



***St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, PA
July 19, 2026***

ESTHER: FROM SADNESS TO JOY

*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

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

God, you have called us to this time and place.

You have invited us to sit and rest, to sing and pray.

We do not have to hurry.

We do not have to worry.

For here, we are found and fed.

Here, we are nurtured and nourished for the work ahead.

Inspire us, Holy One, as we spend time with you and one another,

that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly.

Move us from sadness to joy, from fear to trust,

from hate to love, from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts, fill our worship, our world, and our universe.

***HYMN #566**

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

adapted from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion

God of courage, you gave Esther the strength to speak out and the intelligence she needed to save her people. Help us to believe that you are still present and active in this world and that your grace remains as an everlasting force in our lives. You are our guide and help. In you, we place our trust. Encourage us in our struggle to confront the oppressor and free the oppressed, so that all people may know the justice and unity of your realm. In Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

***PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

adapted from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion

Your Word is our salt; without it, we lose our being, our joy, and our ability to endure. Melt us, mold us, fill us, and use us, O God, for your purposes. Open our hearts and our minds to listen, really listen, to your Word today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:68-79

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 124 (The Inclusive Bible)

"If it had not been YHWH who was on our side" – let Israel now say -

**"if it had not been YHWH who was on our side, when enemies attacked us,
they'd have swallowed us up alive!"**

When their anger burned against us, the flood would have spent us away,
**the water would have drowned us, the raging torrent would have engulfed
us!"**

Blessed be YHWH, who has not let us fall prey to their teeth!

**We are free like a bird from the trap! The snare has been broken and we are
free! Our help is in the name of YHWH, who made heaven and earth.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Shout To The Lord"

Darlene Zschech

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Roxanne Davenport

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Esther 7:1-10, 9:1-2, 20-22, 29-32

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 Feasting on the Word Worship Companion

**Blessed be the Lord, for God is good, and God's love endures forever. Our Creator,
help us to mirror your goodness through this offering, in the world. Grant us the
gifts of wisdom and discernment to see what we're called to do and live with faith
and courage to change the world for you. Amen.**

*HYMN #509

"Trust and Obey"

*COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (seated)

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.

Birthdays this week: 07/21 Connie Stenger; 07/23 Maurice Marotte III and Kevin Woy; 07/24 Beckhym Collier; 07/25 Kirk Johnson and Kiana Smith.

Worship Participants:	
Pastor	Rev. Caroline E. Saxton
Organist	Barbara Motichka
Choir Director	Gary Crum
Praise Team	Diana Kongkeattikul, Swann Kongkeattikul, Barbara Motichka, Courtney Robertson, Roxanne Davenport, Chris Willman-Bunge
Deacon in Charge	Diana Kongkeattikul
Lector	Sarah Shiraki
Children's Corner	Chani Wolfe
Media Coordinators	Calvin Frantz and Neath Ham
Bulletin cover	Edd Scheer

The Flowers at the Foot of the Cross are given in loving memory of our mother Edna L. Scubelek by Sue McMurtray and Wayne Scubelek.



