



# St. John's **CONNECTIONS**

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

Volume 15 • Issue 123 • December 2022

## “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!”



The holidays evoke all kinds of emotions and celebrations. Thanksgiving, Advent, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza, and New Year’s Eve are some of our community area’s traditional celebrations. Some of them we will be invited to participate in and some we observe and celebrate ourselves. We will celebrate by watching parades, football, finding gifts, wrapping and wrapping, going to parties, preparing cards, decorating and decorating, eating waaaaay too much, “doing it up big” with family or friends or staying home and keeping it simple.

For some, these will be the first of many celebrations with an empty space and feelings which may not be “the most wonderful” as the memories of years past return to you. Others are still “looking for (\_\_\_\_\_)” and yet have expectations of what these celebrations need to look and feel like and who we need to be with so we can enjoy them and be happy. Full disclosure... I tend to fall into this group a lot. I’m an emotional, sentimental, holiday-hopeful person. I have a lot of smiles and a lot of tears. My expectations rarely match up with my experiences.

We may experience a similar bleak feeling when we think about “how things need to be” in the holidays in order for us to experience and feel God with us. One of the familiar names for Jesus is “Emmanuel,” which means, God is with us. Not “God has been with us,” or even “God will come again,” but the unqualified promise that God IS with us, here and now. We are not alone in this “most wonderful time of the year.” God IS with us in the hustle and bustle. God IS with us in the still, still, still, and our silent night. God IS with us in our laughter in celebrations. God IS with us in our tears of longing.



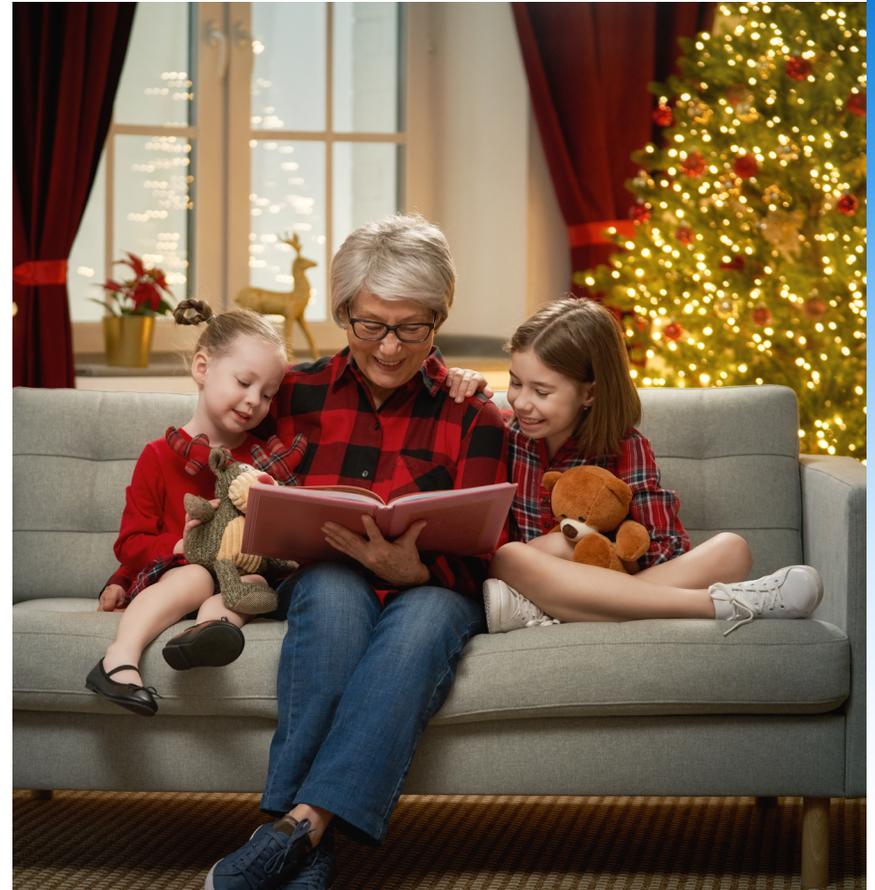
As we enter this season of Advent, with all the opportunities to connect with people and events, I pray for us all to have an intentional focus on who is with us, where we are and what we are doing, and experience it all as moments where we recognize that no matter who we are or where we are on life’s journey, God is with us. May we experience the true gifts of God’s hope, peace, joy and love in this season as we come in worship of the Christ Child.

May we “Worship, Love and Serve ~ No Matter What!”

Yours in grace and hope,

*Steve Davis*

Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor



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## Annual Congregational Meeting

**Reports Due January 4, 2023**

SAVE THE DATE - Sunday, February 5, 2023 - Potluck at Noon

Plan now to be present for our Annual Congregational Meeting to review reports from 2022, celebrate our ministry and hear proposals for better connecting in our congregation and community. Save the date and plan to be part of the potluck social meal in Fox Hall, following our morning worship services.

Any information regarding bylaw updates or other proposals will be available through the Annual Report which will be published and online for our consideration in advance. This important gathering and conversation will give us opportunity to consider implications and needed next steps for our financial health and next steps in ministry.

