

The Spirit

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

From Pastor Caroline

The idea that “summer flies after the Fourth of July” feels incredibly real to me this year. How in the world is it August?! “Time and time wait for no man,” says Geoffrey Chaucer. So we keep moving forward, whether we’re ready or not, and embrace the path before us.

In 2019, I applied and was accepted to the Next Generation Leadership Initiative (NGLI), a program of the UCC Pension Boards designed to equip younger clergy with the skills and support they needed to be sustained in parish ministry. Due to the pandemic, the majority of our learning together has been online, rather than in-person. No wonder it was so good to be together at UCC General Synod in Indianapolis June 30 to July 4! Technology helps us to do many things; but there are limits what Zoom (and similar platforms) can provide. I treasure the informal interactions, the catching up and hugs, that happen when we gather in the same physical space. I’ve included more “Synod reflections” on page 3, along with the reflections of our own Jerry Thomason, who served with me as a delegate from the Penn Central Conference (PCC).

In this season of “ordinary time” there is a lot going on behind the scenes, trying to get ready for the program year and put some new initiatives in place. The strategic goals and the resulting action plans developed during the course of our visioning work are still being revised and refined. Our goal is always to put “flesh on the bones” and live into our goals and dreams. It is a journey of inspiration, ideation, and (especially) implementation. We are entering into a season of true experimentation, growing in love of God and neighbor.

Your ideas, energy, and support are greatly appreciated as we enact our strategic document and embrace new things that God is calling us to do. After all, as the prophet Isaiah says, “God is making all things new.”

And: save the date of Sunday, August 20. We will be blessing our pets at the outdoor service as well as commemorating ten years of the Labyrinth. We hope you join us for the fun!

May we continue to listen and pay attention for what God is calling us to do and how we can be part of creating a just world for all.

*Peace,
Pastor Caroline*

From Pastor Caroline: Reflections on UCC General Synod

From June 30 to July 4, 2023, I attended the 34th General Synod of the UCC in Indianapolis. I had attended Synod twice in the past—as a delegate from the Iowa Conference in Baltimore in 2017 and as a visitor attending virtual Synod in 2021. Being a delegate from the Penn Central Conference and as part of NGLI meant my days started early and went (very) late.

General Synod is the national gathering of our denomination, the United Church of Christ. It was inspiring to be gathered with approximately 2000 people for worship, workshops, and the business of the church. Two of the reasons I was most excited to be a delegate (rather than a visitor) was to be able to vote on two very important pieces of business: a vote on the bylaws to change the frequency of Synod from every two to every three years and to vote on Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson as the candidate to become our next General Minister and President (GMP). I spoke three times on the floor of Synod; the first time was to speak in favor of the bylaws change, honoring the needs of our national staff and being good stewards of our resources of time, finances, and people. The bylaws change sparked heated debate and eventually passed by one vote. The vote to elect Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson was much more celebratory. This is the first time in our 66 year history that the United Church of Christ is led by a woman. Wow!

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, our outgoing GMP, reminded us that “God envisions a world in which you matter.” That truth is reflected in many of the “resolutions of witness” that the delegates considered and voted upon. I was assigned to “Closing the Digital Divide: Seeking Digital Justice and Inclusion”, a resolution that is timely if not particularly controversial. The testimonies shared by many delegates made several of these issues real to me in ways that I had never considered, particularly around harm reduction, gun violence, solitary confinement, abortion as health care, and actively affirming the human dignity of transgender and non-binary persons. The challenge is, as always, how we live into these resolutions. We cannot do it all; we can do our part. More information will be shared through the Penn Central Conference, as well as by Jerry and me, about we might consider implementing several of these important resolutions of witness.

Rev. Nadia Bolz Weber, our keynote speaker, emphasized the power of forgiveness and the importance of community. She pointed out that, in the story of the men who lowered their friend through the roof to be healed by Jesus, “Sometimes we are the ones lowering our friends down to Jesus and sometimes we are the ones being lowered down.” This focus on interdependence was especially echoed in the closing worship and the sermon preached by Rev. Dr. JJ Flag. We need to “reclaim our interdependence” and live into the fullness of “we.” That is a message that deeply resonated with me, especially at this moment in history.

The exhibit hall was the source of a new stole, several t-shirts, and a multiplicity of buttons. These buttons have now made their way onto a stole as a “stole of witness and solidarity.” I plan to debut this new stole at our outdoor worship service on August 20.

Above all, General Synod is about connecting with people. I reunited with old friends and made new ones. I am re-committed to doing the work of being the church. I am grateful to the Penn Central Conference, the Next Generation Leadership Initiative, and St. John’s UCC for making this experience possible for me. Truly, God is “making all things new.”

