

On the Journey ... at St. John's

April
2019

St. John's United Church of Christ
538 E. Thomas St.
Coopersburg, PA 18036
610-282-3310

Volume 20 Issue 4

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR—

As I prepare for Holy Week, I have been trying to imagine what the disciples felt like. We read in scripture they did not yet understand; we pick up on their fear. I also find it ironic that they quickly went back to their previous “career” of fishing rather quickly. I understand that they needed to eat, but it reminds me of how fast we go through the “Easter Motions.”

Yep, we get it that we are supposed to feel somber and maybe sad, for lack of a better term, and it gives us an excuse to eat more chocolate. (Sarcasm abounds) Our worship series has focused on giving up our busyness to spend time with Jesus. To just sit and be. That in itself can be scary. Sometimes we don't like to take a hard look at who we are. But whose we are is also an important question. Do people around you know you are Christian? Do they know that you love Jesus and call him your Savior? I am not advocating waving signs on 309 and random quoting of scripture during a conversation. I am talking of your way of beings. Do your morals and values represent who you are as a follower of Christ?

Often times we find ourselves in conflict between faith and the world or cultural views. Politics has turned down right mean and disgraceful, and to defend one's political party seems to be us at direct odds with our faith.

What does Easter meant to you? While we focus on the lessons of a historical Jesus it is important that we remember we have a living SAVIOR. Through Jesus we have access to a God that wants to love and care for us.

I often preach that life is about balance. Relying on God and trusting that the Holy Spirit will guide our decisions. So I ask you to ponder this question. What does Easter really mean to you in light of all that is going on in your life and the world?

Be at Peace and Do Not Be Afraid,

The Lord has Risen.

Pastor Teresa

NEWS FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Greetings,

Last Sunday was a real good day for St. John's. I am not talking about the amount of giving received, but about how much we were blessed in the presence of God.

We were blessed to share in an honor received by Marc Bamberger in recognition of his scouting achievements. A great touch in that moment was the reading for Marc's letter of recommendation by his mother, Betty.

We were blessed once again by returning visitors for the 5th or 6th time in a row. And, some old friends of St. John's joined us. I couldn't help but smile.

How blessed was it to hear Pastor Teresa loud and clear. Craig and Christine Thatcher's generosity in donating the new lavalier will end all the interference and hissing noises we had to endure.

And finally, the evening Vespers performed by Lou Franco was spot on. There was a great feeling of calm and happiness in the room. Dare I say blessed?

Better days are ahead for St. John's. So, let's experience "the ride" together.

Grace and Peace,

John Ruby



OFFICIAL NOTICE FROM PASTOR TERESA

I am going OVER THE EDGE!
Literally Sat. June 1st.

I am participating in the Lehigh Council of Churