



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

Enlightener

March 2025 Vol. XLV, No. 3

St. John's is about to enter an exciting new chapter with the arrival of our new Settled Lead Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Linda Noonan. But before we open this chapter, I would like to take a look back to recognize and acknowledge where we have been and how far we have come.

St. John's has been on a journey not completely unlike the people with Moses – St. John's members and friends have been wandering through the wilderness for an extended time. While it may feel like 40 years, at times over the last two and a half years, many St. John's folks have been presented with arduous and even exhausting challenges. Yet, upon deeper reflection, there is something worthwhile and even precious about this time.

A time in the wilderness cuts through the unhelpful chatter in our collective minds – it brings what is necessary to actually live into much deeper clarity. While the purpose of the church hasn't changed over the last few years, the way we “do” church, in many aspects, has. I have observed that St. John's folk have learned through this wilderness time to be much less focused on the externals of what we do— and to accept the need to adapt in order to keep moving forward.

A time in the wilderness requires everyone at St. John's to not just address the “how” of being the church. It leads us to ask the “why” questions – questions like: why do we want to update our technology? Why is it important to have Christmas Eve service at a certain time? Why do we need to invest in our ministry team positions? All these questions and more get at the root of what it means to “be the church” in this day and age.

Traveling through the wilderness also tests our relationships at times. When it feels like the stakes are high – and they certainly are for a wilderness people – the friction that may be barely perceivable in times of plenty rises to the surface. In the church, thank God, the people of the church also come to realize, through grace, that these relationships are what will keep us alive. These relationships, which have grown over many decades, become even more vital when a people realizes how much is at stake and how much interdependence is involved in the very act of reaching “the Promised Land!”

So, as we emerge from the wilderness, let St. John's proclaim that we see the Promised Land, and we are moving together with a vision that invites all to journey and to dwell with us. A Promised Land that only God can fulfill. Peace!

Pastor Tom Adil,
Acting Lead Bridge Pastor



**From the Elders' Desk:
Name Tag Ministry**

After experiencing so much change in the past few years, and in preparation for welcoming our new Senior Pastor, Rev. Linda Noonan, the Elders are committed to encouraging and enhancing fellowship among members and visitors at St. John's by providing individual magnetic name tags for all attendees. The Ministry includes creating, distributing, and storing the name tags for all those attending St. John's. It is our plan to introduce the name tags in mid-February and March 2025. Magnetic stands for name tag storage have already been placed in the Narthex and Library. More details to come.



Emilie



Ash Wednesday Service
March 5, 2025.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season and the journey to the cross. A dinner, hosted by the Elders and featuring potluck desserts, will take place at 6 PM. At 7 PM, join us in the sanctuary for a special worship service, featuring music, communion, and imposition of ashes. If you cannot attend the dinner, please come to the worship service.

Here is the chancel flower donation list for March 2025. 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 each chancel flower listing is \$40. Thank you!

March 2
In memory of Nancy Kirk from her daughter, Barbara Kirk (Nancy passed on March 4th)
In memory of Charles May's March 4th birthday from his wife, Connie

March 9
In memory of Christian E. Wurster's March 15th birthday from Christine Wiley
Remembering with love, Wallace and Kier MacKinstry, and Granny's March 16th birthday, from the MacKinstry Rogers family

March 16
In memory of the Rev. Herman C. Ahrens Sr. and Mrs. Ella Ahrens from Lorene Ahrens and family
In memory of Jean MacKinstry Rogers on one of her favorite holidays, St. Patrick's Day, from Karen Filson (3/17/25)
In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Umstead and Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Gehman from Loretta Umstead

March 23
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 loving memory of Louise (Grammie) Snyder's March 30th birthday from her family

March 30
In memory of Lester Long from wife, Rachel, and family
In memory of Lesley Brown's March 31st birthday from her mother, Vivienne Brown



Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Joseph Daniel Smith, brother of JoAnn Sisian, who passed away recently.

Notes from Church Council



Financial Report: Susan Donahue

1. Income vs. Budget:

January income was \$38,552.00.

Of this total, \$33,570.28 came from tithes and offerings, falling short of the \$48,832.00 budgeted goal by \$15,261.72.

2. Expenses:

January expenses were \$47,688.93, which is \$4,331.88 lower than the budgeted amount of \$52,020.81.

3. Overall Impact:

Offering for January was well below expectations but expenses were lower than expected. While our income exceeded our expenses for the month, it was not enough to meet expenses annually.

Year-to-Date Financial Summary:

1. Income:

Total year-to-date income is \$38,552.00, including the investment transfer of \$23,666.00.

2. Expenses:

Total year-to-date expenses are \$47,688.93.

