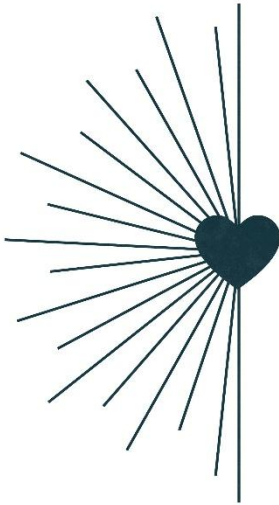


St. John's UCC, Fullerton

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



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



THERE
OUR
HEARTS
WILL BE

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

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 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

- Sunday Social Reflections
- Lady Peeps—Tuesday—September 22nd
- Confirmation Sunday—Sunday, September 27th
- Dine to Donate—Copperhead Grille—September 30th
- Road Rally—Sunday, October 4

***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

Interlude

Arranged by Mark Hayes

***Call to Worship**

Liturgist: Joy Gravely

One: We gather before the God who calls us to love with our whole heart, soul, and strength.

All: We come to offer our lives as faithful stewards of God's grace.

One: Paul reminds us that to live is Christ—every breath, every choice, every act of courage.

All: Shape our living so that Christ is seen in all we do.

One: Moses teaches us to keep God's words close—on our hearts, in our homes, in our daily walk.

All: Write Your truth upon us, that we may live as Your devoted people.

One: Let us worship the God who entrusts us with life, faith, and purpose.

All: We lift our praise and commit our lives to the One we serve.

***Opening Hymn: WR 722**

*Praise and Thanksgiving
Verses 1 and 2*

***Gathering Prayer**

All: Holy and gracious God, You have entrusted us with life, breath, and purpose. You call us to love You fully, to follow Christ boldly, and to steward our days with faithfulness and joy. As we gather in Your presence, open our hearts to Your Word, renew our devotion, and strengthen us to live as people who belong wholly to You. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

Liturgist: Joy Gravely

One: God's Word invites us to examine our hearts—to notice where our devotion has grown divided, where our stewardship has become hesitant, and where our witness has lost courage. Let us come before God in honest confession, offering our own prayers and reflections.

Time for Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

All: Faithful God, We confess that we have not always lived as Your devoted stewards. We cling to our own comfort, we hesitate to speak or act with courage, and we forget to keep Your Word close in our daily living.

Forgive us for the ways we hold back our hearts, for the moments we fail to love You fully, and for the times we neglect the needs of others. Renew us by Your Spirit, so that our lives may reflect Christ and our witness may honor You. Amen.

Sung Response

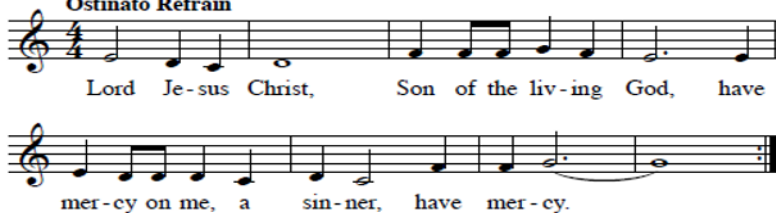
First sung by the choir, then All

LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Jesus Prayer

Carol Browning

Ostinato Refrain



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Assurance of Forgiveness

Liturgist: Joy Gravely

One: God's mercy meets us in our weakness, Christ's love claims us as His own, and the Spirit strengthens us to live with courage and devotion.

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and made new. 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

O God, You Search Me
All Verses

Found on page 4 of bulletin

O God, You Search Me



1. O God, you search me and you know me. All my
 2. You know my rest - ing and my ris - ing. You dis -
 3. Be - fore a word is on my tongue, Lord, You have
 4. Al - though your Spir - it is up - on me, Still I
 5. For you cre - at - ed me and shaped me, Gave me



thoughts lie o - pen to your gaze. When I
 cern my pur - pose from a - far, And with
 known its mean - ing through and through. You are
 search for shel - ter from your light. There is
 life with - in my moth - er's womb. For the



walk or lie down you are be - fore me: Ev - er the
 love ev - er - last - ing you be - siege me: In ev - 'ry
 with me be - yond my un - der - stand - ing: God of my
 no - where on earth I can es - cape you: E - ven the
 won - der of who I am, I praise you: Safe in your



mak - er and keep - er of my days.
 mo - ment of life or death, you are.
 pres - ent, my past and fu - ture, too.
 dark - ness is ra - diant in your sight.
 hands, all cre - a - tion is made new.

