



April 3 - The Gathering at Bucknell Rooke Chapel - 8 pm
April 7 - Worship, Communion - 10 am
April 14 - Worship, 10 am
April 14 - Second Sunday Social - 11 am
April 21 - Worship, 10 am
April 25 - Wired Word Study Group, 7 pm
April 28 - Worship, 10 am - Rose Williams, Getting Ahead in the Valley



St. John's UCC
1050 Buffalo Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
stjohnslewisburg.org





Easter is a time of joy and celebration, but it is also a time of reflection. It is a time to remember that Jesus died on the cross to show us how far God's love for creation goes. It is a story which doesn't end in death and the cross ... there is new life and resurrection in this story to remind us that death is not the end, and that there is always hope of a newness of life.

As we celebrate Easter, let us also reflect on the meaning of this season in our own lives. How do we find hope and renewal in the midst of our own struggles? How can we share this hope with others?

I often wonder what it was like on that Sunday at the tomb where the body of Jesus was buried. The gospel writers tell us that emotions among the followers of Jesus ranged from being fearful and afraid, to being perplexed and full of joy. Maybe they realized then that their world had been turned upside down.

It is Mark who gives me the most haunting story ... "they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid" (Mark 16:8).

Will we continue to be confused, terrified, not saying anything to anyone, because we are afraid?

Will this Easter fill us with joy and excitement, the first stirrings of a newness of life?

Will the resurrection of the Christ fill us with hope and renewal? (Adapted from an Easter Reflection by Rev. Danie de Beer, South Carolina)

Easter Blessings! Alice

“Red Book” Memories Continued XVIII

“In Celebration of... Mission and Service”

“When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me, and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in jail, you visited me.”

– Matthew 25:35-36, CEV)

Our faith community has taken these words of our Lord to heart and put them into action throughout its long history. We have been actively involved in mission and service to our neighbors. That is truly a vital aspect of our church to be celebrated as we observe our 200th anniversary

As noted in a previous “Red Book” article, we know little about the mission and service projects undertaken by our ancestral congregations during our church’s first 35 years. The first mention of a wider mission in our “Red Book” appears in regards to the pastorate of Rev. Charles H. Leinbach (1859-1864), who led the congregation to support the “Home Missions” movement, which sought to bring social and moral change to American society, especially in the West. The next “Red Book” reference concerns efforts to meet the needs of our neighbors, when Rev. Henry Harbaugh Rupp (1920-1937) was pastor. During that time, the people of St. John’s began offering “social services” to the community, which was something new for Lewisburg and the surrounding area. Then in 1946, when Rev. Perry Smith (1938-1949) served St. John’s, congregational members opened the church’s doors and provided a Christian program for the younger children of Lewisburg, called the “Happy Hour.”

Our “Red Book” also reports that during the pastorates of Rev. Paul C. Jordan (1956-1970) and Rev. James E. Johnson (1970-1998), the congregation provided financial support to Devitt Home in Allenwood and members visited the residents. The Zwingli Class even maintained a garden and grew fresh vegetables for the home! In addition, the people of St. John’s made resources and facility space available to Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, as well as a Prison Visitor’s Service, which served hot breakfasts for families visiting with inmates at the Lewisburg Penitentiary. Further, church members made it a point to visit individuals at the Selinsgrove State School and Hospital and the Laurelton School, and to host parties in those places at Christmas.

Additionally, our church’s bulletins and newsletters, dating back to the late 1930s, offer even more glimpses of our church’s mission and social service projects. For example, our congregation worked to collect and distribute food to area pantries, gather and share clothing with immigrants and refugees, put together and deliver kits for Church World Services, and to create and sustain the pastor’s LEAF fund to provide some emergency financial assistance to individuals and families in need. We have also sponsored families through “Christmas Giving Trees,” provided gifts for young residents of the Bethany Children’s Home, and given generously to various benevolences through monthly and special offerings.