General Synod 34

*Making
all things New*
Isaiah 43:18-19



*“Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43:18-19)*

From June 30th to July 4th, 2023, I attended the United Church of Christ General Synod in Indianapolis, Indiana. This was a national gathering of the UCC that currently occurs every two years, but a bylaw change was passed to move it to every three years starting in 2025.

This was the 34th General Synod of the UCC and the theme was “Making All Things New”.

General Synod was 5 days of worship, resolutions, UCC business, and a chance to make new friends from all over our country. There were 736 delegates and about 2000 others including visitors and guests. We had the opportunity to meet our incoming and outgoing UCC leaders and enjoyed wonderful speakers and worship leaders and had plenty of time for theological reflection.

There were 17 Resolutions to wrestle with and vote on – 15 of them required a 2/3rd majority vote to pass. All but one resolution passed.

The first day included education around the resolutions - I was assigned to the committee called "Guns to Gardens". My first thoughts, having been assigned this resolution about guns was that it would be a political "hot potato" and that our church might be put "in harms way" if we took any actions regarding guns. My expectations couldn't have been further from the truth. This resolution was mostly about disposing of unwanted firearms literally turning them into garden tools rather than returning them to the gun market.



The gardening tool and neckless were made from melted down guns.

The Guns to Garden program is an opportunity to collaborate with community partners. Taking an action will connect us with others who want change. Possible partners include but aren't limited to: Other faith communities, elected officials, local public safety officials, community foundations, denominational resources, hospitals, veteran's groups, public health officials and more

In addition to business sessions, voting, meeting/getting to know people and worshipping, we were presented with many personal challenges, questions and concepts to ponder.

One handout was a bookmark that said:

Join the Conversation:

Tell a story that has shaped who you are.

Describe a place where you feel you belong.

What's your favorite film/album/song/book/video game/etc., & why?

Tell a story of a missed opportunity or challenge that shaped who you are.

How would you like to be remembered?

How have your religious beliefs & practice changed over time?

I think these questions can be answered and conversations can be had in adult study classes, small groups, and maybe Bible & Beer sessions.

The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson was elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and is now the first woman to hold this position.

Rev. John Dorhauer, outgoing President of the United Church of Christ, reflected on his time in office (8 years) and had powerful stories to share. Here are some of his words that make me proud to be part of the UCC:

“Dear Friends,

I have had the pleasure of witnessing the difference the United Church of Christ makes in the world. Your articulation of a love that knows no limits of boundaries is changing the world and changing lives every day. Everywhere I go, someone pulls me aside and tells me their ‘the UCC saved my life’ story.

Because of you and your call to build a just world for all, the United Church of Christ has been recognized as a leader in climate justice around the world.

Because of you and your insistence that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, all are welcome here. Also, the United Church of Christ continues to engage in the daily struggle for racial equity, for LGBTQ justice and for women's rights everywhere as we also widen the welcome to all who live with disabilities.

Our churches hold steadfast in their belief that God's love matters in the world - a love we have come to know fully in Jesus. I give God thanks every day for the way your love shows up and the lives that are changed because of that.”

The Rev. Nadia Bolz Weber gave the keynote address. She is an ordained Evangelical Lutheran pastor. She describes herself as a public theologian, and is the author of Shame-less, A Sexual Reformation, and Accidental Saints, finding God in All the Wrong People. Nadia used to be a stand-up comedian (experience that came through as she spoke to us) and is a recovering alcoholic. She is covered with tattoos. She describes herself as someone who "always sits in the corner with the other weirdos."

During our time in Indianapolis, we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of Honoring Jackie Robinson in 1963. Baseball great Jackie Robinson was a member of the United Church of Christ. In 1962 he was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. The Council of Christian Action of the United Church of Christ presented Robinson the Churchmanship Award at the 1963 General Synod.

I would like to thank the Mercersburg Association and Penn Central Conference for the opportunity to attend this General Synod. I also want to thank Pastor Caroline for her presence there as she was a source of friendship, fun and wisdom, and made me proud to be one of her parishioners.

May our St. John's welcoming journey and outreach to the community continue for a long time to come,

Jerry Thomason



St. John's Camp

The Camp Ministry is very pleased with the successful 2023 camp season and thanks the St. John's family for their support of this fun and important community outreach program. There were 29 people, including staff and volunteers, who worked together in the heat and rain to give 29 campers this wonderful experience. The camp program is blessed to have so much support with the hard work of many volunteers, the donations to "Sponsor a Camper", the Camp Ministry, and the ongoing dedication to maintaining the camp grounds. We are so very fortunate and blessed, as a church, to own our camp and to operate our outreach camping program in the scenic mountains. St. John's Camp is the perfect place for making wonderful summer memories!

