

The Disciple

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

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

Volume 19, Issue 1

January 24, 2019



from the Interim Ministry Team...

Penn Northeast Conference

At its Annual Fall Meeting, the Penn Northeast Conference voted to align its Ministry practices and standards with the updated ones of the United Church of Christ. Beginning in January, 2019, ordained ministers shall undertake 25 hours of continuing education annually and, once every three years, participate in each of the following specific, mandated trainings:

Boundary Education

Racial Issues Training

Cultural Awareness Training (includes issues of gender, class, disability, aging)

To assist our clergy in accomplishing these new requirements to maintain their standing, the PNEC has made available Communities of Practice for continuing education, and our local Allentown area UCC clergy group will be studying the book *The Color of Law*. We began our study on January 2 at Grace UCC, in south Allentown.

The United Church of Christ has recently published an updated version of its *Manual on Ministry*, which is available to congregations as a downloadable file.

January 6 - Epiphany Sunday (also known as Three Kings Day)

Epiphany, the day following the twelve days of Christmas, is the day that tradition says the wise men visited the Christ Child. The story is told in Matthew 2:1-12. An epiphany is a revelation, and, in this case, is one of God being revealed to the nations. We celebrated the start of this new church season by sharing in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

January 13 - Baptism of Christ Sunday

Since the season of Epiphany is about how God is revealed to us in Christ, this Sunday recalls how Christ is revealed in his Baptism by John in the river Jordan. We marked this occasion by a congregational renewal of our own baptismal vows and, as a visible reminder of our baptismal call to be servants in Christ's name, everyone received an apron.

January 20 - Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday

***DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER
POSTPONED UNTIL JANUARY 27***

Not only will we conduct the necessary business of our church, but we will also have audio-visual presentations highlighting what we have accomplished in the year past. The Fellowship Committee will host a luncheon after worship.

Future activities

January 27 - Health & Human Service Sunday

Reverend Becca Stephens will be preaching this Sunday.

February 3 - Candlemas Service

We all know that on February 2 a certain groundhog brings rotten news, but on the church calendar this is an important date. It is forty days after Christmas, when Mary was allowed to perform her ritual of purification and Jesus was presented in the Temple as the firstborn son. This story is recorded in Luke 2: 22-40. It was in the Temple that Simeon gave his blessing and Anna made her prophesy.

Traditionally, the church marked this occasion by blessing the candles with which people would illuminate their homes and served as a reminder that we carry the Light of Christ into the world.

We will mark this occasion with our own lighting of candles, singing one of the oldest hymns of the church, "Phos Hilaron" (Joyous Light) and everyone will receive a candle to take home as a reminder to share Christ's light with others. We encourage lighting your candle during times of prayer or remembrance.

March 3 - Healing Service

March 6 - Ash Wednesday

There will be a Communion service at 7pm. We begin the forty-day season of Lent, a time of reflection and preparation, as we get ready for the joyous holiday of Easter.

March 10 - First Sunday in Lent

Lenten Breakfast at 9:30am and worship with the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Watch for further details.

March 17 - A Celebration of Celtic Spirituality

Would you like to have a Lenten study program for the six weeks of Lent? Is there a book of the Bible you'd like to explore? Want to explore how we can strengthen our church? Let your Interim Ministry Team and Consistory know, so that we can begin planning.

Property Improvements Underway

As of this writing, upgrades to our lighting are being done and installation of a new security system will commence soon. This new system will include security cameras at the entrance door leading to the office and the backdoor from the church parking lot. Consistory has also asked the Property Committee to investigate the costs and requirements for installing a new audio-visual system for the sanctuary, including flat screens, a laptop, software and licenses.

The Interim Ministry Team passed along two requests to the Consistory. One is that some sort of safety rails be installed by the lectern and pulpit. Two is that the rug in the office be replaced.

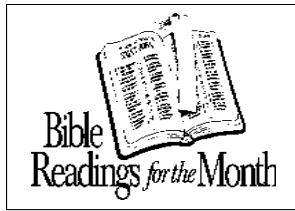
Your Property Committee is working hard to ensure we have a safe and attractive facility.

We get "Thank You's"

from Zachary DeLong
for his *Feed Our Sheep* package

Thank you very much, everyone, for the care package. It means a lot that you all still think and care about me.