### Kids in Worship!

In addition to our Children's Message during the 10:45am Sunday worship service, a kids table with "Busy Bags" and other fun supplies is set up in the Parlor for any who need some extra activities. Room 201 is open for kids and parents who need to step out from the sanctuary. We will have the worship service livestream available in Room 201 during the 10:45 worship. Enjoy and receive our kids in worship with joy as Jesus did!

### Advent Giving Envelopes

During the month of December for the Season of Advent, special offering envelopes are shared for additional gifts to help us reduce our current year deficit. Envelopes will be available on the Parlor table throughout the season. Thank you for your generosity!



## Tripledemic Concerns, Masks and Showing Care

We're all tired of living with changing variants and new concerns for our public health; yet, these viruses do not care how we feel about them as they continue to spread. Thankfully, across the country, and increasingly in many countries around the world, the number of COVID deaths has continued to decrease. According to the CDC, in the United States, there are still almost 260 persons dying from COVID and related issues. In Lehigh and Northampton counties, only 49.8% and 51% of the population have received the primary series of vaccinations and at least one booster. Fewer people are masking in public areas, fewer are testing and reporting.



Fortunately, even though our areas are in the medium spread risk categories, death rates in the first week of November remained around 10-12 persons in our two counties. This time last year, we saw a spike that took us from the 20s to mid-40s with the Omicron variant. The new threats of Flu, RSV (for both children and older adults) and the two newest dominant COVID variants demand our continued attention and consideration for our faith community, families and neighbors.

While it may seem contradictory to the information shared above, the Consistory has weighed these concerns and looked at how our congregation has responded by being vaccinated and getting booster doses and other routine seasonal flu measures, and is amending our policy as noted here:

We continue to urge all to give added attention if you are seated in close proximity to others and demonstrate greater care for those with health conditions. For those vaccinated and unvaccinated, masking is optional during all aspects of our worship and other gatherings. We strongly recommend vaccination and consideration of others in our congregation. We provide KN-95 masks at our entry tables for all who would like one.

Noting how persons who paid attention to isolation and masking when they've become ill or exposed, we thank everyone who takes these measures seriously and does what is needed to show our care and support for our fellow congregants.

To do our part to help prevent a return to mandatory mask wearing, we are urged to get flu vaccinations and COVID boosters as soon as possible. With our increased holiday group activities, we remain thankful people have taken measures to isolate, mask and return to activity when recuperated.

The Consistory continues to monitor case numbers and hospitalizations for COVID in our area and is paying attention to ongoing variants and projections for Fall/Winter 2022-23 and will make updates if conditions in our area change. Our current vaccination, "boosting" and masking recommendations are posted on the [website](#).

## Blessed to Be a Blessing - Children's Faith Formation

Faith Formation for our children is growing! We are grateful for those who have stepped up to lead and assist in this vital outreach to our younger disciples. "Blessed to Be a Blessing" offers a weekly time of ritual through our sacred circle, a bible story and craft and some other goodies for children, age 4 - 6th grade. This group gathers in Room 101 at 9:30am. Adult leaders and helpers are scheduled through December, and the upcoming months need your help.

Please visit with Rev. Becca Stephens to learn more about how you can help with this vital ministry with our young people, visit the class and see what takes place, then volunteer for one Sunday a month to help with the first quarter of 2023.

## Music at St. John's

### The Story of O Little Town of Bethlehem

(One of many Patrick's Favorite Christmas Carols)

At nearly six feet six, weighing three hundred pounds, Phillips Brooks cast a long shadow. He was a native Bostonian, the ninth generation of distinguished Puritan stock, who entered the Episcopalian ministry and pastored with great power in Philadelphia and in Boston. His sermons were topical rather than expositional, and he's been criticized for thinness of doctrine. Nonetheless he's considered one of America's greatest preachers. His delivery came in lightning bursts; he felt he had more to say than time in which to say it.

While at Philadelphia's Holy Trinity Church, Phillips, 30, visited the Holy Land. On December 24, 1865, traveling by horseback from Jerusalem, he attended a five hour Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. He was deeply moved. "I remember standing in the old church in Bethlehem," he later said, "close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices I knew well, telling each other of the Wonderful Night of the Savior's birth."

Three years later, as he prepared for the Christmas season of 1867, he wanted to compose an original Christmas hymn for the children to sing during their annual program. Recalling his magical night in Bethlehem, he wrote a little hymn of five stanzas and handed the words to his organist, Lewis Redner, saying, "Lewis, why not write a new tune for my poem. If it is a good tune, I will name it "St. Lewis' after you."

Lewis struggled with his assignment, complaining of no inspiration. Finally, on the night before the Christmas program, he awoke with the music ringing in his soul. He jotted down the melody, then went back to sleep. The next day, a group of six Sunday school teachers and thirty-six children sang "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

