

2023 Annual Report



St. John's UCC, Fullerton
575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052
(610) 264-8421
www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org



Annual Meeting Agenda

February 4, 2024, 12:00 Noon

Meal and Ministry Fair

- Call to Order DonnaLee Yeatts, 2024 Consistory President
- Opening Prayer Rev. Steve Davis, Senior Pastor
- Approval of the February 5, 2023 Congregational Meeting Minutes DonnaLee Yeatts
- Approval of the November 19, 2023 Congregational Meeting Minutes DonnaLee Yeatts
Consistory Election and Approval of the 2024 Budget
- 2023 Committee Reports
 - Visitation Committee and Home Communion Rev. Steve Davis
 - Faith Formation – Children Rev. Becca Stephens
 - Faith Formation – Youth and Adults Rev. Steve Davis
 - “Fun-Raising”
 - Missions
 - Worship and Music
- Treasurer’s Report Sue Weldner, Treasurer
- Additional Business
 - Personnel Committee – Personnel Manual Updates
 - Bob Bold, Consistory class of 2026
- A Word from the Pastor Rev. Steve Davis
- Looking Ahead to 2024 DonnaLee Yeatts
- Adjournment

Church Officers - 2023

President	DonnaLee Yeatts 3151 Seventh Ave, Whitehall PA 18052	610-262-1962
Vice President	Wendy Fox 904 Front Street, Whitehall PA 18052	610-442-0076
Secretary	Tyler Shankweiler 1063 Fourth Street, Catasauqua PA 18032-2744	610-737-1911
Treasurer	Susan Weldner 7287 Lochhaven Street, Allentown PA 18106	610-509-4674
Financial Secretary	Michelle Gutekunst 846 5 th Street, Whitehall PA 18052	484-347-3629



Our Church Staff

610-264-8421 ~ Church Office

Senior Pastor	Rev. Steven Davis	325-725-2423
Director of Music Ministries	Patrick Sandt	
Office Administrator	Alison Berger Boor	
Treasurer	Susan Weldner	
Financial Secretary & Coordinating Custodian	Michelle Gutekunst	
Worship-Media Tech & Connections Newsletter Editor	Bill Castello	
Custodian	Robert Czekner	
Custodian	Christina Bach	

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Report of the Senior Pastor- 2023

"Because of YOU... Our Church Changes Lives!"

When we want to talk about something or someone we know truly or deeply, we often resort to the language of the heart. Helen Keller said, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." When we try to express the way we know something truly or deeply or beautifully, we often turn to the metaphor and language of the heart.

We do this in our religious language as well. We don't want just second-hand knowledge in religion. Abstract formulas and dusty dogmas won't sustain us for very long. We want first-hand experience as well. We want to know these things in our hearts. The best and the most beautiful things in the world must be felt with the heart. We don't need to know them with our minds alone. We must also know them with our hearts.

– Rev. Joseph S. Pagano, an Episcopal priest who serves in the Anglican Parish of Pasadena and Cormack in Newfoundland, Canada. He is a faculty member in theology at Queen's College in St. John's, Newfoundland.

"To get unstuck, a system must bring forth leaders who can separate themselves enough from the emotional processes around them so that they can see things differently. They must be able to pursue their vision, persist in the face of sabotage by others, be challenged where others are anxious, and value adventure more than safety."

-- Edwin H. Friedman, author of A Failure of Nerve

Our hearts warm over and over again when they are moved through our worship. High and holy moments of worship have stirred us as we received ashes and heard our name as beloved; as we placed flowers on the resurrection cross while singing "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," as we received new confirmands in the beginnings of their faith journey and affirmed them, as we received new families to our faith community.

Our hearts felt the warmth of God's Spirit at Pentecost, as we welcomed transformation to our worship space with a new grand piano and refreshed our chancel wood floor and made space in our pew seating for those differently abled and with mobility challenges, all with donated labor through the skilled craftsmanship of our members.

We felt the power of being one congregation in worship together, even as we struggled with the decision to remain with one Sunday service of worship and change our faith formation structure. The choices were not easy, but the unity we have felt as we worship together and have social connection time to follow has deepened our connections.

Our worship brought us to affirm week after week our connection as the beloved community, committed to doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God, experiencing the reminders of the sacraments of baptism and communion each week in October until we celebrated the saints of our community who had passed. We shed tears of gratitude and

thanksgiving for the many ways we experienced God's love and our human sharing at our Thanksgiving Eve service.

And we concluded the year returning to the affirmations and expectant blessings of hope, peace, joy, love and light of our Advent and Christmas seasons. We shared another magnificent Service of the Nativity with guest musicians and singers joining us. There is nothing like the beauty and glory of the faces of God's people in candlelight on Christmas Eve.

The feelings that have touched our hearts beyond our ability to express are so often found in worship. I'm grateful for the partnership in ministry I experience through the generosity and collegiality of our retired and connected clergy. We celebrated over a century of ministry leadership with the ordination anniversaries of Rev. Dave Mohr and Rev. John Hoff. We've been blessed with the leadership and preaching of Rev. Becca Stephens with our Children's Ministry and guiding our lay leaders in developing vital experiences of faith formation. Rev. Evelyn Stupp helped coach our Consistory and Elders in developing a new ministry of sharing communion to our homebound members.

Rev. Becca Stephens, Rev. Cliff Herring and our beloved Pastor Emerita, Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith, provided great leadership in worship allowing for important time and travel for me to prioritize our family in Texas with the birth of a new grandson, the 100th Anniversary of my college and choir performances, as well as seeing a cherished Aunt in her diminishing memory and health, as well as celebrating our youngest son's graduation from Texas Tech University and the thrill of being with all four of our adult children together for the first time in over six years. The clergy of this congregation, with their prayers and affirmations, their partnership and diligent commitment to St. John's have so greatly added to my joy in being your Senior Minister.

With all these great heart-felt experiences, we have still endured and persevered through the pain of losing people we love and relationships which have given us so much joy. It's not been easy to part with friends, to say "goodbye" to loved ones, even when we know we will one day celebrate the fullness of God's love together.

In some ways, we've felt a bit "stuck," perhaps limited and challenged as we've tried to focus on our "No Matter What!" spirit and continue to step forward. I've been blessed to be part of the PNEC team of persons sharing in the leadership of the Keystone Working Group, exploring the possibility of merging the four conferences within our commonwealth. The study and conversations have challenged us to deepen our interconnectedness as congregations in covenant with each other. That work will continue into 2024 with a potential vote in November 2024 to petition the 2025 UCC General Synod to allow the four conferences to change our boundaries and merge as one Keystone Conference of the UCC. I'm honored to be part of this study, discernment and conversation.

I've participated in training events and professional development to help us more deeply explore how our Open and Affirming status as a congregation helps us live out our commitment to a fully inclusive place and ministry for every person. I've so greatly appreciated those who

have shared their questions and their struggles about what this means to them. Whether in conversations around anti-racism, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, systems of inequity and systems of privilege, I hope you've found me to be one with whom you can engage in conversation and know you are respected, honored and loved, whether we agree on all the issues or not. Whether we find the political, social or relational challenges easy or difficult to navigate, I'm thankful that we take seriously the covenant relationship in which we've promised to hold one another.

Our onsite Worship Attendance in 2023 has decreased by nine persons on average from maintaining the shift from the two services to one, yet we worship together and the feeling of a more connected community has moved us to stay and enjoy our social time together as well. Our online Worship Attendance has increased on average over the week of viewer participation by 22 persons, or an increase of 39% over 2022. We continue to look for ways to improve the worship experience and intentionally include those sharing and participating on Sundays and throughout the week in other locations. Worship is happening many times, in many places, and people have shared with us how significant it is to connect with their St. John's Fullerton community wherever they may be.

We have gone from an initial projected budget deficit of over \$-23,000 to a budget surplus going into 2024 of almost \$14,000. Through great financial management and restraint where possible and a wonderful blessing of a less expensive healthcare cost for the pastor and family coverage, significant prioritizing of funds has helped us achieve a stronger financial position and reasonable stability. By no means are we able to add to our program and ministry staff on a consistent basis yet, but we are making good progress toward that goal.

Our mission support and giving has increased to meet the challenges and demands of needs with international crises of war, natural disasters around the world and in other places in our country. St. John's has risen to help heal hurts, provide food, share resources for housing and medicines, share with those experiencing homelessness and those who struggle to find support with addictions and finding a faith community of grace.

Our Visitation Committee and our Consistory, along with the pastor, have diligently worked to maintain the vital connections with our homebound, those in care facilities or with continuing care needs, and others when hospitalized. I have prioritized prompt visits to the hospital and consistent visits during the year for others. With the help of our leaders, we have been able to offer monthly communion and sharing our stories of faith.

We continue to look to God to help us, trusting that "God is good, all the time! And all the time, God is good!" Yes, it's an affirmation. Yes, there's much to accomplish still. St. John's is a consistently generous congregation in our commitments to the UCC as a denomination in ministry and mission, and in our community and global outreach.

Because of YOU, our church changes lives! This truth continues to remind us that every day, God works in and through us to share love, extend grace and experience hope in our community. With your faith, the mission of St. John's UCC, Fullerton will thrive, because...
We Worship, We Love, We Serve ~ No Matter What!

Glory to God!

Yours in grace and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Steven Davis
Senior Pastor



Consistory President's Report and Spiritual Council Report – 2023

Spiritual Council

The Spiritual Council (Pastor Steve, and the elders Donna Lee Yeatts, Wendy Fox and I) met religiously the hour before the monthly consistory meetings to discuss matters of importance, joys, and concerns. The meetings always opened and closed with prayer. The time in between was spent performing our sacred duty working prayerfully together on important and sensitive matters in our effort to speak the truth and to build up the body of Christ at St. John's.

