

St. John's United Church of Christ
36 S. Sixth Street, Allentown, PA 18101
Phone 610-433-0146

Email: stjohnsucc2@verizon.net

Website: www.stjohnsuccallentown.org

Pastor Rebecca Sausser

Phone: 570 – 581 - 0594

Email: revsausser@gmail.com

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 7, 2025

11:00am

Tower Chimes

Janet Cook

Music to Gather:

"Lift High the Cross"

Lani Smith

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*** Welcome**

Call to Worship inspired by A Mighty Fortress

One: Behold! Our God is like a mighty fortress!

All: God is our helper! God is our strength!

One: Jesus Christ is on our side, from age-to-age Christ is the same!

All: Jesus is our savior, God's chosen one, our refuge.

One: Even when it feels like the world is against us, we do not need to fear.

All: God is with us! God's truth abides forever! God's kingdom is forever!

Hymn #439.....“A Mighty Fortress” Profession of Faith

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here! Today we gather in the presence of our Mighty God, resting in the promises that God is with us always.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

439

Martin Luther, c. 1529

Transl. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853; adapt. Ruth Duck, 1981

1. A might-y for-tress is our God,
a bul-wark nev-er fail-ing,
Our pres-ent help a-mid the flood
of mor-tal ills pre-vail-ing.
For still our an-cient foe
does seek to work us woe
with craft and pow-er great,
and armed with cru-el hate,
on earth with-out an e-qual.
2. Did we in our own strength con-fide,
our striv-ing would be los-ing,
But there is one who takes our side,
the One of God's own choos-ing.
You ask who that may be?
Christ Je-sus sets us free!
With might-y power to save,
vic-to-rious o'er the grave,
Christ will pre-vail tri-um-phant.
3. And though this world with dev-ils filled
should threat-en to un-do us,
We will not fear for God has willed
the truth to tri-umph through us.

All: Holy God, today we gather to celebrate your presence with us always. Jesus Christ, you became fully human, though you were fully God, so that you could be our refuge and strength. Jesus, you are our friend who sticks closer than a brother, you are Lord of all! When the troubles of this world fill us with anxiety and dread, help us to remember that you are our mighty fortress, our strength, and our savior! Amen.

Confession Response 🎵 #42, Verse 3

Jesus! The name that calms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease
Is music in the sinner's ears,
is life, ad health, and peace!

Assurance of Grace

One: Beloved community, our God is a mighty fortress, a place where we can

always feel safe and secure. Christ's love surrounds us and fills us and sustains us.

All: "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth." -Psalm 46:10

Response to Words of Assurance:

♪ Hymn 410 v 1

**If you but trust in God to guide you,
With hopeful heart through all your
ways,
You will find strength, with God beside
you,
To bear the worst of evil days;
For those who trust God's changeless
love
Build on the rock that will not move.**

Scriptures

Janet Cook

Reading 1: Psalm 46

(page 456)

Reading 2: Hebrews 1:1-4

(page 973)

Beautiful Jesus

Münster Gesangbuch, 1677

Transl. Madeleine Forell Marshall, 1993

1. Beau-ti-ful Je-sus,
Head of all cre-a-tion,
God and the bless-ed Mar-y's child:
I want to love you,
praise and a-dore you,
joy of my soul, so long de-sired.
2. Beau-ti-ful spring-time,
love-ly, green, and hope-ful,
all earth ex-hales its sweet per-fume:
Je-sus is sweet-er,
Je-sus is pur-er,
sad hearts at this, re-joice and bloom.
3. Beau-ti-ful sun-shine,
clear, so love-ly, moon-light,
stars shine like an-gels, ranked through space:
Je-sus shines bright-er,
Je-sus shines clear-er,
in per-fect beau-ty, love, and grace.
4. All earth-ly beau-ty,
all ce-les-tial ra-diance
fade when com-pared to Je-sus' face.
Let me not cher-ish
beau-ties that per-ish;
let me this love-ly good em-brace.

