

St. John's UCC, Fullerton

575 Grape Street, Whitehall, PA 18052
Church Office: 610-264-8421

February 2021



Vol. 14 Issue 1

"Our Church Connection"



You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

- Matthew 5:14-16

Can you understand why I am having trouble writing about *Lent* - the forty day season of the church year that precedes Easter? I'm writing this newsletter article on January 3rd, and even though I still haven't put away the creche, the angels, or even finished writing my Christmas thank-you notes, I'm needing to think about Ash Wednesday, which takes place on February 17th!

But there is an upside to this looking ahead - the word Lent can be traced etymologically to the Old English word *lencten*. Lencten is related to "lengthen," referring to the lengthening of days that happens during the season of spring. Yes, Spring is coming! In fact, the Longest Night, which we celebrated on December 21st, is solidly behind us!

So although the word Lent has thoroughly secular roots, I think that the season of Lent in the Christian calendar is aptly named. Lent is commonly known as a season of repentance and fasting in preparation for the celebration of Easter. However, those Lenten practices serve the purpose of deepening one's relationship with God, and making intentional space for the growing Light (whose arrival we just celebrated at Christmas) to fill us and overflow from our beings into the world where we have been called to shine!

We can't know for certain what God has in mind for us in this new year, but we do know that we are called to worship, to love and to serve - no matter what! May our 2021 Lenten practices strengthen all of us to be the people God is calling us to be!

Be God's,
Pastor Bonnie



Get to know the congregation of St. John's UCC Fullerton

We worship

- We are a community of faith that nurtures, challenges, and encourages everyone to grow in their relationship with God and one another.
- We use both unique and traditional worship methods with relevant, uplifting messages and music.

We love

- We are a loving intergenerational community/family of faith with caring, supportive, and restorative ways.
- We are an open and welcoming community of love that appreciates, accepts, and celebrates diversity of people and ideas.

We serve

- We do everything with a spirit of generosity.
- We create and provide active, compassionate service to others with opportunities for everyone to participate.
- We envision the future with prayer, resiliency, trust, and joy.

*We worship, we love, we serve
- no matter what!*

Thank you to everyone who assisted us in identifying St. John's core values, and developing this provocative purpose statement that provides an easy-to-remember answer to the question, "Who are we?" You'll be hearing more in weeks to come!

St. John's Transition Team: *Cliff Herring, Nancy Bowman, Paul Raszler, Regi Mohr, Kim Hillegass, Linda Powell, and Pastor Bonnie*



SAVE THE DATE!!!!

SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 2021

BASKET SOCIAL WILL BE HELD AT ST JOHNS. LOOKING FOR PEOPLE TO MAKE BASKETS, THE DROP OFF DATE IS APRIL 24TH.

KEEP IN MIND THIS MIGHT HAVE TO BE OUTSIDE, SO WE ASK NO CHOCOLATE/CANDY BASKETS, AND WE ALSO ASK NO ALCOHOL BASKETS BE DONATED.

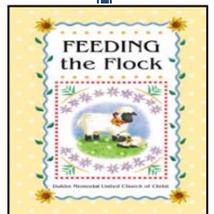
**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR MORE INFO.
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AT ALL, PLEASE CONTACT
KENDA CATALINI @ 484-358-7453**

A Word from the Crafters!

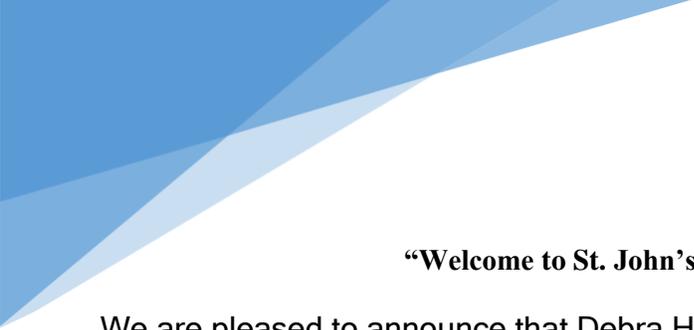
Thank you to everyone who purchased craft items last year. Realizing a profit in 2020 of **\$541.62**, the funds were divided equally and designated to go to the following organizations: **Lehigh Conference of Churches (General Fund), Sixth Street Shelter, Valley Youth House, and Zion's UCC (Jubilee Breakfast Ministry.)**



During these winter months, keep in mind we have **12-Bean Soup Mix** available for sale at \$4.00 each. And with many of you at home these days and doing more cooking, you might be interested in our **Church Cookbook** for sale at \$12.75.



