

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!***

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Confirmation Sunday**

**September 27, 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

- Sept. 30, Dine & Donate at Copperhead Grille, Airport Rd.
- Oct. 4, World Communion Sunday and Road Rally (1:30pm)
- Oct. 16, BINGO – How you can help
- Oct. 18, CROP Walk – See information on pg. 13

***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

*Touch
Jason Tonioli*

***Call to Worship**

Liturgist: Samanatha Kistler

One: We enter this space carrying the currency of our lives: our time, our energy, our wealth, and our worries.

All: We are invited to lay them down, trusting the Maker of all things with every piece of who we are.

One: We are called to step down from the thrones of our own understanding and release our grip on what we claim as "ours."

All: We choose to put on the mind of Christ, who poured Himself out of love for the world.

One: Let us not hold back. Let us honor the Lord with the first fruits of our hearts.

All: With open hands and willing spirits, we come to worship God!

***Opening Hymn: WR #466**

Take My Life and Let it Be
Verses 1, 2, and 4

***Gathering Prayer**

Liturgist: Samantha Kistler

All: God of abundance, You have given us everything—the breath in our lungs, the resources in our hands, and the grace in our souls. As we gather today, quiet the voices that tell us we must hoard, hustle, and rely only on our own strength. Align our minds with the mind of Christ Jesus. Teach us to trust You so deeply that generosity becomes our natural reflex. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

Liturgist: Samantha Kistler

One: When we lean on our own understanding, we begin to view God's gifts as our personal possessions. We build walls instead of longer tables; we look to our own interests rather than the needs of others. In the quiet of this moment, let us examine our own hearts, confessing where we have held back from God and from one another.

Time for Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

All: Merciful Creator, we confess that we are often poor stewards of Your grace. We protect our time, guard our wealth, and prioritize our own comfort, forgetting that everything we have is borrowed from You. We have not loved others above ourselves, nor have we embraced the humble mindset of Jesus.

Forgive our scarcity mindset. Forgive our pride. Empty us of our selfishness so that we may be filled with Your Spirit, ready to serve and eager to share. Amen.

Sung Response

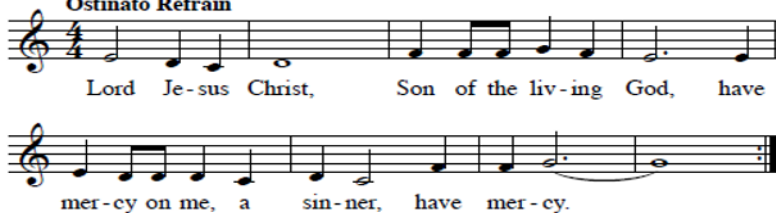
First sung by the choir, then All

LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Jesus Prayer

Carol Browning

Ostinato Refrain



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Assurance of Forgiveness

Liturgist: Samantha Kistler

One: Hear this radical truth: God does not weigh your worth by what you accumulate, nor does God condemn you for your past greed. Look to Christ, who did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage, but made himself nothing so that you might have everything.

All: In Jesus Christ, our debts are cleared and our slate is wiped clean. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Children's Message

Rev. Steve Davis and
Samantha Kistler

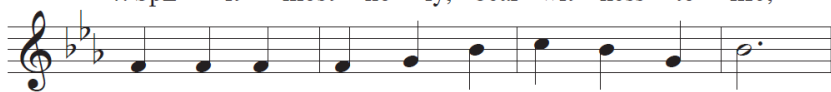
Children and youth are welcome to come up to the chancel steps.

BREATH OF COMPASSION

Eli Cooper-Nelson

SLANE
Irish traditional

1. Breath of com - pas - sion, con - spire with us here;
2. Rain - drops of won - der, in - fuse our mun - dane;
3. Wel - com - ing fire, help our quick pulse to slow;
4. Spir - it most ho - ly, bear wit - ness to life;



sooth - ing Di - vine, keep your calm breez - es near.
 ten - der Di - vine, flow in peace and in pain.
 hope-filled Di - vine, wrap us in your soft glow.
 ten - der and hope-filled, you soothe us in strife.



Com - fort - ing whis - per, be - come our de - light:
 Sweet liv - ing wa - ter, al - le - vi - ate thirst:
 Way - find - ing star - light, your dark - ness brings rest:
 Part - ner in wis - dom, re - main in our tears:



be our deep breath - ing by day and by night.
 nour - ish - ing us wheth - er dry or sub - mersed.
 be our re - lief a - mid times of dis - tress.
 be our com - pan - ion and ground - ing through fears.

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Introduction to the Word of God

Jean Fennell

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 2: 1-5

Reader: Jean Fennell

If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

Proverbs 3: 1-12

Reader: Ryan Szoke

My child, do not forget my teaching, let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they will give you. Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Then you will find favor and high regard in the sight of God and of people. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.

Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. My child, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves the one he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

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

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

Rev. Steve Davis

There Your Hearts Will Be "Living Your Best Life"

Song of Praise

Trust in the Lord
Mary McDonald

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path.

In all you do, may Christ's love flow through you. He's faithful and righteous, He is Holy God. Have faith in Him, cast your cares all on Him. He will lead, He will love, He is God!

Trust in the Lord, with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him - and He will direct your path. Trust in the Lord your God.

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.**

The Celebration of Confirmation

One: Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. Ryan Szoke has found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ at St. John's United Church of Christ, Fullerton. Through prayer and study he has been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm his baptism and to claim in our presence his covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of this church.

Questions of the Confirmand

Samantha Kistler

Sam: Ryan, do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Ryan: I do.

Sam: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Ryan: I do.

Sam: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Ryan: I do.

Sam: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Ryan: I promise, with the help of God.

Sam: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Ryan: I promise, with the help of God.

Sam: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this church, sharing regularly in worship of God?

Ryan: I promise, with the help of God.

Affirmation of Faith

One: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

One: Do you believe in God?

All: I believe in God.

One: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ.

One: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

All: I believe in the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of the Confirmand and Congregation

All: O God, my God, known to me in Jesus Christ, I give myself to you as your own, to love and serve you faithfully all the days of my life.

Almighty God, who in baptism received your servants into the church, forgave their sins and promised them eternal life, increase in us all the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Strengthen us for our ministry in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Act of Confirmation

The pastors will invite the confirmand to kneel, accompanied by their parents and mentor. The pastors, parents and mentor will lay their hands upon the confirmand.

Pastor: What is the name in which you were baptized?

(Confirmand responds)

O God, through the grace of Jesus Christ, you have accepted Ryan through the waters of baptism. Nurture in him the power of the Holy Spirit that he may serve you in the world. Amen.

Prayer of Confirmation

All: O God, we rejoice with all these confirmands in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help them to live for Christ and those whom Christ loves. Keep them steady and abounding in hope. Help them in their walk with you through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Candle Lighting By Newly Confirmed and Giving of Gifts

Pastor: Ryan, you are our newest members. As a sign of the promises you have just made, we invite you to light a candle on the altar in anticipation of the way you will radiate the light of Christ in the years to come.

Everyone returns to the kneeler spot after lighting the candle and receiving their gift and the certificates.

Greeting of Christian Love

One: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of St. John's United Church of Christ, Fullerton, we welcome you as full members of our family of faith.

One: Let us pray. Almighty and ever living God, may your hand ever be over your servants confirmed today. May your Holy Spirit be with them. Lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word. May they serve you in this life and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ.

All: 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: Samantha Kistler
All: **Generous God, we return to You these gifts of money,**
time, and talent, acknowledging that they were always
Yours to begin with. Multiply these offerings to heal the
broken, feed the hungry, and build communities of
peace. We pray this in His holy name, Amen

We Serve

***Closing Hymn:** *The Servant Song*
All Verses
Found on page 10

***Benediction** Rev. Steve Davis
***Postlude** *Enter His Courts with Praise!*
Adam Mason

THE SERVANT SONG

Richard Gillard



- 1, 6. Will you let me be your ser-vant, Let me be as
2. We are pil-grims on a jour-ney, We are trav-'lers
3. I will hold the Christ-light for you In the night-time
4. I will weep when you are weep-ing; When you laugh I'll
5. When we sing to God in heav-en We shall find such



- 1, 6. Christ to you; Pray that I may have the grace to
2. on the road; We are here to help each oth-er
3. of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you,
4. laugh with you. I will share your joy and sor-row
5. har-mo-ny, Born of all we've known to-gether



- 1, 6. Let you be my ser-vant, too.
2. Walk the mile and bear the load.
3. Speak the peace you long to hear.
4. 'Til we've seen this jour-ney through.
5. Of Christ's love and ag-o-ny.

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Flower Sponsorship for September 27

In memory of the birthday of Emma Repp Kuczek

By Paul and Carol Raszler

In Loving Memory of Emma Repp Kuczek

By Linda Repp Cruttenden

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 20

Onsite – 73 Online – 41 Total – 114

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 Stoitsits and Tom Moyer

Greeters: Wayne Lichtenwalter and Linda Powell

Open / Close Building: OPEN / Wayne Lichtenwalner

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

Worship Tech: Bill Castello

Joy Gravely

Altar Guild: Charlotte Kerrigan

Greeters: Members of Consistory

Open / Close Building: OPEN

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, Todd Brokenshire, Ginny Brokenshire, MaryJane Ott, Christine, Sally Gibson, Cindy and Chuck, Laurie, Bob, and Joel, Josh, Eric, Starlisa and Naomi, The Funches Family, Constance and Geoffrey.

Our heartfelt condolences to the family of Ginny Brokenshire, whose sister, passed away in Oklahoma last week.

