



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

Enlightener

May 2025 Vol. XLV, No. 5

Off to Palestine: Standing Where Jesus Would Stand



Palestinian children in Massafer Yatta, West Bank, Palestine. October 2023.

On April 29, I will be traveling to Israel and Palestine to represent the United Church of Christ and St. John's UCC on a delegation of bishops and denominational leaders. I will return on May 10.

I am not going to walk where Jesus walked as much as I am going to stand where I believe Jesus would be standing right now – with those who have been forcibly displaced from their homes and ancestral lands, denied basic human rights, and are daily witnessing the genocide of their people.

And yet, the faith of the Palestinians is astonishing. We have so much to learn from them about trust in God and the power of community. They are begging us to not avert our eyes and inviting us to be in solidarity with those who suffer.

Throughout our scriptures, we are told that God stands with the oppressed, and God's people are called to defend those who are crushed by the powerful, whoever they may be. We can do that by praying, and also by taking action for an end to the war in Gaza, an end to illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, and a just peace for all people in the Holy Land.

This will be my second trip. I was there last in September and October of 2023, and we were in the West Bank when the war on Gaza began on October 7. This is a story I sent to the United Church of Christ News about our experience - <https://www.ucc.org/commentary-pastor-experienced-radical-hospitality-fleeing-west-bank-when-violence-broke-out/> (QR Code found below)

I feel proud to represent St. John's on this delegation and am so grateful for your support and care. I will do my best to send back some brief reports, which Grace Marchione, our Communications Coordinator, will share with the congregation. I welcome your prayers for those who are traveling, the ones we leave behind (like some of you, my family would have preferred that I sit this trip out!), and those that we meet.

In the words of the prophet Isaiah, let us "learn to do right; seek justice; defend the oppressed." (Isaiah 1:17.)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Linda". The script is fluid and cursive.

Pastor Linda

Scan here to read Rev Linda's UCC Article:





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5

Announcement for the New Member Dinner from Pastor Tom below:

Attention:
New Members Dinner!



On May 18 at 5 PM we invite all who are planning to join St. John's to a dinner and to meet our pastors and a few members from the congregation. We want to welcome our newest folks and provide them with a helpful orientation! There will be time for informal conversation about what's planned for our future and opportunities to get your questions answered. Please sign up for the dinner by contacting the office at office@st-johns-ucc.org or by calling 215.855.5489. If you are interested in joining, but haven't indicated so, please speak to Rev. Linda or Rev. Tom. They may be reached at pastorlinda@st-johns-ucc.org or pastortom@st-johns-ucc.org, or by calling the church and pressing 2 or 3. Thanks!

Church Picnic



Our church picnic will be held on June 1st at Plains Mennonite Church. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Signup sheets will be in the Narthex and Elevator Lobby beginning on May 11th.



SUNFLOWERS FOR UKRAINE

On Lansdale Day, June 7, along with the Basket Raffle, St. John's Creation Stewards will be selling giant sunflower plants to help raise funds for rebuilding Ukraine. We hope to have over 100 plants for sale. 100% of the donations will be sent to the UCC Ukraine Relief Fund. The sunflower plants (we had one in the driveway garden last year) grow 10+ feet tall and attract bees, butterflies, and birds. It would be great to see 100 giant sunflowers growing in the North Penn area this year!

ARTICLES DUE FOR JUNE ISSUE DEADLINE: MAY 11

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

- o Pentecost
- o Father's Day
- o Juneteenth
- o Graduates
- o 68th Anniversary of the UCC
- o Independence 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 267.886.5326.

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Eric Kinsey, Editor: erickinsey46@gmail.com

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

May 4 In memory of George and Dorothy Knipe, John and Diane Skibbe, and Wendy Hunt from Phil Hunt, John Skibbe III, and Donovan Thomas
In memory of Mary Franks from Suzanne Franks

May 11 Mother's Day Happy 96th birthday on May 13 and Happy Mother's Day to Lorene K. Ahrens from her loving family
In memory of their mothers, Ruth Ekberg and Mae Brown, from Sandy and Scott
In memory of Marie Evans from Jeane, Robert, and Beth Fritz
In memory of Mary Fritz from Robert, Jeane, and Beth Fritz
In memory of Lillian Wurster's birthday and Mother's Day from her daughter, Christine Wiley
In memory of Nancy Schultz on Mother's Day from her daughter, Merle Anne Morcom, and Walter Hawkins
In memory of Mary Franks from her parents, Donald and Suzanne Franks
In memory of George Ruth's May 15 birthday from Chriss Bodde and family
In memory of Daniel Elliott on our May 15 wedding anniversary from his wife, Elizabeth
In memory of Tobi Timko from Vada Timko

