

The Disciple

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

St. John's United Church of Christ

Volume 26 Issue 11

November 2026

Howdy St. John's family,

I am so excited for this month because we finally get to talk about Joseph! During the 2026 calendar year we have taken each month to look at the 12 tribes of Israel and their namesake, the sons of Jacob. This month we get to talk about Joseph, the son whom most of the story revolves around. Joseph is mentioned before this, but the bulk of his story takes place in Genesis, chapters 37 through 50. Joseph is the son of Rachel and Jacob, and Jacob does not hide his favoritism for Joseph, giving him a coat of many colors, that would have cost a pretty penny back in the day... er, shekel? When Joseph begins receiving visions of his brothers acting in servitude toward him, it is the breaking point for the brothers to enact their jealousy. Though they intend to kill him, instead they sell him into slavery.

If you are not familiar with the story of how Joseph goes from being a slave to the second most powerful person in Egypt, I will not ruin it for you! Go open up your Bible and read all about this incredible turn of events and how God turned a tragedy into a blessing that would end up saving thousands of lives! For our purposes today, I'm going to jump right in to the descendants of the tribe of Joseph, since we are trying to learn more about the 12 tribes. The descendants of Joseph did not form one single distinct group, but instead formed two tribes named Ephraim and Manasseh, named for Joseph's sons who were adopted by Jacob to his place of inheritance.

But hang on a second, how do we still only have 12 tribes if Joseph gets this double portion? If you remember back to our discussion about the tribe of Levi, we remember that the Levis served as priests, and so they did not technically have a standard land inheritance, because their duty was connected to the temple. If we don't count Levi, we are down to 11 tribes until we see Joseph's double portion that brings us back up to 12 tribes. I know that seems a little convoluted, and so often in discussion these two tribes were referred to as the house of Joseph to avoid the term *tribe*. We see geographically that the house of Joseph spans a wide amount of territory that was filled with water, precious commodities, mountains for added protection, and fertile soil. There are so many more things that I could say about Joseph, but in the interest of keeping with the theme for the year, I encourage you to go forth and read your Bibles to learn more about his story. What can we learn from the ~~tribe~~ House of Joseph? I am reminded that even in the midst of our story when it seems that tragedy has struck, God is always doing a new thing and will guide us through each adversity to an outcome that leads to the most possible good. Lord bless you this November and God bless!

-Rev. Becky Sausser

Consistory Summary

The meeting began on October 13 at 7pm. After the sharing of joys and concerns Trudi shared devotions. The minutes were reviewed from the September 8 meeting and approved. In the Minister's report, Pastor Becky reported that the "Crochet and Pray" event is set to take place on October 24 at 10am. Thank you to Mandy for leading this event. The Resource Room has been fully organized thanks in large part to our Administrative Assistant, Lucia. We will be issuing an updated list of needed items soon. The Prayer Room has been completed and will be dedicated and officially opened on November 8 during our worship service. Under New Business, Pastor Becky shared a request from one of the nonprofits in our building to use the kitchen for a Christmas dinner. We will reassess this request once we have received more information on the details. Another piece of new business was a request from the nonprofit group "Eastern PA Trans Equity Project" to begin renting space in our building. This nonprofit helps connect people with direct aid like food, legal aid, medicine, and essentials. The consistory moved to welcome this group into our building; they will be located in the former Nursery.

Under the Fellowship Committee, Lynn Cloak shared gratitude to Dennis and Nancy Blankovitsch for hosting fellowship on October 2. Rally Day was a success this year. The decorating of the Trinity Room for Christmas is planned for the week of November 23. Under the Fundraising Committee, Lynn Cloak reported that the pre-Thanksgiving nuts and truffle sale is being planned with the selling dates of November 15 and 22. Under Property, Jeff Rissell shared that the fire suppression system has been completed in the social hall kitchen. Under Christian Education, Pastor Becky shared that the Christmas pageant is planned for December 20. Mark your calendar because the first Sunday in advent is November 29. The Treasurer's report was accepted. The Benevolence Committee has received applicants for the community grant and will review the applications this month. The next meeting is scheduled for November 10 at 7pm. The meeting adjourned with prayer.

