



COURAGE
for Community

St. John's United Church of Christ
An "Open and Affirming" Congregation
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Rev. Alice Rauch, Pastor

The Service: 10:00 a.m.

September 26, 2021

(Let us be silent and prayerful as we prepare ourselves for worship.)

MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Remembering that God calls us through Christ to be ministers with each other, St. John's United Church of Christ, as inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit, seeks: To be inclusive and accessible to all people; To provide loving service to all of God's people through mission and ministry; To strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Prelude

Sharing of Announcements and Prayer Concerns

Moment of Meditation

Call to Worship:

You call us into this space, O God,

Inviting us into a time of worship.

You call our hearts, O God,

Inviting us to know Your love.

You call us by name, O God,

Inviting us to know You more deeply.

Continue to call to us, O God,

And may we know Your grace and peace.

Hymn #436 "God of Grace and God of Glory"

Prayer of Brokenness - Holy One, forgive us when we have kept others out, intentionally, or unintentionally. Forgive us when we have slammed doors shut that You opened. Forgive us when we have assumed our measures were accurate to determine who was worthy, when we know in our hearts, we have all fallen short. Forgive us for the glass ceilings, the longer staircases, all the ways of oppression in the forms of sexism, racism, homophobia, and economic status have been used to keep Your people from fulfilling the call You have on their lives. Forgive us for the gatekeeping that You never wanted us to do. Instead, fling open the gates, make a highway in the wilderness, and springs in the desert. For You are always finding a way where there was none, O God, and tearing down the walls we built, and constructing bridges where we assumed it wasn't possible. Call us into the work of restoration, forgiveness, and healing. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness: *Be the salt of the earth! Give flavor to the world! Preserve what you know of God's love, mercy, and peace, and share it with others. Open your hearts to receive God's mercy, forgiveness, and grace, and go and share it with the world, for you are forgiven, loved, and restored. Amen.*

Affirming the Peace Among Us

The peace of Christ is with you!

And also with you!

You are invited to turn to the people around you and wave as a sign of graceful greetings this day.

Words for All - Especially Children

Anthem *"Alleluia" - Reese*

Scripture: *Mark 9:30-37*

Message *"How Salty?"*

Morning Prayer

Let us continue to pray in the words that Jesus taught us - 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 sins, as we forgive those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sharing our Joys and Celebrations

Dedication of Gifts and Offerings: **May these tangible gifts and all the intangible gifts we share among us make known to the world that God is within us and among us. Amen.**

Hymn #181 *"You Are Salt for the Earth, O People"*

Benediction

Postlude

THIS MORNING

St. John's is pleased you have joined with us today. We hope that you have found this time to be a blessing. **Please sign** the attendance book located in the Narthex (and kindly include your mailing address/telephone number and/or email) and introduce yourself to the persons who are worshipping around you. If you are looking for a new church family and are interested in knowing more about St. John's, please indicate that following worship to the Pastor or one of the ushers.

Available to you, if needed, is a Quiet Room for adults and children, where the service can be seen and heard. Also available are phonic-ear hearing units, large print bulletins, and large-print Bibles. Ask any usher.

Chancel Flowers - are given by Lauren and Rick Rautzhan, in loving memory of Rick's father, Marlin Rautzhan.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers This Morning

(please contact the church office, at 570-523-0162, with any updates)

Ongoing Needs- Oliver Auman, Betty Hackenberg, Janet & Richard Heaton, Ingrid, Christine Sartwell, Karin Shawver, Joanne & Bill Stahley, Leanne Trout (Dee Ledgerwood's Mother), Linda Williams, Wayne Williams.

Shut-In/Homebound- Ann Beasom, Richard Berry, Peg Brouse, Bill & Lola Fuller, Jane Hayes, Evelyn Mabus, Ken Moore, Ethel Moser, Loretta Roberson, Mary Stover, Amelia Troutman.

Immediate Concerns - Scott Bower, Joyce, Maryjane H., Michelle L., Katelynn Mattison, Alice Savidge, Barbara Smith, Peg Swinehart.

THIS WEEK

Monday, Sept. 27	7 pm 7 pm - 8 pm	BVS Rehearsal (FH) TECH TEAM & CONSISTORY (ZOOM)
Tuesday, Sept. 28	7:30 - 9:30 pm	Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)
Wednesday, Sept. 29	7 am - 8:30 am 11am - 1pm	Lewisburg Sunrise Rotary (FH) YARD SALE ITEMS PICK-UP
Thursday Sept. 30	9:00-10:30 am	TOPS 1158 (CR.)
Friday, October 1		
Saturday October 2		
Sunday, October 3	9 am 10:00 am	BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.) WORSHIP - WORLD-WIDE COMMUNION (Children's Church during worship)

HARVEST HOME - We celebrate today the festival of Harvest Home. The 'special' offering taken today will go directly to the Lewisburg area Food Bank. Thanks so much for your support of such a worthwhile mission.