In recent years, many of our mission and service activities have been proposed and guided by church committees. But, as already indicated above, other efforts to support and meet the needs of our neighbors, near and far, have also been performed by small groups, Sunday School classes, boards, Vacation Bible Schools, and guilds, as well. For example, the former “Life Tradition Study Group,” which offered adult Christian education to church and community members in the early 2000s, collected donations and purchased Spanish-language Bibles. They were given to inmates at the nearby Allenwood Correctional Facility. In recent years, the children and youth of St. John’s, along with gardeners in the congregation, have raised vegetables for the Union-Snyder Community Food Hub at the Miller Center in Lewisburg. And let us not forget the quilt and prayer shawl ministry being performed by the St. John’s Quilters, Knitters, and Knotters group. For many years, these few individuals have been making and distributing wonderful reminders of God’s love and caring to individuals facing difficult times.

Mission and service. These have been important expressions of our congregation’s devotion to God and Christ. It is the focus of this month’s 200th anniversary celebrations. Is there a special mission or service project we should undertake in honor of this milestone year in the life of our church? Let us always remember and celebrate all the good our congregation has done and will continue to do in its next 100 years.

– Gary Nottis

Earlier this year, we kicked-off our bicentennial celebration with the creation of special logos by Dot Bower and Riley Hoey. These adorn selected clothing and other items made in honor of this milestone occasion. Some have already been sold and delivered to members. But, if you missed the chance to get these 200th Anniversary keepsakes, they will again be advertised for purchase at a later date.

In March, our months-long celebration began in earnest with the hanging of a beautiful 200th Anniversary quilt in our Narthex. It was lovingly made by one of the St. John's Quilters, Knitters and Knotters. This was followed by our Sunday, March 10th, worship service, which featured a special, thought-provoking sermon offered by Penn Central Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, followed by a delicious congregational meal.

As our 200th Anniversary year progresses, you will have so much more to look forward to. For example, each month, we will focus on a major aspect of our congregational life. That schedule includes:

April – Mission and service

May – Congregational generosity and gifts of the laity

June – Music and worship

July – Hospitality and growth

August – Buildings and grounds

September – Christian education

October – Celebration of our church pastors, church leaders, and spiritual children

Activities appropriate for each month, including presentations, picnics, sales, and displays, have been planned. Dates for them will be announced in coming newsletters and worship services. Do look forward to them and please plan to participate!

Additionally, there are two events you should certainly mark on your calendars and attend are:

June 23rd – A Festival of Music, an afternoon of presentations by the musical groups who make use of St. John's. Food will also be available.

October 20th – 3 PM Worshipful Celebration of St. John's, followed at 5 PM by a catered congregational dinner at the Silver Moon Banquet Hall in Lewisburg.

St. John's is 200 years old! Be sure to come and celebrate this wonderful milestone with your church family as events are offered. It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." (Psalm 126:3, NIV)



04/06	Barbara Kugler
04/07	Riley Hoey
04/11	Adam Snayberger
04/15	Stephen Gemberling
04/16	Marvin Border
04/19	Mark Brouse
04/25	Katrina Aulenbach
04/27	Michael Roberts

04/08 Dean, Lynn & Yvonne
04/10 Ransdorf, Melissa & Thomas
04/26 Aulenbach, Katrina & Zachary

The “NEW” Fellowship Hall

Thanks to everyone who worked so diligently to give the Fellowship Hall and the nearby hallways a new look! They included the people who painted: Don Adams, Chuck Laudermilk, Bill Ledgerwood, Syllas Wilde, and Palmer Dreese. The old carpet was taken out and the new luxury vinyl flooring was installed by Carpet Man of Milton. Special thanks also to Mark Satteson, Bonnie Meckley, Ed Donlin, Linda Sartwell, Don Adams, and David Smit for moving the furniture back into the Fellowship Hall and hallways.

Hospitality and Growth

What a blessing we had in March as we saw increased numbers of visitors, family, and friends join us at St. John's U.C.C. for the Lenten Season. We shared the lessons, reflections of the preparation and journey to crucifixion and resurrection, culminating in the greatest gift of Hope we have received and celebrate each Easter morning. Thank you one and all for joining us on this journey.

We continue to ask for volunteers to sign-up as a greeter. Help us greet anyone that enters our sanctuary with open hearts. If you would like someone to stand with you, just let us know! You are able to participate however you feel comfortable, rather by yourself, with a friend, or the whole family! It provides a very real service for which we are most appreciative. And remember, there is no test! I am constantly having to ask someone's name again, as it has quickly disappeared from my mind—but I have never been fired! In fact, it usually results in much laughter, as they admit they cannot recall my name either! It is truly, something each and every one of us can do, if we have the desire to be of serve.

