

The Good News Letter



Mission Statement

The mission of St. John's United Church of Christ is to share with our community the Gospel of God's love by the stewardship of our lives in outreach, fellowship, education, caring and worship.



Important Dates

January 7
Communion

January 8
Consistory meeting at 6:30



St. John's United Church of Christ

1027 Church Street PO Box 817

Fogelsville, PA 18051

Office Phone: 610-398-7015

Church Hospital Code # 467

E-mail: stjohnsucc1@gmail.com

Website: www.stjohnsuccfogelsville.com

Web & Facebook Submissions:

stjohnsuccfogelsville@gmail.com



Church Staff

Pastor: Irvin Moore

Minister of Music: Dave Roth

Cell: 610-737-0530

E-mail: rothd@rcn.com or rothpiano.com

Bill Gieringer, Sexton

Anna DeAngelis, Secretary

Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:30am-1:30pm

Opportunities Available

We all have talents that are given to us by God. Those talents vary. Some are able to speak in public; others feel more comfortable sharing in small groups. Some are good at organizing; others are good at carrying out directions. As shown at coffee hours, some are really good at baking. (Some are really good at eating, too.) Some feel comfortable visiting with our older—or infirm—members. There are many different ways that our talents can be used by God for the benefit of our members, our congregation and the community.

If you are comfortable speaking in public (or if you want to give it a try even though it seems scary) talk to Pastor Irv or contact the church office about being an assistant minister. If you enjoy talking to people one-on-one, consider being a greeter on a Sunday or going along with a few of our members who visit our sick and shut-ins. Good at cooking or baking? We can always use help with coffee hour and with the occasional fellowship meals we offer or providing food when we host a bereaved family after a funeral service.

If your time is limited and you want to contribute financially you can sponsor bulletins and altar flowers or make a contribution toward coffee hour. The cost for flowers is \$35 per Sunday and bulletins for \$5 per Sunday.

Thank you for sharing your talent in God's service.



Pastor's Corner

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Read Matthew 5:8 and 1 John 3:1-3, 11-18
(That's First John - the letter – not John – the Gospel.)

The entire Sermon on the Mount and the main thrust of Jesus' teaching and living is a commentary on the Bible readings. What Jesus came to do was to demonstrate what it means to be pure in heart and how purity of inner motive is possible for us, not of our own good intentions but by the love of God.

Some questions:

Have I prided myself that my outward acts were virtuous when I have actually been harboring selfish, arrogant, or impure thoughts?

What is my particular form of impurity of heart: anger, jealousy, self-will, self-pity, resentfulness, lust, pride?

Have I cared enough about "seeing God" to pay the price?

Prayer:

Most gracious God, pure and holy, cleanse me of evil thoughts and desires, that I may be more worthy to approach your presence. Because you are merciful you have set before me a vision of yourself and called me to follow the light that leads to you. Forbid that the gleam of that light be so choked with my own impurities that I am unable to see you.

Forgive, O Lord, the desires that corrupt my spirit – those I have fought against, those I have known and cherished and those I have not yet discovered. Strip off my masks and show me myself. Increase me longing for purity of heart.

Amen.

PASTOR'S LETTER

I can't help but notice how much "noise" surrounds my life. There's always some kind of noise from outside my apartment – whether it be traffic on Cedar Crest Boulevard or the continual "hum" of Route 22. There's always music playing where I eat my breakfast and the tv is tuned to the news. Noise. We all experience it. Some folks find it comforting and actually need noise of some kind.

Many years ago, a Swiss doctor, Henri Nouwen, who wrote about life and spirituality. I don't remember which of his books contained this quote, but I found it recently, tucked in a folder in a file cabinet at home:

There was a time when silence was normal, and a lot of racket disturbed us. But today, noise is the normal fare, and silence, strange as it may seem, has become the real disturbance... perhaps we should say that we can't stand the sound of silence.

(He wrote that long, long before Simon or Garfunkel had even been born.)

We are surrounded by noise pollution: stereos, tv's, cars, trucks, jets, mowers, snow blowers, people, office noises, machine noises at work. We are used to noise: in elevators, at home, at work, on the road, and we even have music playing in our ears when we are "on hold." Even in sacred spaces, worship sanctuaries we have trouble with silences. Sometimes it seems that even in worship there has to be something to break the silence.

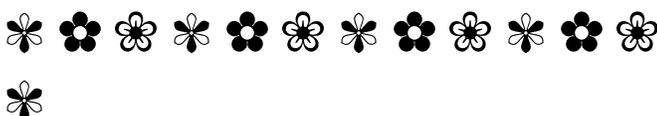
Perhaps we should stop to consider that 3 of the world's great religions began in the silence of the desert in the Middle East. Israel met God at Sinai, Mohammed met God in Arabia, and both Jesus and Paul went to the quiet of the desert to listen and learn. The great monastic orders of the Church still find God in the quiet of contemplation. Even Elijah,

hiding in fear from Queen Jezebel, found God in the silence.

