



**LEE ANN LOPEZ
NANCY KEISTER**

St. John's **CONNECTIONS**

A monthly update from the people of St. John's UCC, Fullerton

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On The Cover...



LEE ANN LOPEZ NANCY KEISTER

Nancy and her daughter, Lee Ann, have been members of St. John's since Lee Ann was young and have always remained active in the church. Nancy helps assemble the newsletter, and both are members of the handbell choir. They also sing with the choir for holidays and special occasions. Lee Ann married her husband, Robert, at St. John's, and they have one daughter, Alyssa, who is married to Christopher. Alyssa and Chris share their home

with their two dogs, Archie and Toby.

Nancy retired from Kohl's, where she worked from the time the store opened. She enjoys crafting and baking. Lee Ann has been employed by the same company for most of her career, and her interests outside of work include cooking and baking. Both enjoy spending time with friends and family, especially Disney vacations and Disney cruises, which have become cherished family traditions.

"We continue to worship at St. John's because it has been our home church and a place where we have found faith, friendship, and community."

Celebrating Ordination Anniversaries

We congratulate the following pastor who will celebrate the anniversary of his ordination in July:

Rev. Todd Fennell	46th Anniversary of Ordination	7/28/80
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A More Perfect Union: **Celebrating 250 Years of Aspiration**

This year our nation begins commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It is a significant milestone, inviting us to look back with gratitude, honesty, and hope. For two and a half centuries, the United States has sought to embody the bold ideals expressed in those founding words: that all people are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

As people of faith, we recognize that anniversaries are more than celebrations of the past. They are opportunities for reflection. We give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy, the sacrifices made by generations before us, and the democratic principles that continue to shape our common life. At the same time, we acknowledge that our nation has often struggled to live up to its own ideals. The story of America includes remarkable progress and painful shortcomings, moments of courage and moments of moral failure.

Holding these truths together is not a contradiction. In fact, it is part of what it means to be a people of faith committed to hope. We do not honor our highest values because we have perfectly achieved them. We honor them because they continue to call us forward, into our better selves and a more perfect union.

Perhaps no symbol captures that aspiration more powerfully than the words inscribed on the Statue of Liberty: **"Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"**

Those words remind us that the American story has always been connected to a larger vision of human dignity, welcome, and opportunity. They challenge each generation to ask how faithfully we are extending compassion, justice, and hospitality to those who seek hope and belonging. The prophet Micah offered a similar challenge centuries ago:





"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Justice, compassion, and humility are not only biblical virtues; they are also essential qualities for a healthy democracy. They call us beyond self-interest toward concern for our neighbors and the common good. They remind us that freedom carries responsibility and that citizenship is not merely about rights but also about how we care for one another.

As we mark our nation's 250 years of independence, may we resist the temptation either to romanticize the past or to surrender to cynicism of this present time. Instead, let us embrace the faithful work of aspiration. Christians understand that God's kingdom remains both a present reality and a future hope. Likewise, the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice are not destinations we have fully reached, but commitments that continue to guide us.

May this anniversary inspire us to be people who seek justice, extend compassion, welcome the stranger, and work together for a society that more fully reflects the dignity of every person. In doing so, we honor both the best aspirations of our nation and the calling of our faith.

As followers of Christ, we know that hope is not found in perfection but in the courage to keep moving toward what is good, true, and just. May God grant us wisdom and grace for that journey. And together, with hopeful aspiration, we will create that more perfect union together as...

We Worship, We Love and We Serve — No Matter What!

Yours in grace and hope,

Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor



Faith Formation & Worship Celebrations!

Growing in Faith Together (G.I.F.T.) Confirmation Class



growing in faith together
celebrating every gift

Over the summer months, our Confirmation collaboration with UCC Greenawalds and Grace UCC, Allentown, will meet once each month with special activities and lessons as we near completion of our year-long instruction, which concludes in September.

Collectively, we are helping young people, young adults and mentors, and pastors too, who all grow in faith together. Please pray for the 11 people going through our G.I.F.T. (Growing in Faith Together) Confirmation Class from the 3 congregations. Pray for our confirmand, Ryan Szoke, and his mentor, Bill Fink.

During the summer, the class meets for lessons on the 4th Tuesdays of June, July and August, 6–7:30pm. June 23-24 will be our OVERNIGHT RETREAT at St. John's. In July we will return to Grace UCC, Allentown for our gathering on July 28.

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

Here are some things you can take part in to grow in faith and celebrate God's presence:

Verso-Chat Lectionary Study
Wednesdays at 9am on Zoom

Friendship Class

-takes the summer off, but some still show up to enjoy a cup of coffee and good company. Friendship never takes a break, even when we don't see each other every week. So come gather early before worship and share in the joy of being with Friends!

“And the Lord added to their number...”

St. John's, United Church of Christ, welcomes new persons to become members in the faith family, with strong, loving connections. On Pentecost Sunday, May 24, we welcomed 6 new persons to our faith family.

**PAT DEMMY
PHYLLIS GUTEKUNST
JOAN HOTTLE
SUEANN HREGICIAN
ETHEL LAVENBURG
MARCIE WOLFE**

Since then two more persons, have reconnected with St. John's:

**FRANK CSASZAR
PHYLLIS CSASZAR**

If you're considering making St. John's UCC, Fullerton, your faith home, or would like more information about what we offer, please contact the Church Office or speak with Pastor Steve.



Wanted: Brave Souls With Lungs, Larynxes And A Love For Making A Joyful Noise!

(Oh, and of course anyone who can successfully ring a handbell without launching it across the room)

Dearest Gentle Readers,

It has come to this author's most discerning attention that a most-delightful scandal is about to unfold—not in the ballrooms of the town, but within the hallowed halls of our very own music ministry. Indeed, whispers abound of a grand return... and what a return it shall be!