OCWM:

Donations to Our Church's Wider Mission for January were \$2,877.00. Year-to-date donations total \$2,877.00.

Please feel free to share your questions or concerns with Susan Donahue, Treasurer.

Staff and Contractor Reports:

Ministerial Staff (Tom Adil, Hilary Barrett, Andrew Paulson)

Andrew:

Lent: Rather than giving something up for Lent, think about doing something for Lent— a spiritual practice such as attending Holden Evening Prayer service during Lent at church on Wednesdays at 7 PM in the Sanctuary.

All things Artists Series: Encourage everyone to come and tell all your friends to come. You are how we reach people to come to the concert series.

Tom Adil:

Confirmation class of four students are holding regular meetings working with pastors.

Working with Educators to update Youth Safety policy for mentors.

Continued at right

Tech work is high priority. Example: poor signal in building, lack of external connectivity. Need for tech specialist.

Hilary Barrett:

She will be here for 3 more Sundays, and she has enjoyed her time serving here.

Abbie Lampe: Minister of Music for Children and Youth

(No Report)

Kay Peebles: Office Manager

Whites Road Park is reserved for the Easter Sunrise Service.

Plains Mennonite is reserved for the Church Picnic.

Thank you to Judy Leslie for working with me.

Deacon of the Morning and Hospitality schedules for the year have been distributed.

Grace Marchione: Communications Coordinator

Another big thank-you to all of Council for your support of the website project! Grace has been working with the staff to ensure the website serves all of its intended purpose of communication within and outside of our congregation.

Grace is making sure the St. John's public Facebook page is consistently updated, and that it works in conjunction with the website to share relevant information and make visitors feel welcome. We encourage members of St. John's to engage with the public page first and foremost; this will help make the church more visible out in the community.

Board Reports:

Trustees: (Alan Malachowski)

Physical needs: Andy Jay needs a custodial office. Where that will be and what that will look like to be decided.

We are looking to create a campaign to raise funds for the Exterior Restoration

Deacons: (Judy Leslie)

Social Host assignments are filled for March.

Signup sheets will be in the Narthex for future months.

We propose having our Basket Raffle drawing on June 8th at our Social after Lansdale Day.

Educators: (Mary Billy)

Family Game Night is Thursday, February 20 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Snacks and games will be provided but you are more than welcome to bring a game of your choosing. There is a future Family Game Night scheduled for March 20.

We are in the process of collecting items for the college goodie boxes.

Continued on next page

Elders: (Bill Cagney)

January average was 128 people at Sunday service. Estimated attendance for WNL is an average 15 to - 20 people. Holden Evening Prayer averages 12 to 17. Ash Wednesday is March 5 with a 6 PM dinner and a 7 PM service. Potluck desserts are needed.

March 9 we are welcoming Pastor Noonan. Elders are providing a chili luncheon.

Holy week: no WNL but Choir and Bells will practice.

Maundy Thursday there will be a 7 PM service in Fellowship Hall.

Good Friday there will be a 7 PM service in the Sanctuary.

Hospitality is short on volunteers.

Elders are reporting a 2025 Christmas Eve service-time change: two Christmas Eve services— a family service held at either 4 PM or 5 PM (to be determined later) and a candlelight service held at 9 PM with a musical prelude at 8:30.

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

**ARTICLES DUE FOR APRIL ISSUE
DEADLINE MARCH 10**

- † Palm Sunday
- † Maundy Thursday
- † Prayer Vigil
- † Good Friday
- † Holy Saturday
- † Easter Sunday
- † 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 267.886.5326.

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500 West Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446
Eric Kinsey, Editor: erickinsey46@gmail.com

**Soup
Sale
Sunday
March 2**



Order forms are in the Narthex and Elevator Lobby.

Were You There?



Thirty Years Ago: The Council approved the purchase of new robes for the Chancel Choir. Matching robes were ordered for the Acolytes.

Twenty-five Years Ago: A second Nursery was added. The one on the first floor was designated for infants and toddlers two years old and younger; the one on the second floor for children three to five years old.

Twenty Years Ago: A St. John's softball team was formed, open to those fifteen years and older, male and female.

Fifteen Years Ago: The St. Vincent de Paul clothing drive was held on March 18 in the Manna parking lot.

Ten Years Ago: From Amos the Church Mouse: I have always believed that the best way to observe Lent is by adding something to our daily routine that will "feed" our souls or enrich our lives and the lives of others. Yes, I know that many people choose to observe Lent by giving up something they enjoy, and that, too, can be very meaningful if it results in drawing us closer to God.

Five Years Ago: St. John's formed a Creation Justice Team to join a UCC initiative (Creation Justice Covenant) that aims to focus efforts on protecting God's creations and to address income inequality and environmental discrimination.

