in the sanctuary, including the Children's Message. Parents are asked to accompany their child if they are at the kids' table in the back. On Communion Sundays the children remain in the worship service.*

Hymnal Abbreviations
WR—*Worship and Rejoice* ***NC****—New Century Hymnal*

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

Chimes

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Steven Davis

- Oct. 4, World Communion Sunday and Road Rally (1:30pm)
- Oct. 16, BINGO – How you can help – pg. 15
- Oct. 18, CROP Walk – See information on pg. 16
- Nov. 1, Samantha Kistler Ordination Service, 3:00pm

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

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
All: And also with you!

Music to Prepare our Hearts for Worship *This One Table*
Arranged by Joel Raney

Choir of St. John's

***Call to Worship** Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere

One: Today we gather with believers from every nation, every language, every culture, and every land.

All: We come to worship the One who calls us together as one body.

One: Christ calls us beyond comfort and convenience.

All: We come ready to take up our cross and follow.

One: At this table there are no strangers, no divisions, no barriers.

All: We are one family, one faith, one hope, one Lord.

One: Across oceans and deserts, cities and villages, cathedrals and simple homes, God's people are gathering in worship.

All: We join our voices with theirs in praise and thanksgiving.

One: Come, let us worship the God who calls us, transforms us, and unites us.

All: Let us worship God!

***Opening Hymn:** *As the Bread of Life Is Broken*
Verses 1, 2, and 3

Found on page 3
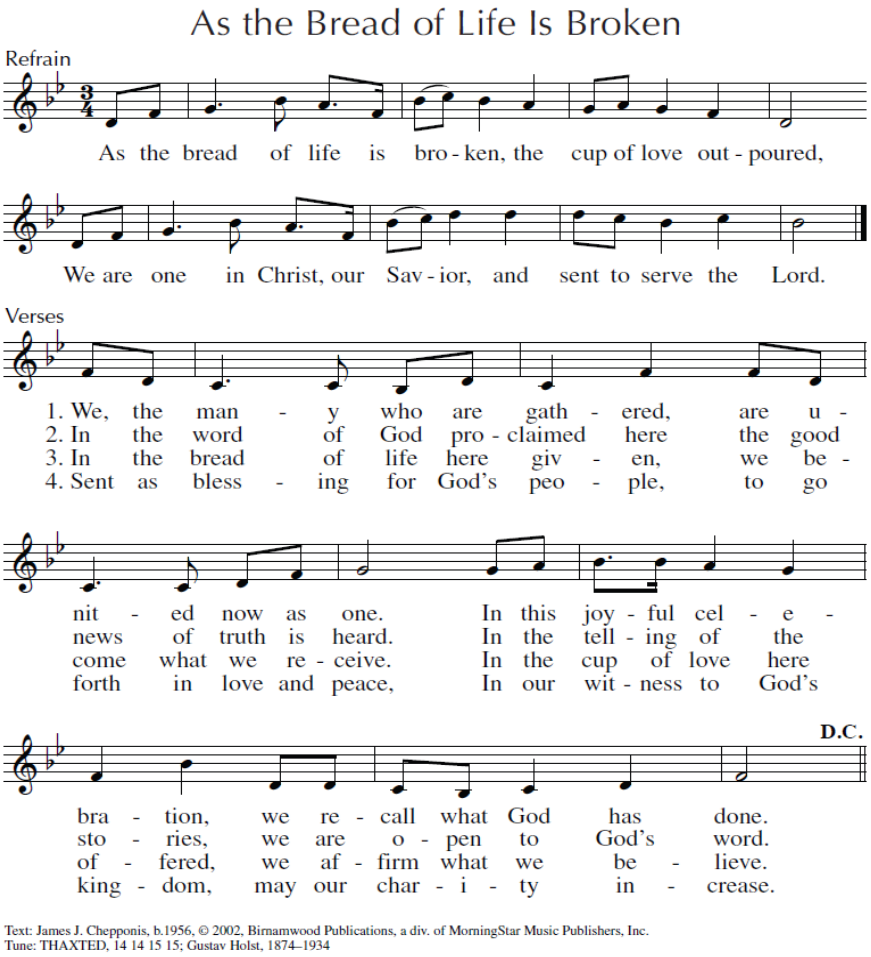
***Affirmation of Faith** Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere

A New Creed
(1968, The United Church of Canada)

All: We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.



