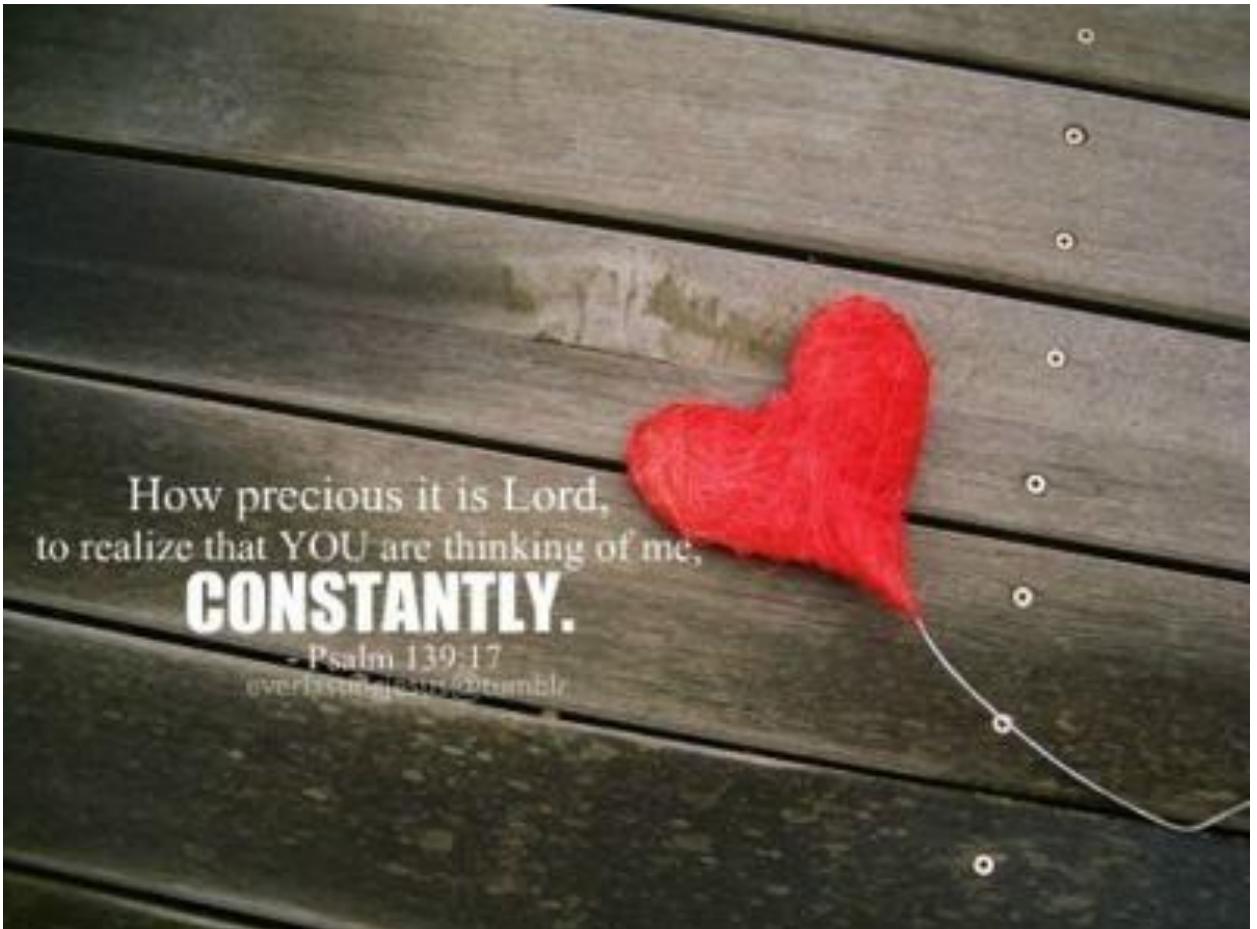


The Spirit

Volume 74 No. 2 February 2021



A publication of St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

From Pastor Caroline

For the first time in my life, I put up an artificial Christmas tree. I grew up with real trees and loved the fresh pine smell. I put up my three (3!) trees just after Thanksgiving and only took them down in mid-January. Perhaps more than ever, I needed the warmth and light. There seems to be so much darkness; we need the light as we learn to walk in the dark. “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not extinguish the light.” (John 1:5)