One Year Ago: There was a rose-pruning demonstration on March 16, starting in the library for a short presentation, then going outside for hands-on pruning of St. John's rose garden. This was open to the public.



Chancel Flower Ministry

Thank you for being part of this amazing ministry! The flower room is through the door on the left side of the Chancel—the side where the pastor preaches. All the supplies you need will be in this room.

- Plastic and Glass Floral Containers
- St. John’s Address Directory
- Chancel Flower Cards
- Bouquet Wrap
- Rubber Bands, Ribbon, and Address Stickers
- Paper and Writing Utensils

If you cannot make your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone and let me know!

Remove the flowers from the brass vases and green liners. Put the flowers into the plastic containers located on the shelf, the donated glass containers beneath the rolling cart, or wrap them in the foil on the shelf. Return the green liners to the brass vases. These belong to the florist.

Separate the flowers into as many bouquets or vases as you wish. Please keep in mind that the containers need to last for a month. Include a card for each bouquet. There are rubber bands or ribbon to secure them to the container.

Write a personalized letter if you wish! Be creative! You bring something to this ministry that only YOU can bring. Let that shine!

In the signup book note who the flowers were delivered to.

Thank you so much for being part of this life-changing ministry! Many lives have been touched by your efforts.

Kay Peebles, Office Manager

2025

March 2	Sarah Hogan
March 9	Tracey & Mark O’Neill
March 16	Kelly Bresadola
March 23	Gale Linderman
March 30	Vacant

Summary of Last Month and YTD Income and Expense	January 2025	January 2025
Income		
Current Tithes/Offerings	33,570.28	33,570.28
Event Income/Fundraisers	460.00	460.00
Facility Rental	990.00	990.00
Flowers	180.00	180.00
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	1.72	1.72
Rental Income	3,350.00	3,350.00
Total Income	38,552.00	38,552.00
Gross Income	38,552.00	38,552.00
Expenses		
Building Operation Expenses	6,349.97	6,349.97
Deacons Expenses	1,011.02	1,011.02
Educators Expenses	51.97	51.97
Elders Expenses	224.26	224.26
Operating Expenses	7,461.84	7,461.84
Salaries and Benefits	31,291.15	31,291.15
Trustees/Building Expenses	1,308.72	1,308.72
Total Expenses	47,688.93	47,688.93
Net Ordinary Income	-9,136.93	-9,136.93
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Artist Series Income—Special	2,560.00	2,560.00
Benevolence Offerings	6,582.00	6,582.00
Soup/Cookies Sales	569.00	569.00
Special Accounts	51,688.00	51,688.00
Total Other Income	61,399.00	61,399.00
Other Expense		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	611.72	611.72
Benevolence Disbursements	6,294.67	6,294.67
Soup Sale Expenditures	592.07	592.07
Special Fund Expenditures	6,150.00	6,150.00
Total Other Expenses	13,648.46	13,648.46
Net Other Income	47,750.54	47,750.54
Net Income	38,613.61	38,613.61

WELCOME REV. LINDA NOONAN

Dear St. John's Family:

The Search and Call team would like to welcome the Rev. Linda Noonan to our St John's family!

We are excited to announce that on Sunday November 17, the members of St. John's voted the Rev. Linda Noonan as our new Senior Pastor! Rev. Noonan is serving out her contract with her current church and will start her call with St John's in March 2025.

During the interview process for our new Senior Pastor, the Search and Call Team focused on the Core Competencies of our future Senior Pastor as outlined in our Church Profile:

Collaborative

Compassionate

Inspirational

During our Zoom and in-person interviews with Rev. Noonan, we found her to be very engaging and interested as she listened to our concerns with compassion and care. It was during our time together that Rev. Noonan shared that she was passionate about church being a place where we "figure out what justice looks like, practice our values and put people at the front that the world puts in the back." Rev. Noonan also said that she loves "creating worship experiences that are embodied, sensory-rich, intellectually stimulating, creative, inclusive and joyful."

Rev. Noonan also took it upon herself to visit our community with Pastor Fritz of Trinity Lutheran Church. Together they toured Manna on Main Street and many of our local businesses where she interacted with the local community members. The Search and Call Team felt this visit to our community reflected how interested and committed Rev. Noonan was to St. John's and mirrored our ministry goals and desired qualities, which were:

- *Recover from losses*
- *Grow membership and strengthen intergenerational relationships*
- *Engage with the community and increase visibility*
- *Strong spiritual and emotional support during discernment and growth phases*
- *Gently guide in new vision blending traditions with new ideas for growth and outreach and lead us in achieving goals outlined in visioning*



"... My search led me to charismatic churches and toxic theologies, and being told I could not lead because I was a woman. Then I discovered spiritual communities that practiced extravagant welcome, prophetic witness, and care for a world in need. I knew I was home and that this was to be my work."