Mark your dance cards accordingly: the esteemed Choir shall make its triumphant reappearance on Thursday, August 20th, ready to lift voices heavenward with all the vigor of a debutante at her first assembly—6:30pm sharp in the Music office and from what this author hears, the director is not a fan of lateness—choose wisely!

Not to be outdone, the ever-dazzling Bell Ringers will actually resume BEFORE the choir, on Tuesday, August 18th beginning at 6pm in the church, poised to ring with such brilliance that even the most inattentive church participant will sit upright in astonishment.

Now, one must ask—who shall grace these illustrious ranks this season? Will it be you, dear reader?

Are you a soprano with a penchant for the dramatic? A tenor who believes himself the hero of every anthem? Perhaps an alto who quietly (yet confidently) carries the ensemble, or a bass whose notes rumble like distant thunder? And let us not forget those brave souls who find joy in the noble art of ringing bells—precision, timing, and just a hint of flair required.

Be advised: no prior fame in the courts of music is necessary. One need only bring a willing spirit, a joyful heart, and a readiness to laugh at the occasional missed entrance (which, of course, this author would never dare to report... publicly).

Rehearsals promise not only musical excellence, but camaraderie, mischief, and the kind of shared purpose that transforms a simple gathering into something rather extraordinary.

If you would like additional information—or guidance on how to woo the director—you may send an email (a wondrous invention of modern technology) to music@sjuccf.org. I still prefer weekly handwritten correspondence on scented stationery, but I am told that is no longer the custom.

If possible, please make contact by the beginning of the month so the director does not suffer a fainting spell when unexpected singers appear.

If writing is not your thing, there is also a device called a telephone. It occasionally makes strange noises, but you may reach him at (484)241-0250.

Or, if you are feeling especially bold and daring, simply arrive on Thursday, locate the nearest piano, and declare with great conviction: "I have come to make a joyful noise." A curtsy or bow is optional, though always appreciated.

So consider this your formal invitation—sealed, stamped, and delivered with the utmost enthusiasm. Step into the spotlight, join the ranks, and become part of a society where every voice matters and every note tells a story.

Yours truly,

Lord Whistledown



The day is almost here! On **Sunday, July 26, 2026, at 7pm**, St. John's Music Ministry is honored to welcome the Jerusalem Singers under the direction of Pete Deshler.

The Jerusalem Singers is a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to public service and the performance of quality choral music.

Founded in May 1996 by Pete Deshler, the ensemble was created to bring together singers of varying ages and experience levels to perform challenging and meaningful choral music. In 1998, the group began collecting canned goods for New Bethany Ministries in Bethlehem as part of its community service efforts. Since 2003, the singers have also presented an annual benefit concert at the close of each season. For many years, proceeds from that concert have supported Satori's Gift of Music program.

The Jerusalem Singers continue to perform throughout the Lehigh Valley and surrounding communities.

A free-will offering to support the Jerusalem Singers will be received.

Core Faith Message Series for July

All of us yearn for aspects of life which ground us in firm foundations and equip us to achieve and accomplish new things in the midst of challenging times. Our Core Faith principles guide us and hold us together with an anchor of faith upon which we can depend. As we expand our our “Forming Family” themes in Romans from June, we explore Romans 8 and the Core Faith beliefs that we share together as followers of Jesus!



The eighth chapter of the letter to the Romans is one of the most loved chapters in the Bible. As the crux of this important epistle, this chapter provides insight into some of the core elements of our faith. How does the law function in our faith? What does it mean to set our mind on the Spirit? What is our relationship with all creation? How are we bound together with other disciples in suffering and joy? The Apostle Paul sets out to answer these and many other questions as he weaves a poetic vision of what it means to be a follower of Jesus and a part of the body of Christ. We invite you to explore “Core Faith” this July as we worship together.

OUR JULY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

JULY 5 - INDEPENDENCE SUNDAY WITH HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATING OUR NATION'S 250 ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

Lectionary Readings: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
and Psalm 45:10-17; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Core Faith: The War Within

Sermon Scripture Text: Romans 7:15-25a

We worship God with many names and in various experiences of relationship with God. Yet, however we call upon the name of God, we are drawn into a presence, a way of living by which others can tell we are a transformed people because of the God we worship.

JULY 12

Lectionary Readings: Genesis 25:19-34 and Psalm 119:105-112; Isaiah 55:10-13 and Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Core Faith: Mindset

Sermon Scripture Text: Romans 8:1-11

JULY 19

Lectionary Readings: Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24;
Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Core Faith: Anticipate or Participate?

Sermon Scripture Text: Romans 8:12-25

JULY 26

Lectionary Readings: Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b;
Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Core Faith: All In Together With God

Sermon Scripture Text: Romans 8:26-39

AUGUST 2 - VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SUNDAY WITH HOLY COMMUNION

Join us as the children of our St. John's VBS share their celebration of life in Rome from Vacation Bible School. See their crafts and stories and share in the wonder of the ancient times. More details on page 28.



Use the QR code to register or:
<https://sjuccf.churchtrac.com/connect?ei=OZPG49D>

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Wrapped in Love, Warmed in Prayer



Each Prayer Shawl and prayer square is lovingly handcrafted and prayed over as a tangible reminder of God's comfort and our congregation's care. Shared with those facing illness, grief, or life's challenges, these gifts offer warmth, hope, and the assurance that no one walks alone.

We are grateful for the faithful hands of Connie Viglione, Emilie Moyer, Nancy Weaver, Donna Held, and others who make this ministry possible. Before each shawl is delivered, it is placed near the offering plates so the congregation can bless it in prayer.

If you know someone who would be comforted by a Prayer Shawl, please contact the Church Office. If

you enjoy knitting, crocheting, quilting, or would like to learn, we would love to welcome you to this caring ministry.

