



**PAUL
RASZLER**

St. John's **CONNECTIONS**

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

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“These Moments We Make”

Ever since hearing her first “spoken word” on a national inaugural stage, the poet, Amanda Gorman has enthralled and inspired me. I’ve taken delight in reading her words, and have been even more moved as I’ve watched her public presentations and heard her deliver prose to audiences riveted by her every utterance. Amanda’s ability to share word and movement, meter and pacing share more than a poem. She shares moments which transform us and transcend our understanding, creating experiences with her words that guide her hearers and all who see to a new moment of possibility.



As I watched the [video](#) of her “[New Day’s Lyric](#),” I could not help but reflect on the journeys we have experienced over the last several years. We lament the dreams that have forever shifted with the changes of our global experience, the changes in our national discourse, the division and ill will that we know in all too prevalent ways. We long for a common dedication to our shared values of “doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with God” that we embrace from Micah’s words, sharing what God requires of us all. We aspire to be the better selves of people who rise above callousness and seek compassion, we go beyond minimums in order to maximize

potential. We approach the challenges before us with each new opportunity, each hardship, each possibility and yes, each new year, trusting that God will guide us in these moments we make.

What new day, what moments, what transformation will God work through me? through you? through us? through our families? through our St. John’s UCC, Fullerton congregation? through our community? our nation? our world? What moments will we make together that will change a life for all eternity? I’m looking for these things in 2023, and invite you to join me in a “New Day’s Lyrics” as we step forward in these moments we make. Watch and hear Amanda’s spoken word and let your spirit be joined with your neighbors as we are bound together in the journey, coming together, so we may forever overcome.

A blessed new year to us all as we
 “Worship, Love and Serve
 ~ No Matter What!”

Yours in grace and hope,

Steve Davis
 Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor



p.s.

As this issue goes to press, Bill and I are excitedly awaiting the arrival of our grandson, Jaxson Trujillo.

Mom Erin was overwhelmed by the wonderful gift package, “I received this enormous box, filled with more than I could imagine!” Christopher appreciated the special gifts celebrating his “big-brother” status.



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On The Cover...



PAUL RASZLER
 has been a member of St. John's for over 7 years. He appreciates the mission work that is done inside and outside our neighborhood.
 Paul loves singing in the choir and is an avid model railroader. He also loves collecting things like bottle openers, shoe horns, and has over 600 PEZ candy dispensers.
 His favorite thing is telling jokes (mostly groaners) and loves all the St. John's members who have put up with them.

In the coming year, we will feature photos of some of our St John's people on the cover of CONNECTIONS.

You may contacted to be featured in the church newsletter, but don't worry! Just write a short, 2-3 sentence bio about yourself. Focus on an interesting fact or two that you think others would find entertaining or unique. This could include hobbies, talents, or special skills that you have. You can mention what brought you to St John's. Lastly, end with a fun and friendly phrase that captures your personality. Here are some examples:

"John Smith has been a member of the church for 10 years. In his free time he enjoys playing golf and reading books.

"Jane Doe has been attending the church for 5 years and loves to volunteer in the community. She also enjoys cooking and spending time with her family.

"Jim Johnson has been a part of the church for 15 years and loves to help others. He enjoys playing guitar and going on hikes in his free time."

Have fun and don't be afraid to be creative!

Music at St. John's

If you had asked me what a choir was 7 years ago, I would have told you that it was a bunch of people singing a song that they'd practiced.

If you had asked me what choir was 5 years ago, I would have told you that it was a bunch of people having fun, learning songs and then singing them for the congregation to add to the worship service.

If you had asked me what choir was 2 years ago, I would have told you it was a bunch of people that worked on a collection of pieces and tried to sing them exactly right so that the congregation and director would like their performance. I would have told you that you could only be as good as the choir you were in.

Today, I can tell you that a choir is a family. A choir is a family that is held together, not by mutual interests or blood, but by a love of music and the prayers we sing. A choir is a family bonded by the hearts they have poured into their music, a family that may not always like each other but always loves each other, and a family that doesn't give up on anyone. A choir is more than just a bunch of people singing a song they've practiced. It is hours, days, months and years of commitment all built on top of itself!

In other words, 2023... a new year with fresh beginnings. What else is there to do besides **KEEP CALM AND JOIN THE CHOIR!!!** If singing isn't for you, how about joining the Bell Choir which rehearses on Monday evenings 6-6:45pm beginning January 9? If you enjoy smaller ensembles, maybe the Jubilation Choir of St. John's, an all-female ensemble that rehearses on Monday evenings from 7-8pm beginning January 9 is the answer for you? Perhaps it's time to reconsider adding your voice to the Chancel Choir, you come to service at 10:45am, why not? The Chancel Choir is trying out a new rehearsal night in the new year, which will be Thursday evenings (starting January 5) 7-8:30pm.