One of my favorite questions to us, the elders, from Pastor Steve was – “What are you hearing/sensing from the congregation?” So as the Spirit moves you, tap an elder on the shoulder and voice your matter of importance, your joy, or your concern, that it can be attended to in a most prudent and expeditious manner. What are your thoughts, how can we work together toward a better St. John's, community, and world.

Consistory

Because of you, 2023 was a year of smooth sailing; the Christian symbol for the church is a ship with its main sail unfurled, catching the wind, and moving ever forward on what we hope would be a fruitful voyage. So it was for St. John's in 2023, because of you the congregation was able to return to near normal sailing and move ever so further away from the Covid Storms of the preceding years. We were able to meet without masking; religious, social, and fund-raising events were once again filling our schedules.

In the area of religion, because of you and the Holy Spirit we sailed forward in 2023; organizing the Consistory and elders (both present and former) to visit the homebound for conversation, fellowship and to commune with them; moving to a 9:30 service where we were able to meet and have the faith community of St. John's come together as one body in Christ to praise the Lord.

Coming together as a community was one of the areas Pastor Steve and the Consistory felt was important for St. John's to reclaim from the pandemic. To that end, 2023 saw many events that fell into the religious/social or just social categories - mid week get togethers for Bible study, Lenten and Advent programs, Service of the Nativity, Spaghetti Dinner, Cheesesteak Night, Iron Pigs, Ice Cream Social, Trunk-or-Treat, Bus Trip to NYC, just to name a few, all designed to bring us together as a community of faith for fun and fellowship.

In 2023 there are a few things that are noteworthy for me, and I hope for you too.

The fundraising for the grand piano and the response not only with the monetary funds to support the purchase but also for the transformation that the church underwent afterwards. The time and effort of the crew who removed the pews and refinished the floors to accommodate the grand piano, choir, and those less mobile.

Fundraising activities overall were up for 2023: BINGO, nut sales, crafters, Craft and Vendor shows, etc., thanks to all who organized the events and those who participated.

The elevator “malfunction” took the wind out of our sails as those who needed the elevator to attend were unable to do so; thankfully, with technology they were able to participate via the web as the Property Committee worked on securing parts and insurance money to fund the repairs.

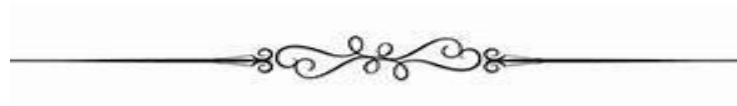
Giving - the amount of love poured out for those in need - Hawaii, Ukraine, Israel, UCWM.

Take the time to read the reports that follow to become informed and involved in your church’s activities.

A note of caution - smooth sailing is not very exciting – to move the spirit some rough seas are needed - all hands on deck; so, as we look forward and set the next course for 2024 and beyond let us not be afraid to stretch the boundaries of our comfort zones. Because of you, we can endeavor to go forward with the faith given to us by the Spirit into the future; To Love, To Serve, No Matter What.

Remember it all happened “Because of you!”

Yours in the Faith,
Bill Fink



Membership Statistical Report - 2023

Baptisms: 2

3/12/2023 Olivia Rae Weidner
6/4/2023 Ingrid Fern Hemdal

Weddings: 2

Andrew Michael Everett and Chloe Eleanor Davie 5/20/23

Confirmation: 4 5/28/2023

Aubrey Jane Beckwith
Kayla Marie Bryant
Gavin Jeffrey Phillips
Carson Everett Strauss

New Members: 3 6/5/2023

George Michael (Mike) Borgman
George Richard (Rick) and Roberta Borgman

Member Deaths: 11

Richard Bateman	1/3/23	Shirley Green	8/24/23
Susan Felegy	3/5/23	Eleanor Smith	8/27/23
Carl Case	6/3/23	Jean Coombe	10/2/23
Margaret Snyder	6/3/23	Timothy Ott	10/12/23
Franklin Nolt	7/15/23	Mary Jo Bierman	11/24/23
Elaine Lentz	8/23/23		

Removed by Request or Transfer: 16

Gary Madaus – transferred to Egypt Community Church – 3/9/23
Christiane Schantz – transferred to UCC Greenawalds – 3/21/23
Lamar and Beverly Peters – transferred to Jordan – 7/31/2023

George and Mary Ann Weaver – 3/10/23
David Erney – 3/13/23
Janet Smith – 3/13/23
Judith Miranda – 6/14/23
Stacy Broad, daughters Audrey and Margot Craig – 7/23/23
Alycia DeMilio – 9/19/23
Kevin and Barbara Hoderman – 12/4/23
Rachel Eichman – 12/20/23

Moved to Inactive Member Status by Spiritual Council, 5/19/23

26

David Adams	William & Laurie Dovico
Susan Albus-Evans	Richard and Traci Hicks
Richard and Tina Baatz Jr	Donna Lynch
Barbara Begel	Megan, Adam, Barbara, Chad Marinkovits
Diane Buss	David and Marina Newton
Mark and Sheryn Chwastiak	William and Tara Roth Jr
Brittany Diaello	Troy and Brittany Rothrock
Richard Dickey Jr	Zachary Young

Summary of Membership

Active Membership Reported 12/31/2022	570
New Members (does not include weddings)	9
Active Member Deaths	11
Removed by Request or Transfer	16
Moved to Inactive by Spiritual Council	26
Active Membership as of 12/31/2023	526

Worship Statistics: 2023

Average attendance at 9:30 service	99
Average attendance at 8:15 service (January-May)	44
Average attendance at 10:45 service (January-May)	65
Online Livestream Participation Average	24
Additional Online Viewing Average	52



St. John's UCC Fullerton
Congregational Meeting Minutes
Sunday, February 5, 2023, 12:00 pm

ATTENDANCE: 67 people in person, 2 online

Steven Davis, Senior Pastor

Susan Weldner, Treasurer

- I. Call to Order—William Fink, Consistory President
- II. Opening Prayer—Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor
- III. Approval of February 13, 2022 Congregational Meeting Minutes; motion for approval of minutes: Colleen Kulhamer, seconded by: Nancy Bowman: APPROVED
- IV. Approval of November 20, 2022 Congregational Meeting Minutes and the 2023 Budget, motion to approve both by Charlie Hoff, seconded by Sharon Czeckner: APPROVED
- V. 2022 Committee Reports
 - A. Visitation Committee, Reported by Sharon Antrim
 1. Committee members conduct visitations in person, by phone, sending cards
 2. Pastor Steve visits hospitalized
 3. 29 Christmas Gift Bags were made and distributed
 4. New members to this committee are being recruited
 - B. Christian Education/Faith Formation, Reported by Becca Stephens
 1. Faith Formation defined as any group or individual activity done to promote faith
 2. "Blessed to be a Blessing" curriculum being used, includes Sacred Circle Time in which symbols of God the Creator, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are reinforced weekly at start and end of class, includes Bible Story and craft. 7-12 children attend weekly
- VI. Treasurer's Report—Sue Weldner
 - A. 2022 presented financial challenge, ended the year with \$11,000 loss, need \$22,500/month income to meet budgetary needs; our January income was \$24,000
 1. General Fund currently: \$32,000
 2. Property Fund currently: \$24,000
 3. Pavilion Fund currently: \$40,000 to be invested to provide income stream for Pavilion maintenance
 4. Endowment Fund currently: \$440,000

VII. Additional Business

- A. Constitution and By-law Update: All active members in good standing of St. John's UCC, Fullerton, regardless of age, are eligible to vote on Congregational matters. Motion to approve: Becca Stephens, discussion followed, seconded by Brian Fisher, APPROVED by unanimous vote
- B. Kim Hillegass was elected by Consistory to complete Consistory term of Donna Held, motion passed by common consent of Congregation

VIII. A Word from the Pastor

- A. Promote use of St. John's Website for communication, report any corrections needed to office staff
- B. St. John's is in a good place, albeit a place of struggling to get back to pre-COVID
- C. Opportunity is all around, from youth to older individuals
- D. Review of 2022 Statistics:
 - 1. 13 Confirmands, 15 Transfers In equals 28 New Members
 - 2. 11 Lost, 5 Transfers Out, 47 Removed from Active Status
 - 3. 140 Actively participate every month
 - 4. 570 total members
 - 5. Who can we bring in?

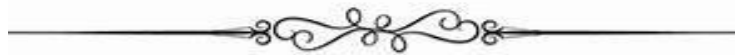
IX. Looking Ahead to 2023—Bill Fink

- A. Become involved

VI. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn, Wendy Fox, seconded by Grace Mohr APPROVED

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet L. Ebert, Consistory Secretary



St. John's UCC Fullerton
Fall Congregation Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2023, 9:30a

Attendance in person: 110 (3 non-members left once we started the presentation of the 2024 budget); Attendance on Zoom 3

Call to Order at the beginning of the service - Bill Fink, President
In honor of the Glory of God and the 63rd Wedding anniversary of Tom and Emilie Moyer

Fall Congregation meeting was held Sunday November 19, 2023, during our 9:30a Sunday Services

At the time of We Love in the service, the proposed 2024 budget was presented by Sue Weldner, Treasurer, motion to accept the 2024 budget by Kirby Hower seconded by Sharon Antrim; APPROVED

- What is happening with the elevator – looking at the vendor on cost, don't have numbers. Seeing what portion the insurance can cover – we believe some portion can be covered by insurance right now – no number yet - we do have some in the restricted monies from the past that we put aside that we could use – \$30,000 plus \$20,000 in property – they were able to raise the elevator.
- Putting in ramp in case the elevator can't be repaired as an alternative – property committee can assess and discuss.
- 2024 are for our normal operating expenses. Any additional expenses like the elevator will more than likely have a special fundraising.

