



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

***Enlightener***  
June 2025 Vol. XLV, No. 6

## **Celebrating Our Youth**



### **Inaugural Meeting of the St. John's UCC Youth Group, May 18, 2025**

Jesus said, "Let those kids come!" Okay, according to the gospel writers, he really said "Let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." Mark 10:14, Luke 18:6. (It's also possible he actually said something closer to "Yo! Let those kids come!")

One of the things I am most excited about as I settle in at St. John's (it's only been a little over two months!) is connecting with our children and youth. I love sitting with the kids on the steps each Sunday, was fortunate to spend a session with our Confirmands, and have relished my conversations with our youth. The big news is this: St. John's UCC now has a Youth Group!

On May 18, a handful of young folks (middle school and up) generously shared their time, thoughts, and feelings during our Listening Session. Over pizza, we talked about what we each like about church, what we would like to see more of, and what we would change if we could (getting up early on Sunday was a shared struggle). They are eager to engage big questions, offer their gifts, and be service to the St. John's community as well those beyond our doors. We're planning a fun summer outing – stay tuned for details. By the time we finished our meeting, they had decided they wanted to start a Youth Group!

I've come away with some good notes. I take their input seriously, and look forward to finding ways to continue to not only celebrate our young folks, but have them as conversation partners as we together discern God's dreams for St. John's UCC.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Linda". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Pastor Linda



### Were You There?

#### Forty Years Ago:

Tim Ahrens was ordained at St. John's on June 23, 1985.



#### Thirty Years Ago:

A hi-low cardiovascular program began. Asked to bring a mat or towel for floor work and hand weights for strengthening, men and women of all ages were invited.

**Twenty-five Years Ago:** A ten-minute video about St. John's people, its worship, activities, and role in the community was completed.

**Twenty Years Ago:** St. John's June picnic was an old-fashioned country and western barbecue at Parkside Place in Upper Gwynedd. Our guests were the Brass Choir from the Anhalt Regional Church in Germany.

**Fifteen Years Ago:** From Rev. Dr. Sue's front page of the *Enlightener*: When we remember [difficult times past] we take the broken pieces of our lives—lives that have been dismembered by tragedy and injustice—and re-member them into something whole.

**Ten Years Ago:** we had our third annual Mini Golf Outing at Freddy Hill Fun Center. All ages welcome!

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**Five Years Ago:** We celebrated 40 years of Rev. Dr. Sue's devoted service to St. John's.

**One Year Ago:** Our Library featured titles reflective of summer: Father's Day, Juneteenth, and Pride Month.

### Articles Due for September Issue Deadline: August 10

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](mailto:erickinsey46@gmail.com). If you have questions, please call Eric Kinsey at 267.866.5326.

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](mailto:erickinsey46@gmail.com)



*Our thoughts and prayers are with the friends and families of Charlene Lewis; Rich Haring, brother-in-law of Sally and Don Atkiss; and Lynn Richardson, daughter of Phyllis and George Richardson, who passed away recently.*

## WHAT'S UP IN COUNCIL?



### **Financial Report, Susan Donahue:**

Overall net income is doing well—about \$2,800 off budget. We are delaying transfers of the full amount normally done for the quarter and doing it monthly due to the insecurity of the stock market at this time. Grace Bruen added that the congregational giving is above budget.

See page 8 of this *Enlightener* for an operating financial summary of April 2025 income and expenses.

### **Staff Reports:**

#### **Ministerial Staff (Rev. Dr. Linda Noonan, Rev. Tom Adil, Andrew Paulson, Abbie Lampe):**

Pastor Linda stated her gratitude for support for her trip to Palestine and will be doing a presentation of her trip as soon as she finds an open date after the worship service.

She has updated the bulletin with a new font for those with visual difficulties and put in new information to make our building more accessible to newcomers.

Linda is working on a community covenant document. She has had listening sessions with some of our congregants. Sunday, May 18, she will be doing a listening session for youth and young adults.

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More listening sessions are on the horizon for young families with children, and for LGBTQ folks, for worship and general information.

Pastor Tom has been assisting with the listening sessions and has been doing visitations. Listening to the newcomers has been helpful because of their perspectives in incorporating their ideas into our new vision for St. John's.

Andrew spoke about the very professional recording of the Brahms Requiem performance, using multiple camera angles and superior audio recording. He hopes everyone gets a chance to see and hear it.

