

# THE EAGLE

# MAY



May 6 - Worship, Holy Communion - 10:00 a.m.  
 May 13 - Worship, Mother's day - 10:00 a.m.  
 May 13 - Annual Congregational Meeting - 11:00 a.m.  
 May 20 - Worship, Blessing/Dedication of Lap Quilts  
 May 24 - Baked Bean Pick-up - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 May 26 - Baked Bean Pick-up - 9 a.m. - Noon



DATED MATERIAL

Lewisburg, PA

Permit No. 6

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stjohnslewisburg.org

Lewisburg, PA 17837

1050 Buffalo Road

St. John's UCC





Spring is upon us (finally), as shoots of green push through the ground and an array of fabulous colors are sported by all of last year's buried bulbs.

All that natural growth is a wonder to behold. And it suggests an important question, one that is near and dear to the hearts of us who care about the present and future of St. John's Church: What makes a church grow?

If it is true that any healthy body will irresistibly grow, and if it true that the church is a body of sorts--we call it the Body of Christ!--then healthy churches should grow.

But what is involved in such growth? What makes a Church grow?

There are numerous theories proposed by both experts and laypersons alike, and there is no end to the number of packaged programs that are marketed to back them up. Research related to growing churches, however, reveals the most critical aspect as boiling down to one simple, consistent fact. Here it is: The one thing that significantly makes growth possible is people--people who are excited about what their church is doing, who are enthusiastic about what their church has to offer, and who are intentional in talking about their church to others who have no such meaningful affiliation.

In short, the finest theory or the cleverest marketing scheme in the world will not work if the folks who are currently part of the church are not convinced of its unique value or who are not personally committed to inviting others to share in it.

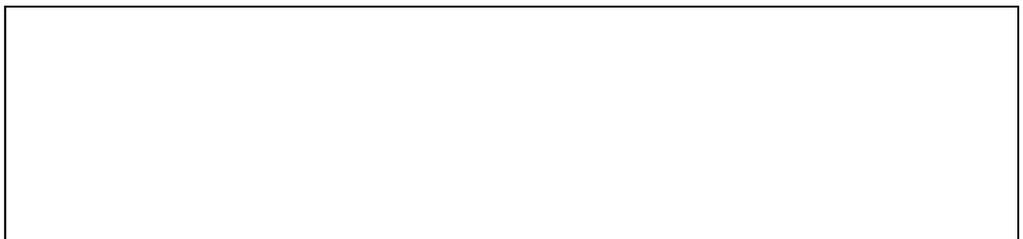
So, what makes a congregation grow? In a word, people do! People who can't stop talking about the meaningfulness of their worship experience, about the importance of their church relationships, about the impact of their Sunday School Class or the most recent adult education opportunity, about the value of their community service endeavors. People whose positive attitude about their church is unavoidably infectious.

It's not true, then, that it's the pastor who makes a church grow, even though often it is s/he who is heard to get the credit for it. No pastor, no matter how energetic or bright or talented or faithful, can do it all individually. Pastors can do lots to cultivate the sort of environment that newcomers might find attractive, welcoming, and satisfying, but by themselves pastors cannot compel a church to grow. That power is vested in the hearts and minds of the women and men, children and youths, that sit in the pews, participate in the social events, and serve on the working committees--people who can't help but open the door to others who might share in all the fellowship and ministry and enrichment.

With each of us doing our respective parts, St. John's, as naturally as a hyacinth pressing to bloom, will again be a healthy, vital congregation. I've seen it happen elsewhere and, from my experience to date, I know that it can happen here!

I'm willing to do my part. How about you?