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

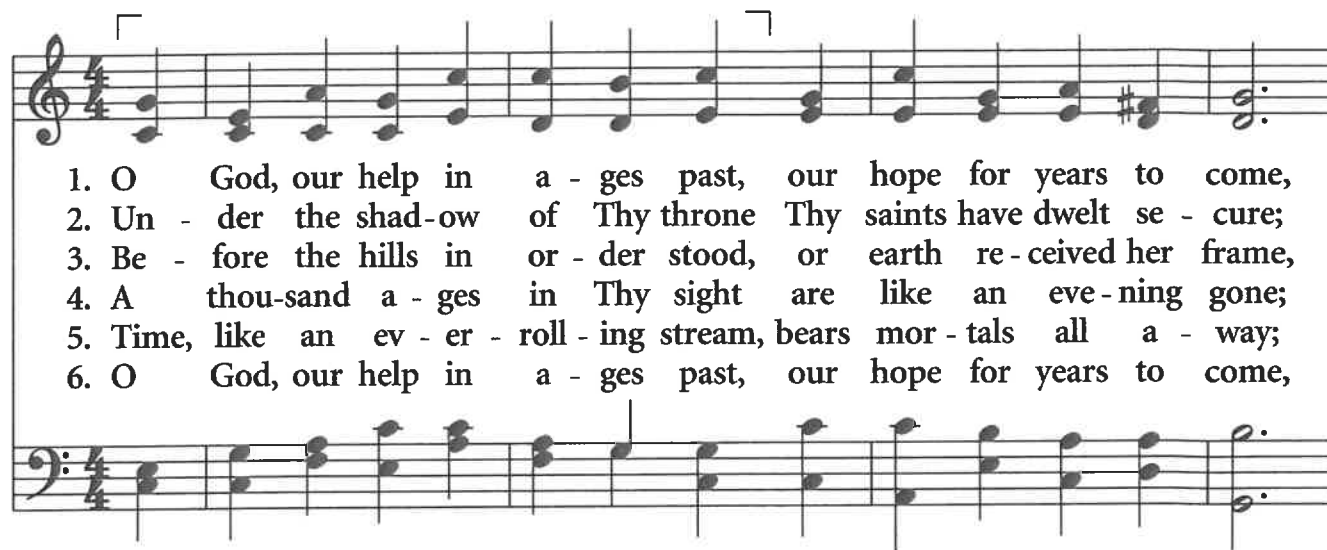
To grow in love of God and neighbor

Worship Resources:

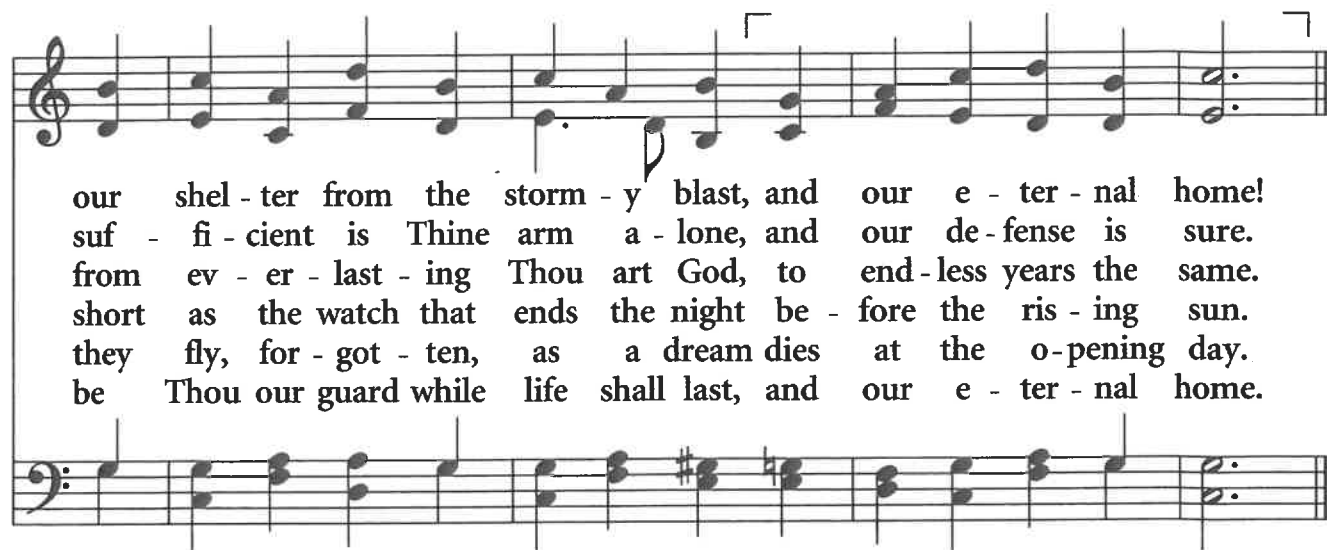
*Call to Worship written by Pastor Caroline and inspired by the World Peace Prayer
Prayer of the Day adapted from Feasting on Word Worship Companion and Revised
Common Lectionary Prayers
Feasting on the Word Worship Companion
The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

