



The Disciple

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

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

Volume 26 Issue 2

February 2026

Howdy St. John's Family,

February is one of the shortest months in the year and often one of the coldest! While you're stuck inside with friends and family it is a perfect opportunity to work on your listening skills! In fact, today we are going to be learning about the tribe of Simeon, which in Hebrew means "one who listens and one who hears". We also see Simeon as being interpreted to mean listening and understanding or empathizing. Simeon is the Second son of Jacob, and his name may seem a little ironic when we visit Genesis chapter 34.

In this chapter of Genesis, we see but when Simeon finds out about his sister, Dinah, being defiled by a Hivite named Shechem, and so Simeon and Levi come up with a plan of revenge. They created a false treaty with the family of Hamor, which involved all of the men of the city being circumcised (Gen 34:15). Instead of living peacefully, Simeon and Levi took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city killing every male. Jacob ends up disciplining his two sons because what they did was wrong, and it made many of the neighboring communities pretty anxious about trusting Jacob and his family.

We know from the Bible, but Jacob didn't really get over this act of violence and betrayal, because in Genesis chapter 49 he ends up cursing Simeon and Levi so that their tribes may be dispersed in Israel. By the time that we get to the book of Joshua chapter 19 we see that the tribe of Simeon is small and forced to share territory with the tribe of Judah which greatly outnumbered them. When I think about the tribe of Simeon, I can't help but focus on the irony. Simeon's name means to empathize and to listen, but that is the opposite of what he does as he seeks revenge and refuses to offer grace even when a peace treaty has been negotiated. It reminds me of one of the first books that I read in seminary, *The Sacred Art of Listening*, by Kay Lindahl. This book talks about how we can retrain our brains to really be present and listen to one another, rather than focusing on how we are going to respond. I think this is something that we could all use practice with! Blessings to you as you work on listening in February.

-Pastor Becky Sausser

Consistory Summary

The January consistory meeting was held on January 13, 2026, at 7 PM in the Trinity room. After a time of joy and concerns, Nancy Kramer Moyer shared devotions. The minutes

from the December 9, 2025, meeting were approved. Under the Ministers Report, Pastor Becky shared her housing allowance for 2026. She informed the consistory that the annual report is almost ready to print. She also informed the consistory that written correspondence was mailed to everybody informing them of the proposed change to the bylaws. New representatives from the groups that meet in the building have been elected and been in contact with Pastor Becky. She shared a brief update on the resource room and reminded everybody of the cleanup to be held on February 7, 2026.

Under new business, Jeff Rissell presented the 2026 Proposed Budget. After a time of questions and answers, the budget was accepted for the annual report. Under committee reports, Lynn Cloak shared under Fellowship Committee that the special time of fellowship following the Christmas pageant and the Christmas Eve service were a success. The annual meeting luncheon is scheduled for January 18. Under the Fundraising Committee, Lynn Cloak shared that there will be a soup sale on January 25. Under Property Committee, Jeff Rissell shared that an estimate was received for the repairs to the paint in the sanctuary. Under Christian Education, Pastor Becky shared that the Christmas pageant was a success! The kids voted to have another pizza night soon and a pole will be sent out in the next few weeks. The Treasurer's report was accepted. Under Personnel, Pastor Becky shared that Allied Services is currently working on finding us applicants for a new administrative assistant. Under the Green Team Nancy Kramer-Moyer shared a reminder about the clean up on February 7. Under the Scholarship Committee, Nancy Rissell shared that Applications are ready and will be shared this spring. The next meeting will be held on February 10, 2026, at 7 PM in the Trinity room. Pastor Becky let a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned. Respectfully submitted

End Of Year Giving Statements

We no longer mail annual giving statements to every member. If you would like to receive a copy, please email the church office at stjohnsucc2@verizon.net, or call us at 610-433-0146 and leave a message. Thank you!

February Special Mission Offering

Our Special Mission for February is Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley. For almost 50 years, Turning Point has been offering compassionate care and shelter for victims of Domestic Violence and Partner Abuse. Unfortunately, the need has not significantly decreased over this period. In fact, Turning Point helped over 3500 Lehigh Valley residents in fiscal year 2021-22 and increased again to 3772 for FY 2024-2025.

St John's has supported Turning Point over the past years by donating money and items to support their Services and Shelter. This month we asking you to continue this support by donating items on their Wish List (found on the Mission Bulletin Board in the Great Hall) and/or making a monetary contribution. The

monetary contribution may be made either by using the blue pew or weekly offering envelope (be sure to designate Turning Point) or the Donate Button on the Church website.

Thank you for considering to help in continuing St. John's support of this vital ministry.