At the time of We Serve in the service, Our Consistory Nominations were presented.

2024 - Joy Gravely, Kim Hillegass, Wayne Lichtenwalner, DonnaLee Yeatts (E), Youth Deacon, Fortress Chryst

2025 - Sharon Antrim, Wendy Fox (E), Kathy Roth, Tyler Shankweiler (replacing Paul Raszler's initial sitting)

2026 - Kay Chryst, Kirby Hower, Paul Raszler (E), with a 4th Deacon to be announced at a later time

Motion to accept the new Consistory Members by Michelle Gutekunst; seconded by Kathy Roth; APPROVED

Thanked those members that will be going off of Consistory for their time of service:

Janet Ebert, William Fink (E), Brenda Pascoe, Margaret Young

Closing Hymn was sung.

Adjournment made by President Bill Fink —Motion made by Tyler Shankweiler; seconded by Grace Mohr

Benediction

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy E Fox, Consistory Secretary



Stewardship and Finance Reports



Stewardship & Finance Committee – 2023

Committee Members: Pastor Steve Davis, Sue Weldner (Treasurer), Tom Moyer (Financial Secretary), Michelle Gutekunst (Financial Secretary), John Viglione, Jim Ebert, Brian Fisher, Joe Trippet, Susan Rarich, Bill Fink

A big Thank You to all committee members for all they do to support the work of this committee! Also, Thank You to the congregation for their on-going support. In 2023 you responded to the challenge of increasing your financial support to the work of our church. Offerings from the congregation increased 4% over the previous year, ending the year at \$239,000. A huge THANK YOU to the Fundraising Committee – through their efforts, our net Fundraising income more than doubled from last year, with \$23,837 in net income this year. Each year we tithe 10% of the net income, as directed by the Mission Committee. For 2023, \$2,383 will be split between Lehigh Conference of Churches (\$795) and OCWM (\$1,589). We continued to closely manage our expenses in 2023. As in previous years, our actual spending is below the budget for the year.

Below is a summary of the results for 2023:

	Actual	Budget
TOTAL INCOME	\$306,650	\$305,865
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$(292,738)	\$(317,686)
NET INCOME FOR 2023	\$13,912	\$-
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JAN 2023	\$32,399	
ENDING FUND BALANCE DEC 2023	\$46,311	

Of interest, included in Income and Expense above are the finances related to our 501 Grape Investment property. There is no mortgage on the property, so on an annual basis our expenses are property taxes and any maintenance or repairs needed. Maintenance and repair costs can vary from year to year. In 2023, our net income from this investment property was \$6,420. Rental income of \$13,487 was offset by \$3,482 in taxes and \$3,585 cost of repairing the garage roof.

As we move into 2024, we will continue to target \$22,500 in monthly congregational giving, and we will continue to communicate our progress toward that goal. We have remained approx. 10% below our average giving over the past 10 years. Targeting \$22,500 will enable us to meet our expenses, as well as begin to offer opportunities to grow back our staff. Our faith formation ministry is re-establishing itself and has been growing this past year. We would love to be able to support further growth, particularly in our children’s ministries, with a pastoral staff position,— talk about changing lives!

In addition to our General Fund, we have other financial resources: Restricted funds, Property funds, Endowment funds.

Restricted funds: these are monies given for a specific purpose, or they have been set aside by Consistory for “special needs, rainy day funds”. At the end of 2023, we have \$32,500 available for use with Consistory approval. An additional \$10,795 is earmarked for specific purposes, based on doner designations. All our Mission giving is considered Restricted funds, as the congregation designates their giving in this area. Total Mission giving for 2023 was \$25,000. Details are included in the Mission Committee’s report.

Property funds: at the end of 2023, we have \$18,000 available for larger property expenditures, significant, unplanned maintenance needs. During 2023 we utilized this money for several projects:

- \$2,425 Installation of new fob system
- \$1,750 new flooring in chancel area
- \$6,675 elevator repairs (prior to its breakdown)
- \$3,585 501 Grape garage roof repairs
-

We also have \$52,980 in the Pavilion fund. \$40,500 of this is invested to provide an income stream to support the monthly pavilion related expenses. We have a 30-year mortgage for the Pavilion construction – the outstanding balance at the end of 2023 was \$83,860. For 2023, our income and & expenses for the Pavilion were:

Pavillion Donations	6,690
Furnace Loan Repay	9,091
Pavillion Rentals	1,100
Interest Inc	497
Income	17,378
Mortgage	5,382
Utilities	1,089
Lawn Mowing	2,250
Garden Maint	800
Adverstising	1,037
Expenses	10,558
Net	6,820

Endowment funds: at the end of 2023, we have \$474,777 in our Endowment fund. This continues to provide approx. \$23,000 annual income to our General Fund. During 2022 we lost approx. \$115,000 in market value. In 2023, we regained approx. \$47,000 of that market value.

During 2023, the S&F committee chose a new investment advisor to manage our funds. We are now utilizing Quadrant Financial, a local firm based in Bethlehem.

The S&F Committee will continue to review our monthly financial results – sharing regular updates with the congregation, to keep us all informed, giving each of us the opportunity to support as we can!

Sue Weldner

2024 Annual Budget

2024 Final Budget

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
OFFERINGS	\$ 250,258	\$ 239,287	\$ 230,906	\$ 239,077	\$ 250,000
RENTAL INCOME	\$ 14,722	\$ 15,916	\$ 15,404	\$ 15,074	\$ 17,000
FUNDRAISING INCOME	\$ 5,816	\$ 5,834	\$ 10,919	\$ 23,837	\$ 21,500
ENDOWMENT INTEREST	\$ 21,176	\$ 21,084	\$ 22,680	\$ 23,164	\$ 23,590
FLOWERS INCOME	\$ 728	\$ 1,777	\$ 3,171	\$ 1,995	\$ 3,000
CHRISTIAN ED INCOME	\$ 1,304	\$ 510	\$ 1,005	\$ 1,171	\$ 1,750
SPECIAL GIFTS & TRANSFERS	\$ 2,227	\$ 2,315	\$ 5,308	\$ 2,332	\$ 2,500
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TOTAL INCOME	\$ 296,231	\$ 286,723	\$ 289,392	\$ 306,650	\$ 319,340
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PASTORAL SERVICES	\$ 131,139	\$ 119,953	\$ 135,685	\$ 125,672	\$ 129,506
STAFF SALARIES	\$ 118,802	\$ 101,745	\$ 103,643	\$ 97,389	\$ 107,258
PROPERTY	\$ 27,367	\$ 30,862	\$ 31,415	\$ 35,753	\$ 38,125
PARISH PROGRAMS	\$ 22,151	\$ 23,490	\$ 29,392	\$ 33,925	\$ 29,450
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TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 299,459	\$ 276,050	\$ 300,136	\$ 292,738	\$ 304,339
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NET	\$ (3,228)	\$ 10,673	\$ (10,744)	\$ 13,912	\$ 15,001
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Monthly Contributions - 2023

MONTH	CURRENT EXPENSES	MISSIONS OCWM	PROPERTY NEEDS	REPAY LOAN FOR FURNACE	TOTAL
January	\$ 22,765.00	\$ 1,082.00	\$ 977.00	\$ 743.00	\$ 25,567.00
February	\$ 17,233.21	\$ 1,089.00	\$ 757.00	\$ 434.00	\$ 19,513.21
March	\$ 19,956.00	\$ 1,111.00	\$ 604.00	\$ 381.00	\$ 22,052.00
April	\$ 20,728.75	\$ 1,291.00	\$ 847.00	\$ 1,098.00	\$ 23,964.75
May	\$ 15,986.00	\$ 921.00	\$ 634.00	\$ 870.00	\$ 18,411.00
June	\$ 15,505.00	\$ 931.00	\$ 689.00	\$ 599.00	\$ 17,724.00
July	\$ 19,388.81	\$ 1,110.00	\$ 713.00	\$ 735.00	\$ 21,946.81
August	\$ 16,197.00	\$ 985.00	\$ 623.00	\$ 1,179.00	\$ 18,984.00
September	\$ 16,752.00	\$ 977.00	\$ 585.00	\$ 547.00	\$ 18,861.00
October	\$ 17,607.00	\$ 1,046.00	\$ 829.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 20,282.00
November	\$ 19,401.50	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 590.00	\$ 455.00	\$ 21,656.50
December	\$ 20,962.20	\$ 1,070.00	\$ 966.00	\$ 1,110.00	\$ 24,108.20
TOTAL	\$ 222,482.47	\$ 12,823.00	\$ 8,814.00	\$ 8,951.00	\$ 253,070.47

Amounts Contributed Per Giving Unit - 2023

\$5000 +	12
\$4000 to \$4999.99	6
\$3000 to \$3999.99	12
\$2000 to \$2999.99	20
\$1000 to \$1999.99	29
\$500 to \$999.99	35
\$100 to \$499.99	83
\$.01 to \$99.99	68
No Contribution	251

Please know that all gifts to St. John's, both large and small, are appreciated and valued. Thank you for all you do for St. John's UCC Fullerton.

