

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

Enlightener

September 2022 Vol. XLII, No. 07

"Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow"

Where does one begin? So much has transpired since the last time you received your Enlightener. We are all grieving the loss of our beloved Rev. Sue, each of us in our own way, and in our own time. As we grieve, may we find strength every day to see how God is making "All Things New" among the people of St. John's. Rev. Sue would have wanted this more than anything for her beloved Motley Crew. One concrete and tangible sign of God "doing a new thing" for the People of St. John's is a new leader among us to accompany us on this journey.

On August 14th we shared that a Call for our Senior Interim Pastor had been offered by the Transition team, approved by Council, and accepted by Rev. Dale Davis. This is a meaningful and tangible step along our Faith journey, as we enter this time of healing, growth and discernment.

Rev. Dale knew Rev. Sue, and their relationship and mutual respect was central to his decision to accept our call. He is also well known to Rev. Addie, and she is very much looking forward to having him join her to lead St. John's staff and congregation on this sacred journey. There is a strong confidence among Pastor Addie, Pastor Dale, Andrew and the Transition Team that this is God calling us to be in community with one other.

Pastor Dale's first Sunday with us will be September 25th. The Transition Team will host "Donuts with Dale" in the Library following both services that Sunday. We invite you to visit with Pastor Dale and with one another, as we welcome him to St. John's. On page two is an introduction he prepared so you can get to know a bit about him.

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all of you for your suggestions, support and for keeping St. John's staff and Transition Team in your prayers over these last many months – they have made all the difference.

Yours in Faith and Hope, from the Transition team,

Bill Leslie, Liz Rivett, Grace Bruen, Mark Bruen, Jess Carson, Sally Atkiss, and Don Atkiss

Rev. Dale Davis - Here's What I'd Like You to Know About Me!

My United Church of Christ ministerial profile begins with these words: "I have been breathing God's love and the church my whole life. As a child, the sacred stories of scripture, the people who grappled with those stories; their yearning for authentic community, combined with their desire to serve became the fertile garden in which my call to serve God took root."

I was drawn to become a sociology major during college. I've always been fascinated with how groups, social systems, and culture impact us. Throughout my ministry, I've had rich and varied experiences leading four congregations as well as serving on staff at two theological seminaries. My wife, Helen, and I have two adult children, Hannah and Cameron. Hannah was married last July and teaches and consults at The Vista School in Hershey, PA, where she works with autistic learners. Cameron manages a coffee shop in downtown West Chester, PA after graduating with a degree in music performance. Helen serves as a legal assistant for a law firm in Wyomissing, PA.

Here's what I'm passionate about: I love helping people connect the sacred stories and wisdom of scripture to their daily lives. I love building capacity in leaders and within a congregation. Intergenerational worship, mission, and learning excite me. I'm a deep listener. I'm passionate about preaching. I'm also a visionary and have the strategic know-how to help vision become reality. I'm a consensus builder and get energized by helping people, staff members, and churches clarify and support their strategic choices. In my estimation, the future is exciting!

Professionally I've been blessed with mentors who have made all the difference in my life. Through their involvement I've been able to work as a Certified Consultant for Trustee Leadership Development, a national program aimed at strengthening not-for-profit organizations as well as become an assistant evaluator in a Lilly Foundation project to assess a pioneering course on leadership theory at the John F. Kennedy School of Leadership at Harvard.

At heart, I love the church and am thrilled for this opportunity to serve St. John's United Church of Christ in Lansdale. I'm looking forward to joining you in September, and together with God's love and grace, we can invite our wider community to join in, bringing the world that much closer together.

I enjoy a good cup of coffee, a walk or bike ride along a scenic river, and delight in journaling. At the center of my life is gratitude!



Articles Due for October Issue Deadline: September 11

Leaders: Please provide articles for these coming events for the next *Enlightener* issue (if feasible):

- ₱ Neighbors in Need Offering
- ₱ Reformation 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 (top bin) 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, Pennsylvania 19446.

Eric Kinsey, Editor: erickinsey46@gmail.com

Below you will find the chancel flower donation list for September 2022. Please review this list and contact the church office if you would like to remove, add, or update any information on the list.



Reminder—the requested donation for the listing is \$35.