Respectfully Submitted by William Falla

February Sermons

- February 1
 - Reading 1: Micah 6:1-8
 - Reading 2: Matthew 4:12-23
 - Title: The Beatitudes
 - This week we review the comforting and important words of the beatitudes.
- February 8
 - Reading 1: Psalm 112: 1-10
 - Reading 2: Matthew 5:13-20
 - Title: Salt and Light
 - This week we talk about salt! Jesus used salt to illustrate something important to the disciples, come learn more about it!
- February 15- Transfiguration Sunday
 - Reading 1: Matthew 17:1-9
 - Reading 2: Revelation 1: 9-16
 - Title: Transfiguration
 - This week we revisit the story of the incredible transfiguration of Jesus!
- February 18- Ash Wednesday
 - Reading 1: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
 - Reading 2: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
 - Title: Ash Wednesday
 - This week marks the beginning of our Lenten season. Join us on Wednesday, February 18, as we receive ashes and contemplate Christ.
- February 22- First Sunday in Lent
 - Reading 1: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7
 - Reading 2: Matthew 4:1-11
 - Title: Pink
 - This week we explore the way that our Old Testament is connected to our New Testament. In Genesis we revisit the garden of Eden, and in Matthew, Jesus is tempted in the wilderness.

ADULT FORUM

Please join us Sunday mornings before worship for a variety of studies and programs. And, bring your friends! We gather in the Trinity Room at 9:30 for coffee or tea then begin our program at 9:45 with a sharing of joys and concerns.

Bible Bites

with Pastor Becky



Bible Bites

Did you know that unicorns were mentioned 9 times in the King James Version of the Bible? Why doesn't my bible talk about unicorns? Here is the story, in the original KJV translation, they took the Hebrew word *re'em* and translated it as *unicorn*. When the word *re'em* gets translated from Hebrew into Greek we get *monokeros*, with *mono* meaning one and *keros* meaning horn. In the Latin, when finally get the word *unicornis*, which means "one horned animal". If we look at other references and ratings we see that this *re'em* was a large one or two horned creature that was probably describing a now extinct species of wild cattle known as aurochs. In media depictions of unicorns, they are graceful horse like creatures with one horn in the center of their head; the creature of the Bible was more like a big crazy bison with horns like a bull. So the next time that the unicorn shows up in your Fantasy novel or television show, remember the unicorn of the Hebrew Bible.

Announcements

Important Dates

February 7- Green Team Building Clean Up in the building

February 18- Ash Wednesday Service 7:30pm

February 22- Hoagie Sale Pick Up

March 29- Palm Sunday Service 11am

April 2- Maundy Thursday Service 7:30pm

April 3- Good Friday Service 7:30pm

April 5- Easter Service 11am

Weekly Prayer Group

Each Wednesday morning from 9–10am St. John's hosts a Prayer Call via Zoom. The main purpose of this ministry is to offer folks an opportunity to gather in prayer to share joys and concerns, and to pray for one another. All requests are lifted during the call. It is a spirit-filled gathering and fun!

After the prayer call, a prayer chain is generated and sent out to folks who have requested to receive it. The only information written is that which the participants have agreed to have shared. Contact Pastor Becky for the link to join!

Adult Forum in February

Please join us Sunday mornings before worship for a variety of studies and programs. And, bring your friends! We gather in the Trinity Room at 9:30 for coffee or tea then begin our program at 9:45 with a sharing of joys and concerns. Weather permitting, of course! This is what we have planned for February:

February 1-Please join us for a video and discussion.

February 8-Susan Logomasini, Director of Development for Family Promise of the Lehigh Valley, will be giving us an update on this organization that assists those experiencing homelessness. St. John's has been a long-time supporter of their work.

February 15-Pastor Becky will discuss some activities that may not be traditionally seen as spiritual practices including her own involvement with wood working. I think there may be some show & tell!

February 22-Our annual Lenten Breakfast. Always yummy!



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

February 2025

 <p> 2 – Susan Hoffert 3 – Robert Fegley Jasmine Ferrol 4 – Joshua Pyle 5 – Richard Guhl Susan Cook 6 – Bryon Cook 7 – Robert Zeky 8 – Todd Saylor 9 – Henry Dopera 13 – Linda Ferrol Becky Sausser 14 – Jennifer Hinkle 15 – Zackiryah Schuler 20 – Rebecca Bronfenbrenner 24 – Donovan Hausman </p>	<p>Celebrating 60 <i>An Anniversary This Month</i></p> <p>2/22 Allan & Nancy Kramer-Moyer</p>						
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							1
2	9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship	3	4 Choir 10am Elders Meeting TBD	5 9am Prayer Call	6 Food Bank	7	8
9	9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship	10	11 Choir 10am Consistory Meeting 7pm	12 9am Prayer Call	13	14	15
16	9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship	17 Office Closed	18 Choir 10am	19 9am Prayer Call	20	21	22
23	9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship Green Team Meeting Following Worship	24	25 Choir 10am	26 9am Prayer Call	27	28 Food Bank	

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

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