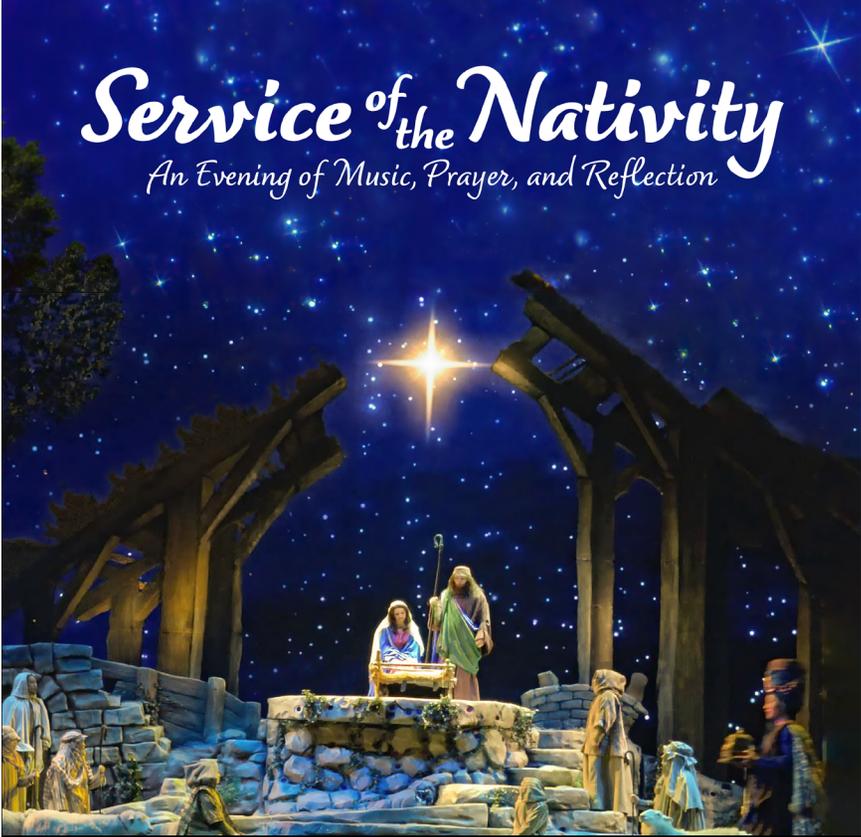
Brooks was so pleased with the tune that he did indeed name it for his organist, changing the spelling to ST. LOUIS, so as not

to embarrass him. The fourth stanza, usually omitted from our hymnbooks, says:

Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,  
Where misery cries out to Thee, Son of the mother mild;  
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,  
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.

Wishing everyone a very merry, blessed and healthy Christmas!

Musically Yours,  
Patrick Sandt



*Service of the Nativity*  
*An Evening of Music, Prayer, and Reflection*

**St. John's**  
FULLERTON - UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

6pm Sunday, December 18, 2022  
575 Grape Street - Whitehall, PA

## Stewardship/Donations

### Take a Step Up

### Opportunities to Serve

### Become an "Automatic Contributor"

**Currently, 49 giving units participating.**

Last month, every member of St. John's received a packet of information, which we hope everyone will review in considering your support and participation in our ministries. Along with the proposed budget for 2023, which projects an income shortfall of just under \$12,000, we included a Percentage of Giving Chart, inviting all of us to "Take a Step Up." Additionally, giving statements for the first three quarters of 2022 were shared.



Every contribution, small and large, reflects our love for God and our love for the one another and community as we seek to meet needs and build up people. If all our members were to evaluate their giving history and increase their giving by 1% from current levels, we could significantly improve our path toward financial stability and possibly even toward expanding our growth possibilities. We need every family, every member of St. John's, those able to be present, and those who continue in relationship with St. John's and yet are not currently participating or attending to "Take a Step Up." As the year draws to a close, the Stewardship & Finance Committee asks every person and family to see what you can do to help St. John's finish the year in a stronger financial position.

Opportunities for Service sheets were also included. While some may not be able to contribute in more significant ways financially, we can all find ways to help encourage and support existing ministry and take part in ministry which is touching and transforming lives. From the beginnings of St. John's history, connecting with people and sharing our love, prayers and encouragement has helped us create a faith home that values relationships and welcomes people. Please take time to complete and return the Opportunities for Service sheet at your earliest convenience so we can intentionally shape the 2023 ministry outreach.

For several months, we have encouraged the congregation, onsite and online, to become automatic contributors. Of our 346 family/member units, only 49 have signed up to be automatic contributors. We can and must do better. This helps our leaders better estimate income and provides for consistency during periods when attendance and giving may be lower. While we are all feeling the continuing effects of inflation and cost increases/shortages globally, we are doing our part to reduce expenses while still seeking to expand our activities and ministry outreach. The challenges are significant. We will continue to share weekly updates on attendance and giving and urge your faithful support.

We offer the ease of using the QR Code found in our worship bulletin, on the worship slides, and in other locations around the church! If you need help getting set up or want to know more, please contact the Church Office or visit with Tom Moyer or Rev. Steve Davis. Become an "Automatic Contributor" today and help the church no matter where you may be on a Sunday morning!

### Possible Visit from "Santa" to St. John's

Following the Service of the Nativity on Sunday, December 18, 6pm in the sanctuary, we will have a social time in Fox Hall with refreshments! Come enjoy some hot chocolate and other goodies. Also, rumor has it that we may have an additional "photo op" with a very special guest "Santa!" Stay tuned for more information and bring your phones and cameras just in case.