Rev. Linda Noonan is an Ordained Minister with full standing in the United Church of Christ, and holds a current standing in the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. She resides in Haverford with her husband and two adult daughters. She is a member of St. Paul's UCC in Exton, Pennsylvania, and has been their full-time Designated Pastor since 2022.

The Search and Call Team felt Rev. Noonan had a very impressive resume. She was experienced and well rounded. She has the skills and experience to lead us now and into ***Who We Want to Become***. Her Education and vocational background speak to the skills and experience needed to lead a congregation, of the size, diversity, interests, at St. John's now and into the future. Her Community and Wider Church Involvement speak not only to leadership but to her interests and heart which align with St. John's profile and vision.

Below, please note Rev. Linda Noonan's bio:

A native Midwesterner (Chicago and Indiana), Linda Noonan has spent the last thirty-five years of ministry between South Africa and the United States. She has served a small Polish UCC church in Chicago, a multiracial UCC/Disciples of Christ congregation on the University of Chicago campus, and served as Senior Pastor of Chestnut Hill United Church (UCC/United Methodist) in Philadelphia for twenty-one years. She is currently serving as Designated Pastor at St. Paul's UCC in Exton. She has also worked as a hospice chaplain and a pediatric hospital chaplain. On appointment with the United Church Board for World Ministries, Linda served as Chaplain to Inanda Seminary (a girls' residential school in a township outside Durban) and Lecturer in Theology at the University of Durban Westville in South Africa.

At this time, Linda has completed her dissertation for her PhD in Religion and Social Change at United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, where she is also an adjunct professor, teaching public theology and faith-based community organizing and ritual. She is currently writing a book on the power of people organizing together across lines of faith and race to create change in their communities. As part of her wider commitment to the UCC, Linda will serve as incoming Cochair of the national UCC Palestine-Israel Network, which affirms the dignity and sacredness of all people, stands against oppression and injustice, and works for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel. She writes biblical commentary for the "Liturgy That Matters" series of *Enfleshed*, and is on the Editorial Board of the Community Organizing Journal.

Singing, photography, brewing kombucha, and writing are favorite pastimes. Linda's husband, Zolani Noonan-Ngwane, is a professor at Haverford College in Cultural Anthropology. They live with their two children, Sonja and Rah, along with Maggie (Margaret Mead), the big, red Irishdoodle, and Boney M, the Dumpster Cat. Together they grow native and medicinal plants, make music, and spend as much time as they can with family in Washington Island, Wisconsin, and South Africa.

As we look forward to a faithful and spiritually inspiring future here at St. John's, the Search and Call Team feel that Rev. Linda has the skills and experience to lead us now and into ***Who We Want to Become***.

With Peace and Gratitude:

The Search and Call Team of St. John's UCC

Search and Call Chair: Susan Fitzpatrick

Sally Atkiss, Chriss Bodde, Steve Butz, Bill Cagney, Anne Kinsey, Janet Morton, Emilie Truscott, and Liz Vanderburg,

Ex Officio Members: Mark Bruen and Deb Dayton

For your reference, additional bio information for Rev. Linda Noonan is available on the Senior Pastor bulletin board outside of the St. John's Library.

Family Game Night—St. Patrick's Theme

Join Us for our **NEW**

Monthly Community Event

Family Game Night at St. John's UCC

Thursday, February 20th

Time: 6:30-8:30 pm

*Join the Board of Educators for
Family Game night!*

All are welcome.

*There will be a selection of games available. Feel free to bring some of your favorites to share. Meet some new friends
★ and enjoy a fun night of gaming!*

*Beverages will be provided.
Bring a snack to share.*

St. John's UCC

in the Assembly Hall

Please RSVP via our Facebook Event Page, the sign-up sheets in the elevator lobby or Narthex OR by contacting the church office so we have enough tables available.

500 West Main St.
Lansdale, PA 19446

215-855-5489
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<https://st-johns-ucc.org>



THE
Artist Series
 AT ST. JOHN'S

Riverview Early Music

4pm • Sunday, March 9

Bucks County based Riverview Early Music will present late medieval, renaissance, and early baroque music played on period instruments. Come and embrace early music as a source of enjoyment and inspiration. Scan the QR code below to learn more!



The Artist Series Gala

7pm-10pm • Friday, March 14

Register for a night filled with dinner, dancing, entertainment from the North Penn Jazz Band, a top shelf open bar, and a silent auction filled with one-of-a-kind items. It's an evening like no other supporting *The Artist Series at St. John's*. Scan the QR code below learn more!



Thank you to our 2024-2025 Sponsors and Patrons!

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