THANKS
FROM THE
HEART

Dear Quilters of St. John's and Pastor Alice,

My brother Viktor Kusin and I want to thank you for the exquisitely crafted lap robes. We will think of you whenever we use this generous gift. Thank you for the love and support. Our sincere thanks to each and everyone of you.

Melitta Hagenbuch and Viktor Kusin

Dear Quilters, Knitters, and Knotters,

Thank you so much for the lovely quilt! It became an important part of my rehab, especially since I needed to keep my feet elevated for long periods of time. It is an ongoing blessing!

Many, many thanks!

Ann Smit

Quilters of St. John's,

Thank you so much for the beautiful quilt!

It is a real blessing to have such thoughtful friends. St. John's has been a welcoming congregation since we moved to Lewisburg five years ago.

St. John's is a really caring Christian Community and we are grateful to be a part of it!

Gloria Kerstetter



College Care Package

Please join the Christian Education Committee in preparing a care package for our college student, Addie Miller! She will be completing her first year at college and could use some snacks to get her through finals.

We're looking for donations of packaged items that can easily be stored and prepared in a dorm room. Addie prefers savory snacks, such as pretzels, chips, popcorn, or crackers. Cheese-filled sandwich crackers or Ritz Bits would be great!

We'll have note cards available if you'd like to jot down some encouraging words to include in the care package for Addie. Snack donations and note cards can be left in the marked basket and box in the Narthex through Sunday, April 14th. Thank you!



FEBRUARY 2024 REPORT

Current Operating Receipts	\$ 18,821.85
Current Operating Disbursements	\$ - 23,430.43
Current Operating Balance	\$ - 4,608.58



Wired Word Study Group

Mark your calendar for the next Wired Word Study Group on Thursday, April 25th, 2024, at 7 p.m., on Zoom. The ZOOM link will be sent out via email.

Wired Word emails are sent each week with fresh content about current topics, making connections to the teachings of the Bible. A topic for this month's Wired Word conversation will be chosen ahead of the meeting from the weekly emails. Please join us for this lively discussion time!



Second Sunday Social

A Tour of Hawai'i, the Big Island

Aloha! Join us for lunch after church on **Sunday, April 14**, while Don and Brenda Adams share about their recent trip to the island of Hawai'i. Learn about the history of the Big Island by seeing temples and learning about Hawaiian religious practices. See all the sights, from botanical gardens and star-filled skies, to smoking volcanoes. See how delicious things like coffee, vanilla, and cacao (chocolate!) are grown. Is your mouth watering already? You will not want to miss this!



Deaths in Our
Church Family

ANDREW (DREW) UPDEGRAFF

03/13/1972 - 02/22/2024

CAROL ERDLEY

11/13/1946 - 03/06/2024



ANDREW UPDEGRAFF

By Sue & Jim Tomlinson

CAROL ERDLEY

By Sue & Jim Tomlinson

By Kay and Pastor Gary Nottis

Native American Life in the Susquehanna Valley

Before the Founding of Lewisburg and St. John's UCC - by Dave Smit

By the time Lewisburg was founded in 1785 by Ludwig Derr, who bought the land from the William Penn family, and the founding of St. John's in 1824, most of the Native American tribes who had resisted the European settlers taking their land had been forced out of the area by various treaties. There is little archeological evidence of what exact tribes lived in this area, but the two mostly likely candidates are the Susquehannocks, whose major camp was in Wyoming County northwest of Scranton and later near the city of Lancaster, and the Lenapes, who at first had lived much further east in the Delaware River Valley but had been forced to move west. Some of them established a major camp in Shamokin, which became Sunbury. By the mid-eighteenth century, these two tribes had alternately traded peacefully with the European settlers but also fought losing battles over the encroachment of Europeans on their land, and they had suffered greatly from European diseases, such as smallpox.

The cultures of these two tribes may give us a chance to ponder how we as Christians are to work to establish the kingdom of God on this earth. They offer us an alternative vision of how to live.