Consider it, pray about it, and together let's make 2023 a year of memories for the Music Ministry of St. John's!

Musically Yours,
Patrick Sandt

Annual Congregational Meeting

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

Reports Due January 4, 2023

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. We will have "Ministry Fair" presentations by many of our committees and ministry task groups to share their work and how we can become involved.

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.

The conversation at this important gathering will guide us toward next steps for our financial health and ministry. Join us as we share together, review and look forward to where God is leading us to **Worship, Love and Serve ~ No Matter What!**

Thank You

Rev. Davis,

During this time of Thanksgiving, I reflect on those things for which I am thankful. What comes to mind this year is St. John's UCC – Fullerton. I am so very grateful for the celebration of my mom's 100th birthday that you and the congregation so expertly planned and executed.

Please extend my sincerest thanks to all who did the work to make it happen, and to those who took the time to be a part of it. Every effort was made to make this day special...the music, decorations, refreshments, scrapbooks...**EVERYTHING!** The joy this event brought to Emma is immeasurable. She will forever remember the many kindnesses shown to her.

Thank you all so very much!
Linda Repp Cruttenden

Stewardship/Donations

Take a Step Up - Opportunities to Serve Become an "Automatic Contributor"

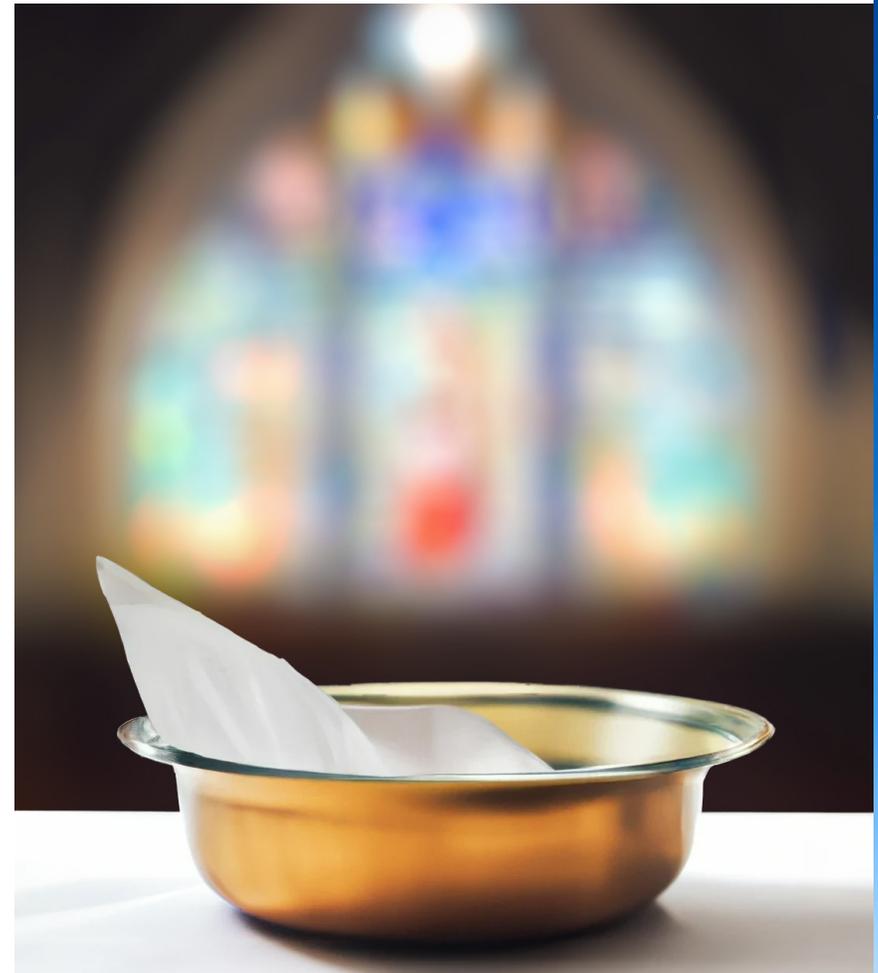
Currently, 49 giving units participating.

With the start of 2023, we want to challenge every family to become automatic contributors in our support of St. John's UCC. The Stewardship and Finance Committee has shared important information about the kinds of giving changes we hope to see in 2023. Here are some ways you can make a significant difference.