May 18 Congratulations to Sandy and Scott Brown, who will celebrate their 49th wedding anniversary on May 24

May 25 In memory of Michelle Lee Snyder on her 36th birthday, May 29. Love, Mom, Dad, Jim, Jackie, James, and the boys
In memory of June Hendricks's June 1 birthday from her nephew, John, and Susan Hendricks
In memory of Scott Harmon from dear friend Barbara Kirk

Summary Of Last Month And YTD Income And Expense	Mar 2025	Jan-Mar 2025
Income		
Current Tithes/Offerings	42,984.21	136,773.54
Event Income/Fundraisers	805.00	2,260.00
Flowers	761.00	1,021.00
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	1.62	4.95
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	115.00	145.00
Rental Income	3,350.00	10,050.00
Use of Building Income	100.00	1,390.00
Total Income	48,116.83	151,644.49
Gross Income	48,116.83	151,644.49
Expenses		
Building Operation Expenses	7,985.54	28,689.33
Deacons Expenses	1,549.82	3,317.99
Educators Expenses	0.00	51.97
Elders Expenses	633.79	1,180.81
Miscellaneous Expenses	173.60	184.20
Operating Expenses	6,737.25	28,631.62
Salaries and Benefits	37,355.03	102,070.34
Trustees/Building Expenses	2,986.51	5,352.86
Total Expenses	57,421.54	169,479.12
Net Operating Income	-9,304.71	-17,834.63
Budgeted Transfers from Investments	12,786.46	41,474.46
Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers	3,481.75	23,639.83
Other Income		
Artist Series Income—Special	10,706.00	17,941.00
Benevolence Offerings	8,014.75	24,701.75
Soup/Cookies Sales	988.00	1,557.00
Special Accounts	9,944.50	44,355.50
Total Other Income	29,653.25	88,555.25
Other Expenses		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	11,335.86	13,648.82
Benevolence Disbursements	9,370.00	22,221.67
Charitable Gift Market	0.00	0.00
Soup Sale Expenditures	988.00	1,580.07
Special Fund Expenditures	3,600.00	11,791.00
Total Other Expenses	25,293.86	49,241.56
Net Other Income	4,359.39	39,313.69
Net Income	-4,945.32	21,479.06
Net Income Plus Transfers	7,841.14	62,953.52

Chancel Flower Ministry

Thank you for being part of this amazing ministry! Many lives have been touched by your efforts! 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 & Glass Floral Containers
- Rubber Bands
- St. John's Address Directory
- Ribbon
- Chancel Flower Cards
- Bouquet Wrap
- Paper & Writing Utensils
- Address Stickers

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

Remove the flowers from the brass vases and green liners.

Put the flowers in the plastic containers located on the shelf or the donated glass containers beneath the rolling cart, or wrap them in the foil on the shelf in the flower room.

Be creative! You bring something to this ministry that only YOU can bring. Let that shine!

Return the green liners to the brass vases. These belong to the florist.

You may separate the flowers into as many bouquets/vases as you wish—just please keep in mind that the containers need to last the month.

Include a card for each bouquet. You may use rubber bands or ribbon to secure them to the container if you wish—some cards have holes punched to allow this.

Write a personalized letter if you wish!

Write in the signup book about who the flowers were delivered to on your assigned Sunday.

Thank you so much for being part of this life-changing ministry!

Kay Peebles, Church Office Manager

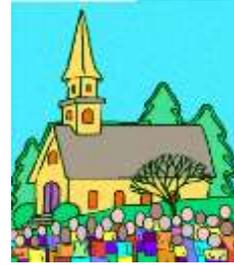
2025

May 4	Judy & Bill Zoll
May 11	Tracey & Mark O'Neill
May 18	Kay Peebles
May 25	Peter Conver

Were You There?

Thirty Years

Ago: May 7 was choir appreciation Sunday. All of the singers and ringers, under the direction of David Furniss and Grace Bruen, participated.



