

The Disciple

The Good News of St. John soars like an eagle!

*St. John's United Church of Christ
Allentown, Pennsylvania*

Volume 16, Issue 8

October 18, 2016

**Pastor Karen's
Korner**

“You will go out with celebration, and you will be brought back in peace. Even the mountains and the hills will burst into song before you: all the trees of the field will clap their hands.” Isaiah 55:12 CEB

At the first church where I served in Chicago, every fall the choir would sing an anthem about the trees of the fields clapping their hands and sheaves of corn dancing. That imagery has stuck with me. Sometimes I picture it as a Disney animation with tree branches shaped like hands applauding or the Ents of “Lord of the Rings”. I see sheaves of grain circling one another with delight as they swirl around the fields.

It's that time of year when farmers are gathering in the final harvest and preparing the soil for next year's crops. There is a chill in the air and the leaves are painted with red, orange and gold. A bite of crisp apple reminds us how wonderful fresh food is.

Once again our hearts and minds turn to thanksgiving; not just the holiday we celebrate, but to all we have to thank God for.

What is at the top of your gratitude list? Each of us has our own list of what we are thankful for. Thank God for companionship, food, shelter, health, the church, forgiveness, hope, joy, love, compassion; for children, youth and the wisdom of seniors. Look around you and be grateful for the beauty of the earth and your senses. Praise God for all creatures great and small. Celebrate diversity and our freedoms.

Whether you are cooking a Thanksgiving meal or going to a restaurant, thank God for food and the farmers who grew it, the people who prepared it, shipped it, sold it and cooked it. Be thankful that you have food to share with those who are hungry. Thank the volunteers who serve at food banks, soup kitchens and breakfast ministries. Say thanks for those who nurtured you and for generations yet to come.

The official Thanksgiving holiday may be once a year but every day is thanks giving day.

May you be so filled with joy that you will see the trees clap their hands.

Happy Thanksgiving and may God abundantly bless you.

Pastor Karen



Saturday Night before bed, November 5, 2016, turn clocks back one hour. Daylight Savings time ends at 2am on Sunday, November 6. If you forget to turn your clocks back you will be an hour early for worship but you will be just in time to join the Adult Forum in the Trinity Room.



November 6–25th Sunday after Pentecost–Job 19: 23-27a; Psalm 17: 1-9; 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5, 13-17; Luke 20: 27-38
November 13–26th Sunday after Pentecost–Isaiah 65: 17-25; Psalm 98; 2 Thessalonians 3: 6-13; Luke 21: 5-19
November 20–Reign of Christ–Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Psalm 46; Colossians 1: 11-20; Luke 23: 33-43
November 27–1st Sunday of Advent–Isaiah 2: 1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44



- Nov. 13** –Confirmation Class begins
- Nov. 23**–Community Thanksgiving Eve Service, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, 7:30pm, page 3
- Nov. 27**–First Sunday in Advent , Advent Breakfast 9:30am, Please **RSVP**

Looking Ahead

- Dec. 18–Children’s Christmas Pageant
- Dec. 18 –Bag lunch and Christmas caroling

Adult Forum

Join us each Sunday morning for challenging and informative programs in Adult Forum. We gather in the Trinity Room for coffee and fellowship at 9:30am. We share joys and concerns around 9:45am and begin the program shortly thereafter. **COME JOIN US!**

- Nov. 6**—St. John’s has been supporting the Ecumenical Food Bank for many years. It is a very important ministry to our community. Come hear members of our congregation who volunteer at the Ecumenical Food Bank tell us about their experiences serving the community.
- Nov.13**—Dr. Thomas Ritter, a supervisor at our neighboring Keenan House, will update us on their program.
- Nov.20**—We will view another of Bart Ehrman’s lectures on the New Testament.
- Nov.27**—Our annual intergenerational Advent Breakfast in the Social Hall!

Next month’s newsletter articles are due on Monday, November 7, 2016.

Invest in the Vision Strengthen the Church Offering

Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church annual offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking.” Your offerings are directed to the Penn Northeast Conference, Local Church Ministries, and the Stillspeaking Ministry for these purposes.

Watch for the flyers in our October 16 and 23 bulletins that tell about two UCC churches that have used the funds from Strengthen the Church to transform themselves. **The offering (your envelope is included in this issue of the Disciple) will be received on Sunday, October 23.** Thank you for considering a gift to Strengthen the Church.