Text: James J. Chepponis, b.1956, © 2002, Birnamwood Publications, a div. of MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc.
Tune: THAXTED, 14 14 15 15; Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

Invitation to Confession Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere

One: The call of Christ is both beautiful and challenging. Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?" Yet the deeper question is whether our lives reflect the answer we proclaim.

As sisters and brothers around the globe gather at Christ's table, we remember that the grace of God is greater than our failures and stronger than our divisions. Let us come before God with honesty and humility.

Time for Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

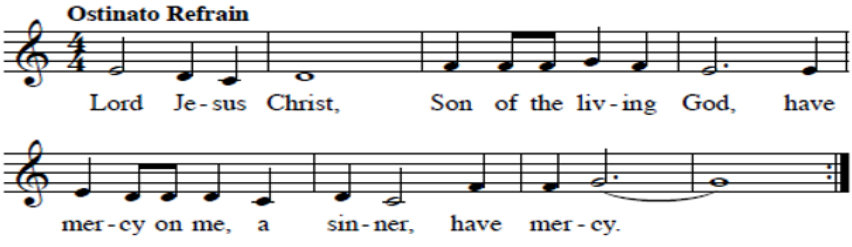
All: Merciful God, you call us to follow Christ, yet we often choose easier paths and safer roads. You call us to lose our lives for the sake of the Gospel, yet we cling tightly to comfort, control, and security. You call us to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. Yet we resist the sacrifices that faithfulness sometimes requires.

Forgive us, O God, renew our hearts and reshape our lives. Teach us to follow Jesus more faithfully. Make us a people of courage, compassion, and reconciliation. Let your Spirit unite us with Christ and with one another. Through your mercy, restore us. Through your grace, transform us. Amen.

Sung Response *First sung by the choir, then All*

LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Jesus Prayer — Carol Browning



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Assurance of Forgiveness Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere

One: Beloved in Christ, hear the good news: The One who calls us to follow is also the One who walks beside us. The One who challenges us is also the One who forgives us. The One who invites us to take up the cross is also the One who has overcome death itself.

All: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. Our failures do not define us. Our divisions do not have the final word. Through God's grace we are reconciled, renewed, and made one. Thanks be to God!

Children's Message Rev. Steve Davis and Samantha Kistler

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

Hymn: WR # 705 *You Satisfy the Hungry Heart*
Verses 1, 2, and 3

Introduction to the Word of God Kay Chyrst

One: God's word inspires us and sustains us.
All: May we build communities of generosity.
One: God's word challenges and provokes us.
All: May we build communities of justice.
One: God's word renews and heals us.
All: May we build communities of the heart.

***Scripture** *Philippians 3: 10-14*
Reader: Kay Chryst

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Mark 8: 27-38
Reader: Joy Gravely

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

One: The word of God for the people of God!
All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Rev. Steve Davis
There Our Hearts Will Be: "I Want to Know Christ"

Song of Praise *Come and Dine*
Diane Hanniable

Come and dine with Jesus come and be his guest, come receive his body with this meal be blessed. Wandering ones, wandering souls, longing for his grace. Come and dine with Jesus, in this healing place.

Come and dine with Jesus, rest within his arms feel the warmth and comfort shielding you from harm. Bruised and broken crushed, confused, come and be restored. Come and dine with Jesus, be present with the Lord.

Come and dine with Jesus bring your greed with tears Jesus lifts each burden, calming every fear. Aching, anguished, scarred, and shamed, come and find relief come and dine with Jesus, come and find God's peace.

We Love

Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer Rev. Steve Davis and
(Requests shared from the entry table basket) Samantha Kistler

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

Rev. Steve Davis
& Samantha Kistler

St. John's is 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.
At St. John's, ALL means ALL!

We do not live by ourselves. We are part of a global community. Today we present breads from around the world, asking God's blessings on these offerings of grape and grain.

