



***St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, PA
April 26, 2026***

PAUL AND SILAS

*Please stand in body or in spirit

GATHERING SONG

"This is the Day"

UNISON WELCOME

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

"The peace of Christ be with you"

"And also with you"

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

PRELUDE

"Fairest Lord Jesus"
The Bells of St. John's

arr. Barbara Baltzer Kinyon

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

God of resurrection, we rejoice in your power and presence.

Your love is stronger than any force on earth.

You seek us out and send us forth.

You call us to be your disciples.

When we are frightened, you reassure us.

You break every chain, making a way out of no way.

Help us to walk with you, O God,

and make us instruments of your peace.

Come, let us worship God together!

***PRAISE SONG**

"Shout to the Lord"

Darlene Zschech

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

from the UCC Book of Worship

Almighty and merciful God, you created and are creating still. In your presence our limits lie stark before us. We confess our unclean lips, our cold hearts, our turning away from neighbors, our broken promises, and our unrepentant hours. Forgive us, O Holy One.

We confess that we have squandered the gifts you have given. We have neglected the land. We have grasped for goods. We have used each other. We have loved power more than people. Forgive us, O Holy One.

Cleanse from us the illusion of innocence. Come into our hearts, and make us new again. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

from the UCC Book of Worship

In Jesus Christ, God knows and receives us as we are. Listen, give thanks, and live. Amen.

***GLORY BE TO THE FATHER #704**

ANTHEM

"The Strife is O'er"

Henry G. Ley

SCRIPTURE READING

Philippians 1:12-26

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 34: 1-10 (The Inclusive Bible)

I will bless YHWH always; praise will continually be on my lips!

My soul will boast about YHWH – let the oppressed hear it and be glad!

Glorify YHWH with me, and let us exalt God's Name together!

I sought YHWH, who answered me and freed me from all my fears.

Those who look to YHWH are radiant, and their faces are never covered with shame.

The poor called out; YHWH heard and saved them from all their troubles.

The angel of YHWH encamps around those who revere God, and rescues them.

Taste and see how good YHWH is! Happiness comes to those who take refuge in YHWH.

Holy people of God, revere YHWH – for those who stand in awe of God lack nothing.

The young lion may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek YHWH will lack no good thing.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Roxanne Davenport

Children's Corner will be offered following the Children's Message

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 16:16-34

SERMON

Rev. Caroline E. Saxton

NICENE CREED: AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Hymnal Companion C-10

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

INVITATION TO GIVING

OFFERTORY

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE #706**

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

adapted from Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship

O God, through the offering of these gifts may we become a more open people... open-minded in hearing your Word and wisdom, open-hearted in healing a broken world, open-handed in heeding your call for solidarity and enacted love. With thanks for all good gifts, we present these offerings to you. Amen.

***HYMN #592**

"How Can I Keep from Singing"

***COMMISSION & BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE (seated)

Join us for a time of fellowship after worship!

The "Nursery Nook in the Narthex" quiet area and infant/toddler space in the Parlor are available for children and families to use during worship. Age-appropriate activity bags are also available. See the deacon for assistance.

Birthdays this week: 04/30 Ruth Bard and Heather Rensch; 05/01 Daryl Nutter.

Worship Participants:	
Pastor	Rev. Caroline E. Saxton
Organist	Barbara Motichka
Choir Director	Gary Crum
Deacon in Charge	Kara Alt
Lector	Judy Hodges
Children's Corner	Roxanne Davenport
Media Coordinators	Calvin Frantz and Neath Ham
Bulletin cover	Edd Scheer

The Flowers at the Foot of the Cross are given in honor of Alahna Hodges 13th birthday.



St. John's Vision

We are called to love, to learn, to worship and to witness in Christ as a congregation that welcomes everyone, and seeks service that will advance God's realm on earth.

St. John's Mission

To grow in love of God and neighbor

Worship Resources:

Prayer of Confession adapted from Prayers and Readings for Worship, Volume 2, Peter Judd, editor

Assurance of Grace and Prayer of Dedication (adapted) from Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi

The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation

How Can I Keep from Singing

592

1. My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam - en - ta - tion,
 2. What though my joys and com - forts die? My Sav - ior still is liv - ing.
 3. I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a - bove it;

I hear the sweet, though far - off hymn that hails the new cre - a - tion.
 What though the shad - ows gath - er 'round? A new song Christ is giv - ing.
 and day by day this path - way smooths, since first I learned to love it.

Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing;
 No storm can shake my in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing;
 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring - ing;

it finds an ech - o in my soul — how can I keep from sing - ing?
 since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?
 all things are mine since I am His — how can I keep from sing - ing?

