



***St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, PA
June 28, 2026***

OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUNDAY
RUTH: NEW LIFE

*Please stand in body or in spirit

GATHERING SONG

"Find a Home Here"

UNISON WELCOME

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY & PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

adapted from "We Shall Not Be Moved!"

Beloved, some of us came here tired, or carrying grief.

But we are still here.

Some of us come with joy in our bones and rainbows in our spirits.

And we are still here.

In a world that tries to erase queer stories and target trans and nonbinary lives,

We shall not be moved.

When fear tells us to be silent,

We shall not be moved.

When shame tries to pull us from the truth of who God made us to be,

We shall not be moved.

We are rooted in love.

We are rooted in justice.

We are rooted in affirmation.

We are rooted in God.

Like trees planted by living water,

We shall not be moved.

Come, let us worship the god who sees the vulnerable, strengthens the weary, and calls the church into holy courage.

Rooted in love, justice, and affirmation, we worship with joy.

We worship with courage. We worship together.

***HYMN #254**

"Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race"

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

from "We Shall Not Be Moved!"

God of love and justice, we confess that we have not always loved as you call us to love. We confess the harm done in your name, especially to LGBTQ+ people: the exclusion, shame, silence, and fear that have wounded your beloved children. We confess, too, the ways we all fall short: choosing comfort over courage, silence over

justice, and fear over love. Forgive us. Transform us. Root us again in love, justice, and affirmation. Make us a church where all people are safe, celebrated, and truly belong. In the name of Jesus, who welcomed all with courageous love, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

adapted from "We Shall Not Be Moved!"

Beloved, hear this good news: God does not abandon us to shame. God does not leave us in the wilderness. God does not ask us to sacrifice our *beloved-ness* in order to be faithful. In Christ, the old powers do not get the final word. Fear does not get the final word. God's grace is still rising. God's Spirit is still making the church new. So stand tall, beloveds. Breathe deep. You are forgiven. You are beloved. You are free. Thanks be to God.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

adapted from "We Shall Not Be Moved!"

The peace of Christ is not fragile politeness. It is the fierce peace of justice, truth, and love. **The peace of Christ makes room for us all.** Let us share signs of peace and remember: every body, every story, every beloved child of God belongs in the circle of grace. The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 17:5-8; Luke 1:46-55

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Roxanne Davenport

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Ruth 4:1-22

SERMON

Rev. Caroline E. Saxton

***HYMN** (words on screen)

"There is Room in God's Great Welcome"

REAFFIRMATION OF ST. JOHN'S UCC COVENANT OF WELCOME AND AFFIRMATION

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 "We Shall Not Be Moved!"

God of abundance, receive these gifts and help them to grow: grow into shelter, into courage, and into care. Let them grow into justice, joy, safety, and beloved community. Bless what we give. Bless what we hold. Bless what we build together. Root our generosity in love, justice, and affirmation, so that all your people may flourish. Amen.

***HYMN #C-53**

"We Shall Overcome"

***COMMISSION & BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE (seated)

Join us a time of fellowship after worship!

Birthdays this week: 06/29 Eleanor Collier; 06/30 Barbara Soper; 07/01 Makayla Sheele;
07/05 Marco Dereef and Kelly Ann Hoover.

Worship Participants:	
Pastor	Rev. Caroline E. Saxton
Organist	Barbara Motichka
Choir Director	Gary Crum
Deacon in Charge	Tena Keeney
Lector	Holli Burton
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 to the glory of God and in the memory and honor of our families Orndorff and Fair by Scot and Mindy Orndorff.



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:

*"We Shall Not Be Moved! Rooted in Love, Justice, and Affirmation" by Rev. Derek A. Terry,
Acting Executive Director of the UCC Open and Affirming Coalition*

*"There is Room in God's Great Welcome" © 2016 Carolyn Winfrey Gillette; used by
permission. This hymn is a celebration of God's love and justice for all and a call for us to be
loving and just.*

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

254

1. Di - verse in cul - ture, na - tion, race, we
 2. God, let us be a bridge of care con -
 3. When cha - sms wid - en, storms a - rise, O
 4. God, let us be a ta - ble spread with

come to - geth - er by Your grace. God, let us be a
 nect - ing peo - ple ev - ery - where. Help us con - front all
 Ho - ly Spir - it, make us wise. Let our re - solve, like
 gifts of love and bro - ken bread, where all find wel - come,

meet - ing ground where hope and heal - ing love are found.
 fear and hate and lust for power that sep - a - rate.
 steel, be strong to stand with those who suf - fer wrong.
 grace at - tends, and en - e - mies a - rise as friends.