Our vision statement is filled with verbs: love, learn, worship, witness, welcome, and serve. We live into this vision through what we say and what we do, growing in the love of God and neighbor. None of us imagined that our life together would look like this—worshiping online, using Zoom for meetings and fellowship time, sending cards and making calls. We long for the days when we can be together, and what a celebration that will be. And in the meantime, we look for how God is at work in our world and in our lives; we listen for how God is still-speaking; and we reach out to our friends and neighbors in love and peace.

As Christian people, we live in three times: past, present, and future. It is interesting to note that our hearts and minds can exist easily in all three, but our bodies can only be in the present. How are you caring for your physical body? How are you caring for your spirit? These are not easy times, people of God. We need rest and good food, laughter and joy, prayer and patience, time alone and time with others. May we treasure the past and look toward the future, while staying grounded in the here-and-now of today.

This summer Director of Children and Youth Ministries Roxanne Davenport presented a children’s sermon series on “The Fruits of the Spirit” as named in Galatians 5:22-23. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are gifts, inviting us to live by the Spirit. Arrogance, anger, and jealousy lead us away from the Spirit. Life in community, especially virtual community, is tough. Yet we are blessed and graced by the presence of the Holy Spirit, inspired and invited and encouraged. God is with us.

Consistory and the Regathering Team continue to carefully monitor the coronavirus case data for Franklin County. Conversations about when we may safely gather in our building, particularly for worship, are ongoing. Updates will be shared in the weekly e-blasts.

Please carefully read the article from Consistory included in this issue of *The Spirit*. We look forward to congregational participation and involvement in our important visioning work, work that is only possible because of you and your love and support of St. John’s UCC.

Peace,
Pastor Caroline



♦ **Office Hours:**

Monday through Friday, 9am-3pm

♦ **Office Closures:**

February 15th– President's Day

♦ **Donations:**

We are still accepting donations of cleaning supplies such as disinfectant wipes and spray

♦ **Volunteers Needed:**

We are still accepting volunteers for the church office. Volunteers would be assisting in phone/door coverage, greeting visitors, and light office duties as needed. To sign up to be an office volunteer, please call the church office.

From Consistory

An excerpt from ***Storms of Life***,

Poetry for the Journey of a Heart by G. Phyllis McCullough

“Life’s storms,
We can’t prevent them or control them
But as we turn to God amid those storms
We’ll find we’re really not alone.
For He has said,
“I am with you always.”
So together, we can weather
All life’s storms.”

Greetings to you from your Consistory team.

Throughout this challenging time of social distancing and isolation we, your Consistory, have continued to press forward (mostly virtually) on your behalf for our mutual love of the people of St. John’s UCC. Several updates on our progress and ideas have been provided to you along the way, including during our most recent Congregational Meeting in November.

At that meeting we indicated plans to study the book: Canoeing the Mountains, by Tod Bolsinger. Since then, Consistory completed two discussion sessions about the messages in this book. During these conversations we realized that knowing what St. John’s does next is as important as staying connected to our roots. It also became clear that St. John’s leadership will only be effective by taking direction from you, the church membership.

Technology provides us with some unique opportunities, and perhaps is paving the way for changes to our future. While we celebrate advancement, changes create loss as well. We recognize the need for both celebration and mourning of events over the past year. Your experiences from the last year are important to us and can help shape St. John’s vision for the future. We want to hear about them.

In preparation for holding discussions with you, we are asking you to think and jot down thoughts about your experiences throughout this most recent and difficult time. These are just a few questions that will become topics of conversations that we plan to have with you in the coming months.

What has this time been like for you?
What St. John’s traditions do you miss the most?
Looking ahead, what excites you most about St. John’s?
How can St. John’s better connect with members and the local community during times of need?

Opportunities to share this information with church leadership are coming soon. We are excited and grateful to work on building our future together.