Our choir will be at Trinity Lutheran for an 8:30 service Sunday, May 18, then back to St. John's for the 10:15 service.

Abbie Lampe spoke about the fun the kids had decorating the sidewalks with chalk during Easter week. The Children's Choir has concluded for the season.

Kay Peebles stated that, after hearing concerns that some people were not receiving emails or updates, she and Grace M. came up with a solution whereby people can opt back in.

Grace Marchione talked about the new banner in front of the church that can be used in a variety of ways, not just for announcements of events but inspiring messages for the community as well.

*[continued on next page]*

She started an Instagram account and is looking to expand our video abilities. Grace will be reaching out to folks to do some informal video shoots about church activities.

### **Board Reports:**

#### Trustees: (Alan Malachowski)

Kudos to Tim Leslie for his work as an interim custodian. He will be leaving at the end of May so if there is a college student in need of summer work, please have him/her contact Alan Malachowski. Talks are continuing about a new Facilities Manager. The front steps repairs have resulted in 2 estimates, both over \$100,000. A congregational vote will be required for this sum. Hopefully, work will begin by early June and be completed by September 1. A short congregational meeting for the vote will be held Sunday, June 1.

#### Deacons: (Judy Leslie)

Baskets for the raffle are on display in the Fireside Room. Tickets will be available after church services for the next few Sundays, at Lansdale Day, and at the church picnic. Volunteers are needed to help sell tickets on Lansdale Day. Judy Johnston will have a sign-up sheet on Sunday.

#### Educators: (Mary Billy)

We are working with Pastor Tom to find mentors for the confirmands, and with Abbie on Connect 3.

They will be at the picnic providing games for kids and adults and are continuing with game night at 6:30 on Wednesdays through the summer. Confirmation is June 8; The Educators are the social hosts.

#### Elders: (Chriss Bodde)

There are mentors for each new member at St. John's.

WNL attendance average was 22; the 10:15 service average was 157; Easter Sunrise Service was 150, and the 10:15 service was 175.

### **New Business:**

It was noted that the four Boards of Council are largely focused on the internal function of St Johns, and there is a need to formalize and organize a more "outward-facing" facet of the church. With this in mind, there was discussion about the creation of an outreach team to be of service to the most vulnerable in our community.

### **Ongoing Business:**

A Garden Club Tour is scheduled for June 14

The Elders reminded Council that the fire doors should be closed, not propped open, during Montessori hours and when the building is empty.

October 12 is the 10-year anniversary of open and affirming status.

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## 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.

Flowers should be delivered after the 9:30 AM service or on Monday. Deliver the flowers to whomever you want—anyone who is celebrating a birthday or anniversary, people who are ill, in the hospital, who need a little extra care. They need not be members of St. John's. They can be your friends, loved ones, neighbors. The flower room is through the door on the left side of the chancel—the side where the pastor preaches. All the supplies 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 in the vases located on the shelves in the flower room.

**Return the green liners to the brass vases, they belong to the florist. Include a card for each bouquet. Write in the signup book who the flowers were delivered to; this will help us avoid replicating recipients.** 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

June 1	Tracey & Mark O'Neill
June 8	Grace & Gerry Linderman
June 15	Shelly Longcoy
June 22	Judy Johnston
June 29	Kay Peebles & Grace Marchione
July 6	Gayle & Bob George
July 13	Kay Peebles
July 20	Lillian & Dan Panachyda
July 27	Mary Billy
August 3	Cindy Reese
August 10	Lisa Thim
August 17	Barb & Don Fretz
August 24	Susan & John Hendricks
August 31	



St. John's will be recognizing graduates from high school, grad school, etc, on Sunday, June 8 during the 9:30 am worship. If you would like your graduate's name to be included, please contact the church office.

## They're Back!

Yes, St. John's, the Midyear Financial Report and Sundaes on Sunday are coming back to Social Hour on June 29 in the Assembly Hall.



Finance Chair Grace Bruen

will give her report with slides, giving an in-depth look of St. John's financial picture. And to entice members to hear and see the report, the Stewardship Committee will provide ice cream and all the fixings for your sundae creation.

First—the pandemic—then all of the work done for the search for a settled senior pastor interrupted this tradition. But St.



John's folks know a good thing when they hear and taste it. So, come to the other side of the partition with your sundae and learn more about our financial picture.

