



**BOB
BOLD**

St. John's **CONNECTIONS**

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

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Love Is Stronger Than Death!

"Easter says you can put truth in a grave, but it won't stay there. You can nail it to a cross, wrap it in winding sheets and shut it up in a tomb, but it will rise!"

— Clarence W. Hall, author of *Adventurers for God*



When I was a youth in my home congregation in El Paso, TX, our organist played a special piece for Easter Sunday that captivated my senses and inspired me. She rattled the rafters and the church burst into thunderous applause at the end. When in college, my roommate played the piece on a record one day, and my ears perked up. "I know this! Play it again!" We played the piece at almost full volume, over and over for about an hour. It was amazing! Several years later when I was the Associate Minister of First UMC in Albuquerque, NM, the Director of Music/Organist treated the congregation to the same piece, the magnificent and inspiring "Tocatta" from 5th Symphony. Here's a performance by a young man at the Washington National Cathedral:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Qdu3uJE2fs>

I can still recall what it felt like to stand in the choir loft between the two large pipe organ chambers as he played the postlude and you could FEEL every note, especially the strong bass pedal notes, giving the music a life of its own. My spirit and my body were shaken into a place of joy and bliss as I experienced the music.

The music holds a powerful and meaningful place in my experience of faith and transformation, the power of God's love and the

experience of what resurrection might feel like, perhaps even a glimpse of what it must have felt like that first Easter morning. When I traveled to the Holy Land with my mother in January 2015, we were taken to two locations, both claiming to be the burial tomb of Jesus. One in an ancient Coptic Christian Church and the other just outside the Old City walls, known as the Garden Tomb. The actual location is not nearly as important to me as what Jesus' resurrection means for me still today.



From the days of my youth into adulthood and in my ongoing journey of faith, the message of the cross and the empty tomb always takes me to the truth of God's love expressed in the hope given to us in these two transformational symbols of our Christian faith. A pastor mentor and friend, Rev. Jim Mitulski, said it this way one Easter Sunday at Cathedral of Hope UCC, Dallas, "LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH!" Life and death, in all its pain and complexity, all its struggles and hardships,

cannot defeat the power of hope, the truth of God's love and the gift of life in the eternal grace of God for every person. When I think of Easter, I cannot help but hear the powerful melody in my mind, feel it in my body, and know its message is still being made known over and over again through our faithfulness. Like the music I heard that Easter Day, which was also played at my wedding ceremonies with Bill, our spirits can feel the power of God, working in each of us as we share the message of Easter. The notes continue to rise, to lift our spirits and triumphantly declare, "Christ is risen! The Lord is risen, indeed!"

May our journey of hope help us to experience life's melodies that inspire us, challenge us, and move us to know the truth of God's love, risen and alive in us as we:

"Worship, Love and Serve ~ No Matter What!"

Yours in grace and hope,

Rev. Steven Davis, Senior Pastor

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On The Cover...



BOB BOLD

I came to St. Johns from Dubbs where I was a longtime active member - (I must admit I miss the place).

I have been involved with public education for 60+ years as a teacher and now a school board member - born and lived in Allentown, eventually moving to Schnecksville where I currently reside - been a widower for almost 10 years - have a wonderful family consisting of a daughter, son, three grand-daughters and one great-grand-son - have a friend (Joan) for companionship - hope to continue serving education and helping kids.

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 April 1 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 QVRRBold@aol.com





The
April 2023
edition of St. John's
CONNECTIONS
is sponsored by
Bob Bold

In honor of my late wife,
Barbara Bold

Home Communion Begins In April!

Congregational Caring and Support Ministry

Our Elders and Consistory leadership will soon be taking steps to add a new connection to strengthen our ministry of congregational caring. About 30 persons are currently on our Homebound Visitation list, and a few others are also not able to regularly receive holy communion. We want to reach out to you by bringing the gifts of holy communion to you in your home. If you would appreciate a visit with communion, please contact the Church Office, (610) 264-8421, so we can include you.

If you're a St. John's Elder, or just love sharing God's love with people, and you're willing to help with this great ministry of relationship, please contact the Church Office. Pastor Steve is creating a simple ritual and St. John's will provide baskets of communion elements to share with our homebound and others. Your support is needed.

Our Visitation Committee serves powerfully, reaching out to our homebound with cards, calls and visits on a regular basis. We thank them all so much for their faithful support and service.

They are looking for a few more caring people who would like to help build great relationships with our homebound members and others who need that special touch of love and care from St. John's.

As we work to re-imagine our visitation and congregational care support, we hope to expand our caring connections even more as the year continues. We invite you to be part of the difference we make together. 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. We ask for you to be part of the connection as 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.

Music at St. John's

Change. What a word! To some this word is scary, to others it is a welcomed word. The word change means to make different; alter or modify.