(The camp's chapel offering of \$100 will be donated to Women In Need.)



Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am –3pm

We are still in need of office volunteers!
Please contact Loretta if you are interested and can help.

The Church Office will be closed Fridays for the remainder of the summer until Friday, August 18, 2023.



MUSIC MINISTRY

A HEALTHY CHOIR!

Have you ever thought about health benefits of singing?

Well, here are a few for you to ponder.

Singing in a choir is a good way to improve your singing skills. In a choir you are with others trying to do the same thing. Additionally you will gain help to develop a better sense of pitch and rhythm.

When singing in a choir you are not just singing for enjoyment but you are releasing your emotions.

Singing with others creates a sense of community and togetherness.

Singing together helps to boost self-confidence, mood and overall well being. Singing in a group helps you to feel more confident and improves your mood.

Being in a choir causes you to meet new friends and expand your social circles. Could you use a new friend?

You can make new friends from a different walk of life and expand your exposures to new cultures and lifestyles.

This article will be continued in the September Spirit so I hope the excitement will not be too much for you as you wait for the ending.

Gary Crum

USED BOOK SALE



Save the Dates

St. John's 2023 sale will be:

Friday, October 27, 4 to 9 pm

Saturday, October 28, 9 am to 6 pm

Sunday, October 29, Noon to 4 pm

Donation Dates at St. John's

Tuesday, September 5 to Friday, October 6

M-F 9 am to 3 pm, plus Saturday Sept. 30 &

Saturday Oct. 7

Please, call 717-263-8593 for pickup of large quantities

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

AUGUST 21, 2023 | 6:30 PM

BIBLE & A BEER

Theological conversations
Rich discussion
Powerful testimony

Join us at 6:30 pm **now at**
The Trojan Diner & Sports Bar!
1121 Lincoln Way E
Chambersburg, PA 17201

Bring your questions,
Invite your friends!



Join us for



Saturday Night Worship

*This service is designed to provide a relaxed, informal,
intimate atmosphere for worship and fellowship.*

*This family-friendly worship service includes communion
and activities for children.*



August 12, 2023

5:00 pm

Outside on the Church Lawn

(in Fellowship Hall if inclement weather)

St. John's UCC 1811 LWE Chambersburg, PA 17202



Congratulations

Kerry and Jill Miller are proud to announce the arrival of a darling granddaughter, Violet Joyce Sobin, on June 30, 2023. Violet Joyce was 7lbs, 14 oz and 20.7 inches, born at the Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington, VA to KerriLynn and Jake Sobin along with Big Brother Parker, age 4. “There’s nothing like having a baby to make you realize it’s a changing world” and all are adjusting to the new addition.

Children are a gift from the Lord.

Psalm 127:3

We are grateful for this heartfelt blessing!



First Fruits for August

Our First Fruits organization for August is Network Ministries.

Network Ministries is an Urban Youth Ministry in Chambersburg. Their mission is to share the Love of Jesus with those who are most vulnerable. They strive to equip children and young adults with the skills necessary for spiritual growth, academic achievement, life management and Christian leadership.

Currently they serve 100 children and are supported by 40 churches.

Ladies LUNCHEON

Wednesday, July 12, was a VERY hot day so instead of being on Norland Pub's deck the group met in the dining room with MANY other diners. The ladies automatically divided into two groups of five for conversation which were difficult but lively. There was much ice tea consumed and many tasty lunches. Diana Macfarlane offered a lovely grace before our meal remembering Mary Mason (a frequent attendee-recently deceased) and several other St. John's members needing our prayers and support. Texas Lunch was chosen for Wednesday, August 9, at 11:30 when we will discuss memorable summer vacations or school days as a youngster or older student.

MENS BREAKFAST



We will be meeting Thursday August 3, 2023 at 7am at Chris's Kitchen (across from Perkins)

We look forward to seeing any and all for July's Breakfast

August BIRTHDAYS

Arlene McFate 08/02

N. Erin Hartman 08/06

Dorothy "Dot" Baylor 08/07

Jean Cook 08/07

Lynann Funk 08/07

Sean Collier 08/07

John H. McGinley 08/08

Sadie Boyer 08/09

Carol Foltz 08/10

Emily Hoger 08/12

Joel Munday 08/13

Rodney Rotz 08/14

Christine Pensinger 08/15

Kirk Zeger 08/15

Joyce Patterson 08/17

Eric Wadel 08/17

Erin Wadel 08/18

Jerry Thomason 08/19

Ann Osterman 08/21

Susan McNew 08/21

Dwight Sollenberger 08/21

Dolores St. Clair 08/23

Sarah Young 08/23

Cooper Miller 08/23

Alma Bassler 08/24

Connie Kaiser 08/24

Wayne Statler 08/24

Zayla Stull 08/26

Kitty Ingram 08/27

Eric Hoover 08/28

Aleeya Leister 08/28

Joann Brechbill 08/29

Kenneth Horn 08/31

Elizabeth Widmann 08/31





Youth Calendar of Events

August

6 VBS Sunday Fellowship Hall

10th CPR Class 6-9pm Rm 116

11 Swim Party at Chambersburg Aquatic Center 4-8pm

13 Children's corner

27 Children's corner

Sept 17th Family Fall Fest 11:30-??