White bread *is offered from lives of comfort and security.* **Crust bread** *is offered from lives of struggle and strife.* **Marbled bread** *is offered from the lives filled with mixed blessings and challenges. From lives confronted with oppression and sorrow, we offer a* **dark loaf of pumpernickel bread.** *From lives enriched by faith and remembrance of the Israelites, we offer a* **loaf of unleavened bread.** *From lives framed by physical impairments, we offer* **gluten-free bread**, *that all may be nourished at the Lord's Table.*

The Invitation to Receive

One: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them up to the Lord.
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

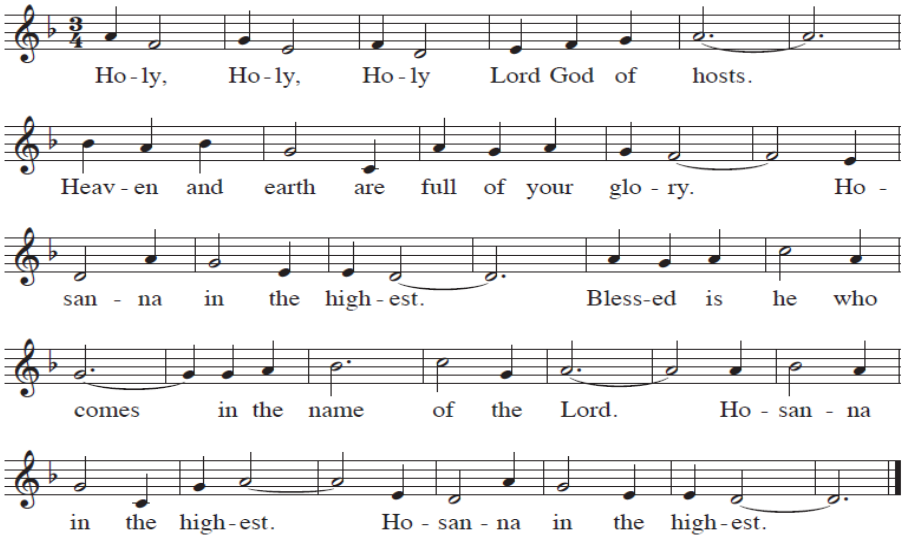
One: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks, O God. You created one human family from the dust of the earth and breathed into us the breath of life.
All: When we wandered from your ways, your love never abandoned us. Through prophets, teachers, and saints you called your people toward justice, mercy, and peace.

One: Across centuries and continents, your Spirit has gathered a people who bear the name of Christ. Today we remember that while oceans divide us and borders separate us, your love makes us one.

All: At your table every nation finds welcome and every person finds grace.

One: And so with all your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we join the unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Text: ICEL, © 2010
Music: *Mass of Christ. Lieht of the Nations*. Tonv E. Alonso. © 2016. GIA Publications. Inc.

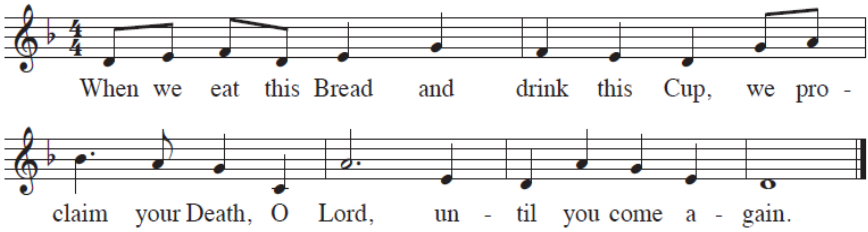
One: Holy are you, and blessed is Jesus Christ. When others sought power, he chose service. When others built barriers, he created community. When others rejected and excluded, he welcomed and embraced.

All: He taught us that whoever would save their life would lose it, and whoever loses their life for his sake will find it. He revealed a kingdom where the first are last, the last are first, and all are invited to the feast of grace.

One: On the night before his death, he gathered with his disciples. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them saying: "Take, eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me." As we remember his life, death, resurrection, and promise to come again, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Sung Response



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Music: *Mass of Christ, Light of the Nations*, Tony E. Alonso, © 2016, GIA Publications, Inc.

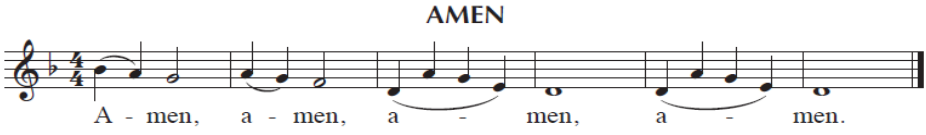
One: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us gathered here and upon these gifts of bread and cup. As we share one loaf and one cup, unite your Church across every nation.