- Sign up for automatic contributions on our website with secure, encrypted giving.
- Increase your current giving by making a 1% "Step Up" on the Percentage Giving Chart which will be part of your 2022 Year End Financial Statement.
- Fill out the "Opportunities to Serve" sheet and volunteer to participate in an area of ministry or program that interests you.
- Sponsor the weekly worship bulletin or monthly newsletter.
- Use the QR Code for convenient "I've been moved by God to give" responsiveness to God's Spirit.
- Have a conversation with the Pastor, Treasurer or any other Stewardship and Finance Committee member about what you can do to make a lasting difference at St. John's.

Opportunities for Service sheets are available on the Parlor table for your connection support. 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.

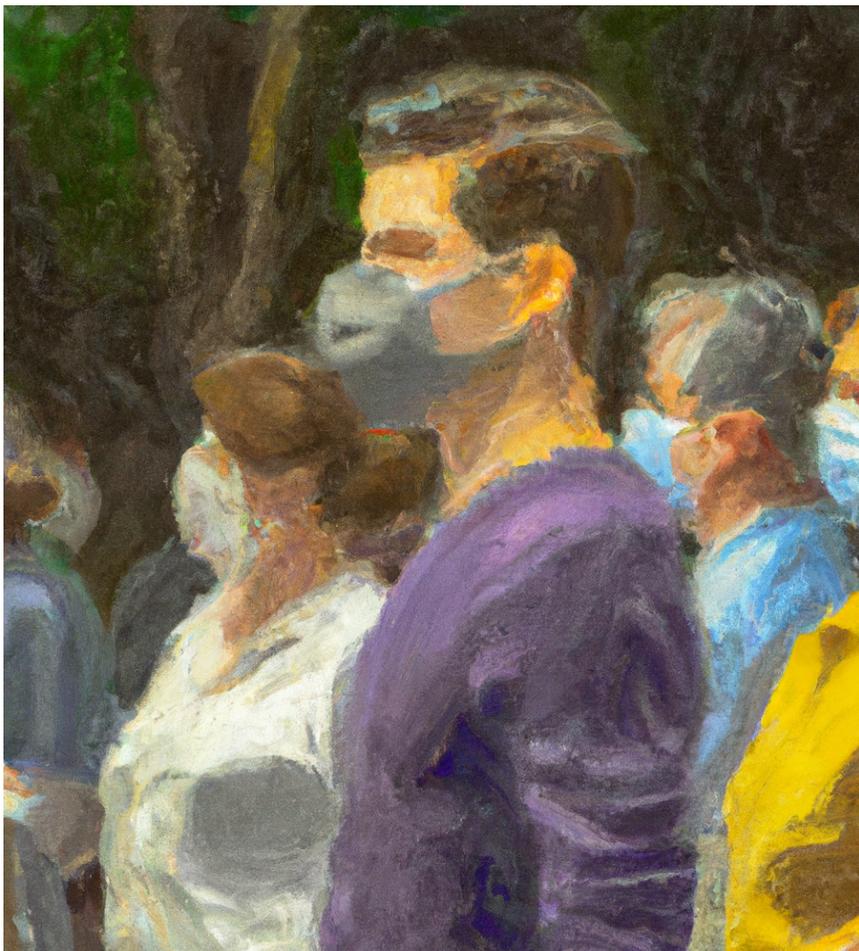
We offer the ease of using the QR Code found in our worship bulletin, on the worship slides, and in other locations around the church! If you need help getting set up or want to know more, please contact the Church Office or visit with Tom Moyer or Rev. Steve Davis. Become an "Automatic Contributor"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



Our donations help support the many important programs and initiatives that our church offers, including outreach to those in need, education and spiritual growth opportunities, and support for our community. By giving above and beyond our usual amount, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of others and further the work of the church. Plus, as we give with an open heart and a generous spirit, we can experience the joy and fulfillment that comes from supporting causes that are dear to us. So let's take this opportunity to show our commitment to our faith and to making a positive impact in the world by increasing our donations to the church. Together, we can make a real difference and bring hope and happiness to those around us.

COVID, Flu, RSV and Showing Care

It seems as if we learn to live with one health emergency and global public health concern only to have the annual flu season return with greater impact after our spending 2 years in masks and isolation. We are tired and frustrated by the continuing variants, the need for keeping boosters and vaccinations updated and trying to protect ourselves, our families, and especially our most vulnerable elderly community. We're living with the changes and the discomfort of life still not quite feeling normal or returning to what we were used to in our old patterns of behavior and ways of being with each other and doing things.



As we enter the official winter season, we are seeing the new threats of Flu, RSV (for both children and older adults) and the two newest dominant COVID variants calling for our continued attention and consideration. 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 group activities, we remain thankful people have taken measures to isolate, mask and return to activity when recuperated.