Isn't that essentially what we have been doing during our journey through the Lenten season in preparation for Easter? Are we not taking this time to look at our lives and make them different, alter, or modify as we prepare to celebrate the great feast of our Lord's Resurrection that brings about joy, hope, and unconditional love?

Change. It is a word that no one can avoid because it causes us to be and do better. We change our clothes every day, we change our hair when it gets too long or we want to explore a different color, we change our diets because we want to be healthier, we do all of this for the sense of wanting to do something better or be better at something.

In 2020, we all had to change at the snap of a finger. Covid-19 swept through our lives and "changed" our very existence. In the blink of an eye, our daily routines, things that were so common to us, were gone or had restrictions placed on them. Churches were closed, hope and faith seemed to diminish as we watched and read of millions dying from this horrible and terrifying virus. Yet, through the darkness of 2020, Christ still rose. He never left our side. Even in the darkness, much like the crucifixion, when all hope was gone, there was still Easter. Yes, we may have not been in the pews singing "Alleluia," but yet hope was still there.

In 2020, David Bjorlin, wrote the lyrics to a beautiful choral piece/hymn entitled, "Christ Still Rises" to remind us that even in the darkness, even in the chaos that we were surrounded by, Christ still rises to be with us. Through his text, he says the following:

Christ still rises when fear grips our city, When death takes no pity, When much is unknown.

Christ still rises when friends are divided, When joy feels misguided, When we are alone.

Christ still rises when churches are shuttered, When praises are muttered, When prayers go unsaid.

*Christ still rises when peace has all faded, When we are most jaded,
When faith turns to dread.*

*Christ still rises when we give to neighbors, When we share our labors,
When strangers belong.*

*Christ still rises when we come together, When love is our tether, When
hope is our song.*

*Christ still rises when grieving is ended, When bodies are mended, When
beauty heals pain.*

*Christ still rises when fear has retreated, When death is defeated, And joy
will remain.*

As our Lenten season comes to an end, and we prepare to shout the words “Alleluia, Christ is Risen,” let us be reminded that even in the darkness, even when hope feels like a long tunnel away, or life changes on the drop of a dime, Christ Still Rises!

Wishing everyone the happiest of Easters!

Patrick Sandt

Music Ministry Update

Beginning on Wednesday, April 12th, after much prayer, thought, good conversations between all, the decision was made that the choirs of St. John’s (Jubilation and Chancel) will be merging to form “The Choir of St. John.” The Choir will lead worship beginning on Palm Sunday, and will remain together as we finish out the choir season on Pentecost Sunday. The choir will sing at the 10:45am Worship Service moving forward.

This is a new and exciting adventure for our Music Ministry, as we come together as one, through “change” to glorify our Risen Lord through the beauty of song!

The Choir is open to anyone 9th grade and older who enjoys music, fellowship, and most importantly praying through the words we sing.

Please consider becoming involved with this new adventure for our Music Ministry!

Staying Healthy & Showing Care

In recent months, several worshipers have asked when we might return to sharing holy communion by passing the elements to one another in the pews and remaining seated to receive. Out of great caution and care for our community health, we have been receiving communion at stations with the elements handed to us by gloved servers. How we receive the gifts of God are not as significant as the spirit in which we receive them. As pastor, I too want to have the blessing of serving you from time to time. We all want to remember that we receive these gifts of love and grace at Christ's invitation and share them together in faith as God's guests. In the coming months we will observe a variety of means of receiving communion.

We can take comfort in knowing that we are a community of support for one another.

We understand that the last few years have been difficult and we may be feeling tired and frustrated by the continuing need to take precautions. As we reflect on our practices of worship and sharing our gifts, let us also remember that these measures are not only about our own preferences, but the well-being of our whole community. We encourage everyone to have open dialogue and to continue to discern together how we can best be a caring and healthy community.

Children's Faith Formation Needs Your Leadership

Blessed to Be a Blessing ~ Sunday mornings and more!

We continue to grow our Faith Formation involvement for our children! We've grown from 7 to 9, and now often have between 9-12 children who are seeking our blessing each week! We need adults who are open to lead and assist in this vital outreach to our younger disciples. Our remaining program year still has opportunities for helpers. "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 April - May and beyond as we seek to sustain and expand this vital ministry to our youngest followers of Christ.



We are already talking about next step options for Summer worship and faith formation on Sunday mornings, as well as a possible Vacation Bible School partnership with the St. John's Early Christian Learning Center.

Please visit with Rev. Becca Stephens, Susan Rarich or Pastor Steve or anyone in the Education Task Force about how you can share your life in blessing our children. Visit the class and see what takes place, then volunteer for one Sunday a month to help with the second quarter of 2023.

Water Gathering Reminder on Vacations

From now until Easter Sunday, a basket of small bottles to collect water from various places is available at the center aisle. Please pick up a couple to collect a sample of water from your journeys across the country and around the world in 2023. Bring it back and give it to Pastor Steve for safe keeping. 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.