## Father's Day

The nation's first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910,

in the state of Washington. However, it was not until 1972—58 years after President Woodrow Wilson made Mother's Day official—that the day honoring fathers became a nationwide holiday in the United States.



Here is the chancel flower donation list for



June, July, and August. Please review this list and contact the church office if you would like to change any of this information.

Reminder—The requested donation for the chancel flower listing is \$40. Thank you!

### **June 1**

In memory of The Rev. Herman and Mrs. Ella Ahrens from Lorene Ahrens  
In memory of Mr. Robert M. Jenkinson and Mrs. Emma Kemp Jenkinson from Joan Jenkinson Haag Beiter

### **June 8 Pentecost/Confirmation**

In memory of Sara Line's birthday from her sister, Jeane, and Bob Fritz  
In celebration of Polly Hartzell's birthday on June 11 from Dee Reedman and Family

### **June 15 Father's Day**

In memory of Warren Koenig from wife, Judy  
In memory of Robert D. Schultz from his daughter, Merle Anne Morcom, and Walter Hawkins  
In memory of David Evans from Jeane Fritz and family  
In memory of William C. Fritz from Robert, Connie, Judy, and family  
In memory of Charlotte Yocum's June 22 birthday from her family  
In memory of Jim Stevenson on Father's Day and his 76th birthday on June 15 from his wife, Lois, and family

### **June 22**

In honor of their June 24 wedding anniversary and in memory of their granddaughter, Caitlyn Jade Liebel, by Grace and Gerald Linderman Jr.  
In memory of Thomas Timko, husband and father, from Vada Timko and son, Tim, and family  
In memory of Tobi Timko, daughter and sister, from Vada Timko and brother, Tim, and family

### **June 29**

In memory of Eric Kirk from his mother, Barbara Kirk

### **July 6**

In memory of Fred Brunner's July 7 birthday from his wife, Thelma

### **July 13**

In memory of dear friend Scott Harmon's July 15 birthday from Barbara Kirk

In memory of Evaline Cagney from her husband, Bill Cagney

In memory of Roy Ekberg's July 19 birthday from his daughter, Sandy, and Scott Brown

### **July 20**

In celebration of Dr. Bill Hartzell's July 24 birthday from Dee Reedman and family

### **July 27**

In memory of Nancy Kirk's July 29 birthday from her daughter, Barbara Kirk

In memory of Richard (Pete) Mininger's July 31 birthday from his wife, Shirley, son Douglas, and daughters Dawn and Connie

### **August 03**

Remembering Rev. Sue on the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of her passing on August 4, with love from the Bertolette family

In memory of Warren Badger's August 6 birthday from his daughter, Susan, and John Hendricks

### **August 10**

In memory of Rev. Sue on what would be her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 13 from her loving family

### **August 17**

In memory of Ethel I. Pool's August 22 birthday from her family

In memory of Herb and Kay Crouthamel's August 22 wedding anniversary from their daughter, Debbie Krail, and family

In memory of Edward Clayton and Margaretta Pole from their family

### **August 24**

In honor of the Rev. Frank and Beatrice Pehrson's September 5 wedding anniversary from their daughter, Karen, and Mark Methlie

Summary of Last Month And YTD Income And Expense	Apr 2025	Jan-Apr 2025
<b>Income</b>		
Current Tithes/Offerings	29,070.00	165,843.14
Event Income/Fundraisers	468.00	2,728.00
Flowers	710.00	1,731.00
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	1.35	6.30
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	31.00	176.00
Rental Income	3,350.00	13,400.00
Use of Building Income	0.00	1,390.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>33,630.35</b>	<b>185,274.44</b>
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>33,630.35</b>	<b>185,274.44</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Building Operation Expenses	6,106.89	34,797.22
Deacons Expenses	1,229.69	4,547.68
Educators Expenses	0.00	51.97
Elders Expenses	544.94	1,725.75
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	184.20
Operating Expenses	9,183.45	37,815.07
Salaries and Benefits	35,756.17	137,826.51
Trustees/Building Expenses	6,802.99	12,155.85
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>59,624.13</b>	<b>229,103.25</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>-25,993.78</b>	<b>-43,828.81</b>
<b>Budgeted Transfers From Investments</b>	<b>14,062.50</b>	<b>55,536.96</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>-11,931.28</b>	<b>11,708.15</b>
<b>Other Income</b>		
Artist Series Income—Special	2,373.00	20,314.00
Benevolence Offerings	2,712.00	27,413.75
Soup/Cookies Sales	0.00	1,557.00
Special Accounts	2,175.00	46,530.50
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>7,260.00</b>	<b>95,815.25</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	31,298.35	44,947.17
Benevolence Disbursements	8,441.75	30,663.42
Charitable Gift Market	0.00	0.00
Soup Sale Expenditures	0.00	1,580.07
Special-Fund Expenditures	5,849.10	17,640.10
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>45,589.20</b>	<b>94,830.76</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>-38,329.20</b>	<b>984.49</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-64,174.28</b>	<b>-42,695.22</b>
<b>Net Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>-50,111.38</b>	<b>12,841.74</b>