When outside noise and distractions are missing we can hear softer sounds: birds, wind, insects, perhaps even the sound of our spirits calling to us from the very depths of our being. Maybe if we sought quietness in this new year we could give our spirits a chance to grow strong within us.

Perhaps a simple prayer could be for God to help us to be still so that we can hear God speak.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Irv



Dutch Lunch

Please join us for lunch at the **Starlite Diner** on Thursday afternoons at 12:00 p.m. It will be Dutch Style where everyone will treat him or herself for a lunch out. We will have informal discussions of faith and life, time to share, support, break bread together, and get to know one another.



Prayer Requests

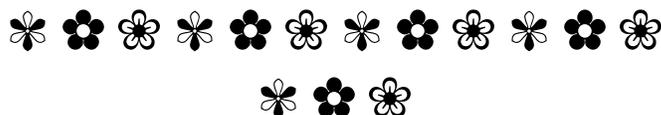
Steven Becker, Basil Breininger, Catherine Csencitz, Nelson Feliciano, Jane Laudenslager, Tina Laudenslager, John Marstellar, Nancy Reichert, George Rodenbach, Polly Snyder, Steve Warner, and Ray Ziegler.

If you or a loved one needs to be hospitalized, please inform the hospital staff that St John's UCC church code is 467. We also ask that you or a family member please notify the church office of your hospitalization when you enter and when you leave—call 610-398-7015. Thanks!



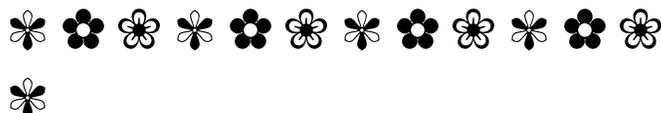
January Birthdays

- 6 – Marlene Hutchinson
- 7 – Beulah Snyder
- 13 – Mallory Conner
- 14 – Robert Burns
- 18 – Nevin Cope
- 20 – Sue Snyder
- 24 – Shane Marth
- 25 – Mark Ritter
- 30 – Jamie Marth



Capital Improvement Campaign

As you are aware, some much needed work has been done on our building. We had new windows installed on one side of the building, a new roof on the education/ office wing, and we had the exterior painted. We are grateful to God for the generosity that has been shown through contributions to the Capital Campaign. We hope that contributions to the fund will continue in the months ahead. If you would like to donate to the fund please make a check payable to St. John's UCC and write "Capital Improvement" on the subject line. Thank you.



Snow Report

In the case of inclement weather, the snow is falling inch by inch. You are wondering, will we meet for church today? Please turn to channel WFMZ or you can log onto www.wfmz.com for cancellation information. If snow is predicted for a Sunday morning, you will be contacted by a member of the consistory to tell you if we will not be having

church that day. Please keep in mind that just because church is cancelled doesn't mean that the church's bills are cancelled for that week. Please consider turning your offering in the following week so St. John's can continue to provide for all of God's people. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Thank You

Thank you to everyone who supported the Busy Bees fund raisers this past year.

Thank you to everyone who served as ushers, acolytes, and assistant ministers.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Bethany Children's Home Wish List.

Thank you to everyone who sponsored poinsettias plants to adorn our sanctuary for Christmas.

Thank you to everyone who came out and help decorate the church for the holidays.



January

Acolyte

- January 7 – Andrew Laudenslager
- January 14 – Mallory Conner
- January 21 – none
- January 28 – Emily Laudenslager

Assistant Minister

- January 7 – Dean Mohr
- January 14 – Steve Conner
- January 21 – Mallory Cope
- January 28 – Frank Garon

Offering

- January 7 – * Marilyn Roth & Tom Sobczak
- January 14 – Sue Snyder & Catherine Garon
- January 21 – Larry Moyer & Suzanne Reigel
- January 28 – Jeff Grim & Mark Laudenslager

***Responsible for supplying bread and for communion.**



Busy Bees

The Busy Bees are taking a well-deserved vacation. They will resume fund raisers in the spring.



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study meets in the family room at 9:00 AM every Sunday. We have decided rather than studying the Gospel lesson for the following Sunday, we will be studying the entire book of Mark. We made this change on December 3rd when we studied chapter 1, verse 1. You are welcome to join us for any or all of these sessions. Discussion is lively as we try to relate Jesus' words to our church and to our own lives.



Consistory Notes

There are no notes this month as the consistory took a break for the holidays.



Choir

The choir meets on a Wednesday night at 7:30pm. Even if you don't know how to sing and read music you are welcome to join the choir for fun, fellowship, and praising God.



THINGS YOU NEVER HEAR IN CHURCH

Hey! It's MY turn to sit on the front pew!

I was so enthralled, I never noticed your sermon went over time 25 minutes.

Personally, I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.

I've decided to give our church the \$500.00 a month I used to send to TV evangelists.

I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the Junior High [Sunday](#) School class.

I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!

Since we're all here, let's start the worship service early!

Pastor, we'd like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.



A Little Humor

Where do baby ghosts go during the day?
Dayscare centers

What do you get when you cross Bambi with a ghost?

Bamboo