



JUNE 2 - CALL TO CARE TRAINING - 6:30 p.m. (Parlor)
 JUNE 6 - WORSHIP/COMMUNION - MISSION CELEBRATION
 JUNE 12 - PCCUCC ZOOM CONFERENCE
 JUNE 13 - WORSHIP - O & A CELEBRATION
 JUNE 13 - 11:30 a.m. - ZOOM FELLOWSHIP HOUR
 JUNE 16 - CALL TO CARE TRAINING - 6:30 p.m. (PAR)
 JUNE 20 - WORSHIP - FATHERS' DAY
 JUNE 24 - WIRED WORD STUDY GROUP (ZOOM)
 JUNE 27 - WORSHIP

JUNE

DATED MATERIAL

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St. John's UCC
 1050 Buffalo Road
 Lewisburg, PA 17837
 stjohnslewisburg.org





Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me". Matthew 25:35

It's been a strange season in the world, in our nation, in our communities. It follows that it's been a challenging season for us congregations. I am grateful for Pastor Gary Nottis' reflections in the beautifully written article and prayer addressing this "post-pandemic" time into which we are moving.

How does this time of transitioning out of the pandemic impact the life of the church in general and St. John's UCC in particular? That's a question that may be running through your hearts and brains as it has been through mine. Prayerfully, we've been discerning step by step how best to regather, reopen the facility and reengage in the ministries of the church. We know that those prayerful decisions will continue in the days ahead and sometimes our ability to know what it best is challenged. Those are the times when we remind ourselves that we make the best decisions we are able with God's help. Then, we trust and pray. Sometimes that's all we can do.

One of the things I have been reflecting upon is the best ways for us to be hospitable when we are still trying to figure "how to be open". My prayer is that we can create a spirit of welcome and comfort (as much as able) for those who participate in the life of the congregation, whether physically or virtually. My hope is that we can "feel at home" in the church - which we all know is more than a building. Some have been undergoing a shift in knowing how to be with each other in many new ways, through Facebook, ZOOM and other technology, while at the same time some have been figuring out how to do the mask (or no mask) social distancing (or not social distancing) dance while in shared space. It's all been interesting and at times awkward.

Whether we are gathered or scattered my hope is that we can be a church of warm welcome - for each other as members and friends - and for the stranger (friends we haven't met yet). Hospitality is an ongoing work. As Robert Shnase reminds us "hospitality has us seeing people as Jesus sees them and seeing Jesus in the people God brings before us." Hospitality is an ongoing work and a faith practice. My prayer is that we can provide much spiritual and emotional hospitality to each other during this challenging season of reentry. My prayer is that we may also be hospitable as a daily spiritual practice in our world full of people who need to see us through the eyes of God's love. As part of this practice we will be sharing in ongoing conversation about how God calls us to be fully welcoming to our neighbors, our coworkers, our fellow students, and our world. The hope is that through these conversations and efforts we will be challenged to grow in faith, to love more deeply and to experience God's unconditional love with each other.

Blessings!

Alice



Birthdays & Anniversaries

06/07 Johnson, Elva & Rev. James
 06/13 Gemberling, Suzann & Stephen
 06/22 Busler, Jessica & Brad
 06/23 Saltsgiver, Jennifer & Daniel
 06/24 Drasher, Debra & Kevin Dock
 06/24 Zug, Janet & Dr. Ron
 06/27 Snayberger, Kelly & Duane
 06/28 Ledgerwood, Dee & Bill

06/01 Timothy Renno Jr.
 06/02 Alexander Renno
 06/04 Colleen Ross
 06/09 Lola Fuller
 06/09 Linda McKissick
 06/18 Keira Aulenbach
 06/19 Joanne Stahley
 06/20 Edward Crow
 06/24 Carol Berry
 06/27 Carol Fisher
 06/28 Linda Williams
 06/30 Brady Brouse

Wired Word ZOOM

You're invited to a ZOOM Sunday School class on a Thursday evening in June. Linda Williams, Gary Nottis, and Pastor Alice will lead us in a discussion about one of the Wired Word topics. We will let you know ahead of time which topic we will use as our focus. So, mark your calendars for a **ZOOM gathering on Thursday, June 24th, at 7 p.m.** The ZOOM link will be sent out a few days before the gathering. **Please call the office no later than June 23rd, to be added to the ZOOM link email.** Join us for reflection on scripture in conversation with an event or idea from the current news.