Photo by Bill Castello - 2009 Annecy, France

Donations through QR code

Become an "Automatic Contributor"

Currently, 49 giving units participating.

Thank you for your generous support each month. The first quarter of 2023 we received contributions beyond our "break even" minimum need. We still have a significant ways to grow, but it is a great step in the right direction. Thank you for your faithfulness!

If you have not yet tried making a contribution to St. John's using the QR code with your smart phone, try it this today. Using the

St. John's QR code for your giving or other contributions is easy! You can contribute to the mission and ministry of St. John's using this simple code with your cell phone camera. You'll be guided to our website contribution page where your secure contributions/payments may be made. After your first time login creation, you'll be able to access further payments with ease whenever you connect. You may also set up recurring online automatic contributions and not have to worry about your regular giving again!

If you're not yet one of our automatic contributors, please consider making this significant change in your method of recurring support. The Stewardship & Finance Committee strongly encourages becoming a "automatic contributor" in your support of these ministries. We still have only 49 giving units utilizing this service. It makes a tremendous difference in the monthly cash flow when we know the contributions will be coming to meet our expenses. You can make this happen!

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!



St. John's
UCC, FULLERTON

**Have you
tried it?**

New “Kitchen Crew”

Kenda Catalini and Colleen Kulhammer, co-chairs of the church kitchen project, have been busy recruiting a team of people committed to supporting our ministry of connection with social and community building functions. Kenda will be responsible for ordering needed staples such as coffee supplies and food items and Colleen will be responsible for paper goods. Kitchen rules will be set up and posted for those using the kitchen for their events. We want to encourage people to use the kitchen and keep it in good shape. Events such as bingos and other group activities will be staffed by those involved in the event or group. The “Kitchen Crew” will be available for events like our potluck meals and other gatherings.



THANK YOU Kenda, Colleen and “crew” for stepping up to lead and support ministry at St. John’s! We appreciate your leadership!

Sunday Morning Social Hour “Hosts” Still Needed

Would you be willing to “host” a Sunday morning Social Hour in Fox Hall? We are still looking for volunteers for social time between the Sunday services of worship. Please sign up on the table in the Parlor.

Blood Drive

After a long wait, St. John's is finally gearing up for a blood drive in the post-COVID era, scheduled to take place on Sunday, April 16, 2023. It is important to note that in order to be eligible, you must not have donated after February 19. If you're interested in donating, you are encouraged to secure your preferred time slot by getting in touch with Sharon Antrim at (610) 216-6207. Once you've given your valuable contribution, you can satisfy your sweet tooth with plenty of free juice and cookies as a token of gratitude for the life you've helped save.



Deadline for April Newsletter

If you would like to contribute an article for the May newsletter, please email your single-spaced submission in PDF, DOC, RTF or plain text format to our new address - newsletter@sjuccf.org by Sunday, April 9.

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

Authors: some helpful newsletter guidelines are here:
<https://stjohnsuccfullerton.org/stylenotes>

UCC General Minister and President Recommendation



After a year-long search, the United Church of Christ Board's Search Committee for General Minister and President has made a historic choice. The committee will be recommending Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson to the UCCB this week as nominee for General Minister and President. If elected, she would be the first woman, and the first woman of African descent, to lead the denomination. Go to ucc.org and click on [Search Committee Recommends Thompson for GMP](#) to read the letter to the wider church from Search Committee Chair, the Rev. Emma Brewer-Wallin.

Worship And Social Opportunities

✓ WEDNESDAY EVENING SOUP & BREAD

Supper (6:00pm) and Worship (7:00pm)

Gather together in Fox Hall on Wednesday evening, March 22 and 29 and enjoy a variety of Soup & Bread options for our shared meal! Sign up sheets to bring a pot of soup or bread will be available in the Church Parlor, or you can call or email the Church Office to sign up.

We will have a meal together March 22, followed by a program of music, prayer, a devotional and more music. March 29, we will enjoy participating in the final Penn NE Conference UCC program study with other UCC congregations and individuals. Please connect by registering for the Zoom link available on the church website and in worship bulletins.

✓ MORAVIAN UNIVERSITY CONCERT CHOIR

Sunday, March 26 (2:00pm)

Enjoy a great afternoon of music! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS! Great music and no sermon! How great will this be? Plan to be part of this wonderful music event and bring your family and friends. There will be a reception in Fox Hall following the concert.

✓ HOLY WEEK

April 2, Palm/Passion Sunday Worship One Service (9:30am)

St. John's will gather to worship in one service with the children leading us in a palm processional in the sanctuary. Join in waving your palm frond and singing praise as we begin the journey of Holy Week to the Upper Room, the Garden, and the Cross. There will be no Faith Formation classes this Sunday.