## Welcome New Members

St. John's UCC, Fullerton is thrilled to welcome Helen Ryber (not pictured), Dorthea and Clarence Biehn, Jeremy Brogna, Christopher (Chris) Rowe, Michele Ann (Shelly) and Philip (Phil) Robinson to our faith family. We celebrate Chris receiving baptism as well as all these who have chosen to make St. John's their home. Some will be worshipping with us online, others will be with us onsite. We welcome the opportunity to be a blessing to each other and grow in our life of faith together. In both November 13 worship services, we shared our covenant of welcome,



**"We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior."**

Please be sure to welcome these new friends and family in faith and introduce yourself. Invite them to join you for lunch or to your home and start building relationships of friendship. Pray for these persons and help them find their place of connection and belonging. Let us BE the Church as **"We Worship, We Love, We Serve ~ No Matter What!"**

## Youth Activities for Sunday Mornings and More

Many times once confirmation activities conclude, the busy pace of school, extra-curricular and family activities fill up schedules. We want the Youth of St. John's to enjoy a warm and welcoming place to be with each other on Sunday mornings. Youth are welcome to participate in individual class session with the Confirmands (6th, 7th & 8th graders) during the 9:30am hour in Youth Room, 301.

Youth are also welcome to enjoy time together in Fox Hall for our Sunday Social Hour. Come have something to drink and some delicious morning treats and enjoy conversation with each other around the tables. Plans are also being made to have a monthly youth event, and of course, there will be great food to share! If you're interested in taking part in something new, please visit with our newest Youth Deacon, Tyler Shankweiler, or Consistory President, Brian Fisher. Let's get the party started and build our relationships! Show your **"No Matter What!"** spirit as we grow together.

### Sundays Social Hour - 9:30am in Fox Hall

Many thanks yous and much appreciation to Kenda and Joe Catalini, Colleen Kulhammer, Michelle and Michael Gutekunst, Cindy Reck, Linda Powell and Wayne Lichtenwalner for hosting one of our social times! Good food and friends highlight our social hour on Sundays between the worship services. You can stay after worship or come early and enjoy the juice, coffee and conversation and goodies on Sunday mornings. Let's keep up the intentional creation of deeper connections as we gather in Fox Hall during the Faith Formation hour (9:30-10:30am) between the two worship services.

If you're not currently in an adult class or group during the 9:30 hour, join us for refreshments, get to know each other and mingle. Meet in the middle and enjoy conversation and time to be together.

Different individuals, ministry groups, and Faith Formation classes are invited to "Host" a social hour. Use the sign up sheet in the Parlor or contact the Church Office if you, your class, group, or committee would like to host one of our Sunday Social Hour events!

## Holiday Worship Services

### SERVICE of the NATIVITY

Sunday, December 18, 6:00pm (See article on page ?)

Social time following the program to be held in Fox Hall.

### QUIET CHRISTMAS - "Longest Night Service"

Wednesday, December 21, 7:00pm at Asbury UMC

Sometimes, we need a more meditative time during the holiday season, to acknowledge loss of all kinds, the passing of ones we have loved, pets we've cherished, health concerns and family needs. The longest night of the year, the winter solstice, has traditionally been a time to gather and share support as the lengthening of days and new hope begin.

Join our friends at Asbury UMC, along with Rev. Evelyn Stupp, as this special holiday service welcomes us to a "Quiet Christmas" and time to worship and reflect as we give thanks for God's presence and God's coming to be with us in new and hopeful ways.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Saturday, December 24, 6:00pm & 9:00pm

Carols, Candlelight and Communion!

Join us for worship in candlelight in both services. Holy Communion will be served in both services and is open to all. Share in the beauty of the sanctuary with beautiful music and a message to welcome the Christ Child as God's gift of love to each of us.

### CHRISTMAS DAY

Sunday, December 25, 10:45am Worship Service

Gather for a casual service of worship with the church family. We will have only one service (no other activities) on Christmas Day, with special music and a Christmas story to inspire us. Come worship Christ, Emmanuel, God with us!

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

Sunday, January 1, 2023, 10:45am Worship Service

Begin the New Year with a service of Holy Communion. There will be time for personal prayer and welcoming the Spirit to lead us as we open our lives to new possibilities.



## Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group of St. John's meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. Our next meeting is on December 3 at 8:30am. We would be pleased to have you join us. If you would like to know more about this group, please contact Bob Bold at (610) 393-6123 or email at [QVRRBold@aol.com](mailto:QVRRBold@aol.com)

### IronPigs Game Scheduled for 2023

We have reserved 80 seats in Section 105 of the grandstand for the IronPigs vs. Buffalo Bisons game. Game day is Tuesday, August 1, at 7:05pm. Cost will still be \$13 per person which will include a ticket to the game, \$2 ball park credit, and raffle ticket. While it is too early to know of any give-aways, we know that it is also Dollar Dog Night. So, mark your calendar—we won't be taking reservations and payment until Spring. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email at [craszler@aol.com](mailto:craszler@aol.com)

### Nut & Fruit Sale – It's Not Too Late!

For anyone who did not place an order for our annual Nut & Fruit Sale, we have a few extra bags left of Deluxe Mixed Nuts, Cashews, Harvest Medley, Healthy Mix, Dark Chocolate Cranberries, and Bridge Mix. Cost is \$12.00 ea. Contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email [craszler@aol.com](mailto:craszler@aol.com) to make your purchase.

### Deadline for January Newsletter

If you are planning to contribute an article for the January newsletter, please email your single-spaced submission in PDF, DOC, RTF or plain text format to our new address - [newsletter@sjuccf.org](mailto:newsletter@sjuccf.org) by Sunday, December 11.