## Remembering Juneteenth

“We’re not free until we’re all free.... We’ve got so many things that we need to attend to, and I contend that we can do it so much better if we’re all on the same page.” – Ms. Opal Lee, The Grandmother of Juneteenth

“What we’re trying to get people to understand is that Juneteenth is freedom. And I don’t mean just for Black people, or Texas people. It’s freedom for everybody. Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights.”

The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863, was meant to establish that all enslaved people in the Confederate States “are, and henceforward shall be free.” However, we do not celebrate the freedom of slaves until five months and 18 days later.

Juneteenth is now a federal holiday. It takes place on the 19th of June and celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. The holiday has been celebrated in Texas since 1980 and spread throughout the country until it was made a federal holiday in 2021—only four years ago—due to the hard work of activist Opal Lee, the “Grandmother of Juneteenth.”



Ms. Opal Lee,  
Grandmother of  
Juneteenth

*[continued on next page]*



In September 2016, at age 89, she walked from Fort Worth, Texas, to Washington DC to raise awareness about Juneteenth. “I started walking... I just knew that somebody would notice a little old lady in tennis shoes, and they did,” she told the *Star-Telegram*. Ms. Opal states plainly that she did not walk the full 1,400 miles, “but I did walk some hundreds of miles” she told *Texas Monthly*, mentioning that at different stops on her journey—like Shreveport, Louisiana; Little Rock, Arkansas; St. Louis, Missouri; Chicago, Illinois; and Atlanta, Georgia—“everybody was so nice.” When she finally arrived in DC in January 2017, the petition she presented to the US Congress had 1.5 million signatures calling for Juneteenth to be made a national holiday.

Ms. Opal started her walking campaign again in 2019, making it through seven states before COVID forced her to stop. However, when President Joe Biden signed the legislation making Juneteenth a national holiday on June 17, 2021, one year after the murder of George Floyd, Ms. Opal Lee was at his side.

So, why June 19th? The date marks the day, 901 days after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, when troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, in 1865 to take control of the state and make sure all slaves would be freed. Even though General Robert E. Lee surrendered two months earlier in Virginia, slavery was not truly affected in Texas. It took US Major General Gordon Granger, standing on Texas soil, to read General Order No. 3: “The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with the National Archives, all slaves are free.”

It makes a good story, but the reality of racism is much darker. The Emancipation Proclamation only applied to places under Confederate control, not to slave-holding border states or rebel areas already under Union control. Most enslaved people got out themselves, fleeing behind Union lines as the Civil War moved south. In reality, the government had to rely on brute shows of force and simply hope that slave owners would see reason. They did not march into every plantation and ensure all the slaves were freed. To that end, historian and genealogist Antoinette Harrell discovered cases of African Americans still living as slaves 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, well into the 1960s.

“I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. Most shocking of all was their fear. I saw time and time again; people were afraid to share their stories. They were afraid to give this information to me, even behind closed doors decades later. They believed that they might somehow get sent back to a plantation that wasn’t even operating anymore. As I would realize, people are afraid to share their stories, because so many of the same families who owned these plantations are still running local government and big businesses. They still hold the power. So the poor and disenfranchised really don’t have anywhere to share these injustices without fearing major repercussions. To most folks, it just isn’t worth the risk. So, sadly, most situations of this sort go unreported.”  
— Ms. Antoinette Harrell

What I take away from this is that Juneteenth is not just a celebration of the end of slavery, it is a reminder that change, even good change, comes not from written law but from kind and firm people on the ground doing what is right. Freedom comes from our community stepping up and showing up for one another. Freedom comes from a rejection of dehumanization; because if you allow yourself to believe that someone is anything but a living, breathing being, you can justify anything.

