

St. John's United Church of Christ
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Like us on Facebook at

St Johns UCC Allentown

**Personal hearing devices are available
from an usher.**

***Indicates that people may stand as they
are able.**

September 22, 2024

11:00am

Tower Chimes

Janet Cook

Music to Gather:

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Wayne L. Wold

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* **Welcome**

Call to Worship by Christine Longhurst

One: Faithful God, we come into your presence with thanksgiving, deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness you have shown toward us, your people.

All: When we cry out, you answer. When we are exhausted, you give us the strength to go on.

One: When we find ourselves in trouble, we find you there, standing beside us.

All: And so we come before you with gratitude and praise, offering you the worship of our hearts and lives.

One: Open our eyes to see and know you here among us; open our ears to recognize your voice.

All: And then send us out from here, to live and work in the world as your faithful disciples.

Hymn #596 “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

Augustus M. Toplady, 1776; alt.

1. Rock of a-ges, cleft for me,
let me hide; my shel-ter be!
Let the wat-er and the blood,
from your wound-ed side which flowed,
Be of sin the dou-ble cure,
cleanse me from its guilt and power.
2. Not the la-bors of my hands
can ful-fill your law's de-mands;
Could my zeal no re-spite know,
could my tears for-ev-er flow,
All for sin could not a-tone;
you must save, and you a-lone.
3. Noth-ing in my hand I bring,
sim-ply to your cross I cling;
Na-ked, come to you for dress;
help-less, look to you for grace;
Stained, I to the foun-tain fly;
wash me, Sav-ior, or I die!
4. While I draw this fleet-ing breath,
when my eyes shall close in death,
When I soar to worlds un-known,
meet you at your judg-ment throne,
Rock of a-ges, cleft for me,
let me hide; my shel-ter be!

Isa. 26:4; John 19:34

Profession of Faith

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Let us come before our great and faithful God to profess our faith!

All: Creator, Son, and Spirit One, we come before you today with joyful singing as we take rest in your faithfulness. Your love and mercies are new each day, and we find peace in your presence. Throughout each season of our lives, we know that you are with us, offering guidance and strength as we journey through. Everything we have needed, you have provided, help us to trust in your great faithfulness. Amen.

Confession Response♪Hymn #502, Verse 1

**Dear God, embracing humankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives your service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.**

Assurance of Grace

One: God is with you always! Throughout the highs and lows of life, God's faithfulness to us endures forever!

All: "Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good! God's steadfast faithfulness endures forever" -Psalm 118:1

Response to Words of Assurance

Hymn #55, Verse 3

With voice as full and strong

as ocean's surging praise,

Send forth the hymns the saints have loved,

the psalms of ancient days.

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.

Scriptures

Bill Falla

Psalm 136:1-9 (Page 503)

2 Chronicles 5:2-14 (Page 349-350)

Congregational Response 🎵

***Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.***

Children's Moment

Sermon: *"God's Love Endures Forever!"*

Rev. Becky Sausser

Hymn #423 "Great Is Your Faithfulness"

(Note: Ushers will collect "Prayer Cards" during this time. Prayer cards are in the pews. We invite you to fill one out if you have a joy or prayer request to share.)

Morning Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our

Great Is Your Faithfulness

Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923; alt.

1. Great is your faith-ful-ness, O God, Cre-a-tor,*
with you no shad-ow of turn-ing we see.
You do not change, your com-pas-sions they fail not;
all of your good-ness for-ev-er will be.

Refrain:

Great is your faith-ful-ness! Great is your faith-ful-ness!
Morn-ing by morn-ing new mer-cies I see;
All I have need-ed your hand has pro-vid-ed,
Great is your faith-ful-ness, God, un-to me!

2. Sum-mer and win-ter, and spring-time and har-vest,
sun, moon, and stars in their cours-es a-bove,
Join with all na-ture in man-i-fold wit-ness
to your great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.

Refrain:

3. Par-don for sin and a peace so en-dur-ing,
your own dear pres-ence to cheer and to guide.
Strength for to-day and bright hope for to-mor-row,
bless-ings all mine with ten thou-sand be-side.

Refrain:

* originally "My Father."

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Lam. 3:22-23

debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response 🎵 Hymn #469, Verse 3

**O grant us light, that we may learn
How dead is life from you apart,
How sure is joy for all who turn
To you an undivided heart.**

Chancel Choir: Chancel Choir

“Songs of Worship”

Stan Pethel

Copyright 1994 Glory Sound

Announcements

Jeff Rissell

Offering

Offertory

“More Love to Thee” David H. Hegarty

Copyright 1976 Lorenz Publishing Co.