Some have asked, "When will we return to passing the offering plates? Wouldn't that help us receive more contributions?" Others have asked, "When will we pass communion through the pews again?" We must first ask if these activities were ever good health practices to begin with. Can we find other means of participating in the intentional sharing of our gifts to God in worship? Can we receive and give the sacraments in ways that also don't unintentionally create a health risk for someone? Do we want to risk anyone becoming ill because we like a particular method of doing something? The Consistory is open to our collective conversation and encourages our continued willingness to discern together how we can best be a supportive and healthy community. Through Spring 2023, the Consistory plans to maintain current health measures of mitigating risks and adapting our practices for the wellbeing of our whole community.

Our current vaccination, "boosting" and masking recommendations are posted on the website. 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 KN95 masks at our entry tables for all who would like one.

Thank you for your continued understanding and participation in these measures.

Youth Activities for Sunday Mornings and More

Tyler Shankweiler is our newest Youth Deacon serving in 2023! He is looking for other youth and adults to get in on the conversation to create something new for St. John's Youth. Many times the busy pace of school, extra-curricular and family activities fill up schedules once confirmation activities conclude. We want the Youth of St. John's to enjoy a warm and welcoming place to be with each other on Sunday mornings. Currently, ALL Youth are welcome to participate in individual class sessions with the Confirmands (6th, 7th & 8th graders) during the 9:30am hour in Youth Room, 301. However, we'd like to create something more!



Join Tyler and caring adults committed to supporting our Youth as we visit over the next several weeks during the Sunday Social Hour in Fox Hall. 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, Bill Fink, or Brian Fisher. Let's get the party started and build our relationships!

Show your "No Matter What!" spirit as we grow together.

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!

Blessed to Be a Blessing - Children's Faith Formation

Faith Formation for our children continues to touch young lives and adult hearts as well! 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 through 6th grade. This group gathers in Room 101 at 9:30am. Adult leaders and helpers are needed for January - May as we seek to sustain and expand this vital ministry to our youngest followers of Christ.

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.

Creating A New Ritual

Water Gathering Reminder On Vacations



Thanks to those who have already been bringing small bottles of water from your travels in 2022. Wherever your travels may take you in 2023, collect a sample of water in a small bottle from your journeys across the country and around the world. Bring it back and give it to Pastor Steve for safe keeping. During the year, we will remind you to continue

this activity. The water will be received, purified and then next Fall on our "Gathering Sunday," we will begin using this water for our celebrations of baptism and other sacred moments in worship. Thank you in advance for helping create a new ritual to touch us with the waters of life from all over the world.

Rev. Alan Miller Dies at 70

by Hans Holznel | published on Dec 6, 2022

The Rev. Alan Miller, remembered by colleagues as a joyful and effective builder of relationships in the ministries of the United Church of Christ, died Dec. 2, in High Point, N.C. He was 70.



He retired in 2017 after more than 40 years in ministry. He was a local church pastor in Pennsylvania, an associate on the staff of the UCC's Southern Conference, and finally Conference minister in Penn Northeast.

His death followed seven years of treatments for cancer

and encephalitis, said his daughter, Christina Miller Lipstreu. That journey is chronicled at this ["Miller Strong" page at CaringBridge.](#)

General Minister and President John Dorhauer first connected with Miller when they were both Conference ministers and spoke with him regularly during his illness. "Even in his dying he made me laugh — and cry," Dorhauer said. "That was Alan — never ashamed to express any emotion. He was the hale fellow well met who never knew a stranger."

Retired Conference Minister Rollin Russell, who headed the Southern staff when Miller was an associate there, remembered his "remarkable gifts and abilities." "He had an unfailing love for people and for the UCC, matched by his deep personal integrity, his commitment to ministry, and his great, good humor," Russell said.

Born April 18, 1952, Alan Craig Miller lived all of his early life in Pennsylvania. He grew up in Perkasio and graduated from Penridge High School there in 1970. He graduated from Lehigh University's

College of Engineering, Bethlehem, in 1974, and from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1979.

Miller's illness — specifically, autoimmune encephalitis as a complication of thymic carcinoma, according to his family — came with tragic timing for him and his wife, Candy.

"When Alan retired, he and Candy bought a new truck," Dorhauer said. "He talked about this for a full year before he finished. He was going to outfit it with all his tools and gadgets, and he and Candy were going to travel around to various Habitat for Humanity sites and build homes. He could not have been any happier about that."