Photos for your article should be included as attachments to your email. Please do not embed them in the file.

Authors: some helpful newsletter guidelines are here:

<https://stjohnsuccfullerton.org/stylenotes>

# Lady PEEPS

POSITIVE, EXTRAORDINARY, ENCOURAGING, PRAYERFUL SISTERS

The Lady PEEPS Women's Group will be meeting on Tuesday, December 20th in Fox Hall at 6:30pm. We will be celebrating Christmas Teas with DonnaLee! Come and join us for this tea party sampling as DonnaLee Yeatts shares her knowledge of tea at this special time of year. Please use the elevator entrance ladies and enjoy a relaxing evening with St. John's friends!



## Grief Support

The mission of our Healthcare Ministry is to promote the spiritual and physical well-being of the St. John's congregation. We believe this includes our mental health and how we grieve together through times of loss. We gladly partner with others in the family of faith and share gratitude for Rev. Evelyn Stupp, a United Methodist minister, who has a long relationship with St. John's and serves in this ministry area.

If you are grieving the death of a loved one, you are invited to attend a grief support group at Asbury United Methodist Church, 1533 Springhouse Road., Allentown. The group meets the fourth Tuesday monthly at 1pm in the upper level Parlor and is led by Rev. Evelyn Stupp, Asbury's Pastor of Bereavement and Care Ministries. Please contact her at [estupp@asburylv.org](mailto:estupp@asburylv.org) or (610) 428-9095 for more details and to indicate your interest. The next gatherings for support is December 27.

## Convalescent & Homebound Residents

People who would welcome receiving a greeting card:

- |                     |                   |                        |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Shirley Abel        | Roberta Habernern | Frank Nolt             |
| Anita Beil          | Lucille Hicks     | Marilyn (Jean) Piskula |
| Carl Case           | Geraldine Keim    | Marietta Seyfried      |
| Jean Coombe         | Adrienne Kiesbar  | Eleanor Smith          |
| Sandra Diefenderfer | Emma Repp-Kuczek  | Bert Smith             |
| Shirley Downing     | Elaine Lentz      | Peggy Snyder           |
| Jean Fischl         | Jean Litzenberger | Nancy Weaver           |
| Susan Felegy        | Roy Luckenbill    | Bonnie Weikel          |
| Milton Focht        | Dale Millham      |                        |
| Ron Glass           | Karen Moyer       |                        |

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

## Thank You

Thank you for all the generous donations for the Homebound Christmas gift bags this year. We had 29 gift bags.

Pat Thompson

## 2022 Poinsettia Order Form

If you would like to order poinsettia plants to beautify the sanctuary at the Christmas season, please complete the order form below and place it in the offering plate or mail to the church office with your money included.

Deadline to order is Sunday, December 4, 2022.

	<u>Number</u>
6 1/2" red poinsettia, \$12	_____
7 1/2" double red poinsettia, \$18	_____
Total plants	_____
Total amount enclosed	_____
Name _____	
In memory of _____	
In honor of _____	

A download/printable version of this form is on the church website: <http://bit.ly/3ERolxc>



Stop me if I already mentioned this, but here is another short reminder that annual reports are due to the office by January 4.

### Last Minute Christmas Shopping?

The Crafters group will have items for sale in the lounge area before and after both worship services on Sundays Dec 4 and Dec 11. There is still time to make purchases for Christmas.

Choose from a large assortment of Christmas decorations, ornaments, and stocking-stuffers. There are kitchen and household items like tea towels, table runners, dishcloths, and bowl cozies.

Baby and children's' items includes sweaters, bibs, burping cloths, boo-boo bunnies, and doll sweaters. Don't forget we also have church cookbooks, 12-bean soup mix, and more!

You can contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email [craszler@aol.com](mailto:craszler@aol.com) to make any purchases.



## Verso Chat Bible Study Group

### Expanding Opportunity with Verso Chat Bible Study

Would you like to know more about the weekly readings of scripture we share in worship? Would an afternoon or evening study better fit your life schedule? Pastor Steve is considering hosting a second group to better accommodate people's varying schedules and offer more opportunities to get connected with God and each other. If you'd be interested in being part of a new group, please send Pastor Steve an email [sjfsrpastor@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfsrpastor@sjuccf.org) and let him know what days and times of the week might best work for you in the new year.

"I'd like to feel more comfortable exploring the Bible, but do know where to begin." I hear this frequently from people new to faith, as well as those who have grown up in the church. Deeper connections with God and each other are open to us all as we explore sacred texts and find God's timeless truths "still speaking" life-giving application today.

You're welcome to participate in fun and conversation as we explore the lectionary readings for upcoming worship services as a study opportunity. ALL are welcome to drop in and participate any time you are available. Each week is it's own contained experience to discover God's "still speaking" words. "Verso" is the Latin word meaning "conversation," and you're invited to join the conversation with God and each other.

Our current group meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:00am onsite at St. John's and on Zoom. If you're interested in being part of an afternoon or evening group, please contact Pastor Steve. You will find the "Verso Chat" LINK BELOW and on the website to participate. Let's study and chat about the verses of scripture together!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81571428042>



## Road Rally - A Rousing Success!

Congratulations to all who participated in last weeks Road Rally. Everyone found their way to the restaurant in good time. We enjoyed a meal at the Slopeside Pub on the top of Blue Mountain. Special congratulations to the prize winners!