Annual Comparisons Of Giving - 2023

ENVELOPE TITLE					
COMPARISONS					
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Current Expenses	\$ 252,240.67	\$ 236,087.04	\$ 225,122.26	\$ 214,085.84	\$ 222,772.47
Donation for Envelopes	\$ 444.00	\$ 296.00	\$ 310.00	\$ 232.00	\$ 214.00
Communion	\$ 4,417.00	\$ 2,161.50	\$ 876.00	\$ 2,615.00	\$ 2,196.00
Ash Wednesday	\$ 830.28	\$ 602.00	\$ 251.00	\$ 564.00	\$ 292.00
Lenten Envelopes	\$ 1,181.55	\$ 996.00	\$ 935.00	\$ 732.00	\$ 625.00
Lent Folders	\$ 2,075.00	\$ 685.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 790.00	\$ 854.00
Maundy Thursday	\$ 717.46	\$ 180.00	\$ 205.00	\$ 539.00	\$ 377.00
Good Friday	\$ 546.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 320.00	\$ 85.00	\$ 399.00
Easter Sunday	\$ 2,182.50	\$ 1,435.00	\$ 1,766.55	\$ 1,509.00	\$ 1,521.00
Mothers' Day	\$ 265.00	\$ 185.00	\$ 130.00	\$ 254.00	\$ 180.00
Fathers' Day	\$ 149.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 128.00	\$ 280.00
Thanksgiving	\$ 1,071.00	\$ 415.00	\$ 462.80	\$ 791.00	\$ 297.00
Advent	\$ 525.00	\$ 671.00		\$ 780.00	\$ 75.00
Christmas Eve	\$ 4,088.00	\$ 910.00	\$ 3,992.55	\$ 2,492.00	\$ 1,329.00
Missions (OCWM)	\$ 19,270.37	\$ 19,250.95	\$ 17,616.30	\$ 14,815.90	\$ 12,823.00
Property Needs	\$ 11,452.83	\$ 11,633.00	\$ 12,430.50	\$ 8,228.60	\$ 8,966.00
H.E.L.P.	\$ 1,889.00	\$ 1,493.00	\$ 1,809.00	\$ 2,035.80	\$ 1,681.00
TOTAL	\$ 303,344.66	\$ 277,300.49	\$ 267,126.96	\$ 250,677.14	\$ 254,881.47



*Church Groups
&
Committee Reports*



Christian Early Learning Center (CELC) - 2023

The Christian Early Learning Center at St John's UCC Fullerton is a program offering classes to 3–5-year-olds. We run on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. We have been able to maintain an in-person classroom. We started the school year with 16 Students and now currently have 14 students enrolled.

Throughout the year we have focused on academics such as the alphabet, letters, letter sounds, numbers and shapes, along with crafts, learning letters and colors in sign language, learning how to share, taking turns and following directions. We have a well-rounded group of students.

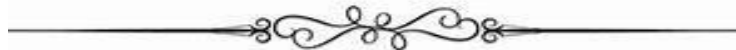
We have been able to maintain an in-person classroom without wearing masks, by cleaning daily and making sure we are all washing hands correctly.

We are currently working on bringing more students to our school for stronger revenue. We did increase revenue this year by extending the 4-year-old class from 2.5 hour classes to 3.5 hour classes and we raised the tuition for both classes. We are looking forward to growing the preschool program to its greatest potential.

We have had requests to add more days to our schedule. We may benefit from having an on call substitute. These are things we can look into for next school year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jazmin Smith, Director



Crafters Group – 2023

The Crafters Group had a successful year in 2023. Our theme this year, “Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives,” inspired new and creative ideas, encouraged more people to join and become part of our group, helped contribute to the church’s finances, and afforded the opportunity to reach out and meet people at St. John’s Community Yard Sale and the Craft and Vendor Fair.

It is with deep gratitude that we would like to thank the following people who made items throughout the year: Joy Gravely, Ruthann Hallman, Emma Kuczek, Regie Mohr, Emilie Moyer, and Carol Raszler along with items donated by Janet Miller. We would also be remiss if we didn’t thank the many people who made prayer shawls and prayer squares this past year.

The Crafters Group participated in the church's Ministry Fair on February 5. After worship, the Annual Meeting, and a pot-luck luncheon, the congregation had the opportunity to remain for the Ministry Fair, visit and chat with committee members, and take a look at posters that depicted the work of each committee.

The following events took place during 2023 and produced the following sales:

Dates	Events	Sales
March 12 & March 19	Easter & Spring Sales	\$ 380.00
March 20 to September 8	Spring & Summer Sales	\$ 171.00
September 9	Community Yard Sale	\$ 99.00
November 4	Craft & Vendor Fair	\$ 372.00
November 26 & December 3	Fall & Christmas Sales	\$ 381.83

The bowl cozies continued to be our best seller this year. New items included our "whatnot" baskets, jar openers, pillowcases, shopping bags, bookmarks, clothespin bags, and tissue box covers.

For the year we had sales totaling \$1403.83. A total of \$217.83 was taken out for expenses (supplies). **The final profit for the year was \$1186.00.** At the end of the year any monetary profit from the craft sales is earmarked towards Mission Outreach. For 2023 the Mission Committee designated the profit to be divided equally between the following:

- **St. John's Furnace Fund – \$593.00.**
- **St. John's Pavilion Fund – \$593.00.**

Hands are needed not only to knit, crochet, or sew but also to assemble, cut, glue, stuff, and label. There is a spot available for anyone no matter what your skill level is or what you might wish to do. All projects are worked on out of the home; we do not meet on a regular basis. We supply the materials; you supply the hands! New ideas are always welcome and encouraged. Thank you to all those who participated in 2023 and to everyone who purchased our items over the course of this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Raszler
Crafters Group Coordinator



Faith Formation, Children – 2023

Blessed to be a Blessing Annual Report

Because of you:

I am so thankful for those who are helping with the children’s faith formation program. A special thanks to Kim Hillegass who has led the faith formation class more than any of the rest of us. Other leaders include Janet Ebert and DonnaLee Yeatts, who helps on those Sundays the choir is not singing. I am grateful for Wendy Fox who has stepped into a leadership position. Also thank you to Fortress Chryst, Jennifer and Susan Rarich who are helpers in the classroom. Jennifer also coordinated the egg hunt for the children.

We continue to have 4-8 children each week:

Age 4 - Rowan Rarich-Lord, Maura Rarich

1st Grade - Shepherd Rarich-Lord, Zander Rarich

3rd Grade - Isabella Pagan, Mia Venanzi, Michael Thomas Gutekunst

4th Grade - Aubrey Funches

5th Grade - Ryan Szokes

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Becca Stephens

Faith Formation, Confirmation - 2023

On May 28, 2023, Pentecost Sunday, we confirmed 4 young people and welcomed them to the journey of faith in covenant with all the St. John’s UCC, Fullerton family for the 2022-2023 program year. This is always a great joy and blessing to celebrate this spiritual marker in the lives of our young people and their families. Many thanks and expressions of gratitude are shared with Linda Powell and Wayne Lichtenwalner who share support, preparation and leadership week after week, and have done so for many years. Also thank you to those who served as mentors to the confirmands, helping them to navigate all of their requirements and have additional adults whose life of love and service to Christ are shared.

Confirmands

Aubrey Beckwith

Kayla Bryant

Gavin Phillips

Carson Strauss

Mentors

Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith

Evelyn Broad

Wendy Fox

Brian Fisher

As the young people completed their requirements, besides participating in congregational life, they had the opportunity to participate in community outreach activities, worship with other faith traditions and create their own unique faith statements.

As classes drew to a close, we emphasized the importance of participating in the life of the congregation. We were always thrilled to have the extended family members share in the faith formation and growth of our confirmation class.

For the 2023-2024 Confirmation Class year, we once again have four young people sharing with us in the Affirming Faith curriculum and participating each week in lessons, worship, and activities of service, witness and growth. The parents and mentors of this year's confirmation class are showing up to share their lives and faith, and participating in making the confirmation experience more personal and valuable. We look forward to receiving these young people on Pentecost Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev Steve Davis, Sr. Pastor

Faith Formation, Friendship Bible Class – 2023

This Adult Faith Formation Class (Sunday School) meets at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday morning from September to the end of May in Room 201. The class averages between 15 to 18 participants on any given Sunday. Anyone is invited to stop by for a cup of coffee, refreshments, and join in the conversation.

Under the leadership of Tom Moyer, different members teach each week and offer a variety of topics including Bible stories, scriptures, parables, Bible characters, family traditions, current events, and much more. Thank you to Nancy Bowman, Kay Chryst, Tom Chryst, Bill Fink, Tom Moyer, Paul Raszler, Tyler Shankweiler, and Becca Stephens for teaching and leading the class discussions this past year.

Finally, after the pandemic years were behind us, the class was able to hold its Annual Picnic at Bill Fink's campsite near Mertztown on Saturday, July 22. Besides feasting on a lot of delicious food, making cotton candy, fishing, and playing games, it was a time for fun, conversation, and fellowship. The day ended with a gathering by the campfire. Class members and friends could also bring their tents and camp for the weekend.

At the end of the Sunday School year, the class came together for its Annual Luncheon on Sunday, May 21, at the Deitsch Eck Restaurant in Lenhartsville. A good time was had by all as we looked forward to the summertime and our class resuming in September.

Throughout the year, the Friendship Bible Class served as hosts for the Social Hour after worship and for the evening Soup and Bread Dinner during Lent.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Moyer
Friendship Bible Class Leader

Faith Formation, Verso-Chat Lectionary Group & Other Adult Classes – 2023

"Verso" is the Latin word meaning "conversation." Our lives long for conversation, significant and meaningful connection, with God and each other.

Pastor Steve and nine to twelve of our faith family meet every Wednesday morning from 9 to 10 a.m. on ZOOM to discuss the scriptures following the Vanderbilt University common lectionary that will be the basis for upcoming sermons. We receive the selected readings a week in advance of our meeting and again the day before by e-mail. This provides time to read and study scriptures. Several students prepare additionally by reading commentaries relative to the scriptures, bringing these thoughts to the informal discussion. Questions are welcomed in an open, accepting environment, guided by Pastor Steve. We learn one another's views and life events that have influenced our perceptions, creating strong bonds of connection among us. Each week we open our lives to the ancient words that still share the timeless truths of God's desire to be in a relationship of love with us.

Find the link to the Vanderbilt University Lectionary by searching with your favorite search engine; we are in Year B. The ZOOM meeting link can be found on St. John's UCC Fullerton website home page under the Verso Chat heading under the "Church Happenings" near the bottom of the home page.

Please consider joining us! There is no obligation for attendance, drop in whenever you are able. Each week is it's own contained set of scriptures for review and sharing.

Janet Ebert



Transformational Conversations:

The Four Agreements & The Fifth Agreement Books Study

July/August/September 2023

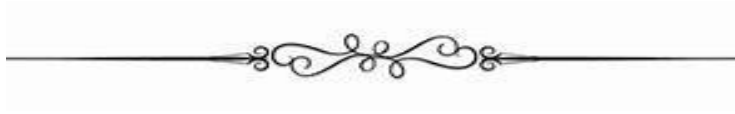
Recognizing that our faith formation as adults continues to shape and form our growth over many decades, St. John's offered a new book study from two companion resources by Don Miguel Ruiz and Don Jose Ruiz. The class participants met on Sunday mornings or Thursday evenings, on site or online, with a total of 12 people sharing in the weekly groups. Based on ancient spiritual wisdom from the Toltecs, we explored the biblical and spiritual approaches to staying spiritually grounded in relationally challenging times.

The agreements we make with ourselves have the power to transform how we experience and live in this experience of life. Throughout our lives, we make many agreements that go against ourselves and create needless suffering. The Four Agreements help us to break these self-limiting agreements and replace them with agreements that bring us personal freedom, happiness, and love.

The Fifth Agreement offers a fresh perspective and a powerful new agreement for transforming our lives through a deeper level of awareness of the power of the Self, and returns us to the authenticity we were born with. We are reminded of the greatest gift we can give ourselves: the freedom to be who we really are.

I hope others will lead and want to share a short-term group, a book or topic study or presentation to welcome adults to continue to form their faith with new opportunities to share themselves and hear God's still speaking message of transformation in conversation with other adults. If you'd like to propose a topic or lead a short-term group, please visit with the Church Office or Pastor Steve and let's share in the process of growth together.

Rev. Steven Davis, Sr. Pastor



Food Pantry – 2023

The Whitehall Food Pantry, located at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall, had another successful year in 2023. Donated food and items received from Second Harvest Food Bank are selected and packed into boxes and bags on the 1st through the 4th Monday mornings of each month. The packed items are then distributed to approximately 150 local families per month in the respective evenings.

For the Easter meals, we collected canned fruits, canned vegetables, and canned sweet potatoes. For the Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, we collected canned turkey gravy, canned cranberry sauce, and canned vegetables. The pantry also handed out grocery gift cards to purchase turkeys.

St. John’s has about 20 excellent volunteers who donated their time and energy on the 4th Monday of each month. New volunteers are always welcome. Volunteers were needed in the morning from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to sort food supplies and stock shelves. Volunteers were also needed in the evening from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to distribute food to pantry clients. A shopping cart to place donated food items can be found in the coat room by the sanctuary. For this year a multitude of assorted food items were collected. We received \$4195.00 in monetary donations, which also included \$15.00 for sponsorship of the wheat basket on the altar in worship. “Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives.”

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Black
Whitehall Food Pantry Liaison



“Fun-Raising” Committee – 2023

The fundraising events scheduled by the “Fun-Raising” Committee in 2023 contributed greatly to the financial needs of the church. With the congregation’s participation in these events along with the help of many volunteers, it reinforced this year’s theme of “Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives.” Our events offered a time of fun, fellowship, opportunities, and outreach not only to our members but also to our community.

This year our fundraisers realized a gross profit of \$23,836.85. The practice of tithing 10% of the profit from all our fundraisers for Mission Outreach continued in 2023. The tithing at the end of the year amounted to \$2,383.68, which the Mission Committee distributed between Our Church’s Wider Mission and the Lehigh Conference of Churches. This left a remaining net profit of \$21,453.17 for 2023.

The “Fun-Raising” Committee met 12 times in 2023 with both in-person and Zoom meetings. It was good to get back and resume all our fundraising events once the pandemic finally ended.

The committee was part of the Ministry Fair on February 5. Following worship, a pot-luck luncheon, and the Annual Meeting, committees had their representatives meet with people and display their posters for the congregation to view. We were fortunate to have Brian Fisher and Brian Strauss sign up and come on board to join our committee.

St. John’s is known for providing many delicious things to eat with our fundraisers. Our food events this year were:

- Homemade Filling Sale – containers of leftover frozen filling from 2022 were purchased by members as well as donated to the Whitehall Food Pantry for distribution. Due to minimal sales in 2022 and lack of volunteers, we did not make filling in 2023.
- Pastie Sales – Pickup April 14 & 16 and November 8 & 12. In Fall we introduced several new pastie selections to choose from, which were well received.
- Ice Cream Social – July 15 at the pavilion. Thank you to Kayleigh Fisher for wearing the ice cream costume and inviting people driving along Grape Street to stop by. Ice cream waffles were made this year in addition to our usual choices of novelty ice creams.
- Nut & Fruit Sale – September through November. Several new items were introduced this year that contributed to larger sales. It is one of our biggest fundraisers.
- Christmas Candy Sale – December 17. Thanks to our very own chocolatier, Ginny Brokenshire, homemade peanut butter and coconut cream chocolates were available to purchase.

At last, Give-Back Sales from various merchants returned. A certain percentage of the money from all sales was given back to St John’s. They included:

- Vince’s Steaks Food Wagon – April 13 – at the pavilion.
- Panera Bread – September 28 – at 2669 MacArthur Rd. in Whitehall.

- Applebee's Coupons – Fall – the purchase of a \$10.00 coupon provided the buyer with a gourmet hamburger of his/her choice and French fries. The coupons could be used at any Applebee's at any time. All 100 coupons were sold.

On the fun and social end of our events, we held the following:

- St. Patrick's Gift Card Bingo – March 17.
- Basket Social – A two-day event on May 19 & May 20.
- IronPigs Baseball Party Porch – May 26.
- Hawaiian Gift Card Bingo – June 16.
- IronPigs Baseball Grandstand – August 1.
- Community Yard Sale – September 9 at the pavilion. Habitat for Humanity was on hand with their "Stuff the Truck" to take any leftover, unsold items the vendors did not wish to take back home with them and have Habitat sell them at their thrift store or give items to people in need. It was another way for St. John's, Habitat, and the vendors to come together and reach out to the community.
- Halloween Friday the 13th Gift Card Bingo – October 13.
- Road Rally & Dinner at Villa Lentini Ristorante (formerly Ballietsville Inn) – October 15. Thank you to Tom and Emilie Moyer for once again organizing this 27th year-old tradition. The challenging 42-mile-long route was won by Regi and Pete Mohr who came in with the exact milage. Other participants followed close behind; some got lost and eventually found the final destination place.
- Craft and Vendor Fair – November 4. Days before the event, we learned the elevator was out of commission and could not be repaired in time. Unfortunately, we had quite a few vendors cancel because of it, as they were unable to bring in their products using only the stairs. However, the event was still a success and provided the vendors (including St. John's Crafters Group) with good sales and the buyers with many new purchases.

We wish to thank the new kitchen crew headed by Kenda Catalini and Colleen Kulhamer and their team for their dedication to keeping the kitchen in good condition, establishing new guidelines, ordering supplies, and having people available to serve in the kitchen if needed.

Under the organizational leadership of Tom Moyer, our bingos this year were rousing successes not only because of the profits earned, but because it brought people of the church and community together once again. The bingo events are our biggest fundraisers, making a gross profit of \$15,620.63 from the three bingos that were held. Food, beverages, and baked goods were available to purchase, most of which were donated. Thank you to Pastor Steve and Paul Raszler for serving as the "callers" and to Bill Castello for his computer knowledge and producing an electronic bingo display board.

With the end of the pandemic, we were finally able to schedule and provide bus trips this year thanks to Brian Strauss. They included:

- Bus trip to Ocean City, New Jersey – September 23. Unfortunately, with the inclement weather due to tropical storm Ophelia, that trip had to be cancelled. We had enough people to fill the bus, and refunds were issued. The trip will be rescheduled in 2024.
- Bus trip to New York City – December 2. A full busload of participants toured the “Big Apple” on their own – they either went to a museum, took in a show, went on a tour, ate at a restaurant, or did some shopping. It was a fun day.