*Doxology 🎵

**Praise God from whom all blessings
flow;**

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

* **Hymn #593** “Lift Every Voice and Sing”

* Commission and Blessing

***Threefold Amen**

Amen, Amen, Amen

Music to go forth:

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

Theodore Hoelty-Nickel

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Lift Every Voice and Sing

James Weldon Johnson, 1921; alt.

1. Lift ev-ery voice and sing, till earth and heav-en ring,
ring with the har-mo-nies of lib-er-ty;
Let our re-joic-ing rise, high as the lis-tening skies,
let it re-sound loud as the roll-ing sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the harsh past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the pres-ent has brought us;
Fac-ing the ris-ing sun of our new day be-gun,
let us march on till vic-to-ry is won.
2. Ston-y the road we trod, bit-ter the chas-tening rod,
felt in the days when hope un-born had died;
Yet with a stead-y beat, have not our wea-ry feet,
come to the place for which our peo-ple sighed?
We have come o-ver a way that with tears has been wa-tered,
We have come, tread-ing our path through the blood of the
slaugh-tered,
Out from the gloom-y past, till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
3. God of our wea-ry years, God of our si-lent tears,
God who has brought us thus far on the way;
God, who by your might, led us in-to the light,
keep us for-ev-er in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the plac-es, our God, where we met you,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, for-get you;
Shad-owed be-neath your hand, may we for-ev-er stand,
true to our God, true to our na-tive land.

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The Altar flowers are from Jeanette and Dick Schmoyer in memory of their daughter Valerie who passed away September 21, 2023.

Special Announcements/Reminders:

You can give ELECTRONICALLY from your mobile device using the VancoMobile app. You can download this app from the Apple and Google App stores. The church's name is - stjohnsuccallentown - exactly as shown. You can also give on our homepage www.stjohnsuccallentown.org by clicking on the "Donate" button.

In emergencies, please use exits found to the left and right of the altar, to the right of the front pew, and at the rear of the sanctuary. Follow **EXIT** signs

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

**God is still speaking, ...
Serving St. John's...**

Rev. Becky Sausser.....Pastor
Andrea Williams...Administrative Assistant
Lois Mease... Music Director and Organist
April Riddick.....Custodian
Jim Saylor.....Sunday Sexton
And too many volunteers to list!

Office Hours

Sunday: 9am-2pm
Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm
Friday: 9am-2pm
Closed on Saturdays

Keystone Working Group – Bulletin Insert 2

“Together We Are Stronger” Staffing a New Conference

When the four Conference Ministers started meeting to explore options for sharing resources, the topic of staffing was forefront in their discussions. Staffing has been one of the key components of discussion during the Keystone Working Group (KWG) meetings. The staffing subcommittee, previously comprised of the four Conference Ministers, kept the KWG updated every month on their progress. At the time of our joint annual meeting in June the KWG had a tentative staffing model for a Keystone Conference.

The subcommittee is now being expanded to include the personnel chairs from all four conferences so we can begin to look at transitional staffing needs and position descriptions should the November vote be approved by all four conferences. Having a transitional staffing plan in place is key to starting any merger process for the four conferences.



It is important to note that this is a staff model and may be altered as we move forward in the implementation of the merger. Succession planning, especially when it comes to staffing, will have a positive effect on the overall success of every aspect of a new Keystone Conference.

“While the working group initially considered several different forms for sharing resources, they overwhelmingly opted for fully combining the conferences as the best way to serve congregations, conferences, and pastors.”

~ Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates, PNEC Conference Minister

Next Town Hall Sessions

The conversations around the timeline, staffing model and finances are available for registration. Please use the QR code, on all conferences websites or contact your conference office.



QR code.

In each townhall conversation, the timeline will be reviewed for possible action toward our vote, the motion to the General Synod and next steps.

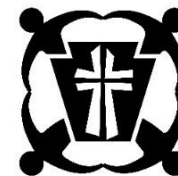
Merger Motion Vote by 4 Conferences Nov. 9, 2024

Each congregation is allowed their usual number of delegates to vote on the merger motion. See each conference for details to register, participate and make your vote count! The full motion is available on the website.

For more information: <https://psec.org/keystone/>

Motion to General Synod, July 11-15, 2025

If approved by all 4 conferences, the motion is presented to General Synod for UCC delegates' approval.



“We face the unknown, but God is known!”

-- Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson
President and General Minister of the UCC to the delegates at the gathered PA area conferences.

2024 CALENDAR

October

- October 6 - Planning Meeting Luncheon
- October 13 - CROP Walk (Allentown)

November

- November 3 - All Saints' Day

December

- December 1 - Advent Breakfast/ First Sunday in Advent
- December 15 or 22 - Youth Pageant
- December 24 - Christmas eve service



If you'd like to sponsor flowers for the Altar please ask Andrea for more details!

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