September 4
In honor of the Rev. Frank and Beatrice Pehrson's September 5th wedding anniversary from their daughter, Karen, and Mark Methlie
In memory of Donald Gibson Sr's September 6th birthday from Donna Wardle and family

September 11 In memory of Helen Huckins's September 11th birthday and Mary Decker's September 13th birthday from Edna Decker In honor of Sandy and Bob Taylor's September 11th wedding anniversary Remembering with love, Bill Rogers and other family loved ones from the MacKinstry/Rogers family In memory of Ruth Ekberg from her daughter, Sandy, and Scott Brown September 18 In memory of Bob Kinsey's September 22nd birthday from his wife, Ruth September 25 Gold Star Mother's Day 2022 In honor of Gold Star Mother's Day from Jean Roshong In memory of son Ted Smith's October 1st birthday from Judy Baumgartner In memory of John Burkholder's October 2nd birthday from his daughter, Judy, and Alan Johnston and family

Council Minutes from Monday, August 8, 2022



Financial Report, Matt Carson, Treasurer:

Total income in July of \$32,531 was short of our budgeted income of \$45,776. Our income of \$32,531 against expenses of \$41,010 is a shortfall of \$8,479. Our monthly goal for tithes and offerings is 34,583.33, and this month our offering was \$22,471.

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) giving is also down year-to-date with a total of \$26,154.00 received as of the end of July, with \$28,158.67 needed to fulfill our pledge. Please feel free to share your questions or

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

[continued on next page]

Staff Reports:

Rev. Addie Stong, Acting Lead Pastor:

Addie asked that we all hold the entire St. John's community in prayer during this season of loss for the congregation.

Blessing of the Animals will be rescheduled in the fall.

Celebration Sunday is October 2, 2022.

Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music:

Chancel Choir, United Ringers, and Wind ensembles will be back in worship service this fall.

Andrew has been increasing the presence of the Artist Series events via posters at 200 area churches and retirement homes. Supporters of the Artist Series will also receive info about the upcoming season and how to support the Artist Series. Andrew reaches beyond the local community with an updated Facebook page and Website for the Artist Series:

Facebook.com/stjohnsartistseries Website: stjohnsartistseries.org

Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children and Youth:

Children's Choir had a Zoom meeting in July singing camp songs and expressing Joys and Concerns. Back to School picnic and scavenger hunt will be August 28. Kick-off to Children's Choir will be in September.

Lisa Delp, Office Administrator:

St. John's has helped the community with \$3,539 in gift cards for groceries and gas, utilities, and rent.

Board Reports:

Deacons

Plains Mennonite has the deposit from the June picnic date. We are considering having a picnic to welcome the interim pastor. Deacons are discussing resuming social hour. Educators

Educators met to discuss how to move forward with Sunday School. The survey on the last page of this *Enlightener* will also be sent out, especially to those families with younger children. Sunday School will be held once a month until surveys are evaluated. [continued at right]

Elders

Barbarann Probst welcomed new members Ken and Bonnie Hales, who will be finishing Jim Stevenson's term.

June Attendance 2022				
Date	8:00	10:15	Total	
6/5	42	138	180	
6/12		345	345	
6/19	30	77	107	
6/26	24	91	115	
	Average/Week =		187	
July Attendance 2022				
Date	8:00	10:15	Total	
7/3	23	73	96	
7/10	22	81	103	
7/17	24	80	104	
7/24	35	88	123	
7/31	27	87	114	
	Average/Week =		108	

Trustees

A donation for the meditation garden was made by the Bupp family in memory of Rev. Marty Bupp, a past associate minister of St. Johns. They asked about the possibility of a memorial plaque. A plaque commemorating Rev. Bupp could be appropriate on one of the trees in front of the memorial garden donated in his name. Trustees recommended that a broader group make a recommendation for an overarching policy for memorial plaques. Trustees will help implement any physical improvements required.

A request to use Anchor House parking lot for employee parking for Backyard Beans coffee shop is under consideration.

A water-bottle filling station will replace the second-floor fountain.

Trustees voted to start a fund for the exterior renovation of the school and church building to include repointing of the stonework, repair of concrete arches for doorways and windows, and other items to be identified as the project progresses. This will be a long-term project, starting with the school building and working its way around the rest of the church. They have asked to add this to the list of capital projects on the envelopes.