We started introducing Family Fun Nights in 2023 thanks to ideas presented by Bill Castello and Pastor Steve. It served as an opportunity for many of our church members to become involved together in a fun and challenging experience and helped to promote the friendliness of St. John's. We held the following events:

- Chili and Game Night – April 21. Different kinds of chilis, corn breads, desserts, and beverages were donated. We played “Pastorword” (aka Password) and broke up into teams. Monetary donations of \$45.00 were received.
- Spaghetti and Game Night – August 18. An assortment of spaghetti sauces, pastas, salads, breads, and desserts were donated. We played “Family Feud” and broke up into teams. Monetary donations of \$529.00 were received and given to the Furnace Fund.

Throughout the year the congregation continued to save Redner's tapes and purchase grocery gift cards from Giant and Weis markets. Thank you go to Karen Stoisits who took over compiling the Redner's tapes and to Sally Gibson and the late Cheryl Weaver for their years of service in that capacity. We sold 39 “Friends Helping Friends” shopping passes for people to redeem at Boscov's department store on October 18. We again held our Scrip (now called Raise Right) Gift Card Sale in December with many gift cards being purchased by our members and friends for the holidays.

The committee had a meeting in October with a representative from St. John's Lutheran Church in Whitehall to discuss the possibility of teaming together for a Madri Gras Event that the Lutheran church has done for years on the Saturday before Lent begins. While we felt we weren't able to do it this coming year, we will check into the possibility of hosting the event together in the future.

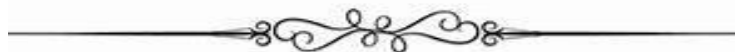
We thank Gary Weaver and Kay Chryst who served on this committee at the beginning of the year. We would be remiss if we did not also thank Kenda Catalini for her many years of service and dedication to the “Fun-Raising” Committee, not only as a great leader in many of our fundraising events but also for serving as chairperson at many meetings. We reluctantly accepted her resignation at the end of the year.

The committee is always looking for new ideas and events that are both enjoyable and profitable for the church. We invite anyone to join the “Fun-Raising” Committee and share your ideas. We welcomed Mike Borgman, who joined our committee in September. Words of appreciation go to Bill Castello for all his great technological skills and ideas in creating wonderful Bingos and Family Fun Nights.

Members who served on the committee were: Mike Borgman, Ginny Brokenshire, Kenda Catalini, Bill Castello, Pastor Steve Davis, Amy Feidler, Brian Fisher, Tracey Glass, Tom Moyer, Carol Raszler (Secretary), and Brian Strauss. A few of the committee members served as the chairperson at our meetings. We also appreciate and thank ALL the many other volunteers who helped whenever needed for this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Raszler
"Fun-Raising" Committee Secretary



Healthcare Ministry – 2023

The objective of this committee is to promote the spiritual and physical well-being of St. John's congregation.

We sponsored a Keystone-Miller Memorial Blood Drive April 16. Twenty pints of blood were collected.

We sponsored two Walking Challenges this year, one in Spring and one in Fall. As of 2023, St. John's Walkers totaled 35,834,749 steps which is 15,926.54 miles. Join us again in 2024. Walkers reported many health benefits to walking.

December, we all enjoyed the festivities throughout the month at St. John's. We continue to monitor first aid kits and the AED. If you need any medical equipment, please contact Ginny Brokenshire or anyone on the committee.

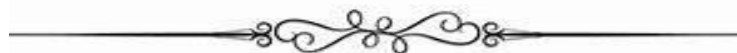
We continue to send sympathy cards to family members who lost a loved one. One month later, we follow up with bereavement information. Pastor Evelyn Stupp has been hosting a bereavement group the 4th Tuesday of each month at Asbury Methodist Church. All are welcome.

We committee members are here to help but would appreciate suggestions from you as to what you need from us. Please feel free to contact any committee member.

We look forward to serving you in 2024. We always welcome new members.

May you all be blessed with good health throughout 2024.

Committee members: Sharon Antrim, Linda Apple, Diana Beck, Marion DeMilio, Ginny Brokenshire (chairperson), Linda Smith, Evelyn Stupp



Lady PEEPS Women's Group - 2023

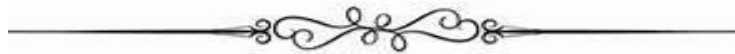
The Lady PEEPS is St. John's women's group for women ages 18 and over. PEEPS stands for Positive, Extraordinary, Encouraging, Prayerful Sisters. We meet once a month from September through May. Each month's theme is always different and could be a guest speaker, arts and crafts, movies and videos, Bible studies, cooking, experiments and so much more. We tell stories, we pray and always we eat with ladies taking turns bringing refreshments.

In 2023 our monthly themes included January Game Night where we enjoyed different games and quizzes led by Dianna Schneck. In February our guest speaker was Pastor Steve who took us on his Personal Journey to becoming his authentic self. In March DonnaLee Yeatts took us on a Nordic Vacation with slides and stories of her trip. April's meeting was led once again by Dianna Schneck who taught us what she learned at the Ark Encounter. We celebrated World Turtle Day and National Lucky Penny Day in May and had a delicious meal to celebrate National BBQ Day.

After our 3-month summer break we began again in September Remembering 9/11. Our speakers were Ginny Brokenshire who was in Washington D.C. on that day and Sue Weldner who was in Japan at that time. In October we were blessed by Patrick Sandt who delighted us with his talent and told us about his musical journey. In November we got to play with paint as we talked about being Thankful for God's Paintbrush. We ended the year with the theme, How Sweet it is - Icing on the Cake. The ladies learned about different icings and frostings and got to experiment with decorating cupcakes. We also included Biblical references to cake while enjoying a scripture cake.

Because of the Lady PEEPS Women's Group, the amazing ladies of St. John's have a safe, caring place to come once a month to share, to laugh, to learn, to create and to relax together. This women's group has built lasting friendships for me and others. It is my honor to lead this group of women.

Colleen Kulhamer

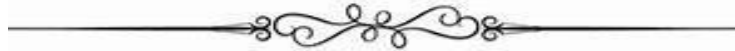


The Men of St. John's – 2023

The men of St. John's continued to meet for breakfast and fellowship on the first Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. Discussion leaders this past year were Rev. Steve Davis, Rev. Dr. Becky Beckwith, Rev. George Eckstein, Rev. David Mohr, and Rev. David Quinn. Tom Moyer led a discussion on finances and a meeting or two were general discussions on a variety of faith issues. We usually average about 12 men in attendance. All men from St. John's are invited to join us and encouraged to bring a friend.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Bold
Men's Group Leader



Mission Committee – 2023

Our St. John's Family continued to generously support all our Mission Outreaches this past year. It was a year marked with unprecedented global disasters (tornados, earthquakes, wildfires, hurricanes); a war declared in the Middle East; and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. As this year's theme says, "Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives," it was because of you, the members of St. John's, who gave of your time, talent, and treasure to offer hope and aid to the less fortunate in our community, our country, and countries around the world.

Our committee met six times in 2023—all by Zoom. Those who served on this committee were: Gary Black, Pastor Steve Davis, Marion DeMilio, Kim Hillegass, Jean McGonigle, Carol Raszler (Secretary), and Cindy Reck. Various members served as chairpersons at our meetings.

The following Mission Projects were carried out by the Mission Committee in 2023:

➤ CLIMATE HOPE POSTCARD CAMPAIGN: UCC National's Environmental Justice Ministries instituted a "For the Love of Creation" postcard campaign to address the climate situation across the globe. Over 250 postcards were sent out in the July newsletter and in the bulletin for the congregation to voice their concerns and have the postcards sent to our decision-makers in Washington, D.C. The 33 postcards that were returned were then sent to the UCC's regional office in D.C. More than 8,000 postcards were returned from UCC churches across the entire United States. A delegation went to Washington on October 13 to deliver the cards and to meet with the Environmental Protection Agency to discuss environmental and climate concerns. Our July newsletter also offered ways we can help with the climate crisis here in our own homes and in our community.

➤ CROP WALK: The CROP Walk was held on Sunday, October 22, at 1:30 p.m. The 10K and “Golden Mile” routes began at St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church, located at 140 S. Ott St. in Allentown. Thank you to Amy Feidler, Cindy Reck, and Karen Stoitsits for participating in the walk. Contributions from our members amounted to \$1,020.00. The event teamed up with St. John’s Healthcare Ministry for its fall Walking Challenge.

➤ DISASTERS ACROSS THE GLOBE: This year we saw a multitude of disasters across the United States and across the world. Through our newly created General Disaster Relief Fund envelopes, the congregation responded with disaster aid to the following:

Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria – A 7.8 earthquake struck on February 6 along with devastating aftershocks. A total of \$552.00 was received and sent to UCC National’s International Emergency Fund earmarked for “Turkey and Syria Earthquake Response.”

Tornadoes in Mississippi, Alabama, and 4 Other States – Powerful EF-3 and EF-4 tornadoes on March 24 to March 27 left a trail of death and destruction. A total of \$555.00 was received and sent to UCC’s Disaster Ministries for “USA Tornado Relief.”

Wildfires in Maui and parts of Hawaii – Fanned in part by severe drought conditions and fierce winds from a passing hurricane, wildfires ignited and spread with alarming speed and ferocity on August 8. The historic town of Lahaina was virtually obliterated. A total of \$865.00 was received and sent to the Hawaii Conference of the UCC for “Hawaii Wildfire Relief.”

➤ EARTH DAY: Through the April newsletter, the congregation was informed of the importance and history of Earth Day, which was celebrated on Friday, April 22. Founded in 1970 by Senator Gaylord Nelson and inspired by protests of the 1960s, Earth Day began as a teach-in on the environment. Our members were given ways to take care of our planet dealing with climate change, air and water pollution, erosion, recycling, renewable fuels, and efficient cars.