-Respectfully submitted by Rev. Becky Sausser

Announcements

- **Important Dates!**

- November 1 - All Saints' Day
- November 15 - Nuts and Truffles Sale!
- November 22 - Nuts and Truffles Sale!
- November 29 - Advent Breakfast
- December 20 - Youth Christmas Pageant
- December 24 - Christmas Eve service 7:30pm

November Special Mission Offering

It is November, which means that **Tallulah, the Turkey** is back on her mission to combat hunger in the Lehigh Valley. We have agreed to assist her as we did her predecessor, Tilly, in this endeavor. Therefore, our Special Mission Offering for November is the **Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank**. This year Tallulah continues to be very concerned because many of its traditional sources that supply the food have dried up. The need, however, has not. The **Food Bank** not only needs money to purchase food from new (more expensive) sources but wholesome, non-perishable food donations as well.

So, let's help her with our donations for the Food Bank during the month of November. We may do so by dropping off food items in the Food Bank tote in the Narthex. Monetary donations can be given using the pew or your weekly offering envelopes (designated for the Food Bank) or by using the Donate button on our website. Tallulah, and more important those in need will thank you.

-Respectfully submitted by Bill Falla

ADULT FORUM

Greetings! You are all once again invited to 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. This is what we have planned for November:

November 1-The Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank has long served a vital need in our community. St. John's continues to work with them to provide resources including many volunteer hours. We welcome Executive Director, Anne Egan, to bring us an update.

November 8-Rick Guhl from our Green Team will join us for an information session about Interfaith Power and Light, an interfaith organization working with congregations to address environmental issues.

November 15-Our theme this week is Seeing with the Heart: Art as Spiritual Reflection. Rev. Gina Harvey, Regional Director of Pastoral Care and Education at Phoebe Ministries, will lead us in a session about using art to deepen spiritual reflection.

November 22- What is happening with our new Keystone Conference? What does this mean for St. John's? Please come meet our Transitional Executive Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, who will bring greetings from the conference and answer our questions.

November 29-Can you believe it's that time already? Our annual Advent Breakfast kicks off our holiday season. Always yummy and fun!

Tales from the Resource Room

This month someone asked me a very good question! They asked me what they should do on a Sunday morning if somebody needs to use the Resource Room and I am not available to help. This is a great question because as we continue to make the table wider and open our doors to more and more people, folks in the community are becoming more comfortable with coming to this place for help. In response to this very good question, I have written some Resource Room instructions and placed them on the walls in the Resource Room. I would like to take this opportunity right now to explain them to you.

The first and most important rule for the Resource Room is safety! Use your instincts, and if the person feels off, or they seem to be struggling, use your best judgment to make good choices. What I mean by this is that if somebody seems to be struggling with mental health, don't put yourself in a confined space alone with that person. Better yet, if a person has yet to enter the church building and you are alone, ask what that person is seeking and bring it to them. I do not say these things to be startling or instill fear, but like I have always told our office staff, we can replace a computer or a window, we can't replace you.

Next, we ask that individuals using the Resource Room only take what they need. Most people are very respectful of this because they appreciate the resource that they are receiving. There are certain areas of the Resource Room where we only have enough supply for people to take one item, like individually wrapped toothbrushes, bars of soap, and tents. If you have any questions about a specific item, ask a person to come back during office hours to talk to the pastor. Thank you for all of the donations, time, and prayers that you are contributing to make this Resource Room possible!

-respectfully submitted by Rev. Becky Sausser



Bible Bites

I learned recently that there is a Hebrew term to express gratitude. It is HaKarat HaTov, which literally translates as recognizing the good! When we look at the root words that make this expression, we find the foundational concept of noticing and acknowledging good in every situation, whether it is big or small. This month has so many of us prepared to serve Thanksgiving meals and attend gatherings of friends and family, there will also be folks struggling this year to figure out how to move forward from grief and loss. Even if the holidays are not always a joyous time for you or your family, they can always be a time to acknowledge and internalize the gratitude, the good in every situation whether it is big or small.

