

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**

October 25, 2026,

11:00am

Tower Chimes

Janet Cook

Music to Gather: "How Firm a Foundation"

Edward Broughton

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*** Welcome**

Call to Worship

One: Come, let us worship the God whose love is freely given.

All: We come not because we have earned God's love, but because God's grace welcomes us.

One: Jesus calls us to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

All: May our love be sincere, without conditions or expectations.

One: Paul reminds us that faith is not about seeking praise or recognition, but about sharing our lives with one another.

All: May we serve with humility, care with compassion, and give without expecting anything in return.

One: Let us worship the God who loves us beyond measure.

All: And may that love inspire us to love without an agenda. Amen.

Hymn #439 “A Mighty Fortress”

Profession of Faith

One: Jesus reminds us that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Paul shows us that this love is not about seeking recognition, approval, or something in return, but about sharing

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.

The powers of e-vil grim,
we trem-ble not for them;
their rage we can en-dure,
for lo, their doom is sure:
one lit-tle word shall fell them.

4. That word be-yond all earth-ly powers
for-ev-er is a-bid-ing;
The Spir-it and the gifts are ours,
for Christ is with us sid-ing.
Let goods and kin-dred go,
this mor-tal life al-so;
the bod-y they may kill;
God's truth shall tri-umph still;
God's reign en-dures for-ev-er.

Ps. 46

our lives with genuine compassion and care. Yet even with the best intentions, we sometimes place expectations on the love we offer. We seek appreciation for our kindness, recognition for our service, and acceptance from those we welcome. But God's love calls us to something greater, a love freely given, without conditions or hidden agendas. As we come before the God who meets us wherever we are on life's journey, let us profess our faith in the transforming power of God's love.

All: Loving God, we believe that your love is freely given, without conditions or expectations. We believe that every person is created in your image, worthy of dignity, compassion, and belonging. We believe that Jesus calls us to love you with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We affirm that genuine love seeks neither praise nor reward, but finds its purpose in caring for others. Help us to live what we profess: to serve without seeking recognition, to welcome without judgment, and to give without expecting anything in return. May our faith be reflected not only in the words we speak, but in

**the lives we share and the love we offer.
Through Jesus Christ, who shows us what it
means to love without an agenda. Amen.**

Response to prayer of confession♪ Hymn #318, V1

**Almighty God, your Word is cast
Like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heaven descend
And righteous fruits abound.**

Words of Assurance

One: Hear the good news! God's love is not something we must earn, and God's grace is not dependent upon our perfection.

All: We are loved, forgiven, and invited into new life.

One: Through Christ, we are freed from the need to prove our worth and empowered to love others freely.

All: May we receive God's grace with gratitude and extend that same grace to others. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Response to Words of Assurance 🎵 Hymn #403, V1

**My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' love and righteousness;
I dare not trust this earthly frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand,
all other ground is sinking sand.**

Scriptures

Barney Cook

Reading 1: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 (Page 959)

Reading 2: Matthew 22:34-46 (Page 798)

Congregational Response 🎵 (aka prayer for grace)

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: "Love Without an Agenda "

Amanda Muschett

Hymn #565

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

(Note: Ushers will collect “Prayer Cards” during this time. Prayer cards are in the pews.)

Morning Prayer and 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 #410 Verse 2

**Only be still, and wait God’s pleasure
in cheerful hope, with heart content,
trusting that grace which knows no measure
will by unbounded Love be sent;
Nor doubt our inmost wants are clear
to One who holds us always near.**

Chancel Choir “Only Jesus” Amy Tate Williams
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God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

565

Robert L. Edwards, 1961; alt.

1. God, whose giv-ing knows no end-ing,
from your rich and end-less store,
Na-ture's won-der, Je-sus' wis-dom,
cost-ly cross, grave's shat-tered door:
Gift-ed by you, we turn to you
of-fering up our-selves in praise;
Thank-ful song shall rise for-ev-er,
gra-cious do-nor of our days.

2. Skills and time are ours for serv-ing,
that your will on earth be done:
All at peace in health and free-dom,
rac-es joined, the Church made one.
Now di-rect our dai-ly la-bor,
lest we strive for self a-lone;
born with tal-ents, make us ser-vants
fit to an-swer at your throne.

3. Trea-sure, too, you have en-trust-ed,
gain through powers your grace con-ferred;
Ours to use for home and kin-dred,
and to spread the gos-pel Word.
O-pen wide our hands in shar-ing
as we heed Christ's age-less call,
Heal-ing, teach-ing, and re-claim-ing,
hon-oring you by lov-ing all.

STEWARDSHIP AND CREATION

4. Lend your joy to all our giv-ing,
let it light our pil-grim way;
From the night of anx-ious keep-ing,
loose us in-to gen-erous day.
Then when years on earth are o-ver,
and we've lived our hu-man span,
God, ful-fill be-yond our dream-ing,
all our stew-ard-ship be-gan.

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Announcements

Jeff Rissell

Offering

Offertory "Aus meines Herzens Grunde"

Johan Christoph Bach

Copyright 1951 C. F. Peters

* 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 #306

"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"

* Commission and Blessing

* **Threefold Amen**

Amen, Amen, Amen

Music to Go Forth "Ye Are the Light of the World"

Edward Broughton

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Fred Pratt Green, 1969

1. The church of Christ, in ev-ery age
be-set by change, but Spir-it led,
Must claim and test its her-i-tage
and keep on ris-ing from the dead.
2. A-cross the world, a-cross the street,
the vic-tims of in-jus-tice cry
For shel-ter and for bread to eat,
and nev-er live be-fore they die.
3. Then let the ser-vant church a-rise,
a car-ing church that longs to be
A part-ner in Christ's sac-ri-fice,
and clothed in Christ's hu-man-i-ty.

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***The Altar Flowers are in Memory of
Paul and Jeanette Saylor,
Bernice Bramick, and Bernand Lackner
by Jim and Brenda Saylor***

Special Announcements/Reminders:

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

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
Lucia Guido.....Admin Assistant
Lois Mease.....Music Director and Organist
Jim Saylor.....Sunday Sexton

And too many volunteers to list!

Office Hours

Sunday: 9am-2pm

Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm

Closed on Fridays and Saturdays