APRIL 2021 REPORT

Current Operating Receipts	\$	25,966.13
Current Operating Disbursements	\$ -	18,075.71
Current Operating Balance	\$	7,890.42

We are living into a post-pandemic time. We have spent over a year in social isolation with restrictions that have disrupted most aspects of our lives. It has been a time of anxiety, loneliness, anger, and burn-out. We have spent months hoping and praying for a return to the lives we had before the words “COVID-19” entered our everyday vocabulary. But now that the widespread availability of effective vaccines is making that dream a growing reality, many of us find ourselves hesitant, even frightened, to embrace it.

According to mental health experts Marcantonio Spada and Ana Nikčević, a number of us are suffering from what they call, “COVID-19 anxiety syndrome.” They note that this condition is defined by behaviors “that can keep people locked into a state of continuous anxiety and fear.”** As a result, individuals remain depressed, scared to move about in public, and fearful that they will be infected by COVID-19 if they do. They also feel physically weak and lacking in energy. These factors combine to make transitioning into life beyond the pandemic very difficult. I, myself, can identify with some of these things.

It doesn't help those who are struggling that a significant number of people are hesitant to get vaccinated or refuse to do so. It also doesn't help that public health officials offer confusing guidance or appear to be moving too fast in lifting COVID restrictions. Add to all this the release of studies showing that the vaccines are not triggering good immune responses in people with certain medical conditions, like leukemia, as well as the disparaging looks and comments being made by some individuals who have discarded their masks and refuse to live with restrictions any longer. “COVID-19 anxiety syndrome” may very well be with us for some time, much to the detriment of many.

So, what do we do? During times like this, I find that it helps to settle into the presence of God and to pray. Never underestimate the power of prayer!! The Biblical witness tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (CEV), “... never stop praying.” That is why I would like to offer the following prayer. I hope it will be meaningful and a source of strength to you during this time of transition.

Prayer for Helping Me Live in a Post-Pandemic World

Holy God, Source of Strength and Hope, hear my prayer.

I am uncertain. I am fearful. I am sad.

This past year has taken much from me. My world was broken by isolation, restrictions, and the deadly threat the virus posed to me and my loved ones.

With your help, I tried to adjust. I embraced a pandemic life, even as I longed for a return to more “normal” days. Somehow, I found security and familiarity in that COVID reality. It became a comfortable place to be.

Now, my dream of being freed from the virus and its restrictions is slowly becoming a reality. I have been vaccinated. I am told I can more freely leave my home. For the most part, I can even leave my mask behind. But my mask was my protection against an invisible enemy. I worry about what will happen to me without it. I remain unsure and fearful.

Remind me my Creator, my Protector, and my Friend, that you are always close to me and always seeking my wellbeing.

Speak peace to my heart and mind and help me to not be afraid.

Help bring courage and wisdom to the forefront of my thoughts, words, and actions.

Help me to know I am not alone in what I am feeling.

Help me to decide what is right and healthy for me.

Help me to honor my anxiety and uncertainty, but not to dwell there.

Help me to trust those you have endowed with knowledge to keep me healthy and safe, whether societal leaders, doctors, or other health care providers.

Encourage and empower me to leave my COVID life behind and to step forward into my dream of freedom from the virus. Help me to do so at my own pace, without fear of what others may think.

Help me to be understanding and forgiving when individuals disparage me for how I live into this post-COVID world, for they too are just as frail and fearful as I am.

And also, help me to have an open heart and mind when those I trust with my care feel that my COVID anxieties may be hindering my life to a concerning degree. Grant that I will listen to their caring counsel and will seek help to live more fully.

O Loving God, provide answers to my prayers through flashes of insight, the words and actions of others, or the situations I will encounter. I know you are my trustworthy guide and companion in this time of transition and will lead me into better tomorrows. Amen.

-- Pastor Gary

** Quotes are from "Why 'getting back to normal' may actually feel terrifying," written by Sharon Guynup (National Geographic online, May 20, 2021)



We would like to welcome our newest member, **Patricia Wigsмоen**. Pat is very interested in getting involved with the work of the Church, and looks forward to participating!

HOSPITALITY & GROWTH COMMITTEE

It is wonderful to see more and more persons returning to "in-person" worship. The Narthex has just put up a sign-up sheet to serve as a greeter on Sundays.

Please consider volunteering for a Sunday in July or August.



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Building and Grounds is in process of evaluating/recommending projects to improve the use and 'curb appeal' of the Church. PLEASE consider making any observations YOU may have regarding issues and concerns regarding the exterior or interior of our facility.

Please contact Jim Tomlinson jimnsue@ptd.net with any comments/suggestions you have. BG will be meeting to discuss these issues.



Fellowship ZOOM

Join your church family for a **ZOOM Fellowship time on Sunday, June 13th, at 11:30 a.m.** The ZOOM connection will be available a few days before the gathering. It will good to see each other's faces (even on a screen) and share in conversation, prayer concerns and updates. Please join us!