Miller is survived by his wife Candy, son Mark and his wife Stephanie, daughter Christina Lipstreu and her husband James, and five grandchildren: Ian, Ellie, Cooper, Miller and Harper.

Memorial services will be held at Jordan United Church of Christ, the Millers' home church in Allentown, PA, on Friday, Jan. 6, 2023, at 11am. A livestream of the service will be available here. More information on arrangements can be found on this [Heintzelman Funeral Home page.](#)

"Alan always brought enthusiasm and joy to his work, joy that was contagious," Thomas said. "His smile and his heart were broad and embracing."

"I smile and give thanks when I think of him," Russell said. "We will miss him deeply."

Hans Holznel, a former member of the UCC news team, retired Dec. 1 after a career that included many roles in the UCC's national ministries, dating back to 1984.



POSITIVE, EXTRAORDINARY, ENCOURAGING, PRAYERFUL SISTERS

The Lady PEEPS Women's Group will be meeting on Tuesday, January 17 at 6:30pm in Fox Hall. The evening's theme will be "Getting to Know You" and is being planned by Dianna Schneck. Come in out of the cold for an evening together with friends as we get to know each other better and warm our hearts through fun and laughter and food. Ladies, if you have not yet had a chance to join us for one of these evenings, come check us out and make some new friends. You are welcome here!

**St. John's
T
A
R
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



A Word of Thanks

On Sunday, December 18, 2022, St. John's held our first annual Service of the Nativity, a story through reflections and music of our own spiritual journey through the season of Advent and re-telling of the Nativity story through the eyes of each important character.

A big thank you to the narrators, handbell ringers, choir members, instrumentalists, advent wreath lighters, members of the Worship and Music Committee who assisted with programs and candles, and those who provided the wonderful refreshments and goodies for our fellowship that followed.

Thank you in making our First-Annual Nativity Service meaningful and spiritual to all who attended in person and to those who watched online. If you haven't had the opportunity to experience this beautiful service, please check our YouTube page with the following link:

<https://youtu.be/4UoDW-KEbc8>

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 January 7 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

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

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 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 don't 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 applications 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 its 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 church website to participate. Let's study and chat about the verses of scripture together! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81571428042>

Convalescent & Homebound Residents

People who would welcome receiving a greeting card:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Shirley Abel | Ron Glass | Karen Moyer |
| Anita Beil | Roberta Haberern | Frank Nolt |
| Jim Carr | Lucille Hicks | Marilyn 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 |
| Susan Felegy | Jean Litzenberger | Nancy Weaver |
| Jean Fischl | Roy Luckenbill | Bonnie Weikel |
| Milton Focht | Dale Millham | |

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



Why did the pastor go outside in the middle of a snowstorm?

To shovel the path to salvation!

Deadline for February Newsletter

If you are planning to contribute an article for the February newsletter, please email your single-spaced submission in PDF, DOC, RTF or plain text format to our new address - newsletter@sjuccf.org by Sunday, January 15.

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>

Holiday and New Year's Worship Services

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Saturday, December 24, 6pm & 9pm

Carols, Candlelight and Communion

Join us for worship in candlelight for both services. Holy Communion will be served at the conclusion of the 6pm service for those who would like to receive and during the 9pm service as part of the worship service. Holy Communion 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.

Join us for "The Piano Man's Christmas," a story of faith written by Dr. Ira Williams and newly illustrated by Bill Castello. This will be a story you'll want to hear and see!

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.

2023 CONSISTORY INSTALLATION & CONSECRATION

Sunday, January 8, 2023, 8:15 and 10:45am Worship Services

BAPTISMAL RENEWAL SUNDAY

January 15, 2023

Come celebrate our relationship of love and being embraced by God and our spiritual community as we renew our covenant of baptism in worship. We give thanks for all the means by which we experience God's faithfulness and affirmation.

Congregational Caring And Support

We all appreciate the simple gestures and kindnesses shown us by people who let us know we are being thought of, prayed for and appreciated as part of the St. John's family. Whether by receiving a call or card, having someone express gratitude for our participation in leading or simply being one of the faithful who attend, all of us appreciate the signs of love and support shared.

As we engage in a new season of ministry, we invite you to be part of the difference we make together, by re-imagining our visitation and congregational care support. Currently, St. John's has an amazing group of people committed to extending care to our homebound members. There are 28 people who receive monthly encouragement, calls, visits and other acts of love. We could not be the caring community we are without these dedicated volunteers sharing their gifts of support.

St. John's has 346 family units. We don't always see them in worship or participating in activities as we did in years past, and we want to change that. St. John's is a place where we want to connect with each other, make a difference and touch lives with hope and grace. The Consistory and St. John's Elders recently met to discuss how we can collectively re-imagine our ministry of congregational care, visitation of our homebound, and hospital and emergency care. We ask you to be part of the conversation as well.