[continued on next page]

Creation Stewards Update:

Don Atkiss introduced Maurice Jones of PAR Recycles. This program is in line with the Creation Stewards' mission. PAR Recycles is a nonprofit electronics-recycling, organization that benefits former prisoners with rehabilitation and reentry into society.

Old Business:

Search and Call Update

The transition team is thrilled with the recommended choice of an interim senior pastor. Rev. Dale Davis is currently a designated pastor for Wentz UCC. He felt compelled by the need of St. John's to serve our congregation. A start date of September 15, 2022, is proposed.



Bring your loose change to church to benefit St. John's Child Sponsorship Project

Change for the Children Offering Sunday, September 11

Hospitality Team—September 2022		
9/4	Team 1: Robin MacMullen	
9/11	Team 2: Bill Leslie	
9/17	Team 3: Don Atkiss	
9/25	Team 4: Grace & Mark Bruen	

Thank you from Rev. Addie Over the course of the past several weeks, so many of you have taken time to pull me aside, send emails, texts, notes, and prayers offering words of love, encouragement, support, and praise. While I am still trying my best to reply to each and every one of you, I wanted to write to thank you all for such unwavering support during this time of shared grief. I truly could not do any of this without your love and care. As I said in my sermon last week, challenging times reveal to us what matters most. I pray you have found, just as I have, that church matters, the people we share pews with matter, the love we show and share with one another matters. What a gift it is to be your pastor. ~ Rw. Advic



Electronics Recycling Event September 24

The St. John's Creation Stewards have partnered with PAR Recycles to conduct an electronics recycling program at St. John's on Saturday, September 24, from 9 AM to 1 PM. Bring electronics, ranging from old cell phones to large TVs (items need not be cleaned prior to donating). There is a small fee charged for larger items. We are also asking that you bring a nonperishable item to donate to Manna On Main Street.

PAR (People Advancing Reintegration) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping formerly incarcerated people obtain employment and work skills. Steady employment helps reduce the recidivism rate for exoffenders, who are unemployed at over 50% after being released from prison. This program is aligned perfectly with our Creation Stewards' goals of protecting the environment and helping to reduce income inequality. PAR Recycles has held recycling events at North Penn High School as well as other churches and synagogues in the area.

We need to provide 15 to 20 volunteers to help manage traffic, unload recycling items, and collect donations. If we get enough volunteers, we can break into 2-hour shifts. If you are able to help, please contact Don Atkiss at 215.872.7487 or datkiss@comcast.net.

Please visit

youtube.com/watch?v=srX00D_wgAI for more information about PAR's mission. This is a great opportunity for St. John's members to put into action our commitment to honor God's Creation. More information will follow as the date approaches.



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 9 AM – 11 AM TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 1000 WEST MAIN STREET LANSDALE, PA 19446

Rep. Steve Malagari and many exhibitors will provide information on

- Health and Wellness
- Medical Services
- State Senior Benefits
- Local Organizations
- Senior SEPTA Key Card
- And more!

Flu shots and free snacks also will be available.

Representative Malagari and his staff will answer questions and provide direction on a host of state government-related programs and services.



State Representative Steve Malagari District Office 100 West Main Street Suite 110, Lansdale, PA 267.768.3671 Repmalagari.com





Summary Of July And YTO Income And Expense July 2022 January-July 2022 Ordinary Income/Expense Income 30.00 100.00 Counters Discrepancies 0.00 100.00 Current Tithes/Offerings 22,471.71 220,700.98 Flowers 235.00 2,732.00 Rental Income 0.00 18,300.00 Use of Building Income 0.00 2,830.00 Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income 6.00 718.23 Interest Income, Savings Accounts 1.02 7.20 Total Income 22,713.73 245,388.41 Gross Income 22,713.73 245,388.41 Expense 31aries and Benefits 25,292.52 241,495.34 Elders Expenses 65.73 1,308.14 Deacons Expenses 459.75 1,758.15 Trustees/Building Expenses 930.82 8,444.43 Building Operation Expenses 9,790.09 46,788.55 Miscellaneous Expenses 0.00 460.66 Total Expense 41,010.00 341,432.85 Net Ordinary Income				
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Were You There?