Clean-up Kits for CWS



Clean Up Bucket Program

The Mission and Social Action Committee is requesting monetary donations for the Clean Up Buckets program. Due to the devastation in Texas there is a need for cleaning buckets. Please consider donating to assist families in being able to return to their homes in a clean environment.



Thank you to Rick and Lauren Rautzhan for providing St. John's with an abundance of daisy plants as they thinned their garden beds. The Church beds benefited, interested worshippers took some home, and Jim and I were able to take some to plant in our next door neighbor's yard. She was delighted! Again, thank you for your generosity!

The Tomlinsons

Thanks to everyone for the treats, cards, phone calls, and for thinking of me.

I truly appreciate everything my Church family has/is doing for me and others.

Fondly,
Jane Hayes

I'd like to thank the quilters of St. John's, for making such a beautiful quilt for my husband, Robert Becker. He is a patient at Buffalo Valley. We are both greatly appreciative for this kind and caring act. Thank all of the people who actually makde the nice quilt. It took a lot of time and patience on their part. It is wonderful to know that there are a lot of caring people in the World.

Mrs. Robert Becker

Dear Quilters, Thank you for the beautiful lap quilt that Pastor Marian shared with me here at Buffalo Valley!

The peach and mint colors make me happy!

What a special ministry you are doing for those of us who need a lift and hope as we recover.

Sincerely, Elizabeth

CHURCH YARD SALE

YARD SALE - SEPTEMBER 1ST, 8:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

St. John's will be having a Yard Sale on **SEPTEMBER 1**, between **8:00 AM** and **3:00 PM**. We are accepting clothing, jewelry, books, dishes, etc.

WE ASK THAT YOU HOLD ALL DONATIONS AT HOME UNTIL AUGUST 4TH, 2021

Anyone interested in helping with the sale please contact Linda Sartwell or the Church office. We are looking forward to having fun and helping St. John's financially at the same time.



Called to Care

We are blessed to have had a long history of Lay Ministry/Called to Care here at St. John's. We are hoping to work towards this being an active ministry of our congregation again in the near future. This is a wonderful opportunity for individuals to "learn the nature of ministry, to strengthen communication skills and to engage in significant ministry that may change your life and the lives of others." This ministry supports and complements the pastoral ministry in providing care for persons who are hurting and/or experiencing significant events in their lives. These caregivers will also reach out to those who are unable to be connected with our congregation by attending worship and other events.

Who can participate? "Persons of any age who are sensitive to the love of God and who want to show their love for others. Qualities needed are: the ability to listen, patience, tactfulness, Christian compassion and confidentiality."

What is required to be a part of Called to Care? We ask participants to participate in a training sessions (approximately 6 hours) which we will schedule once we have a list of potential participants. Once the training is completed, participants in the ministry will be commissioned as part of a Sunday service as the congregation and pastor covenant with them in this important ministry.

Please let Pastor Alice or Todd know if you are interested by May 31st. The classes are scheduled for **Wednesday, June 2 at 6:30 p.m.**, and **Wednesday, June 16th at 6:30 p.m.**

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this important call to ministry.

Pastor Alice

*quotes from Called to Care materials crafted for the trainings by Rev. Dr. Gary Hackenberg and Betty Hackenberg

JUNE VOLUNTEERS

Ushers:

Lock-up: **RON ZUG**

Lay-Reader: **LINDA SARTWELL**

Preparation of Communion Elements: **ANNA BROUSE**

JUNE	Children's Church	OPENER/FLOWER DEL.
6	UNAVAILABLE	ANNA BROUSE
13	UNAVAILABLE	
20	UNAVAILABLE	
27	UNAVAILABLE	

JUNE	FLOWER SPONSORS	Acolyte	Drivers Route 1*
6	KAY & GARY NOTTIS	?	UNAVAILABLE
13		?	UNAVAILABLE
20		?	UNAVAILABLE
27	DOT & ART BOWER	?	UNAVAILABLE

JUNE	GREETERS
6	RUTH BROUSE
13	THE CATHERMAN FAMILY
20	MARTHA & BRUCE RAUCH
27	DOT & ART BOWER



Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Indoor or online
on Facebook or YouTube

Visit us on the Web!
www.stjohnslewisburg.org



St. John's United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

No matter who you are, or where
you are on life's journey, you're
welcome here!

1050 Buffalo Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Phone: 570-523-0162
E-mail: stjohnsucc@ptd.net

MONTHLY COMMUNION MISSIONS

JUNE - Disaster Relief Fund for Local Emergencies/Council of Churches

JULY - Heifer Project

AUGUST - Donald Heiter Center

SEPTEMBER - Ingathering for Food Pantry

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR JUNE - Strengthen the Church (5/5)