All: Where there is division, bring reconciliation. Where there is hatred, bring love. Where there is injustice, bring courage. Where there is despair, bring hope. May this meal strengthen us to take up our cross and follow Christ. May it inspire us to press on toward the goal of your kingdom. May it remind us that we belong not only to one congregation but to a worldwide communion of faith, bound together by your grace.

One: Until that day when people from every tribe, language, and nation gather at your heavenly banquet, keep us faithful in your mission and steadfast in your love.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

Sung Response
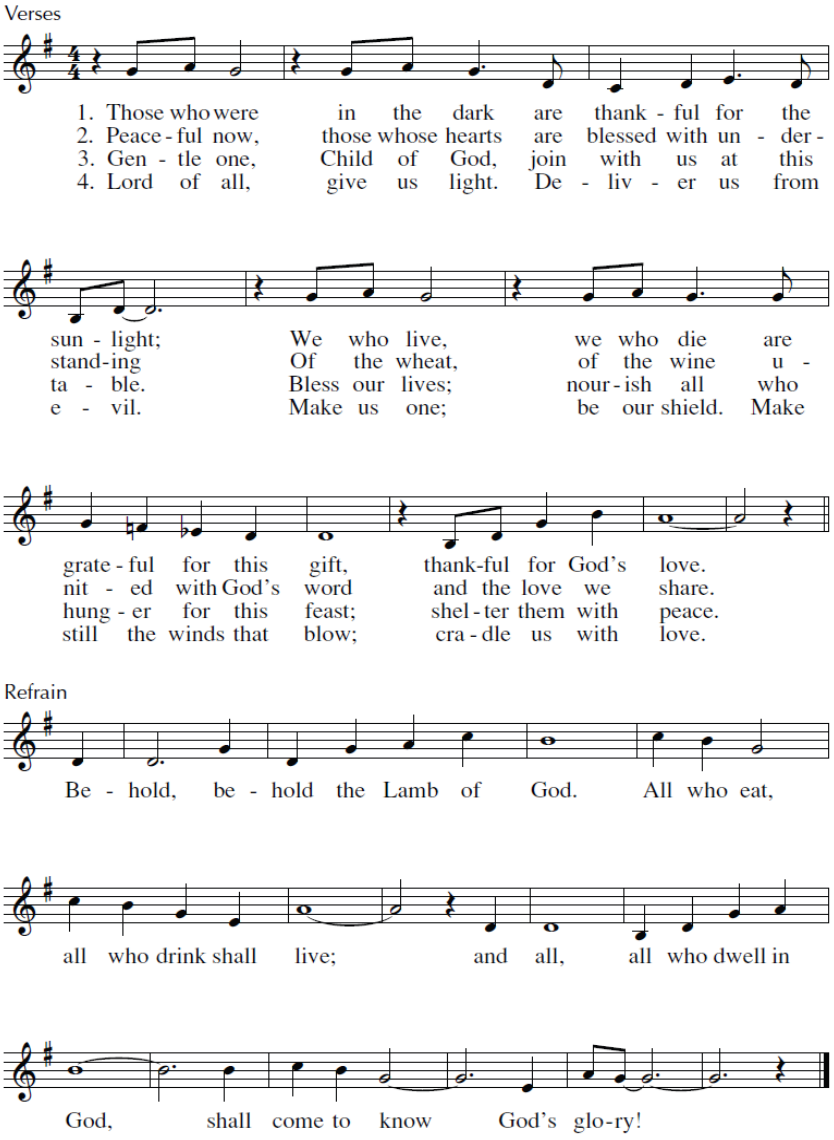


Music: *Mass of Christ, Light of the Nations*, Tony E. Alonso, © 2016, GIA Publications, Inc.

Communion Hymn *Behold the Lamb*

Please join in singing the refrain. As the elements of bread are distributed, the choir will sing verses 1 and 2. As the elements of wine are distributed, the choir will sing verses 3 and 4.