Best time – **Donnalee Yeats & Andrew Madura**

Most accurate Mileage – **The Raszlers and the Hallmans**

Answered all questions correctly – **Marion Demilio, Keith & Donna Held, Margaret Young, Keister and Lopez family, Raszler & Hallman families.**

All of these winners, plus everyone else, received valuable prizes for their efforts. Some are contemplating vacationing at the resort that we passed during the Road Rally. Thanks to all for a great afternoon!.



## Church Chuckle



*What did the wise men say after they offered up their gifts of gold and frankincense?*

Wait, there's myrrh.

*Knock, knock! Who's there? Anna. Anna who?*

Anna partridge in a pear tree.

*What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?*

Frostbite.

*What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?*

Claus-trophobia!

*What do snowmen eat for dessert?*

Ice crispies.

*What do you get when you mix a Christmas tree and an iPad?*

A pineapple!

*How do you help someone who has lost their Christmas spirit?*

Nurse them back to elf.

*What do you call an elf that runs away from Santa's workshop?*

A rebel without a Claus!

*What is it called when a snowman has a temper tantrum?*

A meltdown.

*How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?*

Nothing, it was on the house!

*Knock, knock! Who's there? Ho Ho. Ho Ho who?*

Your Santa impression needs a little work!

### December Birthdays

12/1 ..... Barbara Thomas	12/17 ..... Brittany Rothrock
12/2 ..... Andrew Mill	12/18 ..... Amanda Kaiser Andrea Leibensperger
12/3 ..... Austin Sommer	12/19 ..... Daniel Schlenker
12/4 ..... Phyllis Ambearle Myles Silfies	12/20 ..... Annamarie Barrall
12/5 ..... Carol Buskirk Nancy Weaver	12/21 ..... Susan Albus-Evans
12/7 ..... Alycia DeMilio	12/22 ..... Michael Agrippine Robert Sherman Walter Walenta Joanne Ziegler
12/8 ..... Elijah Fox Kelsey Gallagher	12/24 ..... Sally Gibson Daniel Reid
12/9 ..... Craig Bryant Rylee Schmoyer Ryan Weiner	12/25 ..... Michael Kulhamer
12/10 ..... Donna Brown Rev. Cliffert Herring Rudolph Kaintz	12/26 ..... Paul F Geissinger Christopher Kuhns
12/12 ..... Keith Fox Jr. Kim Hillegass Steven Schlenker Kaitlyn Weidner	12/28 ..... Anne Welsh
12/13 ..... Melissa Szoke	12/29 ..... Debra Hausman Mary Ann Knauss Dennis Pascoe Fay Salivonchik
12/14 ..... Beverly Peters Janet Smith Jo Ellen Wexler	12/30 ..... Kerry Geissinger Faith Schaffer
	12/31 ..... Frank Csaszar

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



### December Wedding Anniversaries

Joseph Trippett & Anne Welsh 12/11/2010	Gerald & Patricia Yanavok 12/28/2011
Gary & Cheryl Weaver 12/17/2005	Peter & Regina Mohr 12/29/1984
Eric Thompson & Melanie Bayer 12/18/2004	Kevin & Barbara Hoderman 12/31/2010
Barbara Thomas & Eugene Gallagher 12/22/1990	Adam & Emma Rarich 12/31/2017
Walter & Janice Walenta 12/27/2009	

**St. John's  
T  
A  
R  
s**  
Technical  
Artistic  
Resources



The STARs committee is your group of tech-savvy, creative folks who assemble the weekly livestream of the worship service. We are looking for people who would like to learn about what we do and join our team. [starsofstjohns@gmail.com](mailto:starsofstjohns@gmail.com)





### “Operation Santa” – Mitten Tree Project

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, our Mitten Tree is back in the sanctuary this year!! We are encouraging everyone to give a donation to Phoebe Ministries (red mittens) and/or Valley Youth House (yellow mittens). At the charities request, we are still not collecting gifts again this year. From your contribution, gifts will be purchased by the staff at both locations and delivered to their clients and residents. Here’s what to do: Take a mitten(s) from the tree. Make your donation payable to St. John’s UCC, Fullerton. Be sure to specify Phoebe and/or VYH in the memo section. Put your donation in the offering plate, mail to the church office, or give on-line or by text. Deadline to receive your contribution is Sunday, November 27. Hurricane Disaster Relief

### The Christmas Fund

*“Overwhelmed with Joy” ~ Matthew 2:10*

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

This year, as we rejoice at churches re-opening and possibilities for gathering and worshipping together once again, we anticipate the “good news of great joy” at Christmas. Still, challenges remain for many of our pastoral leaders who continue to experience loss of income as congregations struggle with budget shortfalls.

Enclosed with this newsletter is an insert and a special offering envelope. Please show your continued gratitude for our active and retired UCC clergy. Contributions can be put in the offering plate, mailed to the church office, or donate on-line or text. The offering will be received on Sunday, December 18. Be sure to specify your donation is to go to the “Christmas Fund.”

### Whitehall Food Pantry

Donations are needed for the Christmas holiday meal. We need boxes of stuffing or filling mix. Monetary donations will also be used to purchase gift certificates for turkeys. Other food items are always accepted as well. A shopping cart can be found in the coatroom area next to the sanctuary where you can place your donations.

### Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative

WCHI and the Faith-Based Community are providing free meals to low-income Whitehall-Coplay households on the 1st Sunday and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 4pm to 6:30pm. The host locations change every time, and they will decide if masks are required and if it is a sit-down or take-out meal. Call the host church to see what guidelines they are following

Date	Church	Address	Phone
Sunday, 12/4	Muslim Assoc. of the Lehigh Valley	1988 Schadt Ave., Whitehall	(703) 346-8698
Tuesday, 12/20	Whitehall Bible Fellowship Church	3300 Seventh St., Whitehall	(610) 434-8661



## Ukraine Relief Fund

As long as the crisis continues, we will receive donations at worship, by mail, or by on-line and text giving. Donations of \$120.00 for October was given to UCC National, and donations for the month of November will be given to Project HOPE. For the month of December donations will be given to Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Be sure to note that your contribution is for "Ukraine Relief Fund." Special offering envelopes along with yellow and blue lapel pins showing your support can be found on the table in the lounge area next to the sanctuary.

### How your contributions have helped the people of Ukraine:

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA began collecting funds in late February to alleviate the suffering of Ukrainians due to the Russian invasion. \$2.8 million has been collected thanks to the generosity of the faithful of the Church. A large amount of those funds was allocated throughout the summer months, providing much needed medical supplies, water, clothing, and food to those displaced within Ukraine. Over 100 ambulances have been delivered. The focus now is turning towards cold weather needs such as coats, blankets, firewood, matches, fuel, etc. The much-needed supplies are being delivered and aiding the suffering people located in the battle-torn areas. The Ukrainian Church will continue to provide much-needed humanitarian aid and support to the Ukrainian people.

### Update on Other Mission Outreaches

We express our gratitude to everyone who responded to UCC's urgent appeal for the families and communities affected by Hurricanes Ian and Fiona. **We are happy to report that \$341 was received for the Hurricanes 2022 Fund.** Your gifts enabled the church to be present with people amidst catastrophic and life-changing situations, offering immediate relief and providing long-term recovery support.

Thank you to everyone who contributed a total of **\$334 to Neighbors in Need.**

The annual October **CROP Walk** took in over **\$25,000** from the community with donations of **\$665** from our **St. John's Family.**



### How Did St. John's Family Do?

Recent Outreaches	Oct 2022	YTD 2022	YTD 2021	YTD 2020
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$1,150.00	\$12,734.90	\$15,086.30	\$15,943.16
Neighbors in Need	\$ 284.00	\$ 334.00	\$ 471.00	\$ 175.00
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$ 145.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 2,395.00	\$ 2,613.00
Mitten Project – Phoebe & VYH	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00	N/A	N/A
Ukraine Relief Fund	\$ 120.00	\$ 3,565.00	N/A	N/A
Hurricanes Disaster Relief	\$ 341.00	\$ 341.00	N/A	N/A
Donations for Homeless	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	N/A	N/A

**St Johns UCC Fullerton - Statement of Finances  
OCT 2022**

Income	Electronic	10/2/2022	10/9/2022	10/16/2022	10/23/2022	10/30/2022	Total
Offerings for Operating Expenses	\$6,442.09	\$5,433.25	\$2,526.00	\$2,879.50	\$2,543.80	\$2,482.00	\$22,306.64
Rental Income--Gross					\$1,225.50		\$1,225.50
Fundraising Income--Net of Exp		\$1,640.00	\$893.51	\$564.50	\$60.00	\$(315.81)	\$2,842.20
Endowment Interest			\$5,670.00				\$5,670.00
Flowers		\$66.00					\$66.00
Christian Education	\$5.00	\$51.00	\$92.00	\$12.00	\$41.00	\$37.00	\$238.00
Special Gifts							\$-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,447.09</b>	<b>\$7,190.25</b>	<b>\$9,181.51</b>	<b>\$3,456.00</b>	<b>\$3,870.30</b>	<b>\$2,203.19</b>	<b>\$32,348.34</b>

Expense Summary	Actual	Budget	Difference
Pastoral Services	\$11,079.50	\$13,377.00	\$(2,297.50)
Staff Salaries & Expense	\$8,017.61	\$9,891.00	\$(1,873.39)
Property	\$1,565.66	\$3,226.00	\$(1,660.34)
Parish Programs	\$2,792.71	\$2,868.00	\$(75.29)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,455.48</b>	<b>\$29,362.00</b>	<b>\$(5,906.52)</b>

	Month	Year
Total Income	\$32,348.34	\$236,111.56
Total Expenses	\$23,455.48	\$258,939.17
<b>Net (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$8,892.86</b>	<b>\$(22,827.61)</b>