Together, we continue to wrap one another in prayer and the love of Christ.

Deadline for August Newsletter

If you would like to contribute an article for the August newsletter, please email newsletter@sjuccf.org by Sunday, July 12.

If you have photos to accompany your story, please attach them to your email. Comments and suggestions are always welcome! [Style guide here](#)

The Keystone Conference Inaugural Annual Meeting

Attending this historic first gathering of over 600 delegates from our 507 congregations of the Keystone Conference UCC, were our own Jackie Maxon, Kirby Hower, Rev. Steve Davis, Bill Castello, Rev. Janet Boyd, Rev. Bob Stevens, and Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith.

While only Jackie, Kirby and Steve were our official delegates, all of these persons participated and shared in unique and transforming experiences of worship and learning together that changed and inspired us all. Bill and Steve led the “Tech Team” for the three-day event, creating meaningful and moving images, videos, and connections to enhance both the business, worship and plenary learning sessions. Pastor Steve asked those who attended to share their reflections and stories with us in worship, at Consistory, and in the CONNECTIONS newsletter.

Watch for excerpts from keynote speakers and Worship preachers on the Keystone YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/@KeystoneConferenceUCC>



The Keystone Connection



Keystone

CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ is more than an organization — it is a community of congregations and leaders partnering in ministry across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. One of the easiest ways to stay informed and inspired is by subscribing to the KEYSTONE CONNECTION, the Conference's weekly email newsletter.

Each week you'll discover opportunities for continuing education, leadership training, congregational resources, mission and outreach initiatives, upcoming events, and stories of how God is at work through churches throughout our Conference. Whether you're looking for ways to grow in faith, strengthen your ministry, or simply stay connected with the wider church, the KEYSTONE CONNECTION is a valuable resource.

We encourage you to sign up today and see how God is moving through the ministries of the Keystone Conference. Use the link below or visit the Conference website to subscribe and begin receiving the weekly KEYSTONE CONNECTION <https://keystoneucc.org>



Use the QR code to receive the weekly email and stay informed!

Here's the link to sign up for the weekly news:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/nKpYdv/TheKeystoneConnection>

“...That They May Be One...”

Notes from the June 5-7 Inaugural Keystone Conference Meeting

We are now officially **ONE** following the close of our first Keystone Conference meeting. Sure, we have already been for 5 months; but, now we've met and communed together! Six hundred representatives from every corner of the state gathered and affirmed that we are **ONE**. Multiple worship services joined our hearts and voices as **ONE**. Workshops, far too many for even a small army of delegates to attend (26 workshops in all), showed us how we can work together; Conservative and Progressive, Small and Large Congregations, Rural and Urban.

The speakers were unparalleled. Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson brought us welcome from the national church. Rev. Dr. Mary Luti helped us to see the roots of communion; our culture encourages us to jealously guard what we have while Christ, through communion, tells us to share all we have with each other. Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture - Russel Redding, a UCC member himself, shared the efforts that we as Pennsylvanians are engaged in to feed our neighbors. Rev. Freeman Palmer, Conference minister of the Central Atlantic conference, closed our meeting Sunday morning by reminding us that joy is a choice and comes from the open invitation to engage with all at the table!

Throughout the weekend, we were reminded that Christ engaged with all people; He turned none away. The early church spent time with each-other and broke bread together; literally eating from house to house. Are we called to anything less? We are called to expand the table at every opportunity; to seek out opportunities to include more people at our table. How will we as St John's do this? One small step I intend to take is to continue our Sunday School gathering time each week at 8am until Sunday service begins. This summer we'll have coffee and fellowship (maybe the occasional donut) but no lesson! Come share your joys and concerns; come join us at the table!

— Kirby Hower

It was very exciting to attend the first meeting celebrating the formation of the Keystone Conference, a new entity created through the merger of four historic conferences. Participants expressed gratitude for the Holy Spirit's guidance throughout the process. The Keystone Conference seeks to serve in fresh ways while fostering unity and community among its congregations.

The gathering emphasized inclusivity and hospitality, welcoming all and highlighting the importance of reciprocal relationships rooted in God's love, peace, grace, and joy. Scripture readings from Romans encouraged participants to practice love, goodness, and hospitality. The session concluded with a prayer for continued vision, leadership, and strength as the conference begins this new chapter.

This gathering held special meaning for me personally. When I first moved to Pennsylvania two years ago, I was fortunate to attend the Spring Conference in 2024, when the four conferences met for the first time to vote on whether to move forward with the merger. The vote passed and was sent to General Synod for the creation of a resolution.

I was again able to attend the Spring Conference in 2025, when representatives from all four conferences gathered as the resolution was presented. A final vote was held on November 9, receiving more than 90% approval. You can understand, then, why serving as one of your delegates to this year's historic first gathering of the Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ was especially meaningful to me.

The highlight of the conference was sharing Communion together as the Body of Christ.

— Jackie Maxon

Steady Support for a Shared Ministry

Summer brings a welcome change of pace. Families travel, schedules shift, and many of us enjoy time away with those we love. While the rhythm of our lives changes, the ministry of St. John's continues every week.

Worship services, pastoral care, outreach ministries, children's programming, community partnerships, and the many behind-the-scenes ministries that support our congregation remain active throughout the summer. Because these ministries continue, so does the need for faithful financial support.



We are deeply grateful for the generosity of this congregation. Your gifts have allowed St. John's to remain financially responsible, respond to unexpected expenses, and continue serving our church family and community with hope and compassion.

One of the most meaningful ways to strengthen our ministry is through recurring automatic giving. Regular electronic contributions provide a steady foundation for the church's operating budget, especially during the summer months when in-person attendance and weekly offerings often fluctuate. Consistent giving also allows our leaders to plan confidently for ministry throughout the year.