NEWS IN THE PEWS April 26, 2026

The Rev. Caroline E. Saxton, pastor@sjucc1811.org (641) 260-1868 (cell)
Tonya Schwartz, Office Administrator, manager@sjucc1811.org (717) 263-8593 (office)
Gary Crum, Music Director | Barbara Motichka, Organist
Roxanne Davenport, Director of Children & Youth
The Rev. Stephen W. Hoffman, Pastor Emeritus

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

TODAY: Support our Scouts! Members of Boy Scout Troop 136 will be selling discount camp cards after worship today. Cards are \$5 and help to support the scouting program.
Bible Study on the Letter of James, chapter 1, 8 pm, Zoom (link in Friday e-blast)

Monday, April 27

10:45 am Piano Tuning – Fellowship Hall
1:30 pm Monday Afternoon Book Study – Conference Room 111 (Chapter 9)
7:00 pm Boy Scouts – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, April 28

5:30 pm Yoga – Room 202
6:00 pm Ladies' Bible Study– Zoom
6:30 pm Cub Scouts - Fellowship Hall (then break into smaller groups)

Thursday, April 30

6:00 pm Dance Class – Fellowship Hall
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice – Bell Room 117
7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room 103

Friday, May 1

Church Office is Closed

Saturday, May 2

9:00 am Camp Clean Up – St. John's Camp

Sunday, May 3

8:45 am Sunday Morning Caffeine Church School Class – Parlor Room 104
8:45 am Godly Play Class – Room 119
8:45 am SPARK! Elementary Church School Class – Room 115
8:45 am Teen Discussion Class – Room 206
8:45 am Wired Word Church School Class – Room 116
8:45 am Upper Room Church School Class – Conference Room 111
10:00 am Sunday Worship – Sanctuary
11:15 am New Members/Inquirer's Class – Conference Room 111
8:00 pm Bible Study on the Letter of James – chapter 2 (link in Friday e-blast)

New Members/Inquirers Class Pastor Caroline will hold a class after worship on Sunday, May 3 for those who have recently joined as members or who are exploring membership at St. John's UCC. Grab a snack and join the conversation in Conference Room 111!

Sunday Night Bible Study Join Pastor Caroline on Sunday evenings at **8 pm via Zoom** for a Bible study on the Letter of James. Our session on April 26 will focus on Chapter 1. Zoom Meeting ID: 836 0593 5961 and Passcode 277938. A hyperlink is included in the weekly e-blast.

Bible and a Beer is an opportunity to talk about our faith in public. Join us on the 3rd Monday of the month at the Trojan Diner at 6:30 pm. Our next gathering will be May 18.

Monday Afternoon Book Study We will read the epilogue of Norman Wirzba's book "Love's Braided Dance: Hope in a Time of Crisis" for our discussion on Monday, April 27, 1:30 pm in Conference Room 111. Our next book is Adam Hamilton's "The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life." Come and join the conversation!

Combined Church School Class Join us for a continental breakfast and conversation on "What is Pentecost" led by Pastor Caroline on Sunday, May 17, 8:45 am in Fellowship Hall.

Pentecost Picnic will be held on Sunday, May 24 after worship. The menu includes hot dogs, chips, drinks, and dessert. We hope the weather will allow us to gather outside!

Race Against Poverty St. John's is a sponsor of the 16th Annual Race Against Poverty held the first weekend in June. This year, the race will be held on Saturday, June 6. We would be delighted to have you join our official St. John's team. Contact Pastor Caroline to learn more.

Mercersburg Association Spring Meeting will be held at Grace UCC in Greencastle on Sunday, May 3, 3-5 pm. This will be a hybrid meeting with a Zoom option to attend. Thank you to Lloyd Beers and Erin Hartman for volunteering to be our delegates to this meeting.

Keystone Conference Annual Meeting will be held June 5-7, 2026 at Millersville University. The theme is "Joy at the Table Together!" If you would like to serve as one of our two lay delegates for this important and historic meeting, please contact Pastor Caroline.

Join us for Life Talk What's on your mind? Something that concerns or worries you? Do you need to vent? Just want to talk with other adults for a bit? Don't want to share in front of the entire congregation? Or you don't think it really needs to be a prayer request? Grab your snack and coffee, and meet in the parlor after services on Sunday mornings. Everyone is welcome.

Summer Quarter First Fruits in May, June, and July will support the Race Against Poverty (RAP), Maranatha Ministry, and United Way's Stuff the Bus. Thank you for your generosity.

May/June Upper Room devotionals are currently available at the Welcome Center. We suggest a donation of \$1 for small print/\$2 for large print copies. If you would like to have a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.