Text: Based on Psalm 139; Bernadette Farrell, b.1957

Tune: Bernadette Farrell, b.1957

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Introduction to the Word of God

Carolynn Miller

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

Deuteronomy 6: 1-9
Reader:Carolynn Miller

“Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the Lord your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Philippians 1: 21-30
Reader: Matthew Horne

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel and in no way frightened by those opposing you.

For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God’s doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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

All: Thanks be to God!

**There our Hearts Will Be
“The Heart of Faith”**

Song of Praise

Unspoken

Ruth Elaine Schram and Victor Johnson

You see a silent tear, a silent, tear falling. You hear a tender heart, a tender heart calling. The spirit may be prompting you to share a word of comfort a word of prayer so many hearts are broken. Don't leave those words unspoken.

Someone is facing loss, another is grieving. The testing of their faith may leave them unbelieving. The spirit may be prompting you to share a word of comfort a word of prayer so many hearts are broken. Don't leave those words unspoken.

The Lord has called us to be kind, be kind to one another care for one another to offer help and to console to minister with love. God calls us to minister with love.

We are the hands and feet the hands and feet of Jesus we are the savior's voice to serve as he leads us as he leads us.

So when the Lord is prompting you to share a word of comfort a word of prayer, don't leave those words unspoken don't leave those words unspoken so many hearts are broken. Don't leave those words unspoken.

We Love

Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer
(Requests shared from the entry table basket)

Rev. Steve Davis and
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.**

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: Joy Gravely
All: **Generous God, You have entrusted us with life, faith, and purpose. Receive these gifts, and our lives with them. Use what we offer—our resources, our time, our compassion— to build Your kingdom, to bless Your people, and to deepen our devotion to Christ. In His name we give and dedicate ourselves. Amen.**

We Serve

***Closing Hymn: NC # 391** *In the Midst of New*
Dimensions

Verses 1 and 2

***Benediction** Rev. Steve Davis

***Postlude** *New Dimensions*
Arranged by Douglas Wagner

St. John's Fall Worship Schedule

8:30 am Adult Sunday School—Room 201

9:30 am Worship

Faith Formation takes place during Worship, immediately following the Children's Sermon

Sunday Social held following Worship in Fox Hall

Attendance – September 13

Onsite – 69 Online – 40 Total – 109

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 20

Lectionary Readings

Exodus 16:2-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

Jonah 3:10-4:11 and Psalm 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-30 and Matthew 20:1-16

Serving in Worship Leadership

Liturgist: Joy Gravely

Scripture Reader: Carolyn Miller &

Worship Tech: Bill Castello

Matthew Horne

Altar Guild: Cindy Reck

Greeter: Robin Brensinger

Ushers: Wayne Lichtenwalter and Linda Powell

Open / Close Building: Gracie Funches / Wayne Lichtenwalner

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 27

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: Samantha Kistler

Scripture Reader: Jean Fennell &

Worship Tech: Bill Castello

Ryan Szoke

Altar Guild: Corinna Purdon

Ushers: Karen Stoisits and Tom Moyer

Greeters: Wayne Lichtenwalter and Linda Powell

Open / Close Building: OPEN / Wayne Lichtenwalner

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 and Richard Baatz, Tammy Beitzel, Rob Czekner, Marion DeMilio, Janet and Jim Ebert, Sally Gibson, Sandy Glass, Tracey Glass, Mike Gravely, Donna Held, Rev. John and Charlee Hoff, JoAnn Hower,

Barbara Jennings, Geraldine Keim, Mary Jane Kistler, Ethel Lavenburg, Dawn Luckenbill, Dale Millham, Karen Moyer, Molly Nicholas, Eleanor and Joe O'Donnell, Elaine Parsons, Brenda Pascoe, Joey Raszler, Rebecca Schneck, Bobby Sherman, Bert Smith, Leona Snyder, Ronald Stocker, Barry Stephens, Martha Strauss, Pat Thompson and George Williams.