If you have not yet enrolled in recurring electronic giving, we invite you to do so. It's simple, secure, and an easy way to ensure your generosity continues even when you're away for a weekend or enjoying a summer vacation.

Thank you for the many ways you invest in the life and ministry of St. John's. Together, your faithful generosity allows us to continue sharing Christ's love, serving our neighbors, and living into God's call every season of the year.

We LOVE ~ Generosity and the Legacy Tree

Another leaf on the Legacy Tree will soon be added, thanks to the generosity of Tom and Emilie Moyer with their donation to our Endowment Fund. Members may share gifts of varying proportions and have different kinds of leaves added to our tree. Gifts to St. John's Endowment have an enduring legacy, providing for the ongoing support of our ministry together.



Church Projects

This summer marks an exciting season of renewal at St. John's as we continue investing in our facilities and ministries. Thanks to the generosity of the Kiesbar Estate gift and the direction of the congregation at our Annual Meeting, the Consistory is moving forward with several projects that will improve accessibility, safety, energy efficiency, and the overall welcome we offer to our community.

Recent additions have already enhanced our worship, including new liturgical furnishings, communion ware, a Christ Candle, and matching choir chairs. In the months ahead, you'll also see major building improvements, including:

- **Elevator modernization and fire safety system upgrades**



- **New sanctuary, office, parlor, and hallway carpeting**
- **Installation of a hearing assistance loop for worship**
- **New flooring on the third floor**
- **Energy-efficient LED lighting and updated lighting controls**

During the elevator renovation, elevator service will be unavailable for approximately six weeks. As needed, worship may move to the St. John's Pavilion during the summer months, weather permitting, and online worship will continue for those unable to attend in person.

These projects are an investment in the future of St. John's, helping us create a more welcoming, accessible, and sustainable church home for generations to come. Thank you for your patience, flexibility, and continued support as these improvements take shape.





July

			<p>9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting 6:00pm Painting G 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recover</p>
<p>5 9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Sunday Social</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 9:30am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Stewardship and Finance</p>	<p>8 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting 6:00pm Painting G 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm Mission Co 7:00pm SAA Recover</p>
<p>12 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9:30am Sunday Worship</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 1:00pm Staff Meeting 6:00pm Elders 7:00pm Consistory</p>	<p>15 DINE & DONATE 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting 6:00pm Painting G 7:00pm SAA Recover</p>
<p>19 9:30am Sunday Worship</p>	<p>20 6:00pm Fun-Raising Committee</p>	<p>21 9:00am Newsletter collating 9:30am Staff Meeting 10:00am Community of Practice</p>	<p>22 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting 6:00pm Painting G 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recover</p>
	PRESCHOOL CA		
<p>26 9:30am Sunday Worship 7:00pm Jerusalem Singers Concert</p>	<p>27 9:00am Food Pantry 5:30pm Food Pantry 5:30pm VBS</p>	<p>28 5:30pm VBS 9:30am Staff Meeting</p>	<p>29 5:30pm VBS 9:00am Verso Chat w 12:00pm Painting 6:00pm Painting G 6:30pm Zumba 7:00pm SAA Recover</p>
			VBS 2

2026

<p>With Pastor Steve Zoom Group Group Room 301 ry Group Room 301</p>	<p>2 9:30am Visitation Committee</p>	<p>3 INDEPENDENCE DAY - OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>4 9:30am Zumba</p>
<p>With Pastor Steve Zoom Group Group Room 301 Committee ry Group Room 301</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 8:30am Men's Breakfast Hamilton Family Restaurant 9:30am Zumba</p>
<p>5 TE-CARRABBAS With Pastor Steve Zoom Group Group Room 301 ry Group Room 301</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 9:30am Zumba</p>
<p>22 With Pastor Steve Zoom Group Group Room 301 ry Group Room 301</p>	<p>23 6:00pm School Supplies Pickup 6:30pm Property Committee</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 BUS TRIP - OCEAN CITY 9:30am Zumba</p>
<p>CAMP AT PAVILION</p>			
<p>29 With Pastor Steve Zoom Group Group Room 301 ry Group Room 301</p>	<p>30 5:30pm VBS</p>	<p>31 5:30pm VBS</p>	
<p>2026</p>			

Update on Our Ministry Staff Search

All of us are part of the life of the Church in differing ways. Some are with us for decades, while others touch us with their presence for a few years, yet still create warm memories. As we share our “goodbyes,” we also rejoice as new persons come to share their gifts with us in our ministry team.

In early June, the Personnel Committee met with a candidate we were excited about and offered them the Office Administrator position. Our offer was accepted, only to have follow-up correspondence two weeks later that the person changed their mind and chose another employer. Our Personnel Committee, Elders and Staff have all been updated as we look at next steps to find the right candidate for St. John’s as our next Office Administrator. We are securing the assistance of a professional employment company as well as posting to Indeed and other social media and Keystone Conference connections.

We are also asking for your help. Please reach out to your circles of family and friends and let them know of our open Office Administrator position and ask if they know qualified persons who are seeking 30-hour per-week employment as part of our Ministry Staff team. It is often the grapevine of people we know who are the best source of communicating opportunities. Please share our open position post which can be found [on our Facebook page](#) with anyone you think might be interested or might know someone who would be a great addition to our team.

On June 30, Alison will conclude her ministry among us and begin a well-earned retirement. While we will miss her presence in the church office, we are deeply grateful for the many ways she has served St. John’s and supported our congregation over the years. We invite you to join us during worship on Sunday, June 28, as we celebrate her ministry and offer our thanks. Please feel free to share cards, notes, and other expressions of appreciation. Wayne Lichtenwalner and Linda Powell are assisting with plans for this special occasion.