Susquehannock Culture

The Susquehannocks had a society based on matrilineal descent and matrilineal residence; that is, their family history was traced through the female side of the family to common female ancestors, and when a couple married, they went to live with the wife's family in a large "longhouse" that had cooking, storage, and sleeping areas for as many as 20 to 25 people in a large intergenerational family composed of the women, their husbands and children, and their unmarried brothers. However, their culture was not matriarchal; this is, it was not ruled by women. Rather, each gender had specific roles to play. As David Minderhout puts it, "The men hunted; the women worked the fields. Men were the political leaders, but women appointed them, with men representing the extended family" (83).

The Susquehannocks supported themselves by raising crops—primarily corn, beans, and squash—and by hunting and fishing. Their tools included ax heads and scrapers and they created cone-shaped ceramic vessels, containers made of animal skins and wood, and baskets to store food and clothing. However, because they did not fertilize their fields, consumed a great deal of timber in building their long houses and containers, they had to move their camps every fifteen or twenty years.

The Susquehannocks also grew tobacco but not for recreational use. They smoked tobacco to induce visions and considered the smoke from a pipe as a way to contact supernatural beings that lived in the sky.

Lenape Culture

Like the Susquehannocks, the Lenapes "practiced matrilineal kinship and matrilineal residence patterns" with women choosing their marriage partners (95). Both women and men played a game much like soccer, the women on one team and the men on the other, the goal being to get a ball across a field. The men could only kick the ball, but the women were allowed to carry it. However, the men could tackle them.

The village leaders, called "sachem," acted like judges, determining which family lived on a particular parcel of land, settling disputes, and representing the tribe with visiting dignitaries, both Native Americans and European settlers. However, a sachem's signature on a treaty with European groups was not binding on the rest of the tribe, which caused a great deal of misunderstanding between the Lenapes and the Europeans.

The Lenapes did not live in longhouses; they lived in wigwams, hemispherical huts occupied by a single family, and their camps were smaller, varying in size from about 20 people to as many as 150, as they adapted to the need to forage for food farther and farther from a larger camp. In other respects, however, their way of life was similar to the Susquehannocks'.

And so, like the Susquehannocks, the Lenape smoked tobacco in order to have visions. However, they had a more developed religious system with two kinds of spiritual leaders: those who healed people and those who had dreams of the future and could interpret the dreams of others. And they believed that the heavens were occupied by twelve gods, with a Creator God at the highest level, and that individuals had two souls.

When someone died, one of these souls stayed on earth and became a ghost; the other soul stayed on earth for eleven days and then went to live with the Creator God on the twelfth day.

And so the number twelve was especially meaningful to the Lenapes. They celebrated their religion in a harvest ceremony for which they built an open twelve-post structure with a roof, each post representing one of their gods. For twelve days, they “prayed, sang, danced, and sought guidance from their gods” (97). They placed twelve prayer sticks around the structure and threw tobacco twelve times into a central fire, and on the last night of the ceremony they sang twelve songs and offered twelve prayers to the gods.

The Lenapes’ primary messenger from the gods was a supernatural being named Mesingw, or Keeper of the Game. The Lenapes told stories of how in their history Mesingw had appeared to three lost Lenape boys and helped them to survive. Later, Mesingw appeared again and told the boys to carve wooden masks and paint them half red and half black and wear them at religious ceremonies, and so these masks were also part of the harvest ceremony. To this day, surviving Lenapes tell stories of Mesingw’s “vision and wisdom.”

We may find the Lenapes’ religion exotic, but we share at least their appreciation of the number twelve: Jesus, after all, had twelve disciples, and modern Christian churches, such as ours, are often designed in shapes with walls that are divisors of twelve. Our sanctuary, for example, is a hexagon: it has six sides, half of twelve, a symbolic space designed to give us something to contemplate as we wait for a service to begin or to meditate in during the course of the week.

The primary source for most of this article is *Native Americans in the Susquehanna River Valley, Past and Present*, edited by David J. Minderhout (Bucknell University Press, 2013). All of the quotations are from Minderhout’s chapter, “Native Americans in the Susquehanna River Region: 1550 to Today,” pp. 77-112.