-Rev. Becky Sausser

November Sermons

- November 1- All Saints' Day
 - Reading 1: Revelation 5:1-14
 - Reading 2: Revelation 7: 9-14
 - Title: Revelation
 - Today as we remember the saints that have gone before us, we look to the book of Revelation to see a foretaste of what holy unity will bring.
- November 8
 - Reading 1: Matthew 25:1-13
 - Reading 2: Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16
 - Title: Using Resources Wisely
 - Using resources wisely is part of the scout oath, but how do we understand the difference between wisdom and charity? Let's look at the parable of the 10 brides to unpack this question.
 - REMOVE: we are Christians not doormats. Put your own mask on first. The 5 foolish brides didn't prepare and they had their consequences. Charity is helping those who don't have the means to choose, not helping those who think they will never run out of time (big business, groups harming planet, etc.).
- November 15
 - Reading 1: Psalm 107: 1-9
 - Reading 2:
 - Title: Gratitude
 -
- November 22- Christ the King Sunday
 - Reading 1: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
 - Reading 2: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28
 - Title: The Kin-dom
 - It is Christ the king Sunday and we are looking at passages to help us understand what a "kin" dom means as opposed to a kingdom.
- November 29- First Sunday of Advent
 - Reading 1: Isaiah 64:1-9
 - Reading 2: Mark 1:1-8
 - Title: The Good News! (Hope)
 - Today we see the words of Isaiah that were written 700 years before Mark's gospel; we will discuss similarities and share the joy of the good news!

Mindfulness Matters

This year as the weather grows colder and we begin to retreat indoors; I find that many of my normal mindfulness activities become inaccessible. Walks outdoors, gardening, and even wood carving tends to be dependent upon warm weather. I was curious what mindfulness practices folks in our congregation do that are not dependent upon warm weather. Below are the answers that I received, enjoy!

Rick Guhl- Rick uses "Happy Color" a free adult coloring app available through either Google Play (Android) or Apple app stores. Through this app you can peacefully color incredible art, and there are even built in hints for the more challenging pieces.

Mandy Muschett- Our dynamic intern Mandy creates prayer shawls as a spiritual practice to promote mindfulness. We were so blessed to have Mandy share this spiritual practice with the congregation at last month's, "Crochet and Pray".

Mary Walker Golden- Mary is one of the yoga instructors that works with Battle Borne! Last month their Self Care club focused on mindfulness and learned about meditation and practices to help calm the mind!

James R.- James helps open the social hall for groups during the week. He mentioned that he feels most mindful when he closes his eyes and focuses on his body and breath.

Julius Pyle- Julius likes to reflect on gratitude!

Do you have a mindfulness activity that you would like to share? Please reach out to Pastor Becky so we can include you in the next issue!

Something exciting to look forward to:

Our delicious Nuts and Truffles

This year's sales will include:

dark chocolate truffles in caramel, raspberry, orange and mint, or an assortment of all 4 flavors;

sweet and salty peanuts;

maple sugar pecans (since pecans have lots of nooks and crannies to hold the natural maple sugar);

dark chocolate peanut clusters.

The sales will take place on the two Sundays prior to Thanksgiving, **November 15 and 22.**

(Pre-orders will be limited to the volunteers helping to make the goods.)

November 2026



11/07 – Todd Saylor and Edward Gildea
11/24 – Cindie and Joe Penzes

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 All Saints' Day Service 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship	2	3 Elders Meeting 11am	4 9am Prayer Call	5 Food Bank	6	7
8 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship	9	10 Consistory Meeting 7pm Candy Making 9-12 noon	11 9am Prayer Call	12 Candy Making 9-12 noon	13	14 Candy Making 12-2pm
15 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship Nuts and Truffles Sale!	16	17	18 9am Prayer Call	19	20 Food Bank	21
22 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship Nuts and Truffles Sale!	23	24	25 9am Prayer Call Military Food Share Program	26 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28
29 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00am Worship Advent Breakfast 9:30am Green Team Meeting	30					

5 – Sarah Collier
6 – Cyrah Morris
7 – Joseph Hein
8 – Byron Cook
10 – James
Bronfenbrenner
Piper Van Ingen
17 – Noelle Schuler
23 – Jay Mosebach
25 – Daniel Collier
Felicitia Hernandez
27 – Susan Steinberg

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)

That time of year....

The poinsettias will be in church on December 24 for the Christmas Eve service. You may take your plants home following the evening service.

Deadline for ordering is Sunday, NOVEMBER 22.



Please submit this form with the exact wording you want printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Please do not write "Same as last year" and please print.

Red Poinsettia(s) to be placed.....

In Memory of: _____

or

In Honor of: _____

Placed by: _____

Number of plants you wish to buy: _____

Please indicate with a check mark or number of plants:

For Pick-Up _____ **For Homebound** _____

Price: \$9.00 (**Orders must be in by November 25, 2025**)

If writing a check, please make payable to "St. John's UCC" and mark the memo line **"poinsettia"**.

You may complete this order blank or call the church office (610-433-0146) and pay later.