CPR/AED Recertification

The Children and Youth Ministry Team has scheduled CPR/AED certification class for those who need it or ANYONE who would like to become certified. The date is August 10th at 6-9 PM in rm 116. Please contact Roxanne ASAP if interested. Space is limited.



Youth Swim Party

End summer with a splash at the Chambersburg Aquatic Center. Tentatively set for August 11th, weather pending.

We will have food and fun, and service hours can be used. Mark your calendars and contact Roxanne for the count.

Food Preservation with the Gleaning Project!

The Gleaning Project and St. John's UCC have partnered together to help food insecure families in our community. Once a month, volunteers from the Gleaning Project and the wider community utilize our St. John's kitchen to preserve fresh produce, either by freezing or canning, helping to fill the food gap and reduce food waste.

St. John's has committed to providing space for this project thru November 2023 as a pilot program. We are excited about this venture and the opportunities we have to reach out in love to our neighbors.

Donations of jars, lids, rings, and recipes are greatly appreciated.

Upcoming food preservation dates:

- ◆ Saturday, August 26
- ◆ More to come!

Thank you for your support of South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP), the Gleaning Project, and St. John's!



THE GLEANING PROJECT

of South Central Pennsylvania

HELP SAVE THE HARVEST

1 in 5 kids in South Central PA is "food insecure" and miss out on dependable fresh fruits and vegetables

20-30% of food loss occurs during agricultural production, harvesting, and distribution.

All of that waste is perfectly delicious, nutritious, local food that doesn't make it to market for a variety of reasons which are usually cosmetic (size, color, shape etc.)

In 2022, The Gleaning Project saved and supplied **750,000+ lbs** of fresh produce to community partners in Franklin and Adams Counties

In 2023 we're hoping to save even more. Here's how:



Freezing

Labeled fresh fruits and produce can be used anywhere from months to a year after harvest depending on storage! This produce, picked at peak ripeness, contains important nutrients essential for a healthy lifestyle that will be preserved by freezing instead of going to waste!



Canning

Canning produce can extend it's life from 12-18months ! Both water bath and pressure canning can be used to salvage produce from fields and extend harvest year round to those who are food insecure and without freezers!



Saving the Veggies

With the help of the community, The Gleaning Project hopes to save more produce than ever and continue to fill the food gap that occurs during months where harvest has stopped but hunger persists.



Interested in Helping?

CONTACT US!

Franklin Co. Gleaning Coordinator - Cory Hess

Assistant Coordinator - Bernie Armstrong

chess@sccap.org

barmstrong@sccap.org



thegleaningproject@gmail.com



717-492-6269



SCCAP

South Central Community Action Programs
Empower • Engage • End Poverty

Ministry Chairs

2022-2023

Called to Care—*Connie Morrill-Hair
and Lisa Frantz*

Camp—*MaryLee Yaukey*

Caring Cooks—*Lisa Frantz*

Children & Youth Ministry—*Roxanne Davenport*

Facilities Ministry—*Peter A'Zary*

Fellowship—*Sue McMurtray*

Finance—*Scot Orndorff*

Invitational Ministry—*Susan Collier*

Library—*MaryLee Yaukey*

Nursery School—*Mary Lou Hendrickson*

Open and Affirming—*Jim Boyer*

Outreach—*Sarah Myers*

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 2022-2023

Trustees

Peter A'Zary—Head Trustee

Thomas Harrison—Vice President

Larry Wadel

Elders

Harold Collier, **President**

N. Aaron Hartman

Jill Miller

Gary Patterson, **Secretary**

Dwight Sollenberger

Carol Yarema

Deacons

Allen Frantz

Michael Herbert

Cathy Kinton

Sarah Myers

TBD

TBD

Pastor

The Rev. Caroline E. Saxton

Sunday Worship will be at 10 am (Offered In-Person and on YouTube)

Upcoming Communion Dates

Sunday, August 6, 10 am Fellowship Hall (an online service will be provided)

Saturday, August 12, 5 pm Church Lawn (Fellowship Hall if inclement weather)

Saturday, September 9, 5 pm, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, September 10, 10 am, Sanctuary & Livestreamed



St. John's United Church of Christ

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

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

Website: www.sjucc1811.org