FUTURE

MESSY CHURCH - A new program is starting at St. John's for families, called Messy Church. It's a new way of thinking about and "doing church" in a relaxed, joyful, creative way. We will experience God's love and friendship through playing and creating (and eating!) together.

Messy Church welcomes anyone in the congregation and community to join us. We will gather, do fun interactive activities with biblical themes, celebrate with stories, songs and prayers, and enjoy a meal together.

Messy Church programs can be found throughout the globe, and we're so excited to host our own at St. John's. Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 26th, from 3:30 PM-5:30 PM**, for the first of these quarterly events.

OCTOBER COMMUNION - We will be celebrating World-Wide Communion during worship on **Sunday, October 3, 2021**. The Communion offering for the month of October is dedicated to supporting **The William Cameron Engine Company**, a VERY important service to our community! Our "**SPECIAL**" offering for October is designated to the "Neighbors In Need" mission.

TRUNK-or-TREAT - The Christian Education committee has decided to hold **TRUNK-or-TREAT** this year on **Saturday, October 23rd, from 3:00 - 5:00 pm**. Unfortunately, we will not be able to serve food at this event as in past years due to Covid restrictions. Please consider joining in the fun by "decorating" the trunk of your car and provide some pre-packaged treats for the kids! If interested, please call the office, 570-523-0162. We are also accepting individually wrapped candy for the event. Please bring to the office by Friday, October 22nd.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS - The Mission/Social Action team will once again be filling up boxes of goodies and food for the less fortunate. Check your October Newsletter (coming soon) for more information.

NEW WEBSITE - Our new website has been up and running since the wee hours of Monday morning on the 20th of September! The transition has been seamless. We've added many new items of interest, and there are many more to come! If you have a chance, please check out the new site and let us know what you think! The address is the same as before: <http://www.stjohnslewisburg.org/>

THE OUTWARD SIGNS

Sunday, September 19, 2021

2021 Yard Sale - \$15.00; Chancel Flowers - \$42.00;
Current Expenses - \$1,906.00; Food Pantry - \$220.00; Giant Gift Cards - \$650.00;
Loose Offering - \$35.00; OCWM - \$355.00; Weis Gift Cards - \$250.00;

GRAND TOTAL - \$3,473.00 THANK YOU!

St. John's United Church of Christ

1050 Buffalo Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837 -- (570) 523-0162

Worship 10:00 a.m. Office: Mon.- Fri. 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Website: www.stjohnslewisburg.org Email: stjohnsucc@ptd.net

It is a privilege to serve you today . . .

Rev. Alice Rauch, *Pastor*

Rev. James E. Johnson, *Pastor Emeritus*

Todd R. Hummel, *Dir. of Music/Organist*

Todd R. Hummel, *Bell Choir Director*

Linda Sartwell / Sue Baish, *Sound Technician*

Todd Hummel, *Administrative Assistant*

Sue & Jim Tomlinson, *Greeters*

Kiera Aulenbach, *Acolyte*

Barry Catherman, *Video Technician*

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 26, 2021

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

Courage for Community ***American Indian Ministry Sunday*** ***United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday***

Esther's story is hidden history for most modern United Church of Christ congregations. Readings from the Old Testament book that bears her name only appear once in the three-year cycle of the lectionary, which is the calendar of Bible readings used by many congregations to guide worship. And there are several readings to choose from each Sunday, so unless a congregation is very thoughtful and deliberate in choosing to share her story, you might not know anything about her.

This is not so for our Jewish brothers and sisters in faith. Each year in the festival of Purim, her story is celebrated with joy and gratitude as one of the great heroes in the centuries-long battle against anti-Semitism.

Hidden histories are those stories from the past that have either been forgotten or deliberately suppressed as a way to center only one telling of history. On this day in the UCC, as we bring Esther out of hiding, we celebrate the voices of two significant groups whose stories have too often also been hidden.

American Indian Ministry Sunday is an opportunity to hear the voices of our Native American siblings. According to caimucc.org, American Indian congregations "are an integral part of the life of the United Church of Christ. We maintain our Indian traditions by employing our Native values and cultures to witness in our communities through authentic and postcolonial Indian expressions of the Christian faith."

United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday is a chance to recognize the UCC's Samoan congregations. You can find their web presence on Facebook at [/united-samoanministriesucc/](https://www.facebook.com/united-samoanministriesucc/), where they proclaim: We are the body of Christ, gathered and scattered in various states and cultural environments, proclaiming our faith in our Risen Lord Jesus Christ! The United Samoan Ministries of the UCC is established to provide a setting for members of Samoan congregations to gather for fellowship, spiritual nurturing, mutual support, and communications, and strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ.

Learn about Esther, and then join these two organizations in keeping language alive and telling stories that reveal hidden histories.



8.5" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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