➤ ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR RELIEF: The senseless killing of Israeli people by Hamas on October 6 ignited a war between the two factions. In December as we tried to address the situation, we asked for donations to UCC National’s “Middle East Support” campaign. At the end of the year \$40.00 was received and donated. We plan to seek additional contributions in 2024 as the war continues to escalate.

➤ MINISTRY FAIR: After worship, the Annual Meeting, and a pot-luck luncheon on February 5, the Mission Committee participated in the Ministry Fair where we met with people and displayed posters showing the work of our committee.

➤ MITTEN TREE PROJECT – “OPERATION SANTA”: A Christmas tree was put in place at the back of the sanctuary in early November where members selected paper mitten ornaments and made

monetary contributions towards Phoebe Ministries and/or Valley Youth House. A total of \$1,715.00 was received and disbursed as follows:

- Phoebe Ministries – Phoebe is a multi-facility organization specializing in healthcare, housing, and support services for the elderly. Donations were received in the amount of \$765.00. The funds were used to purchase gift cards for Phoebe’s beauty salon and barber shop and for Phoebe’s gift shop.
- Valley Youth House – VYH’s mission is to help all youth who have been abused, ran away, or are homeless. Donations were received in the amount of \$950.00. The funds were used to purchase Christmas gifts on their client’s “wish list.”

➤ SHOE COLLECTION DRIVE: St. John’s teamed up with Frieden’s UCC church in Oley, PA, to help them secure funds to send a team on a two-week mission trip to Peru to rebuild houses. St. John’s collected 465 pairs of shoes (22 trash bags) in February and March and delivered them to Frieden’s on April 15—our collection was the largest contribution from nine other churches helping to collect shoes. Frieden’s surpassed their goal of 5000 pairs of shoes and accumulated 5650 pairs (226 trash bags). The church was the top collector of shoes in the Northeast region. For every pound of shoes submitted, 50¢ was given back to Frieden’s by the Fuller Center for Housing to help fund their trip. The shoes were refurbished and sent to Third World Countries and the Frieden’s Mission Team will travel to Peru in 2024.

➤ UKRAINE RELIEF FUND: On February 24, 2022, the Russian military began an unprovoked attack on Ukraine and invaded the country. The war in Ukraine continues now into its third year. Various organizations have worked in the area to provide aid to this war-ravaged country and the Ukrainian people and assist with refugee assimilation in neighboring countries. A total of \$2,345.00 was contributed in 2023. Your donations were given to the following organizations:

- Project HOPE – \$330.00 (providing medicines, medical equipment, medical supplies, trauma-care training, and medical personnel).
- UCC National – \$500.00 (working with our global partners to provide shelter, medical care, hygiene products, transportation, spiritual and psychological care, and long-term recovery assistance).
- World Central Kitchen – \$1,515.00 (providing food, water, seed kits to plant vegetable gardens, and building an amazing network of restaurant partners who prepare meals daily for families and refugees).

Since the start of the war in 2022, the congregation has given \$6,220.00 in aid to Ukraine. As the cold, winter weather sets in and the war continues with no end in sight, it severely impacts the lives of the Ukrainian people. Your continued financial support is still needed, and the Mission Committee will continue to request contributions for this humanitarian effort into 2024.

➤ WHITEHALL-COPLAY HUNGER INITIATIVE COMMUNITY MEAL: In order to alleviate hunger, free meals were offered to anyone on the first Sunday and third Tuesday of the month from 4:00 p.m. to

6:30 p.m. at various locations in the community. Although St. John's was not in a position to provide a meal, anyone could volunteer to help at whatever church is sponsoring the event.

➤ WHITEHALL-COPLAY SCHOOL DISTRICT BACKPACK & SCHOOL SUPPLIES: School supplies were collected at the church in July. The congregation donated over 1700 school items, including 36 backpacks, 11 calculators, 134 glue sticks, 586 pencils, 113 pocket folders, and many other items. Your donations helped the needy school children in Whitehall as well as the school district itself with educational supplies for the school year.

➤ WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY: The food pantry is located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall. Our congregation supplied food during the year, contributed financially, and sent volunteers to help at the pantry. Under the leadership of Gary Black, about 20 volunteers helped on the fourth Monday of each month to sort, stock shelves, and hand out packaged items for the pantry's clients. Canned sweet potatoes, canned vegetables, and canned fruit were collected for the Easter meal. Canned turkey gravy, canned cranberry sauce, and canned vegetables were collected for the Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. Monetary contributions were used to purchase gift cards for turkeys. Thank you to everyone who donated canned and packaged groceries in 2023. Your monetary donations for the year amounted to \$4,195.00, which included \$15.00 for sponsorship of the Wheat Basket at worship.

In 2023 St. John's continued to maintain our "5 for 5" status with UCC National thanks to the generosity of our members. The Mission Committee coordinated the following special offerings:

➤ OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION: Our congregational gifts give financial support to a wider UCC ministry through our Penn Northeast Conference and through national settings. Among other things, it funds the work done at our local conference. It invests in programs needed to keep local UCC churches strong. It assists in pastoral placement and education for church leaders. It exposes youth to retreats and regional and national youth events. Booklets describing the work of OCWM were placed in the July newsletter and bulletin. Contributions were received all year long and totaled \$12,823.00 at the end of December. Because of the shortfall in contributions compared to previous years, an additional amount of nearly \$1,600.00 was given from the 10% tithing in our fundraisers this year.

➤ CHRISTMAS FUND: This fund provides direct financial help to retired and active UCC authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses and includes pension and health supplementation. Contributions of \$347.00 were received in December.

➤ NEIGHBORS IN NEED: One-third of the NIN's offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and two-thirds is administered by the Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Contributions of \$175.00 were received in October.

➤ ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: OGHS supports partners in countries with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development; emergency relief; refugee ministries; and both

international and domestic disaster response. Contributions of \$565.00 were received in March.

➤ STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH: It supports church growth; pastoral and lay leadership development; and youth and young adult ministries within the conference. Contributions of \$220.00 were received in June.

The St. John's Crafters Group was hard at work all year long making craft items to sell (see their report). The total profit from this year's sales amounted to \$1,186.00. The Mission Committee designated the 2023 profit to be divided equally among the following:

- St. John's Furnace Fund – \$593.00.
- St. John's Pavilion Fund – \$593.00.

It is the policy of St. John's to give 10% in tithing from our fundraisers to Mission Outreach. This past year the 10% tithing amounted to \$2,383.68 which was divided among the following charities or organizations:

- Lehigh Conference of Churches – \$794.56. The LCC includes 140 congregations and faith-based organizations. They seek to unite people through community services, ecumenical ministry, and advocacy for social justice.
- Our Church's Wider Mission – \$1,589.12. Among other things, our congregational gifts to OCWM give financial support to a wider UCC ministry and for national settings. It provides funding for the work done at our own local conference, Penn Northeast Conference. This amount of money was given to OCWM because of the shortfall of donations during the year.

The Mission Committee is always looking for more people to join our committee. If you've wondered how you can be part of "We Worship, We Love, We Serve, No Matter What," you will find a great deal of satisfaction by serving on this outreach committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Raszler
Mission Committee Secretary



Music Ministry - 2023

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” —
Colossians 3:16

What a year 2023 was for the music ministry program of St. John’s.

2023 was the year of change in the music ministry. One major change that occurred, was after much thought and prayer on the subject, the Jubilation and Chancel Choir merged after our Easter celebration to form one choir, the Adult Choir of St. John’s.

After Easter, because of you and your generosity and your support of the music ministry, we were able to raise money through a separate fundraising event for the church to purchase a 1960 Baldwin Grand Piano that was played for the first time in service, on Sunday, May 28th. How fitting, Pentecost Sunday! Additional funds raised for the piano were put in a separate account and are helping cover the cost of piano tunings, the usage of instrumentalists for special events, and the purchasing of new choral music to be sung by the choir for Sunday Services, in addition to special events.

After a nice summer break, The Adult Choir began weekly rehearsal on Wednesday, August 23, 2023. The choir participated in service for the first time after their summer break on Sunday, September 10, better known as “Welcome Home” Sunday and this year, my 40th Birthday!!

The Bell Choir began rehearsals on Wednesday, August 30th. Again, a change to the schedule, so members didn’t have to come out multiple nights for rehearsal. Everything is on one night!

The Music Ministry in 2023 has shown growth. From new music never heard of, to learning the importance of dynamics and telling the stories of the words on the page, they have truly blown me away with their talent and commitment to the ministry. The growth of the choir is one thing I will always be proud of!

In October, St. John’s welcomed the Parkland Strolling Strings for a special afternoon concert held in our sanctuary. This continued the concert series I started last year, and opened the door to the community to be a part of a wonderful afternoon of music.

Learning new hymns with the congregation continued, in addition to taking familiar melodies of hymns and putting new words to them.

It was with great joy and excitement that St. John’s held its second annual “Service of the Nativity” on Sunday, December 17th, 2023, led by Pastor Emerita Dr. Becky Beckwith. The choir once again combined with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Northampton and Sacred Heart Church of Bethlehem to form a 32-member choir, in addition to enhancing the beauty of the music with guest instrumentalists and our very own Bell Choir. This was truly a highlight of 2023

for the music ministry and a beautiful way to begin preparations for the Christmas season. A free will offering of \$406 was raised for Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering.

As we embrace a new year, the possibilities are endless! Because of you, 2023 was a memorable and wonderful year of growth, love, learning, and friendships for the music ministry. What does 2024 have in store?