✓ HOLY WEEK

April 6, Maundy Thursday Worship (7:00pm)

Worship together with the ritual of handwashing (instead of footwashing) and celebrating holy communion. Hear the traditional sacred texts that take us deeper in our journey with Christ in remembering his new commandment to love and his example of self-sacrifice, beginning with the traditional "stripping of the church," removing many of our sacred symbols.

✓ HOLY WEEK

April 7, Good Friday Worship (7:00pm)

"Tenebrae" is an ancient practice of recalling the final hours of Christ's earthly life, the shadows and darkness of betrayal, turning away, denying and abandoning Jesus. As scriptures are read, and hymns shared, light is diminished and candles are extinguished, along with the traditional "stripping of the church," draping our remaining sacred symbols in darkness.

✓ EASTER SUNDAY

April 9, One Service (9:30am)

Worship with the St. John's family and celebrate the resurrection! We will bring and place fresh flowers from our home gardens, as well as place some provided by the church, on our resurrection cross as we sing and celebrate our Easter joy! There will be no Faith Formation classes this Sunday.



Celebrate Earth Day!

Saturday, April 22

Earth Day was founded in 1970 by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. Inspired by the protests of the 1960s, he hoped to bring environmental causes into the national spotlight. The holiday is now a global celebration. Nelson authored legislation to create a national hiking trails system as well as the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail System. He also sponsored several key pieces of environmental legislation, including the Wilderness Act. To learn more about Earth Day, how you can help, or donate, go to earthday.org.



Simple Things You Can Do to Help Protect the Earth

1. **Reduce, reuse, recycle.** Cutting down on what you throw away can help conserve natural resources and landfill space. Consider ways to reduce your waste by using reusable containers, buying products with less packaging, and avoiding disposable items. Reusing items can also help reduce waste and save money.
2. **Shop wisely.** Plastic pollution is a growing problem for our planet. By choosing to buy products with less plastic packaging or switching to cloth or reusable bags, you can help reduce your impact on the environment. Consider buying products in bulk or shopping at farmers' markets to reduce packaging waste.
3. **Start a compost pile.** Turning your food scraps into nutrient-rich soil can help reduce waste and provide a valuable resource for your garden. Adding grass clippings and leaves to your compost pile can also help improve soil health and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers.
4. **Conserve water.** The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater

that eventually ends up in the rivers and oceans. Consider ways to reduce your water use, such as taking shorter showers, fixing leaks, and using water-efficient appliances.

5. Turn off lights when you leave the room. Using energy-efficient light bulbs can also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Consider using a programmable thermostat to reduce energy use when you're not at home.

6. Plant a tree or vegetable garden. Trees and plants provide food and oxygen, save energy, clean pollution, prevent erosion, and help combat climate change. Growing your own vegetables can also help reduce your carbon footprint and provide fresh, healthy food for your family.

7. Read labels and switch to non-toxic cleaning products. By choosing non-toxic cleaning products, you can help prevent harmful chemicals from entering our waterways. Look for products that are biodegradable, phosphate-free, and cruelty-free.

8. Bike more, carpool, or walk. Going car-free for the day can help reduce harmful carbon emissions. Consider ways to reduce your reliance on cars, such as biking to work or school, carpooling with friends, or taking public transportation.

9. Pick up litter. Whether you do this as an individual or volunteer or join a community group event, picking up litter can help keep our environment clean and protect wildlife. Consider carrying a reusable bag or container to collect litter while you're out and about.

10. Sell or donate used items. Instead of throwing away items you no longer need, consider selling them or donating them to people in need. Hosting a garage sale can also help reduce waste and earn some extra money.



Chili and Games Night

Friday, April 21, 6pm

Wouldn't you like to enjoy some of St. John's finest chili? It's certainly an enticing prospect! It was even suggested we amend our bylaws to require at least 2 crock pots of chili at potluck dinners!



Sign up to bring a crockpot of chili or bake cornbread or bring a dessert item. We will enjoy a fun evening of food and friendship and a new version of a familiar game!

This image will give you a hint... make plans to be there, you won't want to miss the fun. Bring friends!

Bingo Fundraiser - a BIG Success!

Here are the tabulated figures from St Patrick's day courtesy of Tom O'Moyer!

INCOME		EXPENSES	
	\$3,260.00	Advanced Tickets	\$1,110.05
	\$360.00	Door Tickets	\$53.00
	\$310.00	Cash Donations	\$840.00
	\$80.00	Online tickets	
	\$970.70	Kitchen	
	\$681.00	Boards & Dabbers	
	\$670.00	Specials	
	\$121.00	50-50	
	\$1,102.00	Tricky Tray	
	\$840.00	Starter Cash	
Total	\$8,394.70	Total	\$2,003.05
		TOTALS	
		Income	\$8,394.70
		Expenses	\$2,003.05
		PROFIT	\$6,391.65
		10% To Missions	\$639.00
		TOTAL PROFIT	\$5,752.65

Annual Outing at IronPigs Party Porch

7pm Friday, May 26, 2023

Join us for another night of food, baseball, and fireworks!