*Thanks again,
Zachary DeLong*



January 6

Epiphany – Isaiah 60: 1-6; Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3: 1-12; Matthew 2: 1-12

January 13

1st Sunday after Epiphany – Isaiah 43: 1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8: 14-17; Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

January 20

2nd Sunday after Epiphany – Isaiah 62: 1-5; Psalm 36: 5-10; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 2: 1-11

January 27

3rd Sunday after Epiphany – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany – Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19;
1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a; Luke 4: 14-21

February 3

4th Sunday after Epiphany – Jeremiah 1: 4-10; Psalm 71: 1-6; 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13; Luke 4: 21-30

February 10

5th Sunday after Epiphany – Isaiah 6: 1-8, (9-13); Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11; Luke 5: 1-11

February 17

6th Sunday after Epiphany – Jeremiah 17: 5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15: 12-20; Luke 6: 17-26

February 24

7th Sunday after Epiphany – Genesis 45: 3-11, 15; Psalm 37: 1-11, 39-40;
1 Corinthians 15: 35-38, 42-50; Luke 6: 27-38



Altar Flowers

January 6 - "In memory of J. Mauser Lerch" by Barbara and Arthur Roth.

January 13 - "In memory of Margaret Gehman" by her husband, Norman Gehman.

January 20 - "In honor of the anniversary of the birth of Karlina's father, Karl Y. Donecker"
by Karlina "Donecker" Mosebach.

January 27 - "In memory of Howard Klopp" by St. John's.

February 3 - "In memory of Nellie B. Wagner, Anna W. Bleiler, Kathryn Hartman and Mary Roth" by the family.

February 10 - "In honor of my 93rd birthday" by Estella Saylor.

February 17 - **This date is open. Contact the church office if interested in sponsoring.**

February 24 - "In memory of Lillian Lipko" by Barb Silfies.

We thank all who have graced our altar with flowers.

Search and Call Update 2018

Below is an outline of the accomplishments the Search and Call Team has undertaken on behalf of our congregation.

- We completed our church profile and it was signed off by our conference minister in June. A copy of the profile can be sent to you if you choose. Please email us at stjohnsuccsearchandcall@gmail.com to get your copy emailed to you.
- We placed our classified ad on the UCC website in July. You can see the ad by going to the UCC website and typing classified into the search bar.
- Standardized interview questions were developed, completed and assigned to team members in July. Below are the main questions we are using for the interviews.
 1. Why are you seeking a new calling now?
 2. What interests you about being the minister at St. John's UCC in Allentown?
 3. How do you handle staffing and administrative duties? What is your leadership style?
 4. What are your strengths as a minister? What parts of the ministry do you struggle with most?
 5. Membership has become a significant concern for most churches, mostly because of decreasing funds. St. John's is blessed that at this point we have funds to sustain us. Our concern is that the money will outlast the congregation. What role would you play in actively attracting new members?
 6. Give us some examples of how you would meet the spiritual needs of different generations within the congregation.
 7. How do you connect with the LGBTQ community?
 8. How would you utilize technology to benefit the life of the church?
 9. What do you hope to accomplish through your sermons? Can you accomplish this in one hour?
 - a. What preaching style do you use to succeed?
 - b. How do you measure success?
 10. Our profile indicates we have Christian Education for children, youth and adults. What role do you see yourself playing in Christian Education with each age group?
 11. Music is very important in the life of St. John's. What role would you play in working with our music director, organist and choir?
 12. What would make you feel good about your ministry at St. John's seven years from now?

- A mock interview was conducted with a conference minister in July. It was very successful and affirmed that our questions and process were complete.
- Twenty-four candidates submitted profiles to date.
- Our church profile has been sent to all candidates that submitted a profile.
- Twenty-four candidates have been completely reviewed with Search and Call Team.
- Twenty candidates did not fit our congregation; they are not being considered.
- Four candidates have been interviewed to date. Three interviews took place in person and one through a conference call.
- One neutral pulpit took place and it was determined the candidate did not fit our congregation's needs.
- One candidate is being considered for a visit by the Search and Call Team at a neutral pulpit in January, 2019. We are hopeful this candidate will be our choice.
- We are considering new ways to seek more candidates if needed.
- If you have any questions or comments, please stop one of us at any time or email us at stjohnsuccsearchandcall@gmail.com. We are excited about the progress our team has made in our search.

Thank You!