Cordially,  
Bob Stoudt



## ***MAY VOLUNTEERS***

Ushers: **DIANNA & ROGER SPICKLER, LINDA & WAYNE WILLIAMS**

Lock-up Person: **WAYNE WILLIAMS**

Lay-Reader: **CHRIS DeSANTIS**

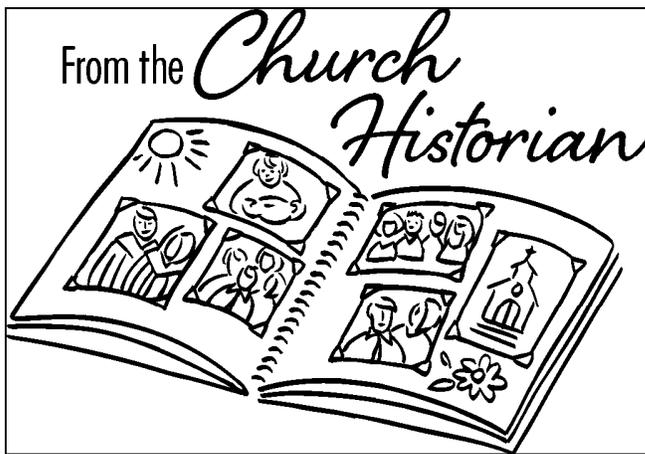
Preparation of Communion Elements: **ANNA BROUSE, DIANNA SPICKLER**

MAY	Children's Church	OPENER/FLOWER DEL.
6	LIZ DeSANTIS	LINDA SARTWELL
13	LINDA WILLIAMS	
20	ANGINE DONLIN	
27	DON ADAMS	

MAY	FLOWER SPONSORS	Acolyte	Drivers Route 1*
6	LINDA SARTWELL	ADDIE MILLER	BAISH
13	CAROL & DON ERDLEY		SPICKLER
20	JEANNE & JOHN LETTEER	ERIN DeSANTIS	ADAMS
27	CAROL & JONATHAN HAHN	JAMES DONLIN	BAISH

MAY	GREETERS
6	MARTHA/BRUCE RAUCH
13	DOT/ART BOWER
20	TESS/FRED GROOVER
27	LINDA & WAYNE WILLIAMS

*If you need a ride to church, please contact Ron Zug (570-523-3987) who schedules the drivers.*



## “Red Book” Memories V

### *Open Communication*

Open communications are essential for the wellbeing of any congregation and its ability to continue Jesus’ mission of revealing God’s kingdom on earth. The fostering of such congregational interactions requires members to speak directly, honestly, respectfully, and lovingly to each other, especially when someone has been or is being hurt by the words and behaviors of another. It necessitates welcoming differences of opinions, the public

affirmation of faults and frailties, and the extending of forgiveness to those who have harmed us. Unfortunately, such communications tend to be absent in many churches, as has sometimes been the case in our faith community.

For instance, the “Red Book” tells us the following about the pastorate of Rev. U. Henry Heilman (1869-1873). “There were hints that there was some unrest brooding in the congregation when the Heilmans came. For some reason it would not disappear, not until it expressed itself in a request that the minister resign” (“Red Book,” p. 29). What were the issues? Why did the pastor have to resign? Open communications could have helped to resolve differences and save the pastorate.

Unfortunately, this pattern of unhealthy communications continued to plague St. John’s for almost another 30 years. St. John’s became known as a troubled faith community, resulting in the further loss of pastors and trouble in attracting replacements. Interestingly, during the pastorate of Rev. Zwingli Yearick (1895-1899), the pastor was once again asked to resign through an anonymous letter. He challenged the members of congregation to openly state their issues with him. The “Red Book” (p. 34) reports that “No one had the courage to stand up!” Rev. Yearick refused to resign but did eventually leave St. John’s.

These events, combined with even greater difficulty in calling a new pastor to St. John’s, led to some painful soul searching by the congregation. In time, they called a former pastor of St. John’s, Rev. R. Leighton Gerhart, to serve once more in 1900. Together, they and their new pastor resolved to create an environment where open communications could take place. Consequently, St. John’s began to flourish and grow, a trend that lasted for decades to come.

If open communications are so beneficial to faith communities, why are they so hard to achieve? It’s because many Christians equate the practice of open communications with troublemaking or worry it will lead to conflict. We would prefer to be seen in our congregations as good people who ignore painful incidents and practice a “forgive and forget” attitude for the sake of getting along with others. Doing so, however, only leads to building resentment and distrust that divide congregants and grow into larger conflicts.

The practice of open communication allows issues and potential conflicts to be dealt with in healthy ways while they are small. It creates an opportunity for such troubles to be managed with the grace and guidance that can only come from prayerful discernment, nourished by honesty, respect, and love. Open communication can bring about wonderful life-giving transformation for faith communities and their members, as our own “Red Book” can attest. Let’s resolve to always encourage open communication in our church. What a wonderful way to honor the congregation of 1900 who brought new life to St. John’s!