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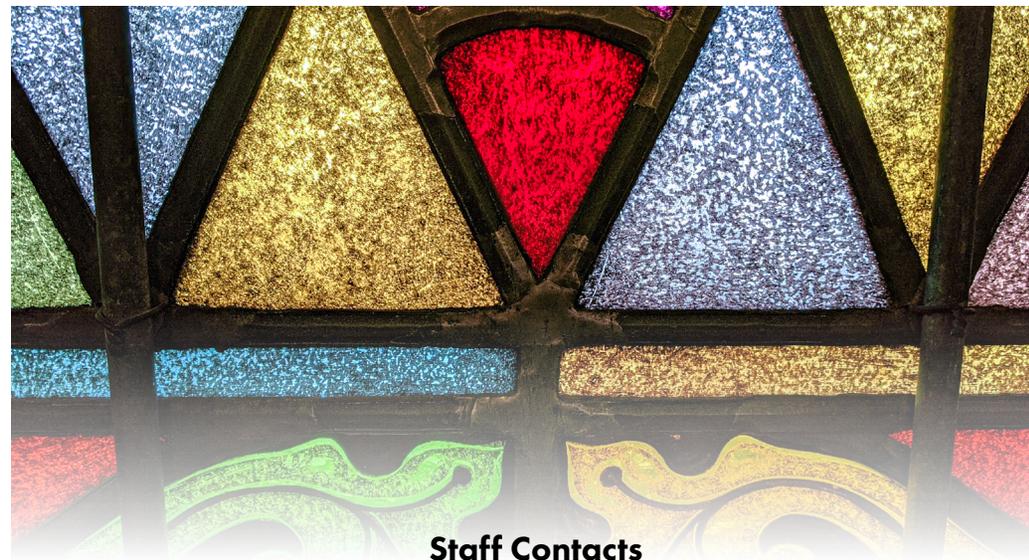
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**Mission Giving, OCT 2022**

Our Churches Wider Mission	\$1,130.00
Neighbors in Need	\$284.00
Ukrainian Relief	\$120.00
UCC Hurricane 2022	\$341.80
Whitehall Food Bank	\$145.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,020.80</b>

**St John's UCC Fullerton  
Fund Balances  
For Month Ending, OCT 2022**

Account	Sep-22	Oct-22	Difference
Checking Account--KNBT	\$17,187.85	\$26,501.21	\$9,313.36
Giant Card Funds	\$744.51	\$1,569.51	\$825.00
Weis Card Funds	\$1,510.00	\$1,510.00	\$-
sub-total General Fund Assets	\$19,442.36	\$29,580.72	\$10,138.36
IN & OUT Account--KNBT Checking	\$72,565.27	\$76,343.03	\$3,777.76
Restricted/Property Money Market	\$31,864.93	\$31,865.21	\$0.28
sub-total Restricted Assets	\$104,430.20	\$108,208.24	\$3,778.04
Endowment Fund--KNBT	\$411,738.60	\$429,689.29	\$17,950.69
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$535,611.16</b>	<b>\$567,478.25</b>	<b>\$31,867.09</b>
Cornerstone Pavillion Loan	\$(85,550.57)	\$(85,550.57)	\$-
<b>TOTAL LIABILITES</b>	<b>\$(85,550.57)</b>	<b>\$(85,550.57)</b>	<b>\$-</b>
<b>NET FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$450,060.59</b>	<b>\$481,927.68</b>	<b>\$31,867.09</b>



**Staff Contacts**

**Rev. Steve Davis**  
Senior Pastor

[sjfspastor@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfspastor@sjuccf.org)

**Patrick Sandt**  
Director of Music Ministry / Organist

[sjfmusic@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfmusic@sjuccf.org)

**Alison Berger Boor**  
Office Administrator

[sjfofficesecretary@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfofficesecretary@sjuccf.org)

**Sue Weldner**  
Treasurer

[sbweldner@gmail.com](mailto:sbweldner@gmail.com)

**Thomas and Emilie Moyer**  
Financial Secretary

[tommoyer54@gmail.com](mailto:tommoyer54@gmail.com)

**Michelle Gutekunst**  
Worship Tech  
Coordinating Custodian

[sjfstars@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfstars@sjuccf.org)  
[sjfcustodians@sjuccf.org](mailto:sjfcustodians@sjuccf.org)

**Bob Czekner**  
Sexton

[rczekner11@aol.com](mailto:rczekner11@aol.com)

**Christine Bach**  
Sexton

[iron1@verizon.net](mailto:iron1@verizon.net)

[www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org](http://www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org)

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

# December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>4</b> 8:00am Basket Social-Fox Hall 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service</p>	<p><b>5</b> 10:30am Visitation Committee 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:00pm Jubilation Choir</p>	<p><b>6</b> 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:30pm Stewardship &amp; Finance Committee</p>	<p><b>7</b> 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve 6:30pm STARS Committee Mtg 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p><b>1</b> 6:30pm Property Committee</p>		<p><b>3</b> 8:30am Men's Breakfast Group: Ham Farm Restaurant 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall 3:00pm Basket Social</p>
<p><b>11</b> Newsletter Articles Due 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service</p>	<p><b>12</b> 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:00pm Jubilation &amp; Chancel Choirs</p>	<p><b>13</b> 1:30pm Staff meeting 6:30pm Elders meeting 7:00pm Consistory</p>	<p><b>14</b> 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm Combined Choirs</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b> 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall</p>
<p><b>18</b> 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Congregational Meeting 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service 6:00pm Service of the Nativity</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b> 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:30pm Lady PEPPS: Fox Hall</p>	<p><b>21</b> 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm Combined Choirs</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b> 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service 9:00pm Christmas Eve Service</p>
<p><b>25</b> 10:45am Worship Service</p>	<p><b>26</b> Church Office closed</p>	<p><b>27</b> Church Office closed</p>	<p><b>28</b> 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>