Please remember in your prayers the prayers of our congregation: Staci Palmer, Tood Brokenshire, MaryJane Ott, Christine, Sally Gibson, Cindy and Chuck, Laurie, Bob, and Joel, Josh, Eric, Starlisa and Naomi, The Funches Family, Constance and 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 the church code, 473**. To add someone to our prayer list please contact the Church Office.

REFLECTIONS — Sundays at 11:00 am in Fox Hall NEW OPPORTUNITY begins TODAY

What did you hear in worship today? What question stayed with you? Where did the Scripture or sermon connect with your own life? When you look at light through a prism, you find all kinds of colors and dimensions you would not normally see without seeing light through different angles.

Reflections offers a new opportunity to continue the conversation after worship. Grab some refreshments during Sunday Social in Fox Hall, then join us at the designated table closest to the kitchen and coffee for conversation about the morning's Scripture, theme, and sermon.

Facilitated by members of our Pastoral Team and Generosity Team, Reflections is an invitation to linger a little longer with what we have experienced in worship. Together, we will explore how God's Word speaks into our lives and how our response to God's grace and love can shape the way we live. If enjoyed by those who can attend, we will revisit this kind of short-term learning opportunity on Sunday mornings as part of our Sunday Social time. Come with a thought. Come with a question. Come simply to listen. There is room at the table for you.

WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY

For the month of September, we're collecting **jelly, pork & beans, and coffee**. Any 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.

KEEPSAKE CROSSES

Pete Mohr has made palm-held crosses out of the old wooden oak pews that were in the sanctuary. Attach a magnet or picture hanger and they can also be placed on the wall or refrigerator. This keepsake item is a church fundraiser for a donation of at least \$10 or more per family. To receive a cross and make a contribution, see Amy Feidler on any Sunday or purchase one from the church office.

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

We congratulate Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith on the 29th anniversary of her ordination, which took place on September 14, 1997.

We congratulate Rev. George Eckstein on the 54th anniversary of his ordination, which took place on September 21, 1972.

We congratulate Rev. David Quinn on the 40th anniversary of his ordination, which took place on September 25, 1986.

We congratulate Rev. Dennis Schappell on the 17th Anniversary of his ordination, which took place on September 26, 2009.

DINE & DONATE AT COPPERHEAD GRILLE

Come out for dinner at the Copperhead Grille at 1731 Airport Road in Allentown on **Wednesday, September 30, from 5:00 to 9:00 pm!** Present the flyer available in this week's bulletin to ensure that 15% of your food purchase (dine in or take out) is donated to St. John's.

PEEPS MEETING

The Lady PEEPS (**P**ositive **E**xtraordinary **E**ncouraging **P**rayerful **S**isters) will meet on **Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00 pm** in Fox Hall. You can contact Regi Mohr at (610) 390-0872 to learn more about PEEPS.

RAISERIGHT GIFT CARDS

We begin our annual fundraising event of RaiseRight gift cards for the Christmas holidays. An order form was in the newsletter & bulletin and can also be found on the table in the lounge area and on the church's website. **Deadline to receive orders along with payment to St. John's is September 30.** Contact Karen Stoitsits if you have any questions.

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The Men's Breakfast Group of St. John's meets the first Saturday of every month at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. We will meet on **October 3 at 8:30am**. We would be pleased to have you join us. If you would like to know more about this group, please contact Pastor Steve.

30TH ANNUAL ROAD RALLY

This fun event is scheduled for **Sunday, October 4, starting at 1:30 pm** from the Grape St. parking lot. You will be given directions and clues to follow along the way ending at a restaurant. A signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the lounge area—need driver's name & number in the car. See DonnaLee Yeatts if you have any questions.