Behold the Lamb



Text: Martin Willett, b.1960, alt.
Tune: Martin Willett, b.1960; acc. by Craig S. Kingsbury, b.1952
© 1984, OCP

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: Gracious God, we thank you for this holy meal. In bread broken and cup shared, you have reminded us that we belong to Christ and to one another. You have nourished us with grace, strengthened us with hope, and united us with your people throughout the world. Send us now into the places where we live, work, learn, and serve. Amen.

Sharing Our Experience of Generosity DonnaLee Yeatts

Presenting Our Gifts, Tithes and Offerings to God



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

***Doxology** *Glory to God Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen

***Prayer of Dedication** Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere

All: Generous God, everything we have comes from your hand. As people united at one table, send us forth as one Church, committed to your mission and devoted to your kingdom. In the name of Christ, who calls us to follow and serves as our example, we pray. Amen.

We Serve

***Closing Hymn: WR # 14** *Now Thank We All Our God*
Verses 1 and 2

***Benediction** Rev. Steve Davis

***Postlude** *Let Our Talents and Tongues Employ*
Arranged by Douglas Wagner

Bulletin Sponsorship for October 4th, 2026
In Loving Memory of Kevin J. Stewart
by Susan Rarich and Family

Fall Mum Sponsorship 2026



In Loving Memory of parents Aldine and Evan Feidler
by daughters Amy and Anita Feidler

In Loving Memory of Paul and Helen Heinly
by granddaughters Amy and Anita Fiedler

In Loving Memory of William E. Fink, Janice E. Fink, and Gary A. Fink
by Bill Fink

In Loving Memory of George and Kammy Franz
by the Fox Family

In Loving Memory of My Mother, Rita Gangewere
by Sherri Gangewere

In Loving Memory of Dad, Mom, Brother, and Husband
by Colleen Kulhammer

In Loving Memory of Mother, Edith Crew
by Barbara Menges

In Memory of Parents, Harry and Theresa Quick
by Carole O'Connell

In Loving Memory of Harvey and Betty Wetherhold
by Staci Pagan

In Loving Memory of Arlington and Larue Snyder
by daughter Joan and family
by Joan Phillips

In memory of Ronald Phillips
by his wife Joan and children, Jeff and Lori
by Joan Phillips

In Loving Memory of our parents: Bill and Carolyn Rumble Sr.
and Herbert and Catherine Yost
by Beverly and William Rumble

Parents Robert and Shirley Abel
by Dianna Schneck and Family

In Honor of Parents Lucille and Roger Schneck
by Donald Schneck

In Loving Memory of Brother Edward and Nephews Scott and James Weaver
by Barbara Seeds

In Loving Memory of our parents Raymond and Marie Weaver
and Raymond and Ethel Seeds
by Barbara Seeds

In Loving Memory of Al and Betty D'Argenio
by daughter Karen Stoisits and Family

In Loving Memory of Joe, Marie, and Dennis Wolfe
by Marcie Wolfe

Our Worship & Faith Formation Sunday Schedule

8:30 am Adult Sunday School—RM 201
9:30 am Worship
Faith Formation takes place during Worship, immediately following the Children's Sermon
Sunday Social follows Service downstairs in Fox Hall

Attendance – September 27
Onsite – 114 Online – 70 Total – 184

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost/World Communion Sunday
October 4
Lectionary Readings
Exodus 14:19-31 and Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
Genesis 50:15-21 and Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13
Romans 14:1-12 and Matthew 18:21-35

Serving in Worship Leadership
Liturgist: Sherri Gangewere
Scripture Reader: Kay Chryst and Joy Gravely
Worship Tech: Bill Castello
Altar Guild: Charlotte Kerrigan
Ushers/Greeters: Dewey Yeatts, Corrina and Jeffrey Purdon, Linda Powell and Kirby Hower

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, October 11
Lectionary Readings
Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Isaiah 25:1-9 and Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9 and Matthew 22:1-14

Serving in Worship Leadership
Liturgist: Sharon Czekner Scripture Reader: Jeffrey and Corrina Purdon
Worship Tech: Bill Castello Greeter: Sherri Gangewere
Ushers: Wayne Lichtenwalter and Carole O'Connell
Altar Guild: Cindy Reck