Tickets cost \$38 (up \$1 from past years) and include:

Admission to IronPigs game and great seats in upper deck

Buffet from 6-8:30pm

Soft drinks and bottled water all evening

Post game fireworks

For tickets, contact Tom Moyer (610) 432-3372



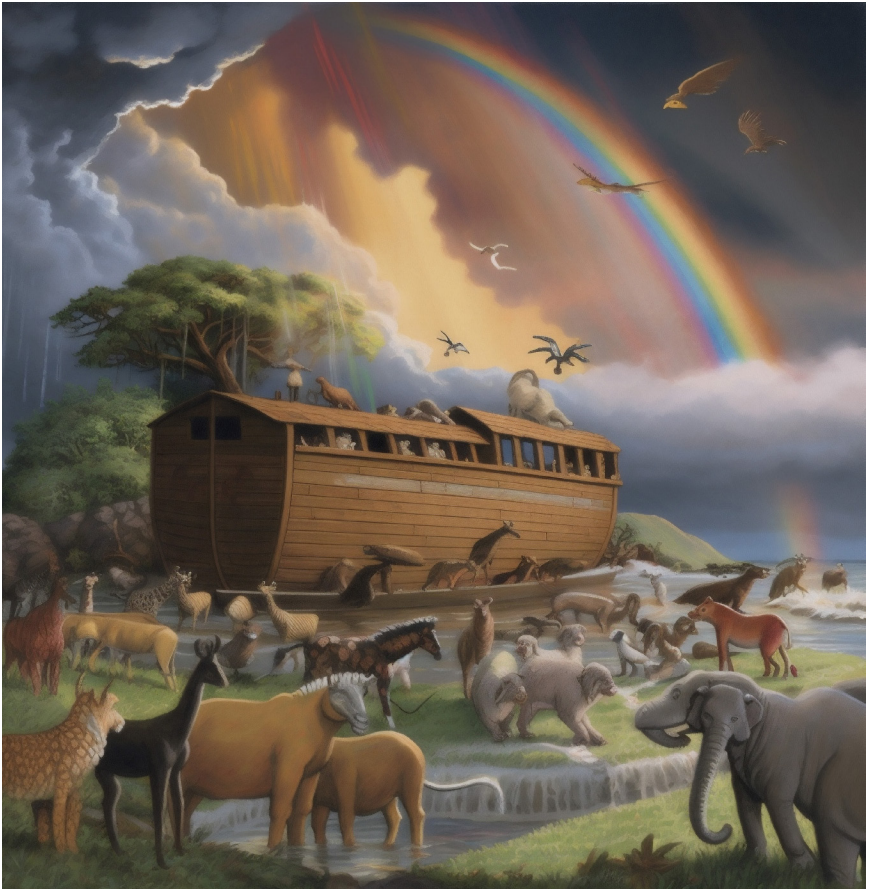
IronPigs Game – Another Opportunity

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 be \$13 per person which will include a ticket to the game, \$2 ballpark credit, and raffle ticket. While it is too early to know of any giveaways, we know that hotdogs will again be \$1. So, mark your calendar—we are now taking reservations and payment must be made in advance. (Checks are payable to St. John's.) For more information and reservations, please contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or email crazzler@aol.com. Deadline for reservations is Sunday, June 18.

Lady PEEPS

POSITIVE, EXTRAORDINARY, ENCOURAGING, PRAYERFUL SISTERS

The Lady PEEPS will be meeting on Tuesday, April 18th at 6:30pm in Fox Hall. Come join us as Dianna Schneck takes us on a Journey Through the Ark Encounter with Noah and the animals. It will be an interesting and fun evening for sure and refreshments will be served. All ladies are welcome and please use the elevator entrance! See you there!



Basket Social

Friday, May 19th 4pm to 8pm & Saturday, May 20th 8am to 1pm

We are looking for donations of baskets for the basket social. Or if you would like to do a monetary donation, Kenda will be glad to make a basket for you. All items must be new, No used or old items please!

- Tickets will be pulled at 1 pm
- Tickets are \$5.00 a sheet, (26 tickets per sheet)
- Food will be available for purchase both days.
- Any questions please reach out to Kenda at (484) 358-7453



Walking Challenge

The St. John's Spring Walking Challenge will begin April 15 and end on May 13. Participants do not need to be members of St. John's so get your walking friends to sign up too. It will be a fun time, watching flowers bloom and nice weather. Your dogs like to walk too. So slip into those sneakers, set your pedometer and away you go. Contact Sharon Antrim (610) 216-6207 or sharonantrim@yahoo.com She'll be happy to sign you up.