At the February Annual Meeting, you will hear some ideas of how we hope to move forward with a new model engaging the congregation in an intentional outreach of support to the whole congregation, in addition to our homebound. We want to be sure we extend our care to those who are able to be present, those who worship and participate online, and those who cannot be present, yet still cherish their relationships made here. Help us discern next steps together by being part of the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 5!

January Birthdays

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

1/1 Lamar Peters	1/14 Timothy Christman Chase Jordan
1/2 Patricia Thompson Carter Troxell	1/15 Jacob Hannis
1/3 Chace Miller Carole O'Connell Guy Schwenk DonnaLee Yeatts	1/16 Kimberly Hannis
1/4 Susan Rarich	1/18 Chloe Martin Lori Stocker
1/5 Nathaniel Kuhns Georgine Long Owen McNicholas	1/19 Jillian Sommer
1/6 Christina Bach Doris Hunsicker	1/20 Lorraine Hower Joseph Trippett
1/7 Milton Focht Noemi Quinn Franklin Reichl	1/24 Megan Marinkovits Natalie Reichl
1/8 LeAnn Focht David Fritzing Jr. Karly Myers	1/25 Natalie Schutts Betty Shankweiler Matthew Sommer
1/9 Brenda Pascoe	1/26 Robert Jones Olivia Powell
1/10 Mark Chwastiak Emilie Moyer	1/27 Rachel Focht Terry Leibenguth
1/13 Lucas Daiello Brian Deutsch Cathy Kuhns	1/28 George Romberger
	1/29 Larry Martin Paul Raszler
	1/31 Rev John Hoff Ronald Patterson



January Wedding Anniversary

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

Carole & Dennis O'Connell
1/24/1970



Sunday Social Hour - 9:30am in Fox Hall

Many thanks and much appreciation to Kenda and Joe Catalini, Colleen Kulhamer, Michelle and Michael Gutekunst, Cindy Reck, Linda Powell and Wayne Lichtenwalner for hosting one of our social times as we concluded 2022! Now onward to create more relationship building in 2023 (January 8th will be hosted by the Healthcare Ministry).

If you've enjoyed sharing around the tables in conversation with good food and friends, sign up this week to host a Sunday Social Hour. 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!



Whitehall Food Pantry

Donations needed for January: pancake mix, syrup, jelly, and peanut butter. A shopping cart can be found in the coatroom area by the sanctuary where you can place your donations. Monetary contributions are also welcomed. Enclosed with this newsletter you will find a special offering envelope for the food pantry. You can also make a contribution via text or on-line.

Thank you to everyone who donated boxes of stuffing mix for Thanksgiving meals, monetary donations to purchase gift certificates for turkeys, and an assortment of holiday canned goods for Christmas dinner meals.

The Whitehall Food Pantry had another successful year in 2022. Donated items and items received from Second Harvest Food Bank are selected and packed into boxes and bags on the first through fourth Monday mornings of each month at host, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. The packed items are then distributed to over 100 local families per month in the respective evenings. St. John's UCC, Fullerton has about 20 excellent volunteers who joyously donate their time and energy on the fourth Monday of each month. New volunteers are always welcome, and you can contact Gary Black at (610) 262-6114 or email at gary.t.black@outlook.com

"Operation Santa" – Mitten Tree Project

Thank you to everyone who contributed to "Operation Santa" this year. It was the first time since the pandemic that a tree was on display in the back of the sanctuary for you to select yellow and red paper mittens for two charitable organizations. We are happy to report that \$620 was received for Phoebe Ministries - Allentown and \$680 was received for Valley Youth House for a total of \$1300. From these contributions, gifts were purchased by the staff at both locations and delivered to their clients and residents.

The Christmas Fund

Donations to the Christmas Fund are still being accepted to the end of December, and we will have a report on that giving in the next newsletter. The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years. It provides emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees and those facing unforeseen financial hardship.

Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative

WCHI and the Faith-Based Community are providing free meals to low-income Whitehall-Coplay households on the first Sunday and third 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, 1/1	No meals served – New Year's Day	--	--
Tuesday, 1/17	Whitehall Active Community Center	2301 Pine St., Whitehall	(610) 443-0675
Sunday, 2/5	St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church	4 S. 5th St., Coplay	(610) 262-2417

Hurricanes 2022 Fund

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Hurricanes 2022 Fund. A total of \$375 was received. Your generosity has aided hundreds of families in need of help to rebuild their homes and lives in the aftermath of Hurricanes Fiona and Ian. Your gift will help with immediate needs while the basic infrastructure is being repaired. Your giving will also offer support on the long road to recovery.