WORDS: Ruth Duck, 1991
 MUSIC: Robert Schumann, 1839
 Words © 1992 by GIA Publications, Inc.

CANONBURY
 LM
Higher key, No. 24

We Shall Overcome

1. We shall o - ver - come, we shall o - ver - come,
we shall o - ver - come some - day! Oh, deep in my
heart I do be - lieve we shall o - ver - come some - day!

2. We'll walk hand in hand.
3. We shall all be free.
4. We shall live in peace.
5. The Lord will see us through.

NEWS IN THE PEWS June 28, 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: VBS Workday after worship, Fellowship Hall

NO Bible Study on the book of Ecclesiastes – (Will begin on Sunday, July 26)

Monday, June 29

1:30 pm NO Afternoon Book Study - (Chapter 5) - (Will resume on July 20)

Tuesday, June 30

10:00 am Summer Singers Practice – Fellowship Hall

5:30 pm Yoga – Room 202

Wednesday, July 1

6:30 PM American Revolution Talk – Fellowship Hall

Thursday, July 2

7:00 AM Men's Breakfast – Texas Lunch

Friday, July 3

Church Office Closed – In observance of Independence Day July 4th

Sunday, July 5

8:45 am K-12 Faith and Fellowship – Youth 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

Summer Special Music A sign up is posted on the choir room door for those who would like to help provide special music in worship this summer. This can be singing or playing a musical instrument. Contact Gary Crum to learn more. Thank you for sharing your talents!

Summer Church School Classes Both the Wired Word and Upper Room adult church school classes will meet throughout the summer. Additionally, we will offer a K-12 Faith and Fellowship opportunity in the youth room for our young people to continue their Christian Education. Please see Diana Kongkeattikul or Roxanne Davenport if you have questions re: Faith and Fellowship

Summer Prayer Gatherings Join us at 8:45 on Sunday, July 12 at the Peace Pole. Please bring your own chair. We will also gather at St. John's Camp at 9:30 am on Saturday, August 22.

Monday Afternoon Book Study We will read Chapter 5 of Adam Hamilton's "The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life" for our discussion on Monday, **July 20**, 1:30 pm in Conference Room 111. Come and join the conversation!

Summer Snacks for NETWORK Ministry Collection boxes for non-perishable snacks to share with the kids at NETWORK Ministry are located in the front lobby. A list of suggested items to donate is posted on the bulletin boards and is listed in the July/August Spirit.

Vacation Bible School Our VBS wish list for Snowball Mountain challenge includes: snow sports equipment; white poly-fill stuffing/batting; Styrofoam balls 3" diameter and larger; white sheets; Styrofoam medication coolers; and a snowflake projector (commonly used outside on houses). A grocery cart to collect these items is in the lobby. Contact Roxanne with questions. VBS Work Days are scheduled after worship on Sunday, June 28 and Sunday, July 12.

American Revolution Talk Join Col. (Ret.) Frank Hancock for an engaging presentation on the American Revolution on Wednesday, July 1, 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. Using historical artifacts, he will explore how the Revolution unfolded and highlight the patriots who shaped its course. He will also share the important role Cumberland County played, including Col. William Thompson, Washingtonburg, and the 1775 attack on Quebec. Free to attend; donations are accepted.

A Civil War Ball will be held Friday, July 10, 7-9 pm in Fellowship Hall featuring period dances. No experience? No problem! All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Summer Singers in Concert Mark your calendars for Sunday, July 27, 3 pm as the Summer Singers perform here at St. John's UCC. Bring your family and friends and come to be blessed!

Sweet Treats: Ice Cream Social We are planning an ice cream social for Sunday, August 16 after worship. If you would like to bring homemade ice cream or baked goods, please sign up at the Welcome Center. We'll beat the summer heat by enjoying the A/C and a sweet treat!

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. More information about these organizations is included in the Spirit. Thank you for your generosity.

Stuff the Bus The collection of physical items for United Way's "Stuff the Bus" school supply drive will run July 15-31. Please look for the boxes in the vestibules and consider contributing through the First Fruits offerings.

Sunday Night Bible Study Join Pastor Caroline on Sunday evenings at 8 pm via Zoom for a Bible study on the Book of Ecclesiastes. Due to Pastor Caroline's schedule, we will be taking a break for a few weeks and will begin studying Ecclesiastes on **Sunday, July 26**. Zoom Meeting ID: 836 0593 5961 and Passcode 277938. A hyperlink is included in the weekly e-blast.

July/August 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.

Want to Stay in Touch? Contact the Church Office to be added to our email list! You can sign up to receive our regular weekly emails, Diana's Devotionals, and/or be part of the Prayer Chain.