Thirty Years Ago: Fall Hiking Day for all ages, sponsored by East Penn Camps, was held at Big Pocono State Park.

Twenty-five Years Ago: There was a planning meeting that sought to discern what would be most helpful and enjoyable to the many young families at St. John's.

Twenty Years Ago: St. John's observed Communion on September 11 at noon to remember and reflect upon the tragic events of 9/11. At 7:30 PM a service of Remembrance and Hope for the Future was held.

Fifteen Years Ago: A call went out for a Nursery Coordinator/Facilitator, a Junior Church Coordinator, and Nursery cleaners to help in the Christian Education Department.

Ten Years Ago: On Celebration Sunday Rev. Sue received the Allan S. Meck Award for distinguished service in the practice of pastoral ministry.

Five Years Ago: The Stewardship Committee launched the theme for the year, "with glad and generous hearts."

One Year Ago: When we resumed having two worship services on September 12, both the United Adult Class and the Mainstream Adult Class resumed meeting at 9 AM.

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, cards.

Please take the flowers out of the brass vases and put them into the <u>plastic floral containers</u> 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.

Lisa

September 4	Karen & Mark Methlie	
September 11	Jen & Matt Harp	
September 18	Anne & Eric Kinsey	
September 25	Kathy Allebach	

Please leave the plastic liners in the brass vases, they belong to the florist.



The Board of Educators of St. John's UCC is conducting a survey to gather information regarding interest in Sunday School and preferred formats. We are interested in learning your preferences for format and meeting time. Please answer the informational questions below and provide us with your preferences for Sunday School.

Are you interested in a Sunday School Program for your child(ren)
Has your child(ren) participated in the Carryout Connection program
What is your preferred time for Sunday School? Please select from choices below:
9–10 AM Sunday morning 11:45 AM–1 PM Sunday
Some other time (please indicate your choice)
Flexible and varied times depending on program
As the Board is gathering this information, we are planning to continue with the
Carryout Connection but also add an in-person meeting once per month on the first
Sunday of the month. This plan would continue through January.
The Board would also like to offer interested persons the opportunity to be a part of the
Sunday School program. Please indicate your interest below:
Sanday School program. Flease maleate your interest below.
Would you be interested in helping with the upcoming plan for Sunday School through
January? A ready-made lesson would be provided.
Yes, I would be interested
Would you be interested in helping with future Sunday School programming? Please
indicate your areas of interest:
Teaching Planning
Optional information:
Name and contact information
Children's ages
Any other ideas/requests/suggestions

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return by Sunday, September 11 to the Church Office or place in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

What's the Scoop? (a financial summary)

As we transition into a new era at St John's, it is important to take stock of where we are financially. When we planned the 2022 budget in September 2021, the retirement of our beloved senior pastor was not part of that plan. But we were able to use guest pastors through the summer, and have an interim pastor starting in September within the planned salary budget.

Through the end of July our income, including planned transfers from our investments, has been \$24,620 behind our budget, and our expenses have been \$4,800 more than budgeted, resulting in a deficit of \$29,420, Thankfully, we have had ample funds in our checking account to be able to pay all of our bills. Some things to note:

- We expect low income over the summer without rent from the Montessori School.
- We have seen substantial giving to Ukraine relief and gifts for Rev. Sue's retirement, about \$15,000. Those diverting their regular giving to these worthy causes, instead of giving surplus funds to these causes, likely contributes to the current income shortage.
- While we have had enough funds in our checking account to pay monthly bills, we are now
 at the point where we need careful attention to bills vs our checking balance. If the
 trend of lower income continues, we will need to pull extra funds from investments.
- While we have had the benefit of lower expenses due to less use of the church building, we anticipate the loosening of Covid restrictions will bring back activities, such as the social hour, bringing our expenses back to the more normal ranges of past years. Our investments have been impacted by changes in the economy. Since October 1, 2021, when we determine the budgeted percentage to withdraw from investments, we have seen a drop from \$2,262,926 to \$2,215,533 at the end of July—a loss of \$47,392 or 2.09%. We continue to be a generous church. Donations to our various benevolences is at the same pace as last year, with OCWM, Bethany Church Home, Veterans of the Cross, and One Great Hour of Sharing being our largest funds. We have given \$2,297 to Bethany Church Home, \$1,790 to Veterans of the Cross, \$1,459 to One Great Hour of Sharing, and \$26,159 to OCWM, which is \$2,005 behind our goal. In all, we have given \$43,416 toward various benevolences. We have also given \$9,444 to the GEM and Emergency Funds, which allows the church to have funds available to help families and organizations in need. With these funds, we have helped a number of local families. We have used GEM funds for Ukraine relief and completed a 5-year commitment to the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance.