Todd Saylor

Search and Call Team Chair Person

Team members: Becky Bronfenbrenner, Stacey Clifton, Trudi Egan, Judy Garrigan,
Subrina Pyle and Jeff Rissell



Announcements from other churches....

The congregation is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?".

Come early and listen to our choir practice.

The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals.

St. John's Prayer Chain (12/31/18)

If you are not receiving the Prayer Chain email and would like to be added to the list, please call the church office or email Wendy Williams at windwend1@gmail.com.



If you don't have email, we can send it to you through the U.S. mail. Just notify the church office.

If you have a prayer request or concern, call or text Wendy at 484-225-6708 or email her.

Hello Faithful Pray-ers,

Please pray for David Heinze, who is recovering from burns suffered in a workplace accident.

Please continue to pray for Diane, a friend of Nancy Kramer-Moyer, who is facing a very difficult battle with cancer.

Please pray for strength for Judie Guhl's mother, Julia Kelley, as the doctors continue to monitor her heart valve condition. Julia is 95 years young – and I mean, young!

Please continue to pray for Anna Mae Schul who is having trouble with one of her eyes while her broken shoulder continues to heal.

Please pray for healing and strength for Emma Saylor as she faces the recurrence of her cancer.

Please pray for safety and comfort for George Yoder, as he adjusts to living at the Miller Building of Phoebe.

Please pray for healing for Alice Roth as she battles myositis.

Please pray for Chuck Canning who is in hospice at home.

Please pray for Ken Fillman in his battle with cancer.

Please pray for a living kidney donor for Jim Bartynski, and for courage and hope in this difficult time of waiting.

Please pray for me while I continue to rehab at home from orthopedic foot surgery.

Thank you all for your ministry of prayer; for keeping the lines of communication between God and our community of faith open and active. May we close out 2018, giving thanks to God for everything we experienced, whether good or bad, for our Creator uses every circumstance to shine a light on God's glory. May we enter 2019 with expectation and hope, with courage and prayer.

Peace to each one of you from each one of us on the Interim Pastoral Team,

Wendy

Pledge/Covenant Cards Returned

Thank you to the folks who have returned the pledge/covenant cards to help us plan for 2019! We encourage those who have not, to do so please. The covenant to support St. John's, both by participation and by financial support, is very important to the church. Every pledge is important.

Thank you from the Stewardship Committee.

Nancy Adams	Allan and Nancy Kramer-Moyer
Priscilla Bowersox	Keith and Linda Lenhart
Eric and Caryn Bronfenbrenner	Barbara Maursky
James and Rebecca Bronfenbrenner	Joan Miller Moran
Alan and Lynn Cloak	Jay and Karline Mosebach
Byron and Janet Cook	Keith Nash
Susan Cook	Tom Raub
Bruce and Dolly DeLong, Sr.	Jeff Rissell
Trudi Egan	Nancy Rissell
William and Bonnie Falla	Alice Roth
Megan Fegley	Emma J. Saylor
Robert and Susan Fegley	James and Brenda Saylor
Courtney Fillman	Todd Saylor and Edward Gildea
Ken and Yvonne Fillman	Linda Scavo
Norman Gehman	Richard and Jeanette Schmoyer
Rick and Judie Guhl	Barbara Silfies
Esther Heinze	Mary Sodaitis
Glenn and Gretchen Kent	Ralph and Doris Todd
Sterna Klingborg	Wendy Williams
Bud and Felicia Knerr	George Yoder
	Nancy Zeky

Adult Forums

January 27 - Reverend Kramer-Moyer will continue his program on Progressive Christianity, which began on November 18.

February 3 - Dr. Scot Brooks-Cope, Director of Pastoral Care Services, Phoebe Ministries, will update us on the latest news and changes at Phoebe Ministries.

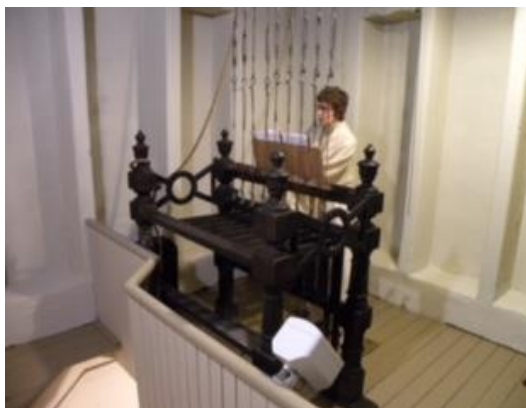
February 10 - Reverend Rick Guhl will do a Bible study with us.

