



St. John's United Church of Christ
500 West Main Street, Lansdale, Pa. 19446

Enlightener

March 2022 Vol. XLII, No. 03

Darn Tough

In a recent Children's Message focusing on the Golden Rule and the challenge of loving our enemies, I chose to use *Darn Tough* brand socks as my "visual" to help the young ones remember that, although many of the things we are asked to do in life feel "darn tough," we have in Jesus a friend who is on the journey with us, ever eager to help us do the things we are convinced we cannot do.

When I think about the transition in the midst of which St. John's now finds itself as I prepare to retire and the church moves forward, in the minds of many, this certainly qualifies as "darn tough." It has been a long time since St. John's has had to think about calling a Sr. Pastor, and changing pastoral leadership is never easy. Our transitioning is compounded by the reality that we, along with churches everywhere, are also in the process of coming out of a pandemic that has forever changed both the world in which we live and the way we "do" church from day to day. Not a day goes by when someone does not express their eagerness to once again be able to fellowship and break bread together as we once did or resume the many activities that once filled our calendars and our parking lots.

This eagerness to return to what once was, however, must also be paired with the awareness that some things that were barely working when the pandemic brought life to a halt need to be reevaluated and examined closely before simply picking up where we left off. Thankfully, we have discovered there are a multitude of new and creative ways to do the important work God has set before us.

Physically coming back together when it feels safe for most to do so is crucial to St. John's growing and thriving as we transition in the months ahead. While doing things virtually has served us well in many ways, there is no substitute for actually being together in person as we do the messy work of being the church in community. As we engage in this "darn tough" work of transitioning, may we look to God for guidance, confident we are not alone as we step into a future filled with possibility and hope.

Rev. Sue
CS



Notes from Church Council

Financial Report: Matt Carson, Treasurer:

January was a good month financially for St. John's. January income of \$52,207 exceeded our monthly expenses, starting us off about 10.3% over budget. Tithes and offerings of \$37,737 also exceeded the forecast of \$33,750.



Our 2022 commitment to "Our Church's Wider Mission" (OCWM) is \$48,272, or \$3,364 per month. January contributions got off to a terrific start with \$6,475 donated, almost double our monthly goal! St. John's continues to show a great amount of support for this important part of our mission.

Please feel free to share your questions or concerns with Matt Carson, Treasurer.

Staff Reports:

Rev. Dr. Sue Bertolette, Senior Pastor:

The Ash Wednesday service will be held in-person on March 2. Prepackaged communion elements and ashes will be available. Those attending can come forward for ashes or take them home. Children's Choir will sing at the service. The Lenten Study will begin on Wednesday, March 9, and continue for five evenings in the Library.

Rev. Addie Stong, Associate Pastor:

Carryout Connection continues with the help of Rev. Kim Stryak. The Confirmation Class met in person on Sunday, February 13.

[continued at right]

They will continue to meet either in person or via Zoom through Pentecost in June.

The Carryout Connection program has been drawing in more people than on a typical Sunday morning prepandemic with a wider reach to grandkids and neighbors.

Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music:

Ensembles have resumed. Chancel Choir, United Ringers, and Children's Choir are resuming their usual roles on Sunday mornings.

Artist Series are planned for Sunday, March 27 (Andrew Paulson and John Pennington on piano, organ, and percussion), and April 10 (Palm Sunday, featuring the Chancel Choir and a chamber ensemble).

Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children and Youth:

Children's Choir has resumed via Zoom and in person. They are preparing Ash Wednesday and Easter music.

Lisa Delp, Office Administrator:

St. John's has helped the community with \$1,565 for grocery/gas gift cards, temporary housing, and a post-office box. AA will begin meeting at St. John's on March 1.

Board Reports:

Deacons

o Easter lilies have been ordered.

Educators

- o Goodie boxes will be prepared on Sunday, March 13, with Bonnie Weber.
- o Eggs will be packed for Easter egg hunt or for take-home.

Elders

- o Average attendance was 83/week for the month of January. St. John's is continuing to reach out via the website, Facebook, and YouTube for Sunday services.