Study the Easter to Pentecost Scriptures with Verso Chat Bible Study

Wednesdays, 9am

Each season of the church worship year invites us to both new and familiar scriptures to deepen our faith and worship experience. You too can enhance your experience of the Easter to Pentecost seasons by joining our weekly Verso-Chat Bible Study on Wednesday mornings. Each week we explore the weekly readings of scripture we share in worship. You're invited and welcome to participate in fun and conversation as we search through the lectionary readings for upcoming worship services as a study opportunity. ALL are welcome to drop in and participate. Each week is its own contained experience to discover God's "still speaking" words.

Our current group meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:00am onsite at St. John's and on Zoom. 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>



Convalescent & Homebound Residents

People who would welcome receiving a greeting card:

Shirley Abel	Ron Glass	Frank Nolt
Anita Beil	Roberta Haberern	Marilyn Piskula
Clarence Biehn	Lucille Hicks	Marietta Seyfried
Jim Carr	Geraldine Keim	Eleanor Smith
Carl Case	Adrienne Kiesbar	Bert Smith
Jean Coombe	Emma Repp Kuczek	Peggy Snyder
Sandra Diefenderfer	Elaine Lentz	Nancy Weaver
Shirley Downing	Jean Litzenberger	Bonnie Weikel
Jean Fischl	Dale Millham	
Milton Focht	Karen Moyer	

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

Collecting Easter Baskets for Youth



At the Annual Meeting, 13 baskets were given out to members of the congregation to be filled with goodies such as candies, fidgets,

knickknacks, or whatever else is going to make it an “eggstravagant” Easter basket! The baskets will then be delivered by [Pinebrook](#)

[Family Answers](#)’ High Fidelity Wraparound Process to youth in the Lehigh Valley between the ages of 8-18 years old who are in low-income families and have a mental health diagnosis. High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) is a team-based planning process providing coordinated family-

driven care to meet the complex needs of youth/families who are involved with multiple systems and at risk of placement. All baskets are due back in the church office no later than Sunday, April 2.

Contact Emma Rarich at (610) 462-6777 or email ebfox@live.com if you have any questions or need further information.



April Birthdays

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

<p>4/1 Kevin Fox Dale Millham Rev Matthew Seeds</p> <p>4/3 Larry Albright Aiden Hannis Roger Knauss</p> <p>4/4 Eric Thompson</p> <p>4/5 Maya Williams Mark Yura</p> <p>4/6 Michael McNicholas</p> <p>4/7 William Meckes</p> <p>4/8 Karen Moyer</p> <p>4/9 Mary Jo Bierman Christopher Leibensperger</p> <p>4/11 Zoe Roth Helene Scheirer</p> <p>4/12 Maci Dovico</p> <p>4/13 Donna Held James Tretter Sr Bonnie Weikel Sarah Young</p>	<p>4/15 Karen Christman Julia Gross</p> <p>4/16 Ashley Venanzi</p> <p>4/17 Sandra Easterwood</p> <p>4/18 Crystal Schwenk</p> <p>4/19 Phyllis Cszaszar Craig Headman Kevin Hoderman</p> <p>4/20 Leia Stocker</p> <p>4/22 Stephanie Hanzl</p> <p>4/23 William Hausman</p> <p>4/25 Geraldine Keim</p> <p>4/28 Michael Kern</p> <p>4/29 Shirley Downing Archer Hunsicker Carson Strauss Jacqueline Thomas</p> <p>4/30 Nicholas Bach Donna Chorney</p>
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April Wedding Anniversaries

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

Rev John & Charlene Hoff

4/8/72

James & Patricia Molinaro

4/8/61

Roger & Lucille Schneck

4/20/63

Todd & Sandra Heffelfinger

4/23/94



Church Chuckle



Q: How did the pastor teach kids to stay safe from King Kong and Godzilla?

A: He taught them to use de-monster-ative phrases.



We Need Your Shoes

Nothing to Buy! Nothing to Sell! Simply clean out your closet!



As we go to press, we have collected over 219 pairs of shoes, but there's still time to add yours to the pile! We are helping Friedens UCC in Oley, PA (Berks County) sponsor a two-week Mission Trip to Peru in August to help the Fuller Center for Housing rebuild houses. We will accept any kind of gently used or new shoes, all sizes and varieties i.e. sneakers, sandals, boots, dress shoes, slippers. The goal is to collect 5,000 pounds of shoes. For every pound we collect, 50¢ per pound will be given back to sponsor the trip. The shoes are refurbished and sent to Third World countries.

Please pair your shoes by tying the laces together or by using a rubber band. You will find a collection basket in the coatroom area by the sanctuary. Contact Carol Raszler at (610) 393-7572 or craszler@aol.com if you need to have the shoes picked up. Deadline to receive shoes is Sunday, April 9.

Whitehall Food Pantry

For the month of April, we are collecting canned fruits, canned vegetables, and canned sweet potatoes for our Easter meal distribution. A shopping cart can be found in the coatroom area off the sanctuary where you can place your donations. Monetary

contributions are always accepted and can be forwarded to the church office or via on-line or text.