Twenty-five Years Ago: The Church School class on May 7 included painting of the Fireside Room.

Twenty Years Ago: St. John's Softball Team held a chili luncheon and cook-off on May 22 following the 10:15 worship service.

Fifteen Years Ago: The final phase of the courtyard project was underway in preparation for the installation of the Circlestone to be surrounded by the engraved pavers.

Ten Years Ago: St. John's UCC Potluck Productions began. The potluck dinner was accompanied by musical performances under the direction of Pastor Addie and Allison Bruen.

Five Years Ago: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was no May *Enlightener* published.

One Year Ago: We celebrated our Interim Senior Pastor, Dale Davis's, time with us at a luncheon on May 19. We also welcomed our new Church Office Manager, Kay Peebles, and our new Communications Coordinator, Grace Marchione.

First Quarter 2025 Financial Summary



1. **Income vs. Budget:**

- o Income to St John's, including planned transfers from our investments, is higher than budgeted. As of the end of March, we are \$5,366 above our expected income. We do expect giving in the first quarter to be high, as some members choose to do an annual donation from their retirement account in the beginning of the year. We are hoping for an additional boost in donations from our Easter services, when attendance tends to be higher.

2. **Expenses:**

- o Expenses for the first quarter are tracking to our budget. As of the end of March, we have spent \$1,470 less than budgeted.

3. **Investments:**

- o As of the end of March, St. John's investments have dropped by \$95,409, a change of -3.9%. The market has become more volatile in April, showing even greater loss. As of April 18, our investments stand at \$2.2 million, down from \$2.4 million at the start of 2025. While this is concerning, it is important to note that the current balance of our investments is still higher than the balance at the end of 2023. Given the volatility of the market, the Finance Committee will explore options to delay or reduce current investment transfers.

4. **OCWM:**

- o **OCWM:** Donations to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) for the first quarter total \$19,032, \$5,386 above our projected amount. Again, these high donation amounts can partially be attributed to those who give annually in the beginning of the year.

It's Basket Raffle Time!



Our annual basket raffle is upon us. Please consider donating a basket.

Be creative with your theme! It can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. Be sure to include a list of the contents of your basket.

Please let Judy Johnston or a Deacon know the theme of your basket as soon as possible.

Drop off your basket in the Church Office the week of May 5th through the 10th.

The baskets will be displayed in the Fireside Room and tickets will be sold before and after church on May 11, 18, 25, at the church picnic June 1, and at Lansdale Day June 7. The winners will be drawn at social hour on June 8.

This has been a wonderful fundraiser over the years, and this year's earnings will be donated to the exterior renovation fund.

APRIL COUNCIL MEETING RESCHEDULED

April's Council meeting has been deferred a week so that all members can take time to focus on the spiritual significance of the Holy Week of Easter instead of the business of the church. Look for inclusive Council minutes in the June 2025 *Enlightener*.

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 9:30 AM Art of Living Foundation 2:30 PM Baby Shower
4 9 AM Stitchers & Confirmation Class 11:30 AM Stewardship	5 Basket Raffle Drop Off Begins	6 7 PM AA	7 10 AM Fire Drill 5:45 PM Wednesday Night Live 7 PM Holden Evening Prayer	8 6:30 PM Girl Scouts	9 6 PM North Penn Chess Club	10 9:30 AM Women's Retreat & Art of Living Foundation
11 <i>Mother's Day</i> Enlightener Due Date Basket Raffle Ticket Sales Begin	12 7 PM Council	13 5 PM Lansdale School of Business Graduation Practice 7 PM AA	14 5:45 PM Wednesday Night Live 7 PM Holden Evening Prayer	15 6:30 PM Family Game Night	16 <i>Lansdale School of Business Graduation</i> 6 PM North Penn Chess Club	17 9 AM Faith Community Nursing 9:30 AM Art of Living Foundation
18 11:45 AM Confirmation Class 5 PM New Member Dinner	19	20 4 PM Fire Drill 7 PM AA	21	22 9:30 AM Enlightener Folding 6:30 PM Girl Scouts	23 6 PM North Penn Chess Club	24 9:30 AM Art of Living Foundation
25	26	27 7 PM AA	28	29	30 6 PM North Penn Chess Club	31



In memory of Warren & Lorraine Badger from their daughter, Susan & John Hendricks