Ukraine Relief Fund

Help is urgently needed as harsh winter conditions have arrived in the Ukraine. With no end in sight to the war and cruel attacks on civilians and healthcare workers continuing, the situation becomes increasingly dire. The long, hard cold winter creates an alarming new challenge in keeping internally displaced people safe. Nearly a quarter of them don't have safe housing for the winter, including a lack of power, electricity, gas, and heat. This could be deadly as temperatures rapidly decline. Your donations will help under-gird an expanding spectrum of services such as food, shelter, medical care, WASH (water, sanitation, hygiene), spiritual and psychological care, protection and more in Ukraine and in countries where Ukrainians were forced to relocate. For the month of January contributions will be sent to UCC National to support programs to help with Ukraine's infrastructure and other needs of the Ukrainian people. We are happy to report that for the month of November, \$100 was sent to Project HOPE to help with the people's medical needs.

How Did St. John's Family Do?

Recent Outreaches	Nov 2022	YTD 2022	YTD 2021	YTD 2020
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$928.00	\$13,662.90	\$15,086.30	\$15,943.16
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$ 220.00	\$ 1,420.00	\$ 2,395.00	\$ 2,613.00
Hurricane Relief Fund	\$ 20.00	\$ 361.80	N/A	N/A
Ukraine Relief Fund	\$ 90.00	\$ 3,655.00	N/A	N/A
Neighbors in Need	-0-	\$ 334.00	\$ 471.00	\$ 175.00
Christmas Fund	\$ 55.00	\$ 55.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Mitten Tree - Phoebe	\$ 545.00	\$ 620.00	\$ 320.00	\$ 515.00
Mitten Tree - VYH	\$ 630.00	\$ 680.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 685.00



Have you tried it?

"New Day's Lyric" – A Spoken Word Poem**by Amanda Gorman, poet**

May this be the day we come together.
 Mourning, we come to mend,
 Withered, we come to weather,
 Torn, we come to tend,
 Battered, we come to better.
 Tethered by this year of yearning,
 We are learning that though we weren't ready for this,
 We have been readied by it.
 We steadily vow that no matter how we are weighed down,
 We must always pave a way forward.
 This hope is our door, our portal.
 Even if we never get back to normal,
 Someday we can venture beyond it,
 To leave the known and take the first steps.
 So let us not return to what was normal,
 But reach toward what is next.
 What was cursed, we will cure.
 What was plagued, we will prove pure.
 Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,
 Those fortunes we forswore, now the future we foresee,
 Where we weren't aware, we're now awake;

Those moments we missed are now
 these moments we make,
 The moments we meet,
 And our hearts, once all together beaten,
 Now all together beat.
 Come, look up with kindness yet,
 For even solace can be sourced from sorrow.
 We remember, not just for the sake of yesterday,
 But to take on tomorrow.
 We heed this old spirit,
 In a new day's lyric,
 In our hearts, we hear it:
 For auld lang syne, my dear,
 For auld lang syne.
 Be bold, sang Time this year,
 Be bold, sang Time,
 For when you honor yesterday, tomorrow ye will find.
 Know what we've fought
 Need not be forgot nor for none.
 It defines us, binds us as one,
 Come over, join this day just begun.
 For wherever we come together, we will forever overcome.

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

Income	Electronic	11/6/2022	11/13/2022	11/20/2022	11/27/2022	Total
Offerings for Operating Expenses	\$6,315.54	\$3,217.30	\$3,903.00	\$2,961.68	\$2,839.00	\$19,236.52
Rental Income--Gross		\$50.00	\$1,225.50			\$1,275.50
Fundraising Income--Net of Exp		\$2,098.17	\$1,401.50	\$1,405.00	\$(1,906.00)	\$2,998.67
Endowment Interest						\$-
Flowers		\$150.00	\$36.00	\$139.00	\$451.00	\$776.00
Christian Education	\$10.00	\$92.00	\$17.00		\$15.00	\$134.00
Special Gifts					\$350.00	\$350.00
Total	\$6,325.54	\$5,607.47	\$6,583.00	\$4,505.68	\$1,749.00	\$-

Expense Summary	Actual	Budget	Difference
Pastoral Services	\$5,583.24	\$13,377.00	\$(7,793.76)
Staff Salaries & Expense	\$7,832.71	\$9,791.00	\$(1,958.29)
Property	\$2,221.37	\$2,926.00	\$(704.63)
Parish Programs	\$5,445.29	\$3,268.00	\$2,177.29
Total	\$21,082.61	\$29,362.00	\$(8,279.39)