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: "A Mighty Fortress"

Rev. Becky Sausser

Hymn # 44..... "Beautiful Jesus"
(Note: Ushers will collect "Prayer Cards" during this time. Prayer cards are in the pews.)

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 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 # 521 Verse 2

**When-e'er the world is troubling me,
and stress is all around,
I seek the presence of my God,
and healing light is found.**

Chancel Choir "I Will Rejoice"

Joseph M. Martin

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A CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Invitation

Communion Prayer

Pastor: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to God.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Almighty.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Pastor: Eternal God, you created the heavens and earth, giving breath to every living thing. We thank you for the gift of creation and for the gift of life itself. We thank you for making us in your own image, for forgiving us when we act as though You have no claim on us, and for keeping us in your steadfast care.

We rejoice in Jesus Christ, the only one eternally begotten by you, who was born of your servant Mary and shared the joys and sorrows of life as we know it. We remember Christ's death, we celebrate Christ's resurrection, and in the beloved community of your church, we await Christ's return at the end of history.

We take courage from the abiding praise of men, women, and persons of faith in every age who stand as witnesses to your love and justice. With all the prophets, martyrs, and saints and with all the company of heaven, we glorify you singing...

People (Singing the Sanctus Hymn #795)
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of
Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full, are full, of
the majesty of Thy Glory.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the
highest.

Blessed is he that cometh in the
name of the Lord.

Hosannah, hosanna, hosanna in the
highest.

Pastor: We remember that on the night He was betrayed and deserted, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke the bread, and

gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, Jesus also took the cup after supper, and gave thanks for it, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

People: By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ's death, we celebrate Christ's resurrection, and we await Christ's coming again.

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, we ask you to meet us where we are today in your mercy; we ask you to bless this bread and this cup and all of us with the outpouring of your Holy Spirit. Through this meal, make us the body of Christ, your church, your servant people, that we may be salt, light, and leaven in this world that you so deeply love.

Receiving the Elements

Pastor: Through the broken bread, we participate in the body of Christ. Through the cup of blessing, we participate in the new life that Christ gives. The gifts of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

(At this time our ushers will bring the bread representing the body of Christ into the congregation. If you prefer to receive individually wrapped elements, there will be wrapped communion cups on this tray that have both the bread and juice.)

Pastor: The body of Christ. (At this time, partake of the bread.)

Pastor: The blood of Christ. (At this time partake of the juice.)

Pastor: Let us join together in prayer.

People: As one body, we lament with those who lament. We hope with those who hope. We live with suffering. We live with beauty. Let us go from this

table as a renewed community, doing the radical work of Jesus that calls us to live justice-making lives of faith. We are followers of God's way. We give thanks and praise! Amen!

Announcements

Jeff Rissell

Offering

Offertory: "Maostoso"

Johann Erasmus Kindermann

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*** 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 #303 " Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing!"**

Charles Wesley, 1746; alt.

1. Re-joyce, give thanks and sing;
your Sov-ereign God a-dore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting
and tri-umphs ev-er-more.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Re-joyce, a-gain I say, re-joyce.
2. Our Sav-ior Je-sus reigns,
the God of truth and love;
The Lamb who purged our stains
is crowned with power a-bove.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Re-joyce, a-gain I say, re-joyce.
3. Christ Je-sus can-not fail
to rule both earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
are to the Sav-ior given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Re-joyce, a-gain I say, re-joyce.
4. Re-joyce in glo-rious hope,
for Christ the Judge shall come,
And take the faith-ful up
to their e-ter-nal home.
We soon shall hear a heaven-ly voice
a-bove the trum-pet's sound, "Re-joyce!"

Phil. 4:4; Rev. 3:7; 19:6-7

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* Commission and Blessing

***Threefold Amen**

Amen, Amen, Amen

Music to go forth

Chorale and Fugue on A Mighty Fortress”

James Denton

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***The Altar flowers are in memory of
Walter and Michael Yenolevich
by Cindy Dannenhower.***

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
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

Closed on Fridays and Saturdays