Friendship Bible Class News

On Sunday, May 31, after worship, the Friendship Bible Class (St. John's Adult Faith Formation or Adult Sunday School Class) celebrated their time together with a luncheon at the Deitsch Eck Restaurant in Lenhartsville. By chance, the class ran into Dave and Louise Earp and invited them to join the class. Dave is a retired organist who served at various UCC churches in the area. It was an afternoon of fun and fellowship as they enjoyed a wonderful Pennsylvania Dutch family-style meal.

As the Sunday School season came to a close, we'd like to thank Kay Chryst, Tom Chryst, Bill Fink, Sherri Gangewere, Kirby Hower, Tom Moyer, and Paul Raszler for teaching and leading the class in discussions this past year.

While we do not have regular classes over the summer, we continue to meet informally in Room 201 for about an hour before worship for fellowship and a cup of coffee. Anyone is welcome to come join us.



Scouting Award to Zander Rarich

We recognized and celebrated Zander Rarich in worship on May 17 with his earning and receiving the *God and Me* badge and pin for Cub Scouts. The badge is in religious recognition designed for youth to encourage spiritual growth. Children must complete specific projects, a workbook, and review their progress with a clergy member or religious leader.



For six weeks, Zander met with Pastor Steve to complete lessons, connecting scripture stories to his own personal connection with recognizing God's love for him and all people. The first of the Scouting Ministry series, it invites young people to see how God has always been sharing love and offering relationship with people so they could know God personally and be better people in the world. Zander decorated his God and Me "Exploring Box" and shared a different interactive game he would play with his family and his mentors to show his connection to the lessons. His mentors were Tom Moyer and Paul Raszler.

We congratulate Zander in achieving this award. He is the son of Emma and Adam Rarich and the grandson of Susan Rarich.





Convalescent & Homebound Residents

People who would welcome receiving a greeting card:

Phyllis Ambearle

Anita Beil

Sherry Castello

Frank Cszasz

Phyllis Cszasz

Shirley Downing

Milton Focht

Sally Gibson

Tracey Glass

Lucille Hicks

Geraldine Keim

Dale Millham

Karen Moyer

Mary Jane Ott

Helen Ryer

Bert Smith

Leona Snyder

Nancy Weaver

Bonnie Weikel

To protect privacy, please contact the church office for a listing with mailing addresses.

Attention: Basket Social Winners

If you were a winner at any Basket Social and don't need that empty basket or container or a portion of its contents, we're asking you to bring them to the church to be used for a future event. Please bring them to the office or to worship and give them to Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler. Thank you.

VBS plans are underway!

Summer is almost here, and we are excited to announce that registration is now open for this year's Vacation Bible School! Join us July 27–31 for Rome: Paul and the Underground Church, where children will travel back to the time of the early church, learn about Paul's ministry, and discover how faith and hope flourished even in difficult times.

Families can now register through the church website, and we encourage you to sign up early and invite friends to join the adventure. We are also looking for volunteers to help make the week a meaningful and fun experience for everyone. If you are interested in helping, please contact Sam, DonnaLee, or Pastor Steve.

We are looking forward to a joyful week of faith, fellowship, and summer fun together!



Use the QR code to link to our registration page for VBS-2026!

Take Me Out to the Ballgame!

As this newsletter goes to press, we have about 40 people going to the IronPigs baseball game on Tuesday, August 11, at 6:45pm. The IronPigs will be playing against the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders at Coco-Cola Park. It will be "Dollar Dog" night where hotdogs are \$1.00 all night long. Park information, game tickets, and food vouchers will be distributed to everyone by mid-July. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email crazler@aol.com

Another group of 48 St. John's baseball fans met at Coca Cola Park's party porch on Sunday, May 24. Unfortunately, the IronPigs lost 5 to 4 to the RailRiders. The IronPigs held an early 3-0 advantage, tied 3-3 in the 8th, but the RailRiders secured the win by scoring two runs in the top of the ninth inning. Besides fireworks that night, the gang got to celebrate Tom Moyer's 90th birthday.



Ask Yourself the Following Questions...

1. Were there things that did not sell from your Yard or Garage Sale?
2. Did you receive gifts you don't like or will never use?
3. Do you have items you don't need anymore?
4. Are you moving and need to downsize?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, we have the answer for you. It's our annual Bazaar to be held on Saturday, November 14. We request you start bringing in items to the church over the summer months or give them to either Amy Feidler or Carol Raszler on a Sunday morning. More information about the Bazaar will be in upcoming newsletters.



Items we will NOT accept: furniture, clothing, bowling balls, computers, monitors, printers, encyclopedias, magazines, or records.

Men's Breakfast Group



The Men's Breakfast Group of St. John's normally meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. However, due to the July 4th holiday, our next meeting has been changed to Saturday, July 11, at 8:30am. Rev. Cliff Herring will be the guest speaker. We would be pleased to have you join

us. If you would like to know more about this group, you can contact Pastor Steve. Think of a friend you can invite to breakfast!

Everyone Does Grocery Shopping

Whether you drive to the grocery store to shop, order online, or have your groceries delivered, we all need groceries. Do you realize that by purchasing Giant and Weis gift cards and by saving Redner's register tapes you are contributing money to St. John's?

For every Giant and Weis card sold, the church receives 5% back. You also get discounts for gas at both stores. Gift cards can be purchased through the church office or by seeing Tom Moyer or Carol Raszler every Sunday morning before or after worship.

For every Redner's tape collected, the church receives 1% back from its "Save-A-Tape Program." The Redner's tapes can be mailed to the church office or placed in a collection jar found on the table in the lounge area. Please do not roll the Redner's tapes and do not include receipts from other stores. If you have any questions, see Karen Stoitsits.

