

The Disciple



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

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

Volume 25 Issue 8

August 2025

Howdy St. John's Family,

This month is the second to last in our investigation into the New Testament reading the Epistle of Jude! Jude, which was actually pronounced *Judah* at the time, was one of Jesus' four brothers. We remember that none of Jesus' brothers believed his divinity until they saw him come back from the dead, and then they became church leaders, according to Acts 1:14. Jude became a traveling teacher and missionary. Because he had such a wide outreach, we don't know exactly who this letter was written for, or what community it was helping, but we do have some clues that tell us a little about these folks. We know that they were more than likely a group of people who were Jewish before becoming Christian. Judah heavily references the Old Testament and different Jewish literature from the time.

Jude explains that he intended to write a longer letter, but when he heard about the issues going on, he wrote a shorter letter to reach them in time. Jude's letter is broken down into three main sections. The first 4 verses are an opening challenge to the community. In verses 5 through 19, we find the meat of his letter. Corrupt teachers are telling people that since Christ forgives all sins, it gives you a free pass to sin as much as they like since they can wipe the slate clean after by asking Jesus to forgive their sins. Jude explains to the congregation that this is not how any of this works! When we accept Jesus Christ into our hearts, we need to obey Christ's teachings and follow his example. Jude backs this up with some scriptural examples from our Old Testament of corrupt groups in verses 5 through 10, and corrupt leaders in verses 11-13. Verses 14-19 share two scriptural warnings, one from Enoch (a prophet who it was believed lived during the time of Genesis) and one from the disciples. Both of these warnings were about avoiding false teachers.

In verses 20 through 25 Jude explains that they need to deal with these corrupt teachers and remember that they are called as a Christian community to be a new temple. Through prayer, sharing Christ's love, and faith, they will keep this temple strong and safe. Jude is a dense letter for being only one chapter long. To oversimplify this book into a "bumper sticker" version of the message, I think Jude is calling us to remember that following Jesus is something that involves our whole selves being fully committed to Christ. In John 14:15 Jesus tells the disciples that if they really love him, they will obey his teachings. The way that we live speaks louder to what we believe than anything we could say. Blessings!
-Pastor Becky Sausser

August Special Mission Offering

By the time you read this, school will be opening in about one month. That means **Central Elementary** with all its needs will be back in session with more students than last year. Therefore, as our August Special Mission Offering, we will be collecting monetary donations to be used to meet what they feel is their greatest need/needs. If you would prefer to contribute an item, you can find **Central's Wish List** on the weekly *St. John's Corresponds*.

Monetary donations can be included with your regular offering by using the blue pew envelopes or by using the Donate Button on our Website. Be sure to designate it for **Central Elementary**. Also, as specific needs are made known to us, we will make them known to you, providing you with another avenue for your support.

Won't you please find a way to help St. John's UCC continue this vital ministry.
Thank you for continuing in this vital ministry. Thank you!

August Sermons: Ask in August

- August 3
 - Reading 1: Genesis 1:24-28
 - Reading 2: Psalms 8:1-9
 - Title: Did you mean for giraffes to look like that?
 - Summary: In a letter writing campaign to God, Norma wrote, "Dear God, did you mean for giraffes to look like that or was it an accident?" This week we look at creation during Ask in August!
- August 10- Vacation Bible School Sunday
 - Reading 1: Luke 19:1-10
 - Title: Big Top, Big Love!
 - Summary: This week we are going to have our Vacation Bible School service! What will it look like when the circus comes to St. John's? Come and join us at 10am!
- August 17
 - Reading 1: Romans 8:31-39
 - Reading 2: 1 John 4:7-21
 - Title: How does God love everyone?
 - Summary: In a letter-writing campaign to God, one little girl asked, "Dear God, I bet it is very hard for you to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only four people in my family and I can never do that." How does God love everyone and how do we love one another?
- August 24- Mandy Mueschette will be our guest minister this week!
- August 31
 - Reading 1: Ezekiel 1:4-28
 - Reading 2: Hebrews 13:1-6
 - Title: What's up with angels?
 - Summary: Popular media has a lot to say about angels, but what does the Bible say? And more important, are biblically accurate angels creepy?

Announcements

Important Dates!

- August 10- Vacation Bible School Church 10am service
- August 15- Youth Pizza Night beginning at 6pm in Social Hall kitchen
- August 17- Lehigh Valley Pride. Volunteer to help with our booth!
- October 5- Pulled pork BBQ & Coleslaw Sale

Bible Bites

I love the Bible! Did you know that Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible! Right before that, Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the entire Bible with only 2 verses. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses. Psalm 118 has 594 chapters before it and 594 chapters after it. Okay, that is a lot of information, but what is the point? Well, check this out, if you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118 you get a total of 1,180 chapters. In our Bible, 1,188, or Psalm 118 verse 8 tells us, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Let us always remember to put our full hope in the Lord, and to keep Christ at the center of it all.

-Respectfully submitted by Pastor Becky Sausser

Bible Bites

with Pastor Becky



Tales from the Resource Room

If I were to ask you to think through your entire day from beginning to end, the majority of you would probably say that you wake up to an alarm clock on your phone, and then check your phone. Our cell phones have become vital parts of our daily life experience, and in fact it can be difficult to get connected with resources in our area if you don't have a cell phone. Even before we established our Resource Room, we were helping people get connected with services in the area that were difficult to access without a computer. We have helped dozens of people apply for housing assistance, get connected to benefits that they are entitled to, and apply for jobs that require physical addresses.