February 17 - Mary Ellen Shiels, Public Health Preparedness Manager for Allentown will speak about the Allentown Volunteer Medical Reserve Corp. and about Zika/West Nile prevention.

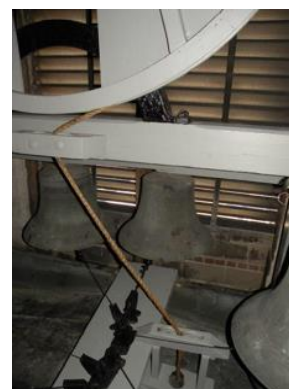
February 24 - Reverend Kramer-Moyer will present a book review of Elaine Pagel's newest book, "Why Religion? A Personal Story". She is professor of religion at Princeton and was raised atheist. This is a personal memoir of her journey of suffering and faith.

Ever hear the bell music coming from our steeple on a Sunday morning around 10:45 and wonder what was making the music? Here is your answer.

Janet Cook plays our carillons after she walks up xxx steps to get to the bell tower.



Ever wonder what the "bells" look like? Here they are.



Look a lot cleaner than you would expect in a bell tower? That's because Barney Cook (the bell ringer's husband) went up there last year with a dust rag and a paint brush. He was also up there this past October when the lantern flies attacked Allentown. Here is a picture just outside the bell tower on the steeple deck.

Before



After



With the help of Jim Bronfenbrenner, they made the Before look like After.

Thank you to Janet for sharing her musical talent and to Barney for taking care of our carillons. These bells are very special. Upcoming issues of the Disciple will explain just how special and why these "bells" are more than just "bells"!

Preaching

January 27 - Health & Human Service - **Reverend Becca Stephens**

February 3 - 4th Sunday Epiphany - **Reverend Rick Guhl**

February 10 - 5th Sunday Epiphany - **Reverend Wendy Williams**

February 17 - 6th Sunday Epiphany - **Reverend Allan Kramer-Moyer**

February 24 - 7th Sunday Epiphany - **Reverend Bill Falla**

Pastoral Care

January 13 thru 26 - **Reverend Rick Guhl**

January 27 thru February 9 - **Reverend Allan Kramer-Moyer**

February 10 thru March 2 - **Reverend Rick Guhl**

St John's UCC Interim Ministry Team

Nancy Adams	610-439-1108	nancyadams68@icloud.com
Bill Falla	610-432-8711	bonnie.falla@gmail.com
Rick Guhl	484-707-5838	rickguhl@gmail.com
Allan Kramer-Moyer	484-695-4108	moyer.allan@gmail.com
Wendy Williams	484-225-6708	windwend1@gmail.com
Lois Mease	610-865-0593	loismease@gmail.com
church office	610-433-0146	stjohnsucc2@verizon.net

December	Year to date				Avg. Worship Attendance for Month
	Current	Benevolence	Property	Totals	
<u>2018</u>					62 on Sundays
Member's Giving:	\$63,722	\$25,755	\$600	\$90,077	Plus 108 on Christmas Eve
Endowment Used:	\$41,316	\$0	\$81,085	\$122,401	
<u>2017</u>					64 on Sundays
Member's Giving:	\$63,516	\$25,135	\$615	\$89,266	Plus 116 on Christmas Eve
Endowment Used:	\$40,160	\$0	\$77,051	\$117,211	



Please Give to the Curtis Fund

This fund has been helping members of our St. John's family for decades. It assists members in need when they have financial emergencies. It is supported by contributions from us, the members of St. John's, and has been an extremely important source of emergency funds for years. Place your donations in the beautiful handmade church in the Narthex on Sundays. You may also send a check to the church made out to St. John's UCC with "Curtis Fund" on the memo line. We need to grow this fund so we can continue to help our family members!

In search of.....

.....folks willing to host the "fellowship time" after a Sunday service. You do not need to purchase the refreshments. Speak with Lynn Cloak if you have any questions about hosting. Please use the appropriate sign-up sheet in the Great Hall if you are willing to help.

.....folks willing to sponsor the worship bulletin or altar flowers. Honor someone or remember loved ones with a bulletin or flowers. The bulletin cost is \$15 and the flowers cost \$35. Your sponsorship will help defray their annual costs! Please see Bruce DeLong or Jeff Rissell or call the church office if you would like to be a sponsor .