It's an easy way to give financially to the church. Think of St. John's every time you go grocery shopping or need to fill up your car.

GIANT



Gift Cards

REDNER'S
WAREHOUSE MARKETS

Receipts

**Grocery Shopping =
Giving Back to St. John's**

**Buy Giant and Weis Gift Cards
from St. John's**

➔ You spend the full value.
The church receives a percentage.

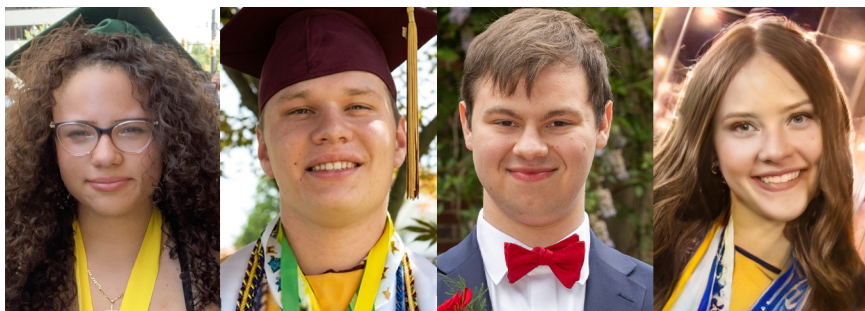
**Save your Redner's
Tape**

➔ Redner's donates 1% of your
total back to St. John's!

Every receipt counts. Every grocery trip helps.



We're Proud of Our High School Graduates



FORTRESS CHRYST

Fortress graduated from Emmaus High School as an honor graduate, receiving an Academic Achievement recognition cord, an Excellence in Academics Medal, and an Outstanding Achievement in French Award. She received the International Fair Scholarship for being heavily involved in the World Language Program excelling in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in French. Fortress was a member of the concert choir, the World Language National Honor Society, and the French Club.

At St. John's, Fortress served as Junior Deacon on Consistory, assists with the Children's Faith Formation Class, and is a member of the Friendship Bible Class.

Fortress will attend the honors college at West Chester University with a double major in Nursing and French. She is the daughter of Tom and Kay Chryst.

ELIJAH FOX

Elijah graduated from Whitehall High School where he carried a GPA average of 4.0 or higher for all four years. He was a member of the National Honor Society for both English and Science. Elijah was a member of the track and field team and was involved with the SERVE Club, Aevium Club, and Big Brother/Big Sister Club. He also participated in Science Olympiad and attended States this past year.

At St. John's, Elijah serves as a technician on the STARs Committee.

Elijah will attend Chestnut Hill College, majoring in Psychology. He is the son of Keith and Wendy Fox.

TYLER SHANKWEILER

Tyler graduated from Moravian Academy where he graduated Cum Laude with high honors. He was presented with the Rev. Elizabeth K. Miller Award for the second highest individual in service to the school and the President's Education Award for academic achievement in having no grades lower than an A during his high school years. Tyler was the Crew Chief in Sound Design for Moravian's theatrical productions. He served as Co-Captain of the Quiz Bowl team, which earned 2nd place in the entire country in the Small Schools Division. At St. John's, Tyler is a member of the Bell Choir, served as Deacon and Secretary on Consistory, was the youth representative for PNEC and the youth delegate to General Synod.

Tyler will attend Gettysburg College with a double major in History and Political Science with a special interest in Constitutional Law. He is the son of Jayne Shankweiler.

MAYA WILLIAMS

Maya graduated from Whitehall High School with high honors. She served as captain of both the cheerleading and track and field teams as well as president of the Student Council. Maya represented Whitehall as a member of the regional Student Athletic Council and participated in the SERVE Club.

Her academic accomplishments included induction into the National Honor Society, serving as president of the Science Honor Society, and membership in the English, Social Studies, Math, and Spanish Honor Societies. She was honored to receive the DAR Award and a Scholar Athlete Medal.

At St. John's, Maya participated in worship services with her interpretive dancing.

Maya will attend Moravian University, majoring in Biochemistry with a goal of becoming a Physician Assistant and continuing her involvement in cheerleading and track and field. She is the daughter of George and Jill Williams and the granddaughter of Bob and Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith.



God Is Still Speaking!

Verso-Chat — Growing in Faith Through Conversation
Wednesdays, 9am and Online Anytime!

Join Us for Summer Lectionary Bible Study

Looking for a meaningful way to stay connected this summer? Our weekly Lectionary Bible Study is the perfect place to begin, especially if you've never joined us before.

Each Wednesday from 9–10am on Zoom, we gather for an engaging conversation about the Scripture readings for the coming Sunday. There are no lectures, no quizzes, and no pressure, just thoughtful discussion, shared insights, and the opportunity to discover how God's Word speaks into our lives today.

Whether you're new to Bible study or have been reading Scripture for years, you'll find a warm and welcoming community where every voice matters. Can't join us live? Each session is recorded and available to watch later.

Summer is a wonderful time to give Verso-Chat a try. We'd love to welcome you to the conversation!

Verso-Chat awaits you. <https://bit.ly/VersoChat>



VERSO-CHAT

Upcoming “Fun-Raising” Events at St. John’s

Saturday, July 25 – Bus Trip to Ocean City, NJ – Leaves St. John's 8am; leaves Ocean City 7pm. \$50. Reservation deadline July 12. See Brian S.

Tuesday, August 11 – IronPigs Grandstand – 6:45pm at Coca Cola Park. "Dollar Dog Night." IronPigs vs. RailRiders. Tickets will be distributed in mid-July. See Carol.

Giant & Weis Gift Cards – Church gets 5% back. See Tom or Carol.

Redner’s Register Tapes – Church gets 1% back. Please do not roll the register tapes or submit receipts from other stores. See Karen.