In 2024, The Choir and Bell Choir will be moving to a new night for rehearsal beginning on Thursday, January 4. The bell choir will rehearse at 6PM every other week, and the choir will meet at 7PM each week in the music room. New membership is encouraged for all our current choirs! After all, growth happens BECAUSE OF YOU.

On Sunday, March 3rd, 2024, we will be welcoming the choir of Lehigh University with a special program beginning at 2:00 pm. All are invited, welcomed, and encouraged to come and listen to the beauty of this choir! Their current director, Stephen Samatz, will be retiring after this year.

I continue to thank and give gratitude to this church and the members of the music ministry. It is because of YOU, your support, encouragement, and dedication, I am able to see dreams and ideas come to life!

Musically Yours, Patrick Sandt, Director of Music Ministries/Organist



Pavilion – 2023

Three years ago, we undertook a capital campaign – this one to develop our “Field of Dreams.” This campaign officially ended at the end of 2023, and St. John’s is grateful for the many pledges and gifts.

This was actually the second of two campaigns that saw many improvements to our church properties including construction of a beautiful pavilion, re-paving of the original parking lot, construction of a new Fox Hall bathroom, Field of Dreams paving with landscaping/lighting and a loan to ourselves to upgrade our heating system. Additionally, there were significant township and engineering fees.

Total expenses for these projects amounted to \$660,000. Most of the funding came from our two Capital Campaigns with the balance obtained from a mortgage – which has a current balance of about \$83,900.

Since being constructed, the pavilion has been used for many outdoor events. To fund the development of the Field of Dreams, we initiated this second, three-year capital campaign. More than 80 pledges were received, totaling \$52,000. Only 7 pledges were not fulfilled

(totaling \$3,035), as life conditions change. There also were many donations from people who did not pledge.

Our challenge is to continue to support reducing the mortgage even though the campaign will have officially ended. All gifts, large or small, are appreciated. There is a line on your weekly church envelope for "Pavilion Loan," which we hope you will consider using.

Without you, the loyal members of St. John's, there would be no Pavilion and we would be without many other improvements. Thank you for helping to fulfill the vision of many years ago.

Tom Moyer



Personnel Committee – 2023

This year we had Tom and Emilie Moyer announce that they would like to retire from the Financial Secretary position after serving for 45 years. After several appeals at church services and committee meetings, Michelle Gutekunst indicated that she was interested in the position. Tom indicated that he would be willing to train the replacement.

A replacement for the Worship-Media Tech and STARs position was now needed. We contacted Bill Castello to see if he would be interested in the position, and he said he was very interested. All that fell into place.

We assigned all the staff members to individual members of the Personnel Committee so should any questions or concerns arise, they would have someone they could go to. Job descriptions and responsibilities were updated. Contacts were made with all staff members and any issues or concerns were addressed successfully. Staff compensation was approved as part of the Fall Congregational meeting. The next round of reviews will be in June/July in advance of the 2025 budget preparations.

We gathered Pastoral Evaluation samples to review and to present to the congregation for input. The Pastoral Review is to be done in February/March.

Committee Members: Sharon Czekner, Pastor Steve Davis, Tracy Fisher, Wayne Lichtenwalner, Carole O'Connell, Paul Raszler, Brian Strauss, Dewey Yeatts



Property Committee – 2023

This year there were some challenges, which started with creating space for the Grand Piano. It was decided to move the organ and the pews from behind the organ. We then lifted the organ into the space where the pews were and built a platform in the area where the organ was to create space for the grand piano.

It was then decided to remove eight pews in the sanctuary to create space for people with mobility challenges. We then removed the choir pews and relocated them to the center of the sanctuary.

We then decided to sand and refinish the chancel area floor.

A new spotlight was installed to shine on the flag.

Mulching was replenished in the memorial garden.

Topsoil was placed in some low spots and grass seed planted around the church yard.

The garage roof was replaced at the 501 property.

We repaired the steps on the alley side of church.

We are continuing to work with Reading Elevator for the repairs which began January 15, 2024.

Property Committee members: Charlie Apple, Gary Black, Bill Castello, Bob Czekner, Michelle Gutekunst, Wayne Lichtenwalner (Chair), Pete Mohr, Pastor Steve Davis, Roger Schneck, John Viglione



Publications and Publicity Committee - 2023

Our committee has focused on the following:

1. Welcomed our members, especially new members and Confirmands both in our newsletter and on our entryway bulletin board.
2. Reminded everyone to consider their Spiritual Gifts and how they are using them to do God's Work at St. John's, utilizing the entryway bulletin board.

3. Highlighted efforts to end hunger in the Lehigh Valley and the money raised in the newsletter, and on the common area bulletin board.
4. Maintained a dedicated staff of volunteers to prepare mailings of the newsletter, Church Directory, and other print materials.
5. Welcomed and are grateful for the willingness and ability of Bill Castello to prepare and publish our monthly newsletter.
6. Welcomed and are grateful for the willingness and ability of Patrick Sandt to prepare and post The Service of the Nativity information on the entryway bulletin board
7. Publicized social and fund-raising events in the weekly bulletin, newsletter, on the outdoor electronic sign, and on social media.
8. Are grateful for those who maintain an active presence on social media, i.e., Facebook.
9. Sent a comprehensive list of upcoming events to be published in “This Week in the Penn Northeast” newsletter and the “Lehigh Valley Press” multiple local editions.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janet L. Ebert
Amy Feidler
Chairpersons, 2023



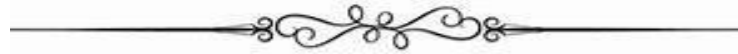
STARs Committee – 2023 **(St. John’s Technical and Artistic Resources)**

Because of you the STARs committee was able to allow St. John's UCC Fullerton to embrace a remarkable transformation in its technological infrastructure. One significant achievement was the upgrade of the worship PC, ensuring that live streaming ran flawlessly. Because of the committee's dedication and technical expertise, the congregation could now experience a seamless and immersive virtual worship environment. The upgrade became a cornerstone in enhancing the overall worship experience, making it more accessible and engaging for everyone.

Continuing their commitment, the STARs committee provided ongoing support for live streaming during Sunday services and special events. Because of their unwavering dedication, the congregation remained connected even when physical attendance was not possible. Because of You the committee continued to play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community through their support for virtual worship. The committee's efforts became a testament to the strength of community collaboration and the impact it can have on maintaining spiritual connections and that would not have been possible without you.

The proactive approach of the STARs committee yielded another significant achievement – gaining a grant from Microsoft. Because of their strategic efforts, St. John's UCC Fullerton was

able to utilize free Microsoft licensing, a valuable resource that expanded the church's technological capabilities. This grant opened up new possibilities, allowing the church to explore options like Pro Presenter. Because of the committee's foresight and resourcefulness, the congregation could consider and implement advanced multimedia solutions, ensuring a more refined and inclusive experience for those who worshiped both in person and online. The journey of technological upgrades became a collective achievement, made possible because of your support.



Visitation Committee - 2023

Theme: Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives

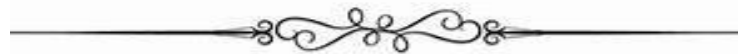
Although the number of Homebound residents in our church community changes, there are usually 30 or so on the Visitation Committee list.

Each month the members of the committee contact the Homebound members by a visit, a phone call or a written card. These simple acts change lives. Our homebound members know that we care about them and that we haven't forgotten them. Smiles are evident during visits. Laughs are shared during phone calls. Offers of support are welcomed.

Because of contributions from you, Christmas gift bags were filled with items both practical and fanciful. The recipients were overwhelmed when visited by a committee member bearing an unexpected gift from St. John's UCC-Fullerton.

The Visitation Committee welcomes all who wish to change a life, even for a few minutes, with a phone call, a card, or a visit, to join us.

Committee Members: Sharon Antrim, Linda Apple, Janice Blaker, Pastor Steve Davis, Emma Kuczek-Repp, Jean McGonigle, Betty Millham, Grace Mohr, Sandra Nagy, Carole O'Connell, Eleanor O'Donnell, Barbara Seeds, Patricia Thompson.



Worship and Music Committee/Altar Guild - 2023

2023 once again brought changes to our Worship and Music Committee. Due to health problems, we lost some members of our committee, one of whom was the committee chair.

After meeting in August, it was decided that the committee would morph more into an altar guild versus an actual committee. I would assist this transition by setting up the flowers, lighting candles, and votives prior to service, with the members of the altar guild assisting with clean up, flower distribution to families, and changing out candles when necessary.

Some highlights of the year for the Worship and Music Committee consisted of the following:

- Preparations for Holy Week's decorations, the Service of Shadows, the many flowers and beautiful resurrection flowered cross made Easter even more joyful.
- The decorations for Pentecost created a vibrant celebration for our Confirmation Class.
- There were many new Fall additions to add to our chancel and windows' beauty.
- The All Saints Remembrance candles for those who passed in 2022-2023 were deeply meaningful to family members who received them with our love.
- On Thursday, November 30th, we had a hanging of the greens event for the church, where the congregation was invited to help decorate the sanctuary for Advent instead of doing it on the weekend. The event began at 6PM with soup served by the music ministry and then decorating after.
- The Poinsettias for this year's Christmas were different, by including white and pink poinsettias instead of just red ones.

New members are always welcome! Because of you, we are able to help assist our church and its growth. Please consider becoming a part of our committee and continuing serving our church.

Patrick Sandt, Director of Music Ministries/Organist
Rev. Steven Davis, Sr. Pastor