St. John's year-round ministries and their needs

Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank

Especially needed items right now are **tuna fish, jelly, macaroni and cheese and canned baked beans**. Other items accepted include boxed cereal, canned fruit, peanut butter, Jell-o, pudding, any kind of canned or dried beans (baked, white, kidney, garbanzo, etc.) and pasta.

Monetary donations are also welcome.

Your monetary donations enable the food bank to purchase food from the Second Harvest Food Bank.

Pathways

Toiletries and personal care items like shampoo, conditioners, soaps, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving cream, disposable razors, etc. are needed. Sample sizes and the types you find in hotels and motels are fine.

Bike Works

Bike Works needs rubbing alcohol, black markers, disposable plastic gloves, toilet paper, paper towels and dish detergent and rags for greasy bike parts and hands. If you have anything you can tear into rags, they always need rags for greasy bike parts and hands. Thank you.

Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley

Turning Point is a safe place where victims of abuse and their children can find refuge. They provide services to nearly 4,000 people a year through programs and services, such as a 24-hour helpline, Safe House, counseling, court advocacy, support groups, prevention education, medical advocacy and more. St. John's is collecting new wash cloths, towels, twin bed sets and gift cards for CVS, Rite Aid, Walmart, Kmart and Giant.

Labels and Box Tops for Education

Don't forget to bring in those labels and box tops for education to be given directly to Central Elementary School to help them raise needed funds. You may bring in any and all types of "education" labels you see on products such as General Mills, Kleenex, Ziplock products and Pepperidge Farm. Collection boxes for the education labels can be found in the Great Hall, in the hallway by the door to the back parking lot and in the church office. Put your donations in one of the boxes the next time you are at the church. If you would like to help at the Food Bank, talk to Nancy Kramer-Moyer.

January 2019



- 1 David Hock
- 5 Ricky Hausman
- 8 Jeffrey Krapf
- 9 Bennet Bronfenbrenner
- 10 Jaleesa Hein-Cooper
- 12 Jeffrey Rissell
- 18 Daniel Collier
- 22 Shari Smith Taylor Fillman
- 23 Marissa Bortz
- 26 Karen Dopera Thomas Rissell Grace Quinn
- 30 Max Bronfenbrenner Emily Ferrol
- 31 Glenn Kent

Celebrating 
An Anniversary This Month

Jan. 14–Joan Moran & William Fenza

		1	2	3	4	5
			7pm Choir			
6 Epiphany	7	8 11am Worship Holy Communion 12noon Fellowship	6pm Elders 7pm Consistory	9 7pm Choir	10	11
13	14	15	16	17 7pm Choir	18	19
20 11am Worship Ecumenical Sunday 12noon	21	22	23 7pm Choir	24	25	26
27 11am Worship Health and Human Service 12noon Annual Lunch & Meeting	28	29	30 7pm Choir	31		

S M T W T F S

February 2019



Celebrating 
An Anniversary This Month

Feb.13 - John & Cheryl Phillips
Feb.14 - Glenn & Gretchen Kent
Feb.22 - Allan & Nancy Kramer-Moyer

- 1 Douglas Hunsinger
- 2 Susan Hoffert
- 3 Robert Fegley
Janet Newett
Jasmine Ferrol
- 4 Suzanne Dannenhower
Joshua Pyle
- 5 Susan Cook
Richard Guhl
- 7 Robert Zeky
- 8 Todd Saylor
- 9 Henry Dopera
- 11 Douglas M. DeLong
- 12 Estella Saylor
- 13 Linda Ferrol
- 14 Jennifer Hinkle
- 15 Zackiryah Schuler
- 16 Byron A. Cook
- 19 Jessica Schuler
- 20 Rebecca Bronfenbrenner
- 24 Donovan Hausman
- 25 Kimberly Garner

					1	2
3 11am Worship Candlemas Service 12noon Fellowship	4	5 7pm Elders	6 7pm Choir	7	8	9
10 11am Worship 12noon Fellowship	11	12 7pm Consistory	13 7pm Choir	14	15	16
17 11am Worship 12noon Fellowship	18	19	20 7pm Choir	21	22	23
24 11am Worship 12noon Fellowship	25	26	27 7pm Choir	28		

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