Coming in the Fall – Mark Your Calendar

- Game Night – Friday, September 11**
- Halloween Gift Card Bingo – Friday, October 16**
- Boscov's Shopping Passes – Wednesday, October 21**
- Pastie Sale – October/November (Date TBD)**
- 30th Annual Road Rally – October (Date TBD)**
- St. John's Bazaar – Saturday, November 14**
- Movie Night – Friday, December 11**

Committee Contacts:

Amy Feidler, Chairperson (835) 210-5944

Ginny Brokenshire	(610) 439-0443	Carol Raszler	(610) 393-7572
Bill Castello	(651) 492-1399	Karen Stoitsis	(610) 262-0746
Pastor Steve Davis	(610) 264-8421	Lori Stocker	(610) 703-2666
Brian Fisher	(610) 762-1134	Brian Strauss	(610) 248-9119
Tom Moyer	(610) 432-3372		



July Birthdays

If you have an upcoming birthday or notice an omission, please update the church office.

7/1	Madison Musselman		Judith Doyle
7/2	Charlotte Kerrigan	7/17	Margaret Reck
	Susan Kaider	7/18	Lucas Weidner
7/3	Dominic DeMilio	7/22	Jean McGonigle
7/7	Wendy Fox		Owen Dovico
7/9	Bobbi Pope	7/23	Stephanie Deutsch
7/10.....	Jennifer Moser		Robert Mill
	Corrina Purdon		Susan Gibson
7/11	Michael Gutekunst	7/24	Robert Barrall
7/12.....	Jennifer Kuhns		Grace Mohr
	Madison Berg		Dorothy Kehnel
	Glenn Buskirk		Mary Lou Tretter
7/13.....	Kathy Haggerty	7/26	Bert Smith
7/14.....	Dennis Warmkessel	7/27	Elwood Thompson
	Diana Beck	7/29	Barrie Carr
7/15.....	Kathleen Bright	7/30	Nancy Wagner
	Carol Wuchter	7/31	Sharon Borgman



July Wedding Anniversaries

If you have an upcoming anniversary or notice an omission, please update the church office.

7/6

Robert & Sharon Czekner

7/11

Joan & Ronald Stocker

7/13

Michael & Michelle Gutekunst

7/16

Charles & Teresa Schwenk

7/20

Keith & Donna Held

7/22

James & Mary Lou Tretter Sr.

7/29

Roxanne & Anthony DeMilio





Backpacks, Calculators & School Supplies Drive

Over half of the students in the Whitehall-Coplay School District rely on full or partial subsidies for lunches. Equipping a child with the needed school supplies can be an extra burden that many parents are not able to afford. What happens then is that the teachers, out of their own pockets, provide the needed school supplies for these children. We have a wonderful opportunity to help.

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Backpacks (new/gently used) | Colored Pencils | Box of Crayons |
| Refillable Water Bottles | Loose-leaf Paper | Dry-erase Markers |
| Student Scissors | Thick Markers | Erasers (not pencil tops) |
| Granola Bars | Pencil Boxes/Pouches | Tissues (boxes) |
| #2 Pencils | Folders | Glue Sticks |
| Lunch Boxes | Thin Markers | Cleaning Wipes |
| Hand Sanitizers | Pencil Sharpeners | |
| Calculator – Texas Instruments – TI-30XS (only this calculator is acceptable) | | |
| Earbuds/Headphones (must be compatible with Chromebooks) | | |

Look for the collection bin in the coatroom area by the sanctuary along with a complete shopping list of school supplies. In addition, there will be a drive-by collection at the Pavilion lot on Thursday, July 23, from 6-8pm. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or crazler@aol.com. Deadline to receive items is Sunday, July 26.



Whitehall Food Pantry

For the month of July, we are collecting **pork & beans, pancake syrup, and coffee**. Any other non-perishable food items are always welcome. A shopping cart can be found in the coatroom area by the sanctuary where you can place your donations. Monetary contributions are always accepted and can be forwarded to the church office or by on-line or text giving. If you would like to volunteer at the food pantry on the 4th Monday of any month, please contact Gary Black at gary.t.black@outlook.com or (484) 274-2405.

Other Outreach Updates

Thank you to everyone who contributed to UCC National's 5-for-5 special offering "Strengthen the Church." A total of \$310.00 was received. Your generosity will help plant seeds for new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Half of your giving will stay with our Mountain Valley Association.

Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative

WCHI and the Faith-Based Community are providing free meals to low-income Whitehall-Coplay households on the 1st Sunday and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 4-6pm. As we go to press for this newsletter, we have not yet received the schedule for the second half of the year. WCHI will post the date and place on Facebook and Instagram and state if it is an inside sit-down meal, take out, or a version of both. The meal being served will also be posted. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Karen Haberern, Program Chair, at (610) 730-3184 or whitehallcoplayhungerinitiative.org

How did St. John's Family do?

Mission	May 2026	YTD 2026	YTD 2025	YTD 2024
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 818.00	\$ 3,818.00	\$ 4,908.00	\$ 5,633.00
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$ 365.00	\$ 1,031.99	\$ 1,850.00	\$ 1,600.00
Strengthen the Church	\$ 310.00	\$ 310.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 125.00
Mountain Valley Assoc.	\$ 150.00	\$ 460.00	N/A	N/A
Pittsburgh Church Fire	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	N/A	N/A

Flag Day BINGO was fun, indeed...

...but here's a moment nobody expected:

When the announcement was made, "Please stand for the National Anthem," everyone rose together.

And then Whitney Houston appeared on the screen.

Not just any version—the undisputed best version that was ever done, or ever will be done.