In memory of Martine Boorse from husband, Dick

In memory of Carlton & Madge Bruen from children Mark & Grace Bruen

In memory of Pop-pop Burke from Ashley Thorpe

In memory of my father, Richard Burke from Lisa McClay

In memory of A. Herbert & Kay Crouthamel from Kevil Krail, Debbie Krail, & Family

In memory of Beverley Drucis from her son, Scott Vanderburg

In memory of Grace & Pete Ehly from daughter, Dean Meacham

In memory of Donald & Bernice Gibson from Donald Gibson Jr & Rosemarie Gibson

In memory of Robert & Marian Gilbert from Donald Gibson Jr & Rosemarie Gibson

In memory of Anne Haines from Jo-Ann Sine

In memory of June Hendricks from her nephew, John, and Susan Hendricks

In memory of Daniel & Anna Henninger from Lyn & Don Huntsinger

In memory of Archie & Blanche Huntsinger from Lyn & Don Huntsinger

In memory of Beverley Jackson from her brother, Scott Vanderburg

In memory of Warren Koenig from Judy Koenig & Family

In memory of James "David" Krail from Kevin Krail, Debbie Krail, & Family

In memory of Judy Lederach from the Slover family

In memory of Marilyn Loos from her daughter, Liz Vanderburg

In memory of Mother, Casilda Luzares from Luchi Luzares

In memory of Charles R. May from wife, Connie

In memory of Ray McNamee from children, Mark & Grace Bruen

In memory of parents Catharine & Albert Menzinger from Kay Fiala

In memory of Allen C. Moyer (Bud) from Ruth & Family

In memory of Jane & Junie Nyce from Suzanne & Don Franks & Family

In memory of George Richardson from Thomas & Jean Biggs

In memory of Michelle, Jim, Luise, & Duane Snyder from Jerry, Mary Ellen, Jackie, James & the boys

In memory of Alma, Bertha, Earl & Emma Swartley from Susan & John Hendricks

In memory of my husband Tim & daughter, Tobi from Vada Timko

In memory of Bob & Bette Trevorah from Pat, Bob, & Bill Trevorah

In memory of Alberta Walsh from Pat, Bob, & Bill Trevorah

In memory of Loved Ones from the Keim / Baker Family

In memory of Loved Ones from James, Frances, & Siobhan Morris

In memory of husband, Vic, daughter, Vicki, & granddaughter, Jessie Lynn from Doris Latta & Family

In memory of Our Parents from Sally & Wayne Fetterman

In memory of Our Parents from Judy & Chuck Neidhardt



Acknowledgements–March 2025



In Memory of Leslie Brown

To the Memorial Fund from:
her mother, Vivienne Brown



In Honor of Matt Carson

To the Good Samaritan Fund from:
Phyllis Richardson

“Thanks for your dedication and hard work as Treasurer at St. John’s.”



In Memory of Judy Lederach

To the Exterior Restoration Fund from:
Lyn & Don Huntsinger
Sally & Steve Jarinko
Robert & Carol Hammel
Ken & Bonnie Hales

Dan & Lillian Panachyda
Judy & Bill Leslie
Richard & Wendy O’Connor

To the Good Samaritan Fund from:
Phyllis Richardson



In Memory of Robert Linderman

To the Memorial Fund from:
Mary Billy
Robert & Carol Hammel
Barbara Monaghan

John & Francine Worthington
Jo-Ann Sine
Fishers True Value Hardware Inc

To the Exterior Restoration Fund from:
Judy & Bill Leslie



In Memory of Ida Scott

To the Memorial Fund from:
Ron & Jeanne Mancica



Join Us for our **NEW**

Monthly Community Event

Family Game Night at St. John's UCC

Thursday, May 15th

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 old or new 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
office@st-johns-ucc.org

FB: *St John's UCC Lansdale, PA*
<https://st-johns-ucc.org>
Under the "events" section



11-2-25

**PHILADELPHIA
BRASS**

12-7-25

**CHRISTMAS
FESTIVAL**

3-6-26

**THE ARTIST
SERIES GALA**

THE
Artist Series
AT ST. JOHN'S

2025 – 2026 SEASON



Scan the QR code or visit
www.stjohnsartistseries.org
for more information on
upcoming concerts and events.

3-22-26

**HAYDN'S
THE CREATION**

4-12-26

LATITUDE 39

5-3-26

**KATELYN
EMERSON**