Some final thoughts: As we enter this transition time of finding our new settled pastor, we have much to offer candidates searching for a church:

- A beautiful building in which to worship
- A strong staff to create meaningful worship experience through words and music
- Talented members willing to volunteer their time to support the work we do
- Our commitment to help those in need in our community as well as those outside our area A financially strong church is also important to attract the best candidates to St. John's.
- ~ Grace Bruen, Chair, Finance Committee

BENEDICTION

"Friends, as you go out into the world this day to enjoy the gift that God has given us, the gift of life, I challenge you to think about your legacy. How will you be remembered? Remember, it's not just about the big things we do, it's about the little things we do; the little decisions we make, the choices we decide upon day in and day out. May the choices we make be ones that honor our God, that touch deeply the lives of others. As you go out into the world this day, my prayer is this: that you will go with courage, be of good courage. Hold fast to that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil. Strengthen the faint-hearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor all people. Love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of God's Holy Spirit. And as you do, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

Now and always, Amen"

May the Lord lift up the light of his smile upon you

and fill you with peace.

Pastor "Sue" Bertolette



JOIN US FOR THE OPENING CONCERT OF OUR 35TH SEASON

Svyati Duo

Rebecca Hepplewhite, cello • Julian Collings, organ Sunday, October 2, 4pm

"The performances are exemplary." -Fanfare Magazine • Learn more about Svyati Duo at: www.svyatiduo.com

All are welcome to this free event!

REMAINING EVENTS IN THE 2022-2023 SEASON

Christmas Festival: Sunday, December 11, 4pm St. John's Chancel Choir and Friends • North Penn Chamber Singers and Brass Ensemble

Midwinter Gala: Friday, February 17, 6pm at PineCrest Country Club
Join us for a night of dinner, drinks, and a silent auction, all supporting the St. John's Artist Series!
Ticket Required • Visit www.stjohnsartistseries.org/midwinter-gala for more information.

Dan Forrest's Requiem for the Living: Sunday, April 2, 4pm St. John's Chancel Choir and Friends • Musicians from Philadelphia Ballet Orchestra • Julie Frey, soprano

> Doppelflöte: Sunday, April 23, 4pm Melissa Freilich, flute • Vincent M. Ryan, organ

New this year! Visit our new website and "like" us on our new Facebook page! Website: www.stjohnsartistseries.org • Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stjohnsartistseries

THANK YOU TO OUR PATRONS

Gifts of all sizes allow us to present concerts at no cost to audience members. Thank you for your support!*

\$1000+

\$500-\$999

\$250-\$499

Anne & Eric Kinsey, Bill & Judy Leslie

\$100-\$249

Lorene Ahrens, Sue & Bob Bertolette, Sandy & Scott Brown, Marie Carota, Leroy & Linda Horst, Cynthia T. Overwise & John B. Overwise, Jr., Marcia Stacy, Joe & Carol Voicheck

Up to \$99

Thank you to our donors in this category for their generous support!

Visit www.stjohnsartistseries.org/make-a-donation or scan the QR code below to give electronically!



Prefer to give via check or cash?

Mail or drop off your gift at St. John's along with the below form completed.

Donation amount:	Name as you would like it to appear in publications:
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Please make checks payable to St. John's UCC and indicate Artist Series Donation in the memo line.

*Note that our giving levels have changed to reflect an average cost of approximately \$4000 for each concert.

This cost covers the necessary expenses of advertising, fair performer payment, travel fees, and more.

To learn more about our updated donor levels and benefits, please visit www.stjohnsartistseries.org/make-a-donation.