APRIL VOLUNTEERS

Lock-up: ED DONLIN

Lay-Reader: MARY LOU RICH

Preparation of Communion Elements:

APRIL	CHILDREN'S CHURCH	OPENER/FLOWER DEL.
7	DURING WORSHIP	LINDA SARTWELL
14	DURING WORSHIP	
21	DURING WORSHIP	
28	DURING WORSHIP	

APRIL	FLOWER SPONSORS	Acolyte
7	Pastor Alice, Palmer and Riley	Keira Aulenbach
14	Alicia and Lisa Graybill	Keira Aulenbach
21		Keira Aulenbach
28		Keira Aulenbach

APRIL	GREETERS
7	CAROL BERRY
14	DEE & BILL LEDGERWOOD
21	BONNIE MECKLEY
28	STACI & SHANNON PRUTZMAN



Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Indoors or online
via Facebook or YouTube

Visit us on the Web!

www.stjohnslewisburg.org



St. John's United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

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Lewisburg, PA 17837
Phone: 570-523-0162
E-mail: stjohnsucc@ptd.net

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

MONTHLY COMMUNION MISSIONS

April - TRANSITIONS

May - GETTING AHEAD IN THE VALLEY

June - STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH

July - DONALD HEITER CENTER



HC Spirit Homecoming

Registrations are open for HC Spirit Homecoming 2024, **Sunday, July 28th through Saturday, August 3rd**, located at Hartman Center. A variety of camps is available, with offers for all ages.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP 8:45am BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.) 9:15am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM) 10:00am EASTER WORSHIP 11:00am EASTER EGG HUNT (PORITCO)	1 12:00pm Lewisburg Garden Club Board (PAR) 6:00pm BVS Board meeting (PAR) 7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH) 7:00pm HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE (GS)	2 10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH) 7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)	3	4 9:00am TOPS (CR) 9:00am WW (FH) 1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH) 7:00pm Building & Grounds (PAR) 7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)	5 4:00pm Violin Class (SANCT.)	6 12:00pm Pavilion Rsvd.
7 CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP 9:00am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM) 10:00am WORSHIP 12:00pm Fellowship Hall rsvd. by member	8 9:00am ST. JOHN'S QUILTERS, KNITTERS & MORE (CR) 12:00pm Lewisburg Garden Club (FH) 1:00pm WORSHIP/MUSIC (GP) 3:00pm Gathering Place rsvd. 7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH) 7:00pm CHRISTIAN ED. COMMITTEE (ZOOM)	9 10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH) 7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)	10	11 9:00am TOPS (CR) 9:00am WW (FH) 1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH) 7:00pm MISSION/SOCIAL ACTION COMM. (GP) 7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)	12	13
14 CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP 8:45am BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.) 9:15am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM) 10:00am WORSHIP	15 6:00pm Evan. Empty Arms Group (CR) 7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH) 7:00pm FINANCE/PERSONNEL (ZOOM)	16 10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH) 7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)	17	18 9:00am TOPS (CR) 9:00am WW (FH) 1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH) 7:00pm CONSISTORY (ZOOM) 7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)	19 4:00pm Violin Class (SANCT.)	20
21 CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP 9:00am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM) 10:00am WORSHIP	22 7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH) 7:00pm Girl Scout Leaders (GP)	23 7:00am ELECTION DAY (FH) 10:30am Willowbrook Strings (NARTHX) 7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (CH.RM.)	24	25 9:00am TOPS (CR) 9:00am WW (FH) 1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH) 7:00pm WIRED WORD BIBLE STUDY (GP/ZOOM) 7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (SANCT)	26	27
28 CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP 8:45am BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.) 9:15am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM) 10:00am WORSHIP	29 7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH)	30 10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH) 7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)	1	2 9:00am KITCHEN rsvd. 9:00am TOPS (CR) 9:00am WW (FH) 1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH) 7:00pm Building & Grounds (PAR) 7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)	3 9:00am KITCHEN rsvd. 4:00pm Violin Class (SANCT.)	4 12:00am Suzuki Class Recital (SANCT.) 9:00am KITCHEN rsvd. 1:00pm Girl Scouts