One of the things that you may notice if you drive past the church during the week is that we often have folks sitting in back of the church near the stairs, or in front of the church near the brick wall outside of the nursery. There is a good reason for this! We have two outdoor outlets that are accessible for people to charge their cell phones. In fact, we have become known in the unhoused community as a location where you can safely charge your phone. Without a working phone, it becomes nearly impossible for these individuals to get connected to jobs, shelter, and their families. If you are wondering what you can do to help with this, I have a few ideas. The first thing is to continue to make regular donations to St. John's UCC. It is only a few pennies worth of electricity that is used to charge a cell phone, but your donation would also help us keep the lights on for the many groups that call our building home. The other thing that you can do is donate old cell phone chargers. When you get a new phone and the old charger is not compatible, consider bringing it in. Or if you are like me and you have accumulated a number of cell phone chargers somehow, consider donating your surplus. Blessings!

-Respectfully submitted by Pastor Becky Sausser



Green Team News

The Green Team has taken a number of steps on behalf of our goal to attain becoming a Creation Justice Church.

First, we developed the following Mission Statement:

The mission of the Green Team is to engage, educate, and empower members of St. John's about the environment.

Second, we decided to organize quarterly projects related to the environment.

In the Fall, we plan to conduct a cleanup of litter along the Sixth Street corridor in collaboration with the Allentown Department of Public Works, recruiting members to join this effort.

In the Winter, we plan on having a cleanup of our church building.

In the Spring, we plan on having a nature walk in cooperation with a local conservancy.

Third, we will have a three-week Zoom book study of the Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt's book *Cathedral on Fire*. Rev. Berndt is the United Church of Christ Environmental Justice Minister.

Meanwhile, the United Church of Christ Environmental Justice Ministry sponsored Climate Hope Affiliate for the PA 7 Congressional District, which meets on the third Saturday from 10 - 2 here at St. John's. The meeting includes a national webinar. Aware of the intersection between environmental issues and societal injustice, the Climate Hope Affiliates empowers people of faith to engage in public advocacy. For more information, contact Rick Guhl at rickguhl@gmail.com.

"Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds." Hebrews 10: 24

Love of Creation

"Water covers 70% of our planet, only 3% is fresh water and only 1% is available. Much of the rest is snow and ice or is in underground aquifers."

This is info from *The Morning Call*, March 26, 2024, Bruce Wilson

Some practical ways to use our precious water responsibly:

- Install water-efficient toilets and washers
- Fix leaking faucets
- Use gray water to water plants and garden
- Turn off water when brushing teeth
- Limit water when washing dishes
- Take shorter showers
- Notice ways you may be wasting water and how to minimize.

Show your love of our creation by doing these good deeds!


August Hoagie Sale Underway

The order sheet has been posted on the bulletin board in the Great Hall for the August hoagie sale.

Last day to order: July 27

Delivery/Payment: August 10

August 2025

<div></div> <div>2 – William Hein 4 – Kim Meitzler 5 – Yvonne Fillman 9 – Bruce DeLong Sr. Megan Edwards 10 – Noah Dopera 11 – Anna Mae Schul 13 – Nancy Kramer- Moyer 14 – Lisa Hoffert 20 – Carol Wikerd Stacey Dannenhower 24 – James Moran 27 – Jeanette Schmoyer 28 – Allison Hausman</div>	<div><div><div>Celebrating</div><div>An Anniversary This Month</div></div><div><div>8/14 – Byron & Janet Cook</div><div>8/14 – Bonnie & William Falla</div><div>8/26 – Richard & Judith Guhl</div></div></div>						
	<div>SundayMondayTuesdayWednesdayThursdayFridaySaturday</div>						
						1	2
	3 <div>10:00am Worship</div> <div>Green Team Meeting</div> <div>after service</div>	4	5	6 <div>9am</div> <div>Prayer Call</div> <div>Summer Book</div> <div>Study 7pm</div>	7 <div>Food Bank</div>	8	9
	10 <div>10:00am Worship</div>	11	12	13 <div>9am</div> <div>Prayer Call</div>	14	15	16
	17 <div>10:00am Worship</div> <div>Lehigh Valley Pride!</div>	18	19	20 <div>9am</div> <div>Prayer Call</div>	21	22	23
	24 <div>10:00am Worship</div>	25	26	27 <div>9am</div> <div>Prayer Call</div>	28 <div>Food Bank</div>	29	30
	31						

Check out our website: <https://stjohnsuccallentown.org/>

Follow us on Facebook by searching St. John's UCC Allentown (our logo is a picture of the church).



August Word Search

F	H	X	L	I	J	K	B	E	I	R	A
R	U	I	P	O	P	S	I	C	L	E	S
E	E	N	N	L	O	M	K	J	K	L	U
A	N	E	K	M	X	U	I	H	T	A	M
D	A	C	Y	T	Q	P	N	S	R	X	M
I	T	R	S	T	A	V	G	N	A	M	E
N	I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M	V	L	R
G	X	A	S	T	Y	E	B	J	E	A	H
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W	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	R	M	P	Z
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N	M	X	O	R	L	P	U	H	J	K	G

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9	7	4		8	6	1	2	3
3	8	6	1	4		2	5	7
7		5						
	4	9	7		2	8	3	6
5				7	4		9	8
	9		3		1			2
2				9		3		1

BIKING	POOL	READING	FRIENDS
POPSICLES	SNOW CONE	RELAX	TRAVEL
SUMMER	ICE CREAM	LEMONADE	FUN