IN OUR PRAYERS

Please remember in your prayers all those who are ill, in our area hospitals, or otherwise in need of prayer: Phyllis Ambearle, Gracie Arnold, Margaret & Richard Baatz, Tammy Beitzel, Rob Czekner, Marion DeMilio, Robin Dougherty, Janet & Jim Ebert, Sally Gibson, Sandy Glass, Tracey Glass, Joy & Mike Gravely, Donna Held, Rev. John & Charlee Hoff, JoAnn Hower, Barbara Jennings, Geraldine Keim, Mary Jane Kistler, Ethel Lavenburg, Dawn Luckenbill, Dale Millham, Karen Moyer, Eleanor & Joe O'Donnell, Elaine Parsons, Brenda Pascoe, Joey Raszler, Rebecca Schneck, Bobby Sherman, Bert Smith, Leona Snyder, Joan Stocker, Susan Stocker, Barry Stephens, Martha Strauss, Pat Thompson, and George Williams.

Please remember in your prayers the intentions of our congregation, especially: Staci Palmer, Todd Brokenshire, MaryJane Ott, Christine, Sally Gibson, Cindy & Chuck, Laurie, Bob, & Joel, Josh, Eric, Starlisa & Naomi, The Funches Family, and Constance & Geoffrey.

Continued prayers for those in our military, especially Dominic DeMilio, Kaden Rossanese, and Nathan Unger.

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

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

There are many meaningful ways to support the life and ministry of St. John's through sponsorship – helping to beautify our sanctuary with seasonal flowers given in honor or memory of a loved one, sponsoring our weekly worship bulletins, or sponsoring our monthly newsletters. Your generosity helps make the ministry of St. John's possible. You can also support our Music Ministry by sponsoring the

purchase of new music, helping our choirs continue to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Every sponsorship, large or small, becomes a meaningful gift to our church family.

Your sponsorship is more than a contribution—it is a way to celebrate a loved one, remember someone special, support our worship, and help St. John's continue its ministry for generations to come.

Consider sponsoring today and help us continue to worship, love, serve, and make a joyful noise together!

30TH ANNUAL ROAD RALLY ~ TODAY AT 1:30 PM

For everyone who signed up for the Annual Road Rally, be sure to come to the Grape Street parking lot no later than 1:30 pm today. See DonnaLee Yeatts & Dianna Schneck, they'll be handing out directions and clues to follow along the way ending with a meal at a restaurant.

HALLOWEEN GIFT CARD BINGO
~TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW~

Halloween Gift Card Bingo is coming soon – **Friday, October 16! Doors open at 6:00 pm & games begin at 7:00 pm**. Tickets are $20 in advance & $25 at the door. Please stop by the church office or see Tom Moyer to get yours.

Additionally, we're looking for the following donations:

- Beef Hot Dogs
- Hamburger BBQ (approx. 2 lbs.)
- Soft Drinks (any brand/variety, Coca~Cola products preferred)
- Bottled Water
- Baked Goods (individually wrapped)
- Game Sponsors ($50 to sponsor one of our 20 games)
- Tricky Tray Items (gift cards/items valued at $20-$30)

And, last but not least, we are in need of 2 more volunteers to help us that evening.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Two-thirds of the NIN offering is used by UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations, as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts,

and direct service projects. One-third of the offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry, witnessing to Native values and culture. Special offering envelopes are in the October newsletter, today's bulletin, and on the table in the lounge. **Contributions will be received up until the end of October.**

BOSCOV'S "FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS"

This annual event is on **Wednesday, October 21, from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm. A shopping pass is $5.00** & St. John's keeps the funds. It gives you 25% off the lowest sales price – shop in-store or online. See Ginny Brokenshire before or after worship to get your pass.

CROP HUNGER WALK

The CROP Walk will take place on **Sunday, October 18, starting at 1:30 pm** at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown. It supports the vital ministries of the Lehigh Church Conference Kitchen and Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank. It also supports the work of Church World Service (CWS) to help those struggling from floods, fires, drought, and other disasters throughout the US & the world. **To sponsor or become a walker, see Cindy Reck. Checks are made payable to CWS/CROP.** Special offering envelopes are in today's bulletin and on the table in the lounge.