Gary Nottis

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING APPROACHING

An annual meeting of the congregation is scheduled for Sunday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, immediately following worship (yes, we know it's Mother's Day!).

This annual meeting follows an April 8<sup>th</sup> congregational forum which was focused on a number of possible changes to our existing Constitution.

Most of these proposed changes deal with a redesign of the way that we approach ministry and mission here at St. John's, trading the previous system built on Deacons and Elders for one where, at the core, will be a set of six Standing Committees.

These Committees (Building & Grounds, Christian Education, Hospitality & Growth, Mission & Social Action, Stewardship/Finance & Personnel, and Worship & Music) will each delegate one of its members to serve as the body of Consistory, completed by four Church Officers (President, Vice-President, Consistory Secretary, and Church Treasurer--all, with the exception of the Treasurer, annually to be elected at-large from the membership) and the pastor, for a total of 11 persons.

Final consideration and adoption of these proposed changes regarding congregational organization will constitute the formal business on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Copies of the full eight-page document comparing the existing and the proposed amended Constitutions are available in the narthex, for further review in advance of the vote.

Sincere thanks to the many hands and voices who helped to forge and refine St. John's "new look"!

## SOON IT WILL BE MOTHERS' DAY!

And you know what that means! Sure, it means that your dear Mom gets a beautifully-worded card, and maybe flowers and taken out to dinner.

And it also means an extra treat at St. John's, where all Moms--and all women--at worship on Mother's Day, May 13<sup>th</sup>, will receive a small potted plant, in honor of the occasion.

So, be sure to do something nice for your Mom, or for the other special women in your life--bring them to church with you on the 13<sup>th</sup>. They'll be glad you did!

## Grocery Cards Available!

Help St. John's by purchasing Weis and Giant gift cards! Available each Sunday morning or during the week in the church office, St. John's receives 5% of all sales. This is an easy way to help raise money for St. John's. There is no additional cost for purchasing the cards - you pay face value with us and get the full value at the store!



**In Our Thoughts and Prayers** (please contact the church office, at 524-7606, with any updates):

**At Home-** Sid Bowersox, Ruth Brouse, Betty Hackenberg, Mary Stover, Merdyth Updegraff.

**Shut-In/Homebound-** Ann Beasom, Fred Brouse, Marilyn Correll, Leona Fertig, Pearl Fisher, Bill & Lola Fuller, Gary Hackenberg (Rolling Hills Manor, rm #7), Louise Heistand, Lois Hummel, Evelyn Mabus, Ethel Moser, Robert Ritter, Shirley Seese, Alda Wagner.

**In our Prayers -** Christine Sartwell, Sheila Seaman, Larissa Young.

### HARTMAN CENTER NEEDS

It's been a long time since teams of workers were organized from Penn Central Conference churches to spend some time improving our camps-and-conferences site at Hartman Center.

That time has now come, with persons of all skill-sets being recruited to help out--from those who can really fix things (like electricians or plumbers) to those who do better at fixing things up (painting, washing windows, cleaning out brush, etc.).

Work days are being projected in advance of the opening of the summer camping season, for Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. Workers can come for just the day, if that's what they have to offer. Those who can spend the entire weekend are invited to stay the night in a cabin at no cost to them.

If this sounds of interest to you, you can get on the schedule by contacting the Rev. Dave Bushnell, either at 717-371-2593 or "abushnell@aol.com."

The complete list of the property's needs to be addressed (four pages long!) is available in the St. John's church office.

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

The 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Penn Central Conference will take place over the Friday and Saturday of June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, this year's theme being "Alive in Christ."

Registration (which can be done online) is currently underway, and a draft agenda for the meeting and other materials can be accessed through the Conference website ([www.pccucc.org](http://www.pccucc.org)).

Given the size of our congregation, we are entitled to two voting delegates, plus the pastor. If you are interested in being one of our official representatives, or in attending any part of these two days, please let the church office know (524-7606), so that we can get you registered.