The timing could not have been more perfect. What began as a simple patriotic moment suddenly became unforgettable, filling the room with smiles, applause, and a shared sense of surprise.

The rest of the evening was just as joyful, with tables full of red, white, and blue, plenty of laughter, great prizes, and wonderful fellowship.

Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated, and helped make Flag Day BINGO such a memorable success.



Worship, Love and Serve — No Matter What!



BUDGET UPDATE

St Johns UCC Fullerton - Statement of Finances

May 2026

Income	Electronic	5/3/2026	5/10/2026	5/17/2026	5/24/2026	5/31/2026	Total
Offerings for Operating Expenses	\$6,222.43	\$2,526.00	\$2,401.00	\$1,524.00	\$2,410.00	\$6,729.75	\$21,813.18
Rental Income--Gross	\$1,385.50			\$166.00			\$1,551.50
Fundraising Income--Net of Exp	\$(1,131.25)	\$48.00	\$3,789.03	\$558.00	\$826.00	\$764.00	\$4,853.78
Endowment Interest							\$0.00
Flowers	\$52.50	\$20.00	\$82.50		\$75.00		\$230.00
Faith Formation	\$65.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$15.00			\$105.00
Special Gifts							\$0.00
Total	\$6,594.18	\$2,609.00	\$6,282.53	\$2,263.00	\$3,311.00	\$7,493.75	\$28,553.46

Expense Summary	Actual	Budget	Difference
Pastoral Services	\$12,020.45	\$11,963.98	\$56.47
Staff Salaries & Expense	\$9,419.13	\$9,417.97	\$1.16
Building Services	\$3,266.51	\$3,681.25	\$(414.74)
Faith Formation	\$0.00	\$104.17	\$(104.17)
Parish Programs	\$2,221.62	\$2,310.42	\$(88.80)
Fundraising Tithe	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total	\$26,927.71	\$27,477.79	\$(550.08)

	Month	Year
Total Income	\$28,553.46	\$138,839.48
Total Expenses	\$26,927.71	\$143,977.06
***** Net INCOME (LOSS)	\$1,625.75	\$(5,137.58)

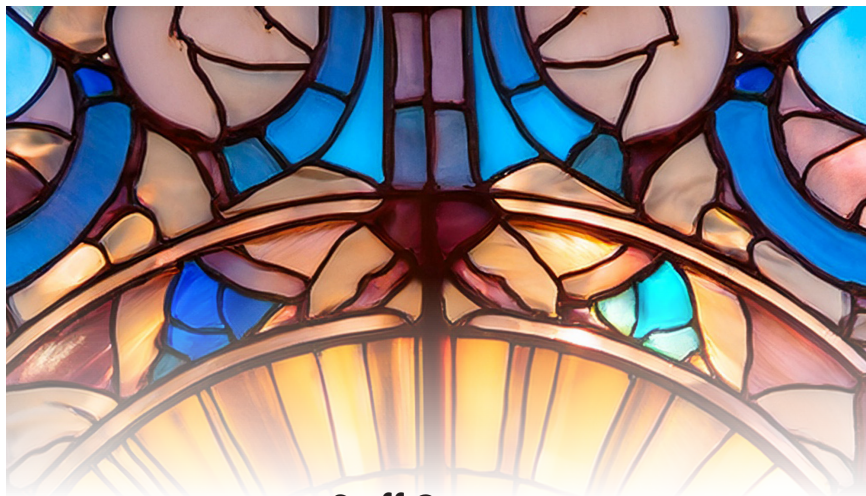
Mission Giving, May 2026

Our Churches Wider Mission	\$818.00
Strengthen the Church	\$310.00
Mountain Valley Assoc	\$150.00
Pittsburgh Church Fire	\$15.00
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$365.00
Total	\$1,658.00

St John's UCC Fullerton Account Balances For Month Ending, May 2026

Account	Apr-26	May-26	Difference
Checking Account	\$84,054.13	\$89,776.78	\$5,722.65
Giant Card Funds	\$1,617.00	\$157.00	\$(1,460.00)
Weis Card Funds	\$1,094.75	\$294.75	\$(800.00)
sub-total General Fund Assets	\$86,765.88	\$90,228.53	\$3,462.65
Restricted/Property Investments	\$363,898.00	\$364,929.00	\$1,031.00
sub-total Restricted Assets	\$363,898.00	\$364,929.00	\$1,031.00
Endowment Fund--Quadrant	\$1,010,074.00	\$1,040,748.00	\$30,674.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,460,737.88	\$1,495,905.53	\$35,167.65
Cornerstone Pavillion Loan	\$(80,405.46)	\$(80,270.83)	\$134.63
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$(80,405.46)	\$(80,270.83)	\$134.63
NET FUND BALANCE	\$1,380,332.42	\$1,415,634.70	\$35,302.28





Staff Contacts

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Office Administrator

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Jazmin Smith

Director St. John's
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www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org

575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052 (610) 264-8421

Entered the Church Eternal

"I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

- 2 Timothy 4:7-8



On Friday, June 12, 2026, William "Bill" Homer Meckes, passed away at Fellowship Community in Whitehall where he resided for 21 years. William (Bill) was born April 7, 1929 in Lehighton to Florence (Bennett) Meckes and Homer Meckes. In 1951, he married Bertha (Betty) Fearer and they were together until her death in 2010.

Bill and Betty were active members of St. John's United Church of Christ, Fullerton in Whitehall. Betty and Bill donated their remains for science education to Temple University.

A memorial service will be planned for the Fall. Memorial contributions may be directed to St. John's UCC, Fullerton or Fellowship Community Annual Fund. The family thanks Gilbert Funeral Services for their support.

We extend our love and prayers for all who we have loved, and remember their families with our support, trusting in the resurrection life they now share with Christ in the fullness of God's love in the Church Eternal.