MUSIC MINISTRY

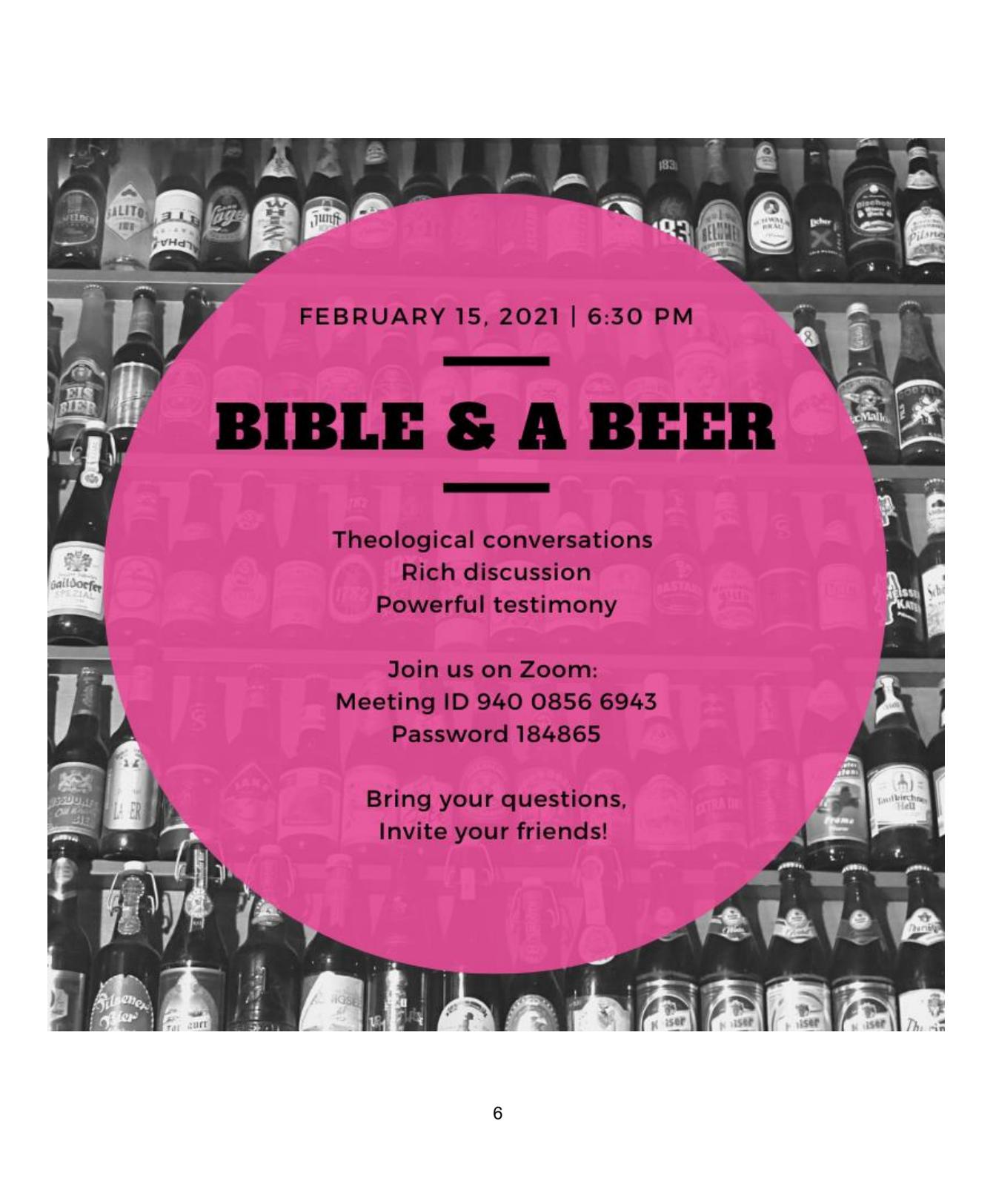
One of My Favorite Hymns

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

In the weeks to follow Ash Wednesday and before Easter you are likely to hear a familiar hymn that we sing almost every year. This hymn is “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” which was written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) who was born in England. It was one of 750 hymns that he wrote in his lifetime. This hymn was first published in 1707 and was a departure from the earlier way of writing hymns as they only used paraphrased biblical texts. However, in this hymn the first two lines of the second verse do paraphrase Galatians 6:14. As a boy Watts was burdened by the fact that the church only sang Psalms. This hymn is considered the greatest hymn of modern English Hymnody. In our “Celebrating Grace Hymnal” Lowell Mason (1824) was given credit for writing the music for this wonderful hymn. The hymn is suitable to be sung during Lent and Good Friday.