Stewardship Corner A Personal Testimony

"Go and do the same" (Luke 10:37). This passage follows the Good Samaritan story, where several people ignored a person in need, but the Samaritan, a foreigner, helped this man. At the conclusion of this story, when Jesus asked his listener "Who did well by this man?" the listener answered, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

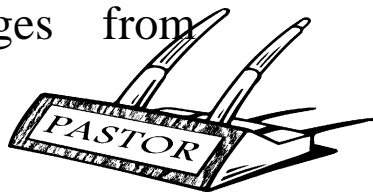
This is a familiar story to many of us. The Bible is so rich in that it can be meaningful in so many ways, depending where we are on life's journey. My husband, Allan, had a serious heart procedure early in October and, gratefully, he is doing well. Contrary to the story, everyone showed mercy to my husband, whether it was their job or out of compassion. Many of you are among those "Good Samaritans" and we thank you!

How this story and our experience speak to Allan and me at this time is how important it feels to go out and show mercy to others. Out of gratitude we want to help others, those we know and those we don't. Jesus has told us to love each other, be merciful, care for the stranger and share our gifts and talents.

Please during this Stewardship campaign, "Go and do the same". Remember all your blessings when you complete your covenant card and return by November 13.

Thank you,
Nancy Kramer-Meyer

Messages from the



Tilly, the Turkey

Tilly will be in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, October 30, to receive our food bank offerings. She will remain there through Sunday, November 20. The food collected will be given to the Ecumenical Food Bank. Thanksgiving meal items are appreciated.

Advent Breakfast and Workshop

Join us for a special breakfast and program to get us ready to welcome Jesus into our lives. **Save the date: November 27, 9:30am. Be sure to RSVP** so we know how much food to prepare. Call the church office or sign up in the Great Hall.

Thank you. Gracias. Merci. Danka

How many ways can we say thank you to the Sesquicentennial Anniversary committee for the celebrations they planned this year? The committee members are: Linda Lenhart (Chair), Keith Lenhart, Bonnie Falla, Joni Brensinger (official photographer), Charles Canning and Tom Raub (historians), Barbara Silfies (publicity), Lynn Cloak, (fellowship and meals) and Pastor Karen. Lynn and those who helped cook, set up and clean up our meals deserve a special word of thanks for all the work they did to create wonderful food. Linda kept the committee on task. The committee is currently working on the anniversary book, to be available in December.

Advent Wreath Candle Lighters Needed

Advent begins on Sunday, November 27. Volunteers are needed to light the Advent Wreath candles during worship. A short script is provided. See Pastor Karen or sign up in the Great Hall.

Thanksgiving Eve Service

A community service of Thanksgiving will be held Wednesday, November 23, at 7:30pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Eighth and Walnut Streets. There will be a combined choir and light refreshments. Take a break and give thanks.

November 25 the church office will be closed.

Confirmation class is beginning Sunday, November 13, 12:30-2:30, in the Trinity room.

Jubilee Breakfast Ministry

Once again we are partnering with Zion UCC to provide a hot breakfast for those who are homeless and the working poor. Beginning Thursday, November 3, breakfast will be served every Thursday, Friday and Saturday (including Thanksgiving Day) through April. We help by volunteering to cook, serve, greet and clean up. We also partner through financial gifts. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Dennis Dries, Volunteer Coordinator, dcdries@rcn.com, phone: 484-719-5050. Contributions can be made to St. John's UCC, marked "Jubilee".



Veterans Day, November 11, 2016



Altar Flowers

- Nov. 6**—"In memory of Loved Ones", given by Bill and Nancy Zeky.
- Nov. 13**—"In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Saylor, Sr.", given by daughter, Emma.
- Nov. 20**—"In memory of my husband, George J. Freyman", given by Marion Freyman.
- Nov. 27**—"In loving memory of our niece, Carla Anne Anthony", given by Doris and Ralph Todd.

We thank all who have graced our altar with flower tributes!

We Get Thank You^s

Allan and Nancy Kramer-Moyer thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers and good deeds during the past months while Allan was getting his new heart valve! It has meant so very much.