### **YARD SALE - JUNE 6, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

St. John's will be having a Yard Sale on **June 6, 2018, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.** We are accepting gently-used clothing, jewelry, books, dishes, etc., and ask that you put your donations on the picnic tables in the Pavilion. Please no electronics or large appliances. The Pavilion will be checked daily for drop-offs. **ALL DONATED ITEMS SHOULD BE AT THE PAVILION NO LATER THAN JUNE 1.** Anyone interested in helping with the sale please contact the Church office. We are looking forward to having fun and helping St. John's financially at the same time.



## **AMOS: A PROPHET FOR OUR TIMES**

Long ago in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE, an unremarkable man, filled with the Spirit of God, left his home in Judah to preach against social injustices and a scarcity of genuine faith in the northern Kingdom of Israel. And then, following decades of effort, he suddenly returned to obscurity. Even so, his words continue to haunt the conscience of Jews and Christians to this very day. That prophet was Amos.

This May and June, you are invited to join with the adult Christian education class to hear and study the words of Amos. Take this opportunity to explore what he had to say and discover how the prophet could be speaking to many of the issues that challenge us, today.

Our conversations will take place in the Library at 9 AM, each Sunday morning. Class discussions will focus on specific issues raised by Amos, enhanced by Bible study, contemporary readings, and instruction. Remember:

There is no cost for any class materials.

You don't need to make a commitment to participate every Sunday. Just come on those Sundays when the topic is of interest to you.

The tentative schedule of these exciting discussions is:

May 6<sup>th</sup> - *No Class*

May 13<sup>th</sup> - Introduction and Ethical Prophecy

May 20<sup>th</sup> - War and Debt Slavery

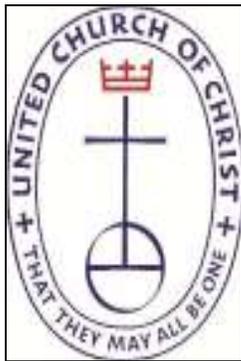
May 27<sup>th</sup> - Conspicuous Consumption and Corrupt Legal Systems

June 3<sup>rd</sup> - Ignoring God's Will and Shallow Worship

June 10<sup>th</sup> - Business Practices and Idolatry

June 17<sup>th</sup> - Consequences and Hope

We hope to see you on Sunday morning!



**WORSHIP HOURS**  
**Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.**  
**Worship: 10:00 a.m.**

Visit us on the Web!  
[www.stjohnslewisburg.org](http://www.stjohnslewisburg.org)



## St. John's United Church of Christ

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

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



The Communion offering for **May** is dedicated to **Hartman Center**.  
 The Communion offering for **June** is dedicated to **Disaster Relief Fund**.  
**Thanks for your continued support of St. John's missions!**



**MAY COMMUNION OFFERING** - The offering for May 6, 2018 is dedicated to **Hartman Center**. Hartman Center is the Outdoor Ministries facility owned by Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ since 1964. Programming includes retreats, conferences, workshops, dinner meetings, summer camps, and other events which, while designed for particular age levels and interests, are open to all persons without regard to race, creed, or ethnic origin, and who accept the guidelines and philosophy of the Center. **Located in the "Seven Mountains" area of central Pennsylvania, Hartman Center** is comprised of 192 acres of open and wooded areas, with easy access to nearby streams, hiking trails, and state parks. It is located on Old US Highway 322, 10 miles north of Lewistown (70 miles from the Conference Center in Harrisburg) and about 20 miles southeast of State College. Brochures are available in the Narthex for more information.

### Bean Sale



Just in time for Memorial Day! St. John's "Famous Baked Beans" will be available by pre-order. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex, or you can call (570) 523-0162 or e-mail [stjohnsucc@ptd.net](mailto:stjohnsucc@ptd.net) to order. Pints are \$4 and Quarts are \$8. **Order deadline is Monday, May 14.** You may pay at pick-up, or ahead of time to the church office, Chris DeSantis, or Linda Sartwell. Beans will be available for pick-up on Thursday, May 24 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or Saturday, May 26, from 9 a.m. to noon at St. John's. We will also need help on Tuesday, May 22, in the afternoon and evening, to cook and package beans, as well as during the pick-up times. Please see Todd, Chris, or Linda if you are able to help.

All proceeds from the sale will support St. John's Adopt-a-Family programs.