As you know, crafts are available for sale all year long. **You can contact Carol Raszler at 610-393-7572 or email her at crazler@aol.com to make your purchases.**



“Welcome to St. John’s”

We are pleased to announce that Debra Hoffman was hired to be our Office Administrator as of January 4, 2021. She was able to have some training by Susan before her retirement - in person as well as on Zoom. When you call the office you will now hear the pleasant voice of Debbie. The office email has changed, it is now sjofficesecretary@gmail.com. When we are able to resume in person worship we will make arrangements for Debra to be introduced.

Connie Viglione, Personnel Committee Chair



BIO

Born and raised in the Lehigh Valley. I grew up in Whitehall (Fullerton) graduated from Whitehall High School and went to Albright College and graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration. Growing up in Fullerton, I had gone to Confirmation Class and had my first Holy Communion here at St. John’s UCC. I had two children, a son and a daughter and I have one granddaughter (Isabella), who is eight years old (and the apple of my eye). One of things I enjoy doing when I am home, is taking long walks with one of my two dogs (not usually at the same time - very dangerous (for me) when they see a squirrel or rabbit), playing with my granddaughter, and also enjoy finding new recipes to try out.



GROCERY GIFT CARDS

Weis and Giant gift cards continue to be available for purchase in various denominations. The church makes a percentage on each one that you purchase. If interested in purchasing any, please contact the Debbie in the church office at (610) 264-8421.

St. John's Prayer Chain Committee

Did you know St John's has a prayer chain group, currently with about 15 members? If you are interested in keeping others in prayer, we are always welcoming new members to join us. Please contact **Kim Hillegass** at **610-360-7895** or kim1257@aol.com and we will gladly add you to the group. Most of our communications are done by email when requests come in but calls will be made to members who don't have an email address. Please join us.

In need of prayers for you or someone you know? You can contact the Office or Pastor or Kim to have someone added to our list."

Text to Give!

Here's another way you can make secure donations to St. John's via your smartphone! Text the amount you want to donate to (844) 935-3593 - it's a free call! The first time you do this, you will be led through a step-by-step process to set up your giving account and make payments via a credit card or direct debit from your checking account. For future donations, all you will need to do is text the amount of your donation to that number. (Note from Pastor Bonnie - I have that phone number saved on my phone as "Give" so I don't have to remember the phone number!) All donations made via text-to-give will be included on your end-of-the-year giving statement.

You can also text #funds to the same number to see a list of funds at St. John's you can donate to, then you can text the amount you want to give, space, and fund name to donate to a specific fund. Unspecified donations received through text-to-give will go to the St. John's UCC General Operating Fund. Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of St. John's!

Tuesday Talkbacks Continue

Join us every Tuesday at 2 pm for conversation and fellowship. Pastor Bonnie hosts these informal, agenda-free Zoom gatherings. Use the following Zoom meeting ID with the Sunday worship passcode: 889 9327 5253. Contact the church office if you need additional information.



Dear St. John's Congregation:

Thank you so much for the monetary gift you gave me for my retirement. I also enjoyed talking with people at my retirement zoom get together on 12/19. It was a blessing to work at St. John's and get to know so many wonderful people!

Blessings,

Susan Kuder

Thank you for the well wishes and all the Christmas cards.

Fondly,

Jean Coombe

My father and I would like to express how much we appreciate all the cards and expressions of Christmas Cheer extended to him this holiday season. Your kindness and thoughtfulness meant so much to him to know that during this difficult time, folks reached out to send a Christmas greeting to him.

Ray Luckenbill and Joy Gravely

Mission Moment!

✝ **“Operation Santa” - Mitten Tree Project** – Thank you to everyone who made a donation for this project. A total of **\$1200.00** was received in which **\$515.00** went to **Phoebe Ministries** and **\$685.00** went to **Valley Youth House**. The staff at both locations purchased gifts for their residents and clients.