Jeanette and Dick Schmoyer thank everyone for their prayers, cards, emails, and phone calls during Jeanette's recovery from knee surgery and for the same during their daughter Val's chemo treatments. Jeanette is doing very well and Val is halfway through treatments and is told the tumor is now half the size. Your prayers are so important to them.

Our Ministry with Central Elementary

We gave an amazing 44 backpacks to Central that we had collected in August and September. We might not think that a backpack is a huge item, but, because we care, 44 children are now able to keep their books and papers together and organized and carry them between home and school every day. A backpack for a child also increases their confidence, self-esteem and their chance at success. Each time the children pick up their backpacks, they're reminded that someone cares about them and how they do in school. That tells them more than words could. The children and their families, the administration and the staff are all grateful to St. John's.

**THANK YOU FOR GIVING GIFTS THAT
KEEP ON GIVING!**

We, also, gave twelve large bottles of hand sanitizer, plus some books and a bag of small stuffed animals to be used as incentives or prizes for good behavior or academic achievements.

**IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, WE ARE
COLLECTING WINTER COATS, HATS, SCARVES AND
GLOVES OR MITTENS.**

Please bring your donations to church with you for the children to collect during the offering and put in the big Central Elementary School box which will be up in front of the sanctuary in October and back in the vestibule in November so that Tilly the Turkey has plenty of room up front for Thanksgiving. Thank you, once again, for your very touching generosity.

Central's back-to-school "Open Fun House" for students, families and the community was held on September 22 and was, indeed, a lot of fun! New murals, painted by the art teacher over the summer, brightened the hallways. Bonnie Falla helped to sign up parents for PTO while Rick Guhl volunteered in the gymnasium where all the activities were going on.

THE NEXT SPECIAL ACTIVITY COMING UP IS THE "BOOKTACULAR" TO BE HELD ON OCTOBER 27TH. Those of us who volunteer regularly as classroom readers will be doing so that day in our respective classrooms, with the option of dressing up as one of the characters from the book we'll be reading. THAT EVENING FROM 5:00-7:00 will be guest readers and activities for families. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE BOOKTACULAR EVENING EVENT, please contact Wendy Williams.

Interested in volunteering at Central? Any questions?? Contact Wendy Williams at 484-225-6708 or windwend1@gmail.com.

September	Year to date				Avg. Worship Attendance for Month
	Current	Benevolence	Property	Totals	
<u>2016</u>					59
Member's Giving:	\$48,973	\$19,926	\$0	\$68,899	
Endowment Used:	\$31,104	\$0	\$69,044	\$100,148	
<u>2015</u>					68
Member's Giving:	\$51,510	\$19,661	\$0	\$71,171	
Endowment Used:	\$41,443	\$1,600	\$80,992	\$124,035	

November 2016

 <p>Sunday, Nov. 6</p>	 <p>Nov. 7–Edward Gildea & Todd Saylor Nov. 8–Megan & Rob Van Ingen</p>		1	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<p><u>November Birthdays</u></p> <p>4 - Vanessa Sperlbaum 5 - Sarah E. Collier 6 - Cyrah Morris 7 - Joseph Hein 8 - Byron D. Cook 10 - Jim Bronfenbrenner 17 - Noelle Schuler 23 - Jay Mosebach 24 - Damian Heinze 25 - Daniel Collier 27 - Susan Steinberg 29 - Alisa Gardner</p> 	<p>9:30a Sunday School 11:00a Worship 12:00n Fellowship</p> <p>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS</p>	<p>Disciple articles due!</p>	<p>Election Day</p> <p>7:00p Consistory</p>	<p>7:00p Chancel Choir</p>		<p>Veterans' Day</p>		
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	<p>9:30a Sunday School 11:00a Worship 12:00n Fellowship</p> <p><i>Don't Forget Tilly</i></p>		<p>9:30a Disciple mailing</p> <p>7:00p Benevolence mtg.</p>	<p>7:00p Chancel Choir</p>				
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
<p>9:30a Sunday School 11:00a Worship 12:00n Fellowship</p> <p><i>Last day for Tilly</i></p>		<p>7:00p Finance & Property</p>	<p>7:30p Community Thanksgiving Eve Service at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 8th & Walnut Street (See page 3)</p>	<p>Thanksgiving Day</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p>			
27	28	29	30					
<p>Advent Sunday 9:30a Advent Breakfast</p> <p>11:00a Worship 12:00n Fellowship</p>								

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