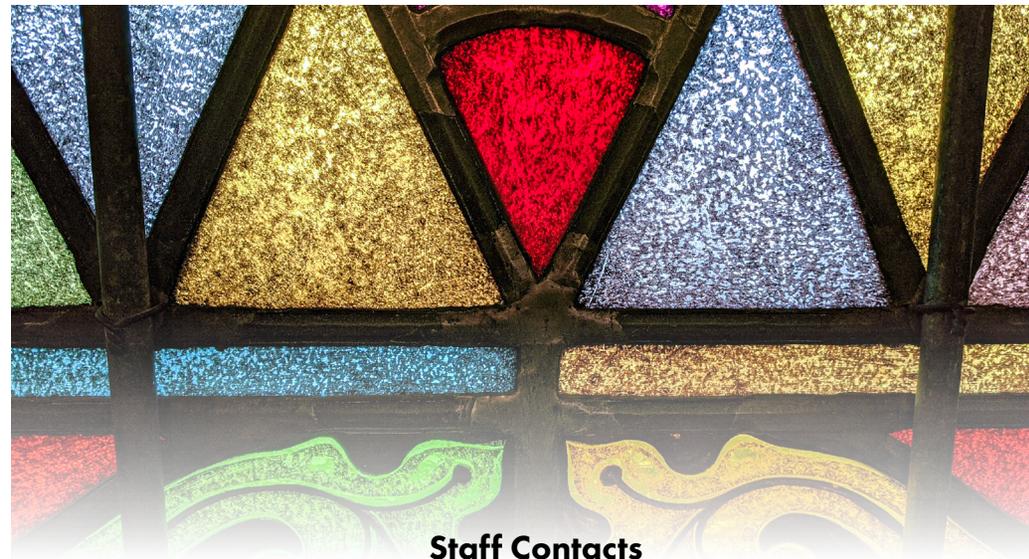
	Month	Year
Total Income	\$24,770.69	\$260,882.25
Total Expenses	\$21,082.61	\$280,021.78
Net (LOSS)	\$3,688.08	\$(19,139.53)

Mission Giving, Nov 2022

Our Churches Wider Mission	\$908.00
Christmas Fund	\$55.00
Ukrainian Relief	\$90.00
UCC Hurricane 2022	\$20.00
Whitehall Food Bank	\$220.00
Total	\$1,293.00

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

Account	Oct-22	Nov-22	Difference
Checking Account--KNBT	\$26,501.21	\$31,117.91	\$4,616.70
Giant Card Funds	\$1,569.51	\$2,819.51	\$1,250.00
Weis Card Funds	\$1,510.00	\$1,760.00	\$250.00
sub-total General Fund Assets	\$29,580.72	\$35,697.42	\$6,116.70
IN & OUT Account--KNBT Checking	\$76,343.03	\$73,579.97	\$(2,763.06)
Restricted/Property Money Market	\$31,865.21	\$31,865.47	\$0.26
sub-total Restricted Assets	\$108,208.24	\$105,445.44	\$(2,762.80)
Endowment Fund--KNBT	\$429,689.29	\$458,182.40	\$28,493.11
TOTAL ASSETS	\$567,478.25	\$599,325.26	\$31,847.01
Cornerstone Pavilion Loan	\$(85,550.57)	\$(85,337.14)	\$213.43
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$(85,550.57)	\$(85,337.14)	\$213.43
NET FUND BALANCE	\$481,927.68	\$513,988.12	\$32,060.44



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January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:45am Worship Service	2 Church Office closed	3 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:30pm Stewardship & Finance Committee 7:00pm Worship & Music Committee	4 Annual Reports due 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve 6:30pm STARKS Committee Mtg 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall	5 7:00pm Chancel Choir	6	7 8:30am Men's breakfast: Hamilton Family Restaurant 9:00am Christmas decorations come down 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
8 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	9 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:00pm Jubilation Choir	10 10:30am Visitation Committee 1:30pm Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:00pm Elders meeting 7:00pm Consistory	11 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Missions-via ZOOM 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall	12 7:00pm Chancel Choir	13	14 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
15 Newsletter Articles due 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	16 Church Office closed in observance of MLK day	17 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:30pm Lady PEEPS: Fox Hall	18 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall	19 7:00pm Chancel Choir	20	21 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
22 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	23 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:00pm Jubilation Choir	24 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201	25 9:00am Verso Chart with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall	26 7:00pm Chancel Choir	27	28 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
29 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	30 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:00pm Jubilation Choir	31 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201				