Ukraine Relief Fund Update

The war in Ukraine, now in its second year, has caused the displacement of 16 million Ukrainians and others living or working there; putting additional strain on communities in Ukraine and in neighboring countries which have graciously welcomed those who have fled their homes; and severely reduced the ability of people in countries farther away to access daily needs such as food and fuel. The UCC has supported people and partners affected by the invasion from the beginning, and a UCC delegation recently visited the region to express solidarity with and encouragement to partners there and to witness the work the UCC has supported.

Since the war started, World Central Kitchen has served more than 200 million meals to Ukrainian communities impacted by the invasion. Russian military forces continue to shell communities across the country, targeting everything from homes to energy infrastructure. WCK's efforts are constantly evolving to meet the shifting needs of communities most in need of support through food. Access to water remains challenging, and tap water is either non-potable or unavailable entirely due to explosions at pumping stations. In Snihurivka, for example, residents have water wells and pumps but no electricity, generators, or fuel. When the weather is cold enough to freeze puddles over, people melted the ice for drinking water. The WCK team now delivers tens of thousands of bottles of clean water each week to Kherson and villages in the surrounding region.

We are happy to report that for the month of February, \$480 was sent to World Central Kitchen. Donations in March will go to UCC National. Donations for April will go to WCK. Please send your donations, payable to St. John's, into the church office or via text or on-line giving. Be sure to include "Ukraine Relief" in the memo section. Special offering envelopes can also be found on the table in the lounge area at church.

Earthquake in Turkey and Syria Update

After the massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on February 6, there were additional earthquakes and more than 10,000 aftershocks—one of the strongest earthquakes there in 100 years. As of March, more than 52,800 deaths were confirmed. Reports indicate that there are over 87,000 injuries and at least 185,000 buildings have collapsed or been damaged. It is estimated that 1.25 million people have been left temporarily homeless.

To date we have received \$552 in donations; however, help is still needed. Your generous financial support will be used by the UCC's Global Ministries as they work with our UCC partners there to see where the greatest need is and for relief and long-term recovery. All donations are sent to the UCC's International Emergency Fund designated for "Turkey and Syria Earthquake Response." Please send your donations, payable to St. John's, into the church office or via text or on-line giving. Be sure to include "Earthquake Response" in the memo section. Special offering envelopes can be found on the table in the lounge area at church.

Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative's Community Meals

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 —Dine-in Only. The host churches are as follows:

Date	Church	Address	Phone
Sunday, 4/2	PALM SUNDAY – No Meal Today	--	--
Tuesday, 4/18	Redeemed Christian Church of God	5 N. Third St., Coplay	610-262-8993
Sunday, 5/7	St. John's Lutheran Church	835 Third St., Whitehall	610-533-1357
Tuesday, 5/16	Whitehall Bible Fellowship Church	3300 Seventh St., Whitehall	610-434-8661

Update on Other Outreaches

Special offering for One Great Hour of Sharing will continue to the end of March. Your gifts to OGHS provide immediate aid and long-term support to people experiencing hunger, thirst, disaster, or crisis around the world. The need has never been greater. The opportunity is now. It's time to share! Please consider contributing by mailing in your donation to the church or giving on-line or by text.

How Did St. John's Family Do?

Recent Outreaches	Feb 2023	YTD 2023	YTD 2022	YTD 2021
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$1,089.00	\$2,171.00	\$2,755.60	\$2,850.30
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 20.00
Whitehall Food Pantry	\$ 370.00	\$1,160.00	\$ 375.00	\$ 520.00
Ukraine Relief Fun	\$480.00	\$665.00	N/A	N/A
Turkey/Syria Earthquake	\$ 552.00	\$ 552.00	N/A	N/A

Mission Outreach giving for February 2023 totaled \$2,566.00 and YTD 2023 totaled \$4,623.00.



Thank You

The Blue Star Mothers of America, Lehigh Valley Chapter PA 201, would like to thank you very much for your donation to the Bi-Annual troop packing to our deployed military persons. Because of your donation of various snacks and hygiene items, we were able to reach our goal of filling the boxes to the brim. Because of your generous contribution, we were able to send out well over 75 boxes of assorted hygiene products, healthy snacks, puzzle books, Tastykakes and other assorted treats. We have receive many thank you letters from our military receiving these boxes from home, stating they are quite grateful for the generosity and love that went into each box.

Best regards,
Bonnie Sankovsky, Financial Secretary
Blue Star Mothers of America
Chapter PA 201

Thank you to the person who left the reams of colored copy paper in the office – it's great to have something besides blue and pink!
Also many thanks to the anonymous person who sent me cookies and tea – I really appreciated both!

Alison

Blessed, thankful, grateful. Thank you St. John's friends for the prayers, cards, phone calls, emails and text messages I received after my recent hospitalization. It means so much to me to know you've been thinking about me during a tough time. God Bless You All

Sharon Antrim

Dear Friends at St. John's UCC,

It is with a grateful heart that we (the board of the Whitehall Food Pantry) thank you for your continued contributions to the Whitehall Food Pantry. Your generous support through both food and money, is greatly appreciated and benefits many families experiencing difficult times. We wish you God's blessings.