PASTIE SALE

These traditional turnovers are made by hand at the Mr. Pastie bakery in Pen Argyl and come frozen. If you don't have time to cook, just pop these pasties in the oven for a quick, delicious meal. We have 14 selections to choose from. Order forms can be found on the table in the lounge area, the church's website, and in this bulletin. **Pickup is Thursday, November 19, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, or Sunday, November 22, after worship in Fox Hall.** If you have any questions, see Carol Raszler. **Order deadline is Sunday, October 25.**

WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY

For the month of October, we're collecting **canned spaghetti sauce.** We're also collecting from October to December **boxed or packaged stuffing mix for holiday meals.** Other food donations, as well as monetary donations, are always welcome. Your donations can be placed in the shopping cart found in the coatroom area next to the

sanctuary. For more information or to volunteer on the 4th Monday of the month, contact Gary Black at (484) 274-2405 or email at gary.t.black@outlook.com.

COLLECTING ITEMS FOR BAZAAR

Saturday, November 14, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

If you have items you'd like to donate, please drop them off in the church office or give them to Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler on Sunday mornings. Items must be clean and in working condition. Items NOT accepted are: clothing, furniture, bowling balls, computers, monitors, printers, encyclopedias, magazines, and records. **Deadline to receive items is October 31.**

HOLIDAY GIFT BAGS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND

Receiving Donations Now!

A Ministry of Love from St. John's
through the Visitation / Congregational Care Committee

For almost 20 years, the active congregation of St. John's has provided holiday gift bags filled with useful items for our homebound members. In addition to offering a ministry of care, the congregation makes it possible for us to bring something of our love to people who might otherwise feel isolated from the regular holiday festivities.

The Visitation Committee has already started gathering items for the holiday bags which will be distributed during visits in November and December by the pastors and committee members.

Our goal is to raise an additional $650 in donations this year. Because St. John's has been incredibly generous in years past, we have a head start toward the total needed amount to get gift bags for our 30 homebound members. THANK YOU!

Make your donations to St. John's with a note for Homebound Bags. Also, if you have extra cards for Birthdays, Get Well, or Condolences, please bring them to the Church Office. They are used throughout the year to share greetings and messages of love every month with our homebound and congregational care support.

CHURCH CALENDAR
OCTOBER 4 — OCTOBER 11

Sun 10/4	8:15 am	Friendship Bible Class
	9:30 am	Worship
	10:45 am	Sunday Social
	11:00 am	New Member Class
	1:30 pm	Road Rally
Mon 10/5	10:00 am	New Member Class
Tue 10/6	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
	6:00 pm	Bells Practice
	6:30 pm	Stewardship & Finance
Wed 10/7	9:00 am	Verso-Chat
	12:00 pm	Painting Group
	6:00 pm	Painting Group
	6:00 pm	Girl Scouts
	6:30 pm	Zumba
	7:00 pm	SAA Recovery Group
Thu 10/8	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
Fri 10/9	5:00 pm	St. George's School
Sat 10/10	9:30 am	Zumba
Sun 10/11	8:15 am	Friendship Bible Class
	9:30 am	Worship
	10:45 am	Sunday Social
	11:00 am	New Member Class

"There Our Hearts Will Be"

Generosity Reflection by DonnaLee Yeatts

What is stewardship? Good ole Webster indicates "the individual's responsibility to manage his life and property with proper regard to the rights of others." What does stewardship mean to me and within the life of the church? I need to read Paul's letter to the Romans 12:4-8. 'Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, **God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well**.

So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith God has given you.' Seems as though I am doing this right now. 'If your gift is serving others, serve them well.' This seems like a gift I'm not very good at doing. 'If you are a teacher, teach well.' Hmm, I've been leading VBS for the past three years and teaching children's Sunday School for their faith formation. This is something that put me outside of my comfort zone for sure. But, I find it highly rewarding. 'If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging.' I think I do this? But maybe this isn't my strong suit. 'If it is giving, give generously.' I give financially via direct deposit so that I don't need to worry about forgetting my offering and to ensure I maintain a steady giving. I encourage all of you who do not give electronically to really consider it. Well, look. I just did something to encourage others. Check that box off. 'If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously.' I have been in several leadership roles within the church: choir, elder, Sunday School leader, etc. 'And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.' I try my best to be kind but sometimes…well, not so kind words come out once in a while. I need to continue to work on this one.