HALLOWEEN GIFT CARD BINGO

Halloween Gift Card Bingo is scheduled for **Friday, October 16, with doors opening at 6:00 pm & games beginning at 7:00 pm**. Food will be available for purchase. Advance tickets are \$20, and they are on sale now! Please call or stop by the church office to purchase yours!

CROP HUNGER WALK

This annual event will take place on **Sunday, October 18, starting at 1:30 pm** at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church located at 140 S. Ott St. in Allentown. It supports the vital ministries of the Lehigh Church Conference Kitchen and Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank

helping neighbors who experience food insecurity in our area. It also supports the work of Church World Service (CWS) to help those struggling from floods, fires, drought, and other disaster throughout the US & the world. **To sponsor a walker or become a walker, see Cindy Reck. Checks are made payable to CWS/CROP.** A special offering envelope will be in the bulletin on October 11.

COLLECTING ITEMS FOR BAZAAR

Saturday, November 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

While the Bazaar isn't until November, we continue to collect items for the event. If you have items left from your yard or garage sale; if you are moving and downsizing; if you received gifts you don't like or will never use; or if you have items you don't need anymore, we will take them. Items must be clean and in working condition. They can be brought into the church office or given to Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler on a Sunday morning. Items not accepted: clothing, furniture, bowling balls, computers, monitors, printers, encyclopedias, magazines, and records. **Deadline to receive items is October 31.**

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

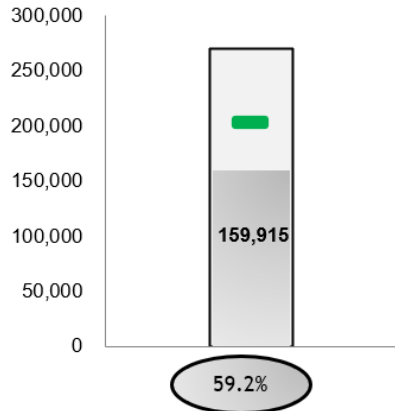
YTD OFFERINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

Overall	
Overall Target	270,000.00
On Track Target	202,500.00
Overall Total	159,914.91
Overall Percent	59.2%

Progress

Overall Target
 Overall Total
 On Track Target



MONTHLY OFFERINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

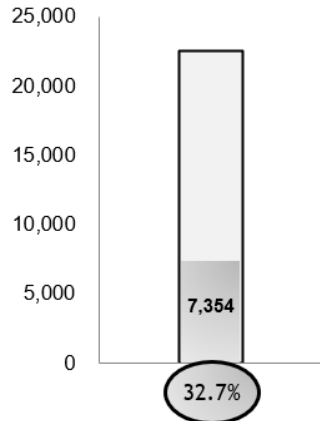
Overall	
Overall Target	22,500.00
Overall Total	7,353.68
Overall Percent	32.7%

Last Week	
Start:	9/13/26
End:	9/19/26
Total:	1,095.25

Amt needed to reach Target	
SEPTEMBER 2026	15,146.32

Progress

Overall Target
 Overall Total



CHURCH CALENDAR—SEPTEMBER 20 – 27

Sun 9/20	8:15 am	Friendship Bible Class
	9:30 am	Worship
	10:45 am	Sunday Social
	11:00 am	Reflections - Conversations
Mon 9/21	6:00 pm	“Fun”-Raising Committee
Tue 9/22	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
	6:30 pm	G.I.F.T.
	7:00 pm	PEEPS
Wed 9/23	9:00 am	Verso-Chat
	12:00 pm	Painting Group
	6:00 pm	Painting Group
	6:00 pm	Girl Scouts
	6:30 pm	Zumba
	6:30 pm	CELC Meeting (Zoom)
	7:00 pm	SAA Recovery Group
Thu 9/24	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
	6:30 pm	Property Committee
Fri 9/25	5:00 pm	St. George’s School
Sat 9/26	9:00 am	Zumba
Sun 9/27	8:15 am	Friendship Bible Class
	9:30 am	Worship (Confirmation Service)
	10:45 am	Sunday Social
	11:00 am	Reflections – Conversations

OUR STAFF

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