Warm regards,
Judy Ehret
Whitehall Food Pantry

Thank you to everyone who participated and donated to our St Patrick's Day Bingo event!

Pastor Steve



St Johns UCC Fullerton - Statement of Finances
Feb 2023

Income	Electronic	2/5/2023	2/12/2023	2/19/2023	2/26/2023	Total
Offerings for Operating Expenses	\$6,546.43	\$3,779.00	\$2,393.00	\$2,472.00	\$3,452.00	\$18,642.43
Rental Income--Gross		\$1,225.50			\$1,422.50	\$2,648.00
Fundraising Income--Net of Exp				\$(690.05)	\$518.00	\$(172.05)
Endowment Interest						\$-
Flowers		\$190.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$88.00	\$378.00
Christian Education	\$10.00	\$62.00	\$22.00	\$40.00	\$35.00	\$169.00
Special Gifts					\$350.00	\$350.00
Total	\$6,556.43	\$5,256.50	\$2,465.00	\$1,871.95	\$5,865.50	\$- \$22,015.38

Expense Summary	Actual	Budget	Difference
Pastoral Services	\$10,257.14	\$11,571.00	\$(1,313.86)
Staff Salaries & Expense	\$7,706.53	\$9,364.50	\$(1,657.97)
Property	\$3,961.57	\$3,518.00	\$443.57
Parish Programs	\$2,477.98	\$2,055.50	\$422.48
Total	\$24,403.22	\$26,509.00	\$(2,105.78)

	Month	Year
Total Income	\$22,015.38	\$53,134.66
Total Expenses	\$24,403.22	\$47,032.14
Net	\$(2,387.84)	\$6,102.52

Mission Giving, Feb 2023

Our Churches Wider Mission	\$1,089.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$75.00
World Central Kitchen Ukrainian Relief	\$480.00
UCC Earthquake Relief	\$552.00
Whitehall Food Bank	\$370.00
Total	\$2,566.00

St John's UCC Fullerton
Fund Balances
For Month Ending, Feb 2023

Account	Jan-23	Feb-23	Difference
Checking Account--KNBT	\$37,471.85	\$37,976.72	\$504.87
Giant Card Funds	\$1,514.51	\$1,514.51	\$-
Weis Card Funds	\$720.00	\$720.00	\$-
sub-total General Fund Assets	\$39,706.36	\$40,211.23	\$504.87
IN & OUT Account--KNBT			
Checking	\$76,715.91	\$75,923.40	\$(792.51)
Restricted/Property Money Market	\$31,866.01	\$31,866.25	\$0.24
sub-total Restricted Assets	\$108,581.92	\$107,789.65	\$(792.27)
Endowment Fund--KNBT	\$462,481.04	\$448,263.75	\$(14,217.29)
TOTAL ASSETS	\$610,769.32	\$596,264.63	\$(14,504.69)
Cornerstone Pavillion Loan	\$(84,960.93)	\$(85,043.15)	\$(82.22)
TOTAL LIABILITES	\$(84,960.93)	\$(85,043.15)	\$(82.22)
NET FUND BALANCE	\$525,808.39	\$511,221.48	\$(14,586.91)



Staff Contacts

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April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 9:30am Palm Sunday Worship Service	3	4 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:30pm Stewardship & Finance 7:00pm Combined Choirs	5 9:00am Verso Chat with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm SIAKs meeting 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm SAA Recovery Support	6 7:00pm Meunby Thursday Service	7 7:00pm Good Friday Service	1 8:30am Men's breakfast: Hamilton Family Restaurant 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall 10:00am Egg Hunt
9 Easter Sunday 9:30am Sunday Worship	10 Easter Monday Office closed 6:00pm Bell Choir	11 10:30am Visitation Committee 1:30pm Staff meeting: Rm 201 6:00pm Elders 7:00pm Consistory	12 9:00am Verso Chat with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm SAA Recovery Support	13	14	15 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
16 8:15am Worship Service 8:30am Blood Drive 9:30am Confirmation Class 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	17	18 Tax Day 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201 10:00am Retired Clergy 6:30pm Lady PEERS	19 9:00am Verso Chat with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 6:30pm Zumba class: Fox Hall 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm SAA Recovery Support	20	21 6:00pm Chili & Game Night Fox Hall	22 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
23 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service	24 6:00pm Bell Choir	25 9:30am Staff meeting: Rm 201	26 9:00am Verso Chat with Pastor Steve: Rm 201 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm SAA Recovery Support	27 6:30pm Property Committee	28	29 9:30am Zumba class: Fox Hall
30 8:15am Worship Service 9:30am Faith Formation 10:45am Worship Service						