It is my hope that you all enjoy this hymn as much as I do and I also hope that we will be able to have a choir to sing this beautiful hymn for you during Holy Week this year.

Gary Crum



FEBRUARY 15, 2021 | 6:30 PM

BIBLE & A BEER

Theological conversations
Rich discussion
Powerful testimony

Join us on Zoom:
Meeting ID 940 0856 6943
Password 184865

Bring your questions,
Invite your friends!

ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE SATURDAY NIGHT SERVICE

There will be NO Saturday Night Service in February due to the continuing high number of positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and our desire to keep everyone safe and healthy.

We hope to hold the Saturday Service in March.

Stay Safe! Be Well!

-Pastor Caroline & the Amistad Praise Band

THE OPEN AND AFFIRMING MINISTRY TEAM

The Open and Affirming (ONA) Ministry continues to express appreciation to the members of St. John's UCC for its support to our 'Covenant of Welcome and Affirmation' adopted on November 15, 2020. The past year has certainly yielded examples of how the marginalized are impacted by lack of understanding and compassionate recognition and actions by others.

Some have raised the questions again of 'what do the rainbow colors represent' and what is the significance of the 'rainbow comma?' In many instances, the colors of the rainbow represent and celebrate the LGBTQ community and is an inclusive symbol. It is helpful to be reminded of the biblical story as to when the rainbow is a dramatic symbol from God. In Genesis Chapter 9, God refers to the 'bow' as being a sign of the covenant between God and all living creatures on earth. We seek to celebrate the beauty of the rainbow and "live out" this symbolism of inclusiveness. Additionally, the comma symbol has been a part of our "God is still speaking" message in the UCC denomination – "Never place a period where God has placed a comma." The comma reminds us of the ever-changing nature of God's creation – new ideas, new people, and new possibilities of the future.



We hope to continue to walk this journey together with each of you as we read, converse, hope, envision, and act in affirming all God's creation. We hope you will engage in this as well. This month we offer a resource to you to begin this. There is a community group called "Community Uniting" which puts out information via email about various venues and activities here within our area (their 'mission' – *people of goodwill coming together with the desire to build personal relationships across faith, race, gender and politics to strengthen our community*). You can email communityuniting@gmail.com and register to receive their informative postings. There is much diversity in these listings, and we feel certain that you can find something to enhance this journey together as we seek to "live out" our Covenant of November 2020, not just within our walls of St. John's UCC, but in the broader community in which we live and seek to be faithful to Jesus's message (and to the symbol of God's 'bow').

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Tom Harrison 02/02

Gary Crum 02/03

Dr. Donald Hendrickson 2/03

G. Michael Bitner 02/04

Jolene H. McGinley 02/04

Kurt Widmann 02/04

Helen Douglas 02/05

Gary Patterson 02/06

Alma Dietrich 02/06

Maelynn Dietrich 02/06

Julie Dereef 02/07

Ernie Welch 02/08

Denny Domer 02/09

Alex Bishop 02/09

Gregory St. Clair 02/10

Colleen Woy 02/11

Richard Collier 02/13

Aryn Rebok 02/14

Donna Hilton 02/17

Kristin Brown 02/19

Marvin Zeger 02/19

Casimir Rzomp 02/19

Cynthia St. Clair 02/19

Harold St. Clair 02/23

Judith Chambers 02/26

Allen Frantz 02/27

Sophie Hoger 02/27



Youth Ministry

The VBS dates for 2021 are July 25-29! Please save the following items over the next year:

Cotton filler/batting

Rolls of Iridescent cloth/paper

Long brown paper used as filler in packaging

Styrofoam coolers/lids used in shipping refrigerated foods/medications

****Puzzle pieces small to medium size (3/4"-1 1/2" pieces) **still need a lot of these****

Scrabble tiles



This is an on-going list and more will be added as we go along so please continue to check it. Items may be dropped in the decorated cart at the entrance by Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your ongoing support to this great ministry!