We also pray and share our support for Joan Stocker and family at the passing of her husband, Ronald Stocker, on September 21, 2026. His service will be Monday, September 28 at Heizelman-Stevens Funeral Home on Krocks Rd., Allentown, 10am Calling Hour and 11am Memorial Service and Interment to follow at Cedar Hill Cemetery.

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.

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.

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.

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 and in the bulletin. **Contributions will be received up until the end of October.**

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.

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

We congratulate Rev. Becca Stephens on the 34th anniversary of her ordination, which took place on September 27, 1992.

We congratulate Rev. Matthew Seeds on the 18th anniversary of his ordination, which took place on September 28, 2008.



Ryan Szoke

I believe that God and Science coexist and that evolution is where we came from. I believe that we came from evolution and not Adam and Eve. I think of God as a side belief and isn't the main thing to me. I believe in Jesus but also evolution so it's a little iffy on my beliefs. I think of the Holy Spirit as a ghost that haunts in a good way. The Holy Spirit is called the Holy Ghost some times.

It is very important to have a part in our church community. God isn't very influential to my life yet, I haven't had any supernatural moments to pull me closer. I have been going to church my whole life but that doesn't mean I have to be super religious.

In conclusion, I believe in evolution but also God. I think having connections with not only God but the church is important and that Christianity is not the main belief to me.



G.I.F.T. Confirmation Class 2025-2026

*A Ministry Collaboration of
Grace UCC, Allentown, St. John’s UCC, Fullerton
and UCC Greenawalds*

GIFT Confirmation Class Picture



G.I.F.T. Confirmation Class 2025-2026

*A Ministry Collaboration of
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and UCC Greenawalds*

2025-2026 Confirmation Class Members and Mentors

Ashley Adams, Eileen Cleaver
UCC Greenawalds

Markie Adams, Benjamin Gullede
UCC Greenawalds

JJ Barnett, Anthony Newett
UCC Greenawalds

Spencer Barnett, Tiffany Dieter
UCC Greenawalds

Harper Cocca, Jane Gilbert
Grace UCC, Allentown

JD Diaz, Randy Seyler
UCC Greenawalds

Peyton Diaz, Anthony Newett
UCC Greenawalds

Leland Harris, Tionne Rupert
Grace UCC, Allentown

Dallis LaAsmar, Colleen Horlacher
UCC Greenawalds

Liam Rupert, Tionne Rupert
Grace UCC, Allentown

Ryan Szoke, Bill Fink
St. John's UCC Fullerton



growing in faith together
celebrating every gift

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

MONTHLY OFFERINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

Overall	
Overall Target	22,500.00
Overall Total	12,872.50
Overall Percent	57.2%

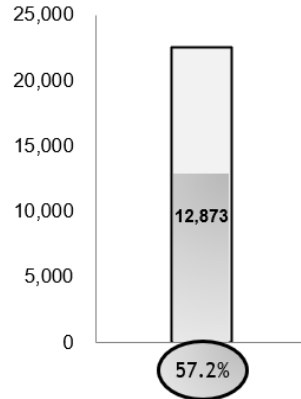
Last Week	
Start:	9/19/26
End:	9/25/26
Total:	1,928.00

Amt needed to reach Target

SEPTEMBER 2026	9,627.50
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Progress

- Overall Target
- Overall Total



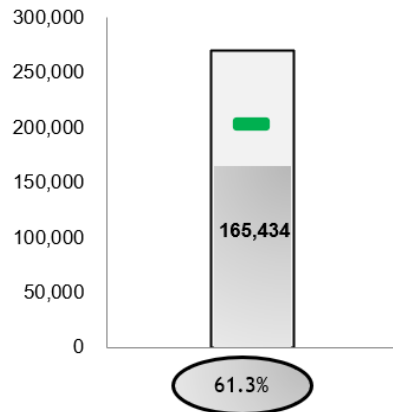
YTD OFFERINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

Overall	
Overall Target	270,000.00
On Track Target	202,500.00
Overall Total	165,433.73
Overall Percent	61.3%

Progress

- Overall Target
- Overall Total
- On Track Target



CHURCH CALENDAR
SEPTEMBER 27– OCTOBER 4

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
Mon 9/28	9:00 am	Food Pantry
	5:30 pm	Food Pantry
Tue 9/29	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
Wed 9/30	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 10/1	9:30 am	Visitation
	6:00 pm	Bells Practice
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice
Fri 10/2	5:00 pm	St. George's School
Sat 10/3	8:30 am	Men's Breakfast
	9:00 am	Zumba
Sun 10/4	8:15 am	Friendship Bible Class
	9:30 am	Worship (Neighbors in Need Offering)
	10:45 am	Sunday Social
	11:00 am	New Member Class
	1:30 pm	Road Rally

OUR STAFF

Senior Pastor

Rev. Steve Davis
srpastor@sjuccf.org

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music@sjuccf.org

Ministry Intern

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samanthamkistler@gmail.com

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Treasurer

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