This is something reflected in our current world so aptly. Many Americans can sleep soundly at night because things are not happening to “us.” However, we are all God’s children. As siblings in Christ, it is our duty to stand with those who need our help, to lift up the voices of those who need to be heard. We are ALL made in God’s image, from natural-born citizens to undocumented immigrants, retail workers to CEOs, Ukrainians to Palestinians, newborns to death-row inmates. As long as we remind ourselves of this simple fact, all is not lost.

Kay Peebles

### Operating Financial Summary April 2025

	Actual	Budgeted	Over (Under) Budget	Variance %
April Total Income*	\$ 47,693	\$ 77,546	\$ (29,853)	-38%
April Expenses	\$ 59,624	\$ 57,658	\$ 1,966	3%
April Net Income	\$ (11,931)	\$ 19,888	\$ (31,819)	-160%
YTD Income*	\$ 240,811	\$ 266,589	\$ (25,778)	-10%
YTD Expenses	\$ 229,103	\$ 228,608	\$ 495	0%
YTD Net Income	\$ 11,708	\$ 37,981	\$ (26,273)	-69%

\*includes budgeted transfers

OCWM YTD Giving	\$ 20,974	\$ 16,469	\$ 4,505	27%
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**HONOR YOUR VIETNAM VETERAN WHO RETURNED  
HOME AND LATER DIED THROUGH THE  
*IN MEMORY PROGRAM***



**The Wall That Heals will be in  
Montgomery Township, PA  
from July 10 - 13th**

To have your veteran included as part of the mobile Education  
Center display when The Wall That Heals is on display in  
Montgomery Township, apply by **June 9th.**



VIETNAM VETERANS  
MEMORIAL FUND  
FOUNDERS OF THE WALL

For more information, visit  
[www.vvmf.org/In-Memory-Program/](http://www.vvmf.org/In-Memory-Program/)  
or scan the following QR code:



# June 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 New Member Sunday</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Stitches <b>9 AM</b> *LS: Families with Children <b>12 PM</b> Church Picnic	2	3  <b>7 PM AA</b>  <b>8 PM</b> LS: Families with Children (Zoom)	4  <u>10 AM Fire Drill</u>  <b>7 PM</b> LS: Wednesday Night Live (Zoom)	5  <b>5:45 PM</b> Lansdale Montessori Graduation	6  <b>6 PM</b> North Penn Chess Club	7  <b>Lansdale Day</b>  <b>9:30 AM</b> Art of Living Foundation
<b>8 Confirmation &amp; Graduation Sunday</b>	9  <b>7:15 PM</b> Council	10  <b>7 PM AA</b>	11  <b>7 PM</b> LS: LGBTQ+ Folks (Zoom)	12  <b>1 PM</b> Stampers	13  <b>6 PM</b> North Penn Chess Club	14  <b>9:30 AM Women's Retreat &amp;</b> Art of Living Foundation
15 <i>Father's Day</i>	16	17  <b>7 PM AA</b>	18	19 <i>Juneteenth office closed</i>  <b>6:30 PM</b> Family Game Night	20  <b>6 PM</b> North Penn Chess Club	21  <b>9:30 AM</b> Art of Living Foundation
22 <b>Pride Sunday</b>	23	24  <b>7 PM AA</b>	25	26	27  <b>6 PM</b> North Penn Chess Club	28  <b>9:30 AM</b> Art of Living Foundation
29	30					

\*LS stands for "Listening Session" with our Pastors



## Acknowledgements – April & May 2025



### **In Memory of Ida Scott**

To the Memorial Fund from:  
Ron & Jeanne Mancia



### **In Memory of Judy Lederach**

To the Exterior Restoration Fund from:  
Richard & Wendy O'Connor



### **In Honor of Bob Tanis's 94<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

To the Exterior Restoration Fund from:  
Steve & Debbie Hendricks



### **In Memory of Judy Lederach, Linda Horst, & Alan Johnston**

To the Exterior Restoration Fund from:  
Anonymous



If you wish to donate to a fund in honor or memory of someone, please include the dedication with your offering. It will be recognized in the Enlightener, weekly bulletins, and eHerald.

**Join Us for our NEW**

**Monthly Community Event**

# Family Game Night

at St. John's UCC

**Thursday, June 19th**

**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](mailto: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](http://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**