566



1. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
 2. Un - der the shad-ow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt se - cure;
 3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or earth re - ceived her frame,
 4. A thou-sand a - ges in Thy sight are like an eve - ning gone;
 5. Time, like an ev - er - roll - ing stream, bears mor - tals all a - way;
 6. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home!
 suf - fi - cient is Thine arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
 from ev - er - last - ing Thou art God, to end - less years the same.
 short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.
 they fly, for - got - ten, as a dream dies at the o - pening day.
 be Thou our guard while life shall last, and our e - ter - nal home.

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1719 (Ps. 90)

MUSIC: William Croft, 1708

ST. ANNE

CM

Higher key, No. 250; lower key, No. 6

Continued on C-11.

C-10

Creeds and Affirmations of Faith

Apostles' Creed: An Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God, the Father, the Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate;
He was crucified, died and was buried.
He went to the dead.
On the third day He rose again,
entered into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life eternal. Amen.

Nicene Creed: An Affirmation of Faith

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

Continued from previous page.

eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
Through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in the one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Trust and Obey

509

1. When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word
 2. Not a bur - den we bear, not a sor - row we share,
 3. But we nev - er can prove the de - lights of His love
 4. Then in fel - low - ship sweet we will sit at His feet

what a glo - ry He sheds on our way! Let us do His good will;
 but our toil He does rich - ly re - pay; not a grief or a loss,
 un - til all on the al - tar we lay; for the fa - vor He shows
 or we'll walk by His side in the way; what He says we will do,

He a - bides with us still, and with all who will trust and o - bey.
 not a frown or a cross, but is blest if we trust and o - bey.
 and the joy He be - stows are for those who will trust and o - bey.
 where He sends we will go; nev - er fear, on - ly trust and o - bey.

Trust and o - bey, for there's no oth - er way

to be hap - py in Je - sus, but to trust and o - bey.

WORDS: John H. Sammis, 1887
 MUSIC: Daniel B. Towner, 1887

TRUST AND OBEY
 6.6.9 D with refrain

NEWS IN THE PEWS July 19, 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: NO Bible Study on the book of Ecclesiastes – (Will begin on Sunday, July 26)
VBS Starts today through Thursday July 23**

Monday, July 20

1:30 pm Afternoon Book Study (Chapter 5) – Conference Room 111
6:30 pm Bible and a Beer – The Trojan Diner

Tuesday, July 21

10:20 am Piano Tuning – Choir Room 103
5:30 pm Yoga – Room 202

Sunday, July 26

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
11:15 am Confirmation Conversation – Room 116
3:00 pm Summer Singers Concert – Sanctuary
8:00 pm Bible Study on the Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 1 (zoom link in Friday e-blast)

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.

Gratitude Sunday on Sunday, August 30 will be a celebration of "This is Us": who we are and sharing what we love about our church! Please share photos in advance or bring them with you. We will have a pancake breakfast at 8:45 in Fellowship Hall, with worship to follow at 10 am.

Summer Prayer Gatherings Thank you to everyone who gathered at the labyrinth and peace pole this summer. Our final summer prayer gathering will be held at St. John's Camp at 9:30 am on **Saturday, August 22**. A sign-up sheet is at the welcome center.

Antietam Battlefield Walking Tour August 4 2026. Walking tour starts at 9 am. The duration is 3 hours long. Price per person is \$20 (plus park entrance fee unless you have a park pass). Gratuities are accepted in form of cash only and are optional. Tour tips: Wear comfortable shoes for walking. Bring your own bug repellent and water. To sign up contact Harold Collier, hcollier@comcast.net.

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.

Summer Singers in Concert Mark your calendars for **Sunday, July 26, 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 6-31**. Please look for the boxes in the vestibules and consider contributing through the First Fruits offerings.

Blessing of the Animals will be held outside on Sunday, August 9. Your pets are invited to come in person or via photo as we bless and give thanks for our animal companions.

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.