So, what does stewardship mean to me? It means doing the work that Jesus asked us to do. Love your neighbor as yourself. Be a good steward to others. Does that mean I have to do everything? No. I'm not good at gardening but I can teach and ring bells! So that's what I do and do so with an open heart. It is very important to me to keep this church in motion, not only now, but in the years and centuries to come. I have seen so many churches close, which is very disheartening to me. Each of us is a different part of Christ's body. We cannot function with only one arm or one leg. We need all body parts and I am glad to be part of the body of Christ. Which is why I am a steward—leader, giver, encourager. May you find the same in your own heart. Which body part are you in Christ and to the church?



"Where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also."
- Matthew 6:21

"Who do you say that I am?" Jesus' question to the disciples in Mark 8 is not only a test of theological accuracy; it is a summons to unveil the true allegiance of the heart. Our answers inevitably shape what — and whom — we treasure, because naming Christ as Messiah re-orders all other loyalties. Our generosity emphasis theme from Matthew 6:21 reminds us,

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Stewardship, then, is not merely about budgets and benevolence reports; it is about locating the gravity that pulls our hearts, the gravitational center around which money, time, energy, and hope orbit.

In a culture that equates generosity with publicity—naming rights on buildings, donor walls, social-media hashtags — Jesus' own pattern is startling. He embraces his identity as Messiah yet commands silence. He reveals divine love not through acclaim but through costly self-giving. Here we glimpse a different economy: an invitation to invest our hearts where applause cannot reach and where the return is measured in transformed lives rather than public praise.

To practice hidden generosity is to trust that God's gaze — not the crowd's — is what matters. It liberates both giver and gift from the tyranny of recognition and keeps our motives free from the corrosion of vanity. Such hidden stewardship is not small-minded privacy; it is a spacious discipline that keeps the heart's treasure unentangled from ego's craving for affirmation.

Unseen faithfulness as a profound act of discipleship — an investment of the heart that outlasts any plaque or ledger. If you looked at your own budget, calendar, and attention, what would it reveal about your heart's priorities?

CONSIDER YOUR GIVING AS A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity.
Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.

Our faith tells us to present our "first fruits" to God as our response to God's faithfulness. We begin with God, rather than see what is leftover. The tithe (the first 10%) is a reflection of our gratitude for God's generosity toward us in life. As we look at our generosity response, how are we demonstrating who Jesus is to us? How will the ways of Jesus become more evident through us?

MONTHLY OFFERINGS

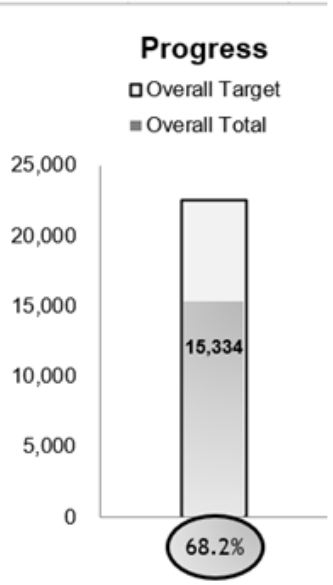
SEPTEMBER 2026

Overall	
Overall Target	22,500.00
Overall Total	15,334.00
Overall Percent	68.2%

Last Week	
Start:	9/26/26
End:	10/2/26
Total:	2,421.20

Amt needed to reach Target

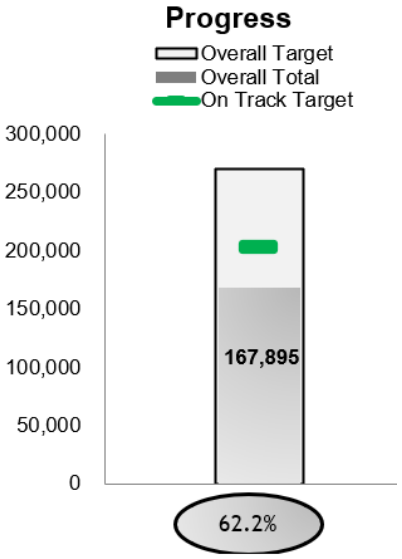
SEPTEMBER 202	7,166.00



YTD OFFERINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

Overall	
Overall Target	270,000.00
On Track Target	202,500.00
Overall Total	167,895.23
Overall Percent	62.2%



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