The Outreach Ministry received a request from the Chambersburg School District to help support the students during these very trying times. Many students are in need of basic school supplies such as binders, pencils, and notebooks. In addition there is a large need for basic items for hygiene such as toothpaste, deodorant, and shampoo. Laundry detergent and non-perishable food items are also in need. We are asking you to help these students by contributing to the February First Fruits offering. A cart to collect donations has been placed in the church lobby.

JOIN US FOR

Wednesday
Night
Lenten Services

Wednesday Nights During Lent | 6:30 pm
beginning February 24, 2021

Worship will be held on Zoom:
Meeting ID: 982 6621 3165
Passcode: 604896

St. John's United Church of Christ
1811 Lincoln Way E
Chambersburg, PA

JOIN US FOR

Ash Wednesday Worship

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 | 6:30 pm

Service will be streamed on YouTube

In-person attendance pending our Regathering Plan

Join us for a service of contemplation and
communion (Bring Your Own Elements)

St. John's United Church of Christ
1811 Lincoln Way E
Chambersburg, PA

ASHES ON ASH WEDNESDAY

St. John's UCC will be offering imposition of ashes on Wednesday, February 17, from 3-5 pm.

We will be doing this in a "drive-thru" format to minimize health and safety risks.

Please enter using Wisteria Drive and pull forward to the side entrance of the Sanctuary.



Ministry Chairs

2020-2021

Called to Care—*Connie Morrill-Hair*

Camp—*Eileen Shaffer*

Caring Cooks—*Lisa Frantz*

Children & Youth Ministry—*Roxanne Davenport*

Facilities Ministry—*Ken Dilling*

Fellowship—*Sue McMurtray*

Finance—*Scot Orndorff*

Invitational Ministry—*Susan Collier*

Library—*Mary Lee Yaukey*

Nursery School—*Linda Zeger*

Outreach—*Lynda Pound*

Prayer Shawl Ministry — *Nina Widmann*

Public Relations— *TBD– Suggestions/ Volunteers Welcome!*

Safe Church Compliance—Safe Church Compliance Steward, *Sarah Herbert*

Safe Church Response—Safe Church Compliance Steward, *Sarah Herbert*

Safety and Security—*Tom Kinton*

Technology and Media Ministry— *Calvin Frantz*

Worship/Music Ministry—*Gary Crum*

Want to serve
on a Ministry?

These Ministry teams
would welcome you &
your talents!

Speak to them or Pastor
Caroline today to be a part
of these ministries.

CONSISTORY 2020-2021

Trustees

Peter A'Zary

Ken Dilling, **Head Trustee**

Tom Kinton

Elders

Peg Bryner

Fran Herrity

Diana Kongkeattikul, **Vice President**

Connie Morrill-Hair

Gary Patterson

Eileen Shaffer, **Secretary, Head Elder**

Deacons

Mike Blumberg

Julie Dereef

Lisa Fair, **President, Head Deacon**

Calvin Frantz

Michael Herbert

Pastor

The Rev. Caroline E. Saxton

**Sunday Worship will be at 10 am
(Offered Online and In-Person*)**

St. John's UCC Communion Dates for 2021

Sunday, February 14, 10 am (Online and In-Person*)

Ash Wednesday, February 17, 6:30 pm (Online and In-Person*)

Sunday, March 7, 10 am (Online and In-Person*)

Saturday, March 13, 5:30 pm (Fellowship Hall*)

*In-Person dates pending COVID-19 restrictions



St. John's United Church of Christ

**1811 Lincoln Way East
Chambersburg, PA 17202**

Phone: 717-263-8593 Fax: 717-263-9010

Web site: www.sjucc1811.org

Office Hours: Mon — Fri from 9 AM — 3 PM