✝ **The Christmas Fund** – Your generosity in December to support this fund by UCC National, part of the “Five for Five” special offerings, had donations of **\$585.00**.

✝ **Whitehall Food Pantry** – While we weren’t always able to collect groceries during the year since church was closed because of the pandemic, St. John’s members were there with your financial support. A total of **\$3333.00** was received in donations for the year 2020. In addition, since the “Fun”Raising Committee was unable to hold their soup sales in 2020, the committee donated the 11 turkeys in the church’s freezer to the food pantry to be used for needy families for their Christmas meals.

✝ **Mask Ministry** – It is with gratitude that we say “thank you” to **Jinny Hess** for sewing all the masks for this project. For 2020 we gave away **275 masks** and received **\$1523.00** in donations to St. John’s. Masks continue to be available by contacting Carol Raszler at 610-393-7572.



The Mission Committee wishes to thank our St. John’s Family for your generous contributions to all our Mission Outreach programs in 2020. Be sure to read the list of all our programs in the 2020 Annual Report. **Those who served on the Mission Committee for 2020 were: Pastor Bonnie Moore, Pastor Cliff Herring, Bob Dougherty, Nancy Dougherty, Marion DeMilio, Kim Hillegass, Jean McGonigle (chairperson), Bill Meckes, Carol Raszler (Secretary), and Connie Viglione.**

The time has come to distribute the 2020 giving statements. Usually, they are distributed in Church around the end of January. Since the church is now closed, we will e-mail your statement to you if the Church has your e-mail address. If we do not have your e-mail address, you can pick up your statement at the Church office during regular business hours (always a good idea to call first) or call the Church office and request that your statement to be mailed to you.

As always, the Stewardship & Finance Committee thanks you for your support of St. John's. With your support, we are weathering the storm.

Tom Moyer

It is Time for Pasties for Dinner

The "Fun"Raising Committee is selling pasties from Mr. Pastie in Pen Argyl. The 12 oz. pastie is available in Beef, Chicken, Sausage or Ham for \$6.00 each. Also available in the 12 oz. size is Veggie Melt and Spinach Melt for \$6.00. The 6 oz. fruit pies are available in Apple, Cherry or Blueberry for \$4.00 each. All the pasties come frozen and simply need to be baked. Make a salad and you have a very easy meal.

An order form is included in this newsletter. To order, simply mail your order form with payment to Cheryl Weaver, 919 5th Street, Whitehall, PA 18052. The deadline to order is Sunday, March 28th. Delivery will be Friday, April 16th or Saturday, April 17th 2:00 – 4:00 pm in the Grape Street Parking Lot. Please designate which date you will be picking up on the order form.

If you have any questions, please call the church office 610-264-8421.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY MUSIC NOTES



In the beginning of 2020, St. John's congregation was given a "star word". Some of you might remember being given a certain word. My word happened to be "enthusiasm". In my newsletter article of 2020 I wrote about the word I had been given. I said I was a more quiet and reserved person. But since receiving the word "enthusiasm" I would try to be filled with enthusiasm and try to continue with that word throughout the year 2020.

I was doing my part of being enthusiastic by being upbeat and joyful with choirs and with the organ music I played. Then came March 15th and everything came to a stop. We were told about a virus, Covid, and St. John's decided to close for a few weeks, like most churches and businesses. We were hoping to open for Palm Sunday and I had to re-plan all the music for the choirs. Closing the church also meant that choirs could not rehearse. I had Palm Sunday and Easter music planned but that did not happen. And my enthusiasm level went down.

We had done some of the worship services live with only a pastor and myself. Then we started recording all of the music. I must admit I **do not like being recorded**. Especially when I know I'm being recorded. There were times we did "take 3 and 4". Again, no enthusiasm. I did what was expected of me.

And here we are - 2021, and it is the same thing. We are still recording all of the music. But I have had **ENOUGH!** Where is my enthusiasm? And where is my faith? I am always uplifted by church hymns. I enjoy reading the text of a hymn and putting it into my own life. I am reminded of a portion of the hymn "Life Every Voice and Sing" by James W. Johnson.