Trustees

- o Three quotes for the chimney liner have been received. Boiler will be replaced when Montessori School closes for summer.

[continued on next page]

- Montessori School will increase their payment in the fall and in the additional four remaining years on their contract to help cover additional utilities and janitorial duties. They have requested an additional 10-year contract.

Old Business:

OCWM

An announcement was made on January 16, 2022, to the congregation regarding their generosity in 2021. The PSEC sent a letter to all churches in the conference about their financial status in 2021. They were able to end \$200 in the black.

New Business:

Creation Stewards

Don Atkiss introduced "People Advancing Reintroduction" to Council. The program employs former convicts and reintroduces them into society. They will hold an electronics recycling program.

Lansdale Police

St. John's received a letter from the department thanking us for our donation to their DARE program.

Church Security

Mark Bruen and Bill Leslie will discuss church security with the Lansdale Police Department.

New Council Members

Installation of new Council members will be held on Sunday, March 6, at the 10:15 AM service. Following the service, a brief orientation will be held with the confirmands to discuss church organization.

Online Donations

Grace Bruen has been working on an online giving program.

Search Committee

Kevin McLemore, Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call, will help St. John's with the search for a new senior pastor and an interim pastor. The search committee will be headed by the Elders, along with representation from the congregation.

As I write to you at the beginning of March, this little church mouse does so well-supplied with Girl Scout cookies, thanks to St. John's Girl Scouts and the drive-through they provided for church folks and the community. Of course, I didn't need to drive to get my cookies—I just perched on the rock at the center of the labyrinth and was well taken care of by some very friendly and polite Girl Scouts!



With cookies and a cup of tea, I have been reading the book that is at the center of this year's Lenten Study: Rachel Held Evans's book titled *Wholehearted Faith*. It's not too late to get on board with the Lenten Study, which begins on Wednesday, March 9, in the Library from 7:30 to 8:45 PM for five evenings, concluding on April 6. All copies of the book ordered by Rev. Sue have been purchased, but you can easily order a copy or speak with Rev. Sue if you need help. Based on what I have read so far, I'm certain the conversation will be lively and helpful as we focus on what it means to embrace a faith that is wholehearted and real.

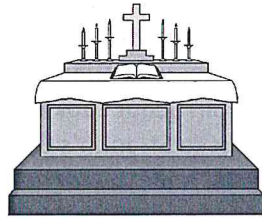
Oh, and backing up just a bit: on Ash Wednesday, March 2, we will mark the beginning of the season of Lent with an in-person worship service at 7:30 PM. This service will include sharing communion and, for those who feel comfortable doing so, the imposition of the ashes. There will also be ashes available for folks to pick up during the day and take along home.

One other important item for your March calendar: on Sunday, March 6, at the 10:15 AM worship service, St. John's Council will be installed with the laying on of hands, celebrating new volunteers who will lead the congregation in the days ahead. Throughout the pandemic, the Church Council has met virtually to conduct the church's business, keeping things running smoothly amid some particularly challenging times. While in-person meetings will resume on certain occasions, virtual meetings will continue to occur, allowing folks to serve in leadership roles who would not have been able to do so in the past, a reminder that good often emerges during tough times, and challenges urge us to learn, grow, and find better ways to do things. This little church mouse is excited about what the future holds, and I look forward to sharing that excitement with you!

AMOS

Were You There?

Thirty Years Ago: Conductor Robert Fountain led the University of Wisconsin-Madison Concert Choir in a performance on March 9.



Twenty-five Years Ago: A call went out for men to join the Lansdale Inter-Church Men's Fast Pitch League.

Twenty Years Ago: The Pre-Confirmation Class presented parable plays during Sunday School on March 17 in the Assembly Hall.

Fifteen Years Ago: Dedication of the new red church doors was held on Sunday, March 4.

Ten Years Ago: The PSEC Quiet Day at Mensch Mill occurred on March 6 from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM and was led by Reverend Sue.

Five Years Ago: Some interpretations of The Beatitudes by participants in Vacation Bible School as printed in the March 2017 *Enlightener*.

~ You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.
~ Blessed are you when you treat others with kindness, compassion, understanding, and respect; you will be filled with the knowledge that God is pleased with you and you will feel fulfilled, whole, and loved.
~ Blessed are you when you seek to understand others' points of view and focus on commonalities instead of differences. That's when you discover your place in God's family.

One Year Ago: An excerpt from the March 2021 pandemic-era *Enlightener* by Stephen Butz of the Stewardship Committee:

As we continue our journey together, I pray that we can connect with each other through sharing our stories and taking the time to reach out and give an update. Our sharing may need to be over the phone, by email, or by sending a card. No matter how we do it, help us to stay connected with each other and to share our stories of hope and love during this Lenten season.

Here is the chancel flower donation list for March 2022. Please review this list and contact the church office if you would like to remove, add, or update any information.



Reminder ~ The requested donation for the chancel flower listing is \$35. Thank you!

March 6

In memory of Sarah Falzone's March 10th birthday from daughter, Pam, and Ray, and Jessica and Alex Ace

March 13

In memory of Christian E. Wurster's March 15th birthday from Christine Wiley
Remembering with love, Wallace and Kier MacKinstry on St. Patrick's Day and Granny's March 16th birthday, from Jean MacKinstry Rogers and the MacKinstry/Rogers family
In memory of Gale Bupp from her family

March 20

In memory of Ruthanne Harrison's March 20th birthday from her daughter and son-in-law, Sue and Wayne Bailey
In memory of parents, Gerald and Edith Linderman, on their March 26th wedding anniversary, and in memory of his brother, Mark, from Gerry and Grace Linderman
In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Umstead and Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Gehman from Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Umstead
In memory of Lester Long from wife, Rachel, and family

March 27

In memory of Lesley Brown's March 31st birthday from her parents, Vivienne and Ian
In loving memory of Louise (Grammie) Snyder's March 30th birthday from her family



St. John's 2021 OCWM Contributions

On January 16, Bill Leslie, President of Church Council, spoke to the congregation during the church services to announce some outstanding news regarding St. John's contributions to the UCC OCWM fund. OCWM stands for Our Church's Wider Mission. Most of us know this as one of the two lines on our weekly offering envelope. But it is truly a very important part of what being a church is all about. Helping others.

OCWM is money that supports UCC activities beyond the walls of St. John's. OCWM contributions are sent to the UCC conference throughout the year for use in providing support to other UCC churches in need, for funding national and global projects and scholarships, for education and training of missionaries, and many other important outreach activities.

Every year, as part of the budget process, Council approves an amount for St. John's to commit to OCWM. For 2021, that amount was \$46,460. This was the same number as our pledge for 2019 and 2020. Regular readers of the bulletin or the Herald know that, for 2021, it worked out to \$893.00 per week. In reading the bulletin and Herald, you also may have noticed that throughout the year, that weekly number was exceeded significantly, often.

To say that this was unexpected is a serious understatement given that we are all still dealing with a pandemic with all its associated economic and emotional impacts. St. John's congregation looked these obstacles in the eye and did not blink. Instead, we decided 2021 was a year that it was more important than ever to support not just the church, but also OCWM.

For 2021, the total amount that St. John's members gave to OCWM was \$59,032, almost \$13,000 more than was pledged by Council at the start of the year.

Church Council felt it was important to share this incredible news. We all want to thank you, the congregation of this incredible institution, for your unprecedented generosity.

Thank You!!

Summary of Last Month and YTD Income and Expense	January 2022	January 2022
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Current Tithes/Offerings	37,737.00	37,737.00
Flowers	400.00	400.00
Rental Income	3,050.00	3,050.00
Use-of-Building income	1,200.00	1,200.00
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	2.00	2.00
Total Income	42,389.00	42,389.00
Gross Income	42,389.00	42,389.00
Expense		
Salaries and Benefits	35,970.22	35,970.22
Elders Expenses	50.20	50.20
Deacons Expenses	350.00	350.00
Trustees/Building Expenses	122.88	122.88
Building Operation Expenses	5,782.54	5,782.54
Operating Expenses	5,062.76	5,062.76
Total Expense	45,695.70	45,695.70
Net Ordinary Income	-4,949.60	-4,949.60
Budgeted Transfers from Investments	9,818.52	9,818.52
Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers	6,511.30	6,511.30
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Artist Series Income—Special	450.00	450.00
Benevolence Offerings	11,225.00	11,225.00
Special Accounts	7,380.27	7,380.27
Total Other Income	19,055.27	19,055.27
Other Expense		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	101.95	101.95
Benevolence Disbursements	21,312.50	21,312.50
Special Fund Expenditures	100.00	100.00
Total Other Expense	21,514.45	21,514.45
Net Other Income	-2,459.18	-2,459.18
Net Income	-7,408.78	-7,408.78
Net Income Plus Transfers	2,409.74	2,409.74

Dear God, so far today I've done all right. I haven't gossiped or lost my temper. I haven't been greedy or grumpy or nasty or selfish or overindulgent. And I'm very thankful for that. But God, in a few minutes, I'm going to get out of bed—and from then on, I'm probably going to need a lot more help, Amen

ARTICLES DUE FOR APRIL ISSUE ON MARCH 13

Leaders: Please provide articles for these coming events for the next *Enlightener* issue:

- † Palm Sunday
- † Prayer Vigil
- † Maundy Thursday
- † Good Friday
- † Holy Saturday
- † Easter Services
- † Earth Day

All submissions must include your name and phone number and be typed or printed. Submissions can be placed in the *Enlightener* bin in the Church Office (basket on top) or emailed to erickinsey46@gmail.com.

If you have questions, please call Eric Kinsey at 215-513.2237.

The *Enlightener* is published monthly except for July and August by St. John's United Church of Christ
500 West Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446
Eric Kinsey, Editor: erickinsey46@gmail.com

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Del Dalby, stepfather of Chriss Bodde; Stan Mininger; Rebecca Kellermeyer, niece of Lorene Ahrens; Isabel Longcoy, mother-in-law of Shelly Longcoy; Doris Dayton, mother of Deborah Dayton; Atti Salomon; Dennis Detweiler, brother of Phyllis Mikolon, a friend of Lisa Delp; Jackie Hunsberger; and Ellen Rauscher, aunt of Alan Malachowski, who passed away recently.



Notice:

St. John's received a Retirement Distribution Check from Fidelity Brokerage Services. There was no name or envelope number written in the memo section of the check or on the stub. The office did not receive a phone call or email regarding the check, so we have no idea who the check is from or how the funds should be distributed. If you believe this distribution check is from your retirement account, please call Lisa in the church office, 215.855.5489.



Chancel Flower Ministry

Thank you for being a part of this important ministry. Many lives have been touched by your efforts.

Flowers should be delivered after the 10:15 AM church service or on Monday. Feel free to deliver the flowers to whomever you want—anyone who is celebrating a birthday or an anniversary, people who are ill, people who are in the hospital, people who need a little extra care. The people you deliver to do not need to be members of St. John's. They can be your friends, loved ones, and neighbors. The flower ministry is part of our outreach.

The flower room is through the door on the left side of the chancel—the side where the pastor preaches. All the supplies you will need are in this room:

plastic vases, St. John's address directory, and cards.

Please take the flowers out of the brass vases and put them into the plastic floral containers located on the shelves in the flower room. Return the liners back into the brass vases. Please include a card for each bouquet. There will be a copy of these instructions in the flower room. If you are out of town on your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone else. Again, many thanks for being a part of St. John's flower ministry. Please leave the plastic liners in the brass vases, they belong to the florist.

Lisa

2022

March 6	Tracey & Mark O'Neill
March 13	Kelly Bresadola
March 20	Gale Linderman
March 27	Pete Probst

Contributions from Retirement Accounts

In the February Enlightener, an article was included regarding St. John's Financial Planning for 2022. For those of you who are drawing from retirement savings, you may be able to benefit by instructing your financial institution to directly donate to St. John's. Grace Bruen wrote about things to consider if you are interested in donating to St. John's using retirement savings. If you decide to donate to St. John's in this manner, contact the church office and let us know to expect a check. Also, submit a **Contributions from Retirement Accounts** form so you will receive credit for the donation and the funds will be distributed according to your wishes. Forms will be available on the literature table in the Narthex and from the church office.

Contribution from Retirement Accounts

Name:		Envelope Number:	
Name of Financial Institution providing check:			
Frequency of distributions (weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually):			

Indicate how you would like your donation applied:			
Current Operating Expenses:		OCWM:	
Capital Projects (state General or specific capital project):			
GEM:		Manna:	
Phoebe Wyncote:		Lancaster Seminary:	
Urban Promise:		Good Samaritan / Emergency Fund:	
Child Sponsorship:		Bethany Children's Home:	
Oaxaca Learning Center:			
Other (please specify):			

2022 St. John's Address Directory

St. John's current pictorial directory was issued in 2016. Many addresses and phone numbers in that directory have changed, so we would like to publish a new address directory with current information. If you wish to be included in the address directory, please complete the form on the following page and drop it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning, in the mailbox outside the ramp door, or in the office door mailbox. Forms will be available on the literature table in the Narthex. You may also email your information to the church office at office@st-johns-ucc.org. We hope to publish the 2022 St. John's Address Directory sometime in the summer. A pictorial directory will not be published until a new senior pastor is hired.

Please note, if you wish to be included in St. John's Address Directory, you must submit a form or contact the Church Office.

Address Directory Form		
Name:		
Address:		
Email Address:		
Phone Numbers:	cell	
	landline	
	work (optional)	



The 2021 AGM Committee celebrates the \$4500 raised for nonprofits in our second virtual AGM fundraiser. The Village Teahouse in West Point was the colorful setting for our lively gathering. We were the only people in this huge room, and we loved seeing everybody's faces for the first time in two years! Pinkies up! Thanks to everyone who donated; our charities are so grateful!



ST. JOHN'S

Artist Series

**Mark your calendars for the final two events in the
2021-2022 St. John's Artist Series!**

Music for Piano, Organ, and Percussion
John Pennington and Andrew Paulson
4pm, March 27th, 2022

Seven Last Words by Michael John Trotta
St. John's Chancel Choir and Friends, and Special Guests
4pm, April 10th, 2022

We hope to see you there!

Patrons of the 2021-2022 St. John's Artist Series

BENEFACTOR (\$200+)

Lynne Bartholomew, Sandy and Scott Brown, Mark and Grace Bruen, Suzanne and Don Franks,
A Friend, David Furniss, Bonnie and Ken Hales, Leroy and Linda Horst, Phil and Wendy Hunt,
Anne and Eric Kinsey, Bill and Judy Leslie, Mark and Karen Methlie,
Wendy and Rick O'Connor, Dan and Lillian Panachyda

SPONSOR (\$100-199)

Lorene Ahrens, Sue and Bob Bertolette, Marie B. Carota, The Faga Family, Jean Fehnel,
Debby and Steve Hendricks, Ruth Kinsey, Ruth Moyer, Cynthia Overwise, Phyllis J. Patton,
Kim and Garen Paulson, Marcia Stacy, Scott and Liz Vanderburg

DONOR (\$50-99)

Sue Clemens, Alyson and Daniel Faga, Nicole and Don Groff, John and Susan Hendricks,
Brandi and Ryan Kinsey, Cliff Kneipp, Mary Lynne and Ray Snyder, Vada Timko

FRIEND (\$25-49)

Joe Feher

Your support is music to our ears! Consider becoming a patron at any level!

☐ Benefactor (\$200+) ☐ Sponsor (\$100-199) ☐ Donor (\$50-99) ☐ Friend (\$25-49)

Name as you would like it to appear in future programs: _____

Looking for past Artist Series recordings?

You can view events from the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 seasons on our YouTube Channel!

www.youtube.com/StJohnsUCCLansdalePA