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by thy might led us into the light:
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.*

With the above exuberant chorus, help me to find my way and lead me into the light. Let me use my star word of "enthusiasm", even as I sit timidly at the piano and organ, to share with you the music that tells stories to remember lessons You taught, stories that show us how to be and how not to be, stories to help us change our lives, stories that lead us into a world that is hungry to hear the Good News. And help me to do this with **ENTHUSIASM!**

Musically,

Gail

Ash Wednesday Worship - February 17, 7:00 p.m.

Lent begins on Sunday, February 21st! Join us to prepare for this season of repentance and expectation at our Ash Wednesday Zoom service at 7 p.m. on February: ID: 859 2671 0932. More info to come!

St. John's UCC Annual Congregational Meeting - February 14th, 10:20 AM

This year's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held via Zoom immediately following worship on February 14th (at approximately 10:20 am). You can sign in using the regular worship Zoom meeting ID (816 8509 8134) and passcode (if you don't have that, contact the church office.)

IMPORTANT!! The Annual Report will be available to read or to download on our church website this year. If you would like a digital copy of the full report emailed to you, or would like to receive a hard copy that can be either mailed or picked up at church, please contact Debbie Hoffmann, our Office Administrator, at sifofficesecretary@gmail.com or 610-264-8421.

Do you receive St. John's "Mail Chimp" email blasts?

They are sent out periodically to provide updated information about upcoming church events. If you don't receive these emails and would like to, please provide your email address to the church office at 610-264-8421 or sifofficesecretary@gmail.com. Thanks!

FEBRUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Cynthia and Michael Bundra	February 24
Judith and Barrie Carr	February 21
Cynthia and Edward Sommers	February 10

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Connor Landis	2/01	Dolly Holler	2/14
Barbara Begel	2/04	Melanie Eckeert	2/14
Robert Beckwith	2/04	Aaron Mill	2/14
Dewey Yeatts	2/04	Richard Baatz Sr.	2/15

Michelle Brobst	2/05	Gerald Yanavok	2/16
Jessica Shirk	2/05	Geoge Eckstein	2/17
Andrew Doyle	2/06	Troy Rothrock	2/17
Cheryl Weaver	2/06	Janice Blaker	2/17
Peter Mohr	2/07	Marion DeMilio	2/18
Halie Holderman	2/07	Sandy Koch	2/19
Eric Romberger	2/07	Ronald Christman	2/19
Bonnie Berger	2/08	Ashley Kuhns	2/20
Brian Fisher	2/08	Shirley Becks	2/20
Owen Eberhart, Jr	2/10	Joseph Catalini	2/20
Todd Heffelfinger	2/10	Ronald Brader	2/20
Bruce Pope	2/10	Donna Lynch	2/20
Timothy Ott	2/10	Kelly Weiner	2/21
Janet Williams	2/10	Shirley Green	2/22
Brian Strauss	2/10	Michelle Cortright	2/22
George Williams	2/11	Robert Scheirer	2/23
Janet Ebert	2/11	Emilie Dumbach	2/23
Beth Ann Erney	2/12	Mary Jane Ott	2/24
Paul E Geissinger Jr	2/13	Elizabeth Reck	2/24
Rebecca Sausser	2/13	Thomas Chryst	2/25
Eleanor O'Donnell	2/13	Wayne Lichtenwalner	2/26
Heather Santee	2/28	Anthony DeMilio	2/28



Pastie Tally Sheet

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Quantity

_____ 12 oz. BEEF @\$6.00
_____ No onion

_____ 12 oz. CHICKEN @\$6.00

_____ 12 oz. SAUSAGE @\$6.00

_____ 12 oz. HAM @\$6.00

6 oz. Fruit @\$4.00

_____ Apple

_____ Cherry

_____ Blueberry

_____ 12 oz. VEGGIE MELT @\$6.00 (w/Cheddar Cheese)

_____ 12 oz. SPINACH MELT @\$6.00 (w/Cheddar Cheese)

TOTAL DUE

- Order deadline – Sunday, March 28th
- Pastie Pick Up dates – (FYI – Pasties are *frozen*)
Friday, April 16 – 2:00-4:00PM
Saturday, April 17 – 2:00-4:00 PM

Please circle which pickup you will be coming to.

- Money is due with the order
- Mail your order with payment to: Cheryl Weaver, 919 5th St, Whitehall, PA 18052
- Make checks out to St. John's UCC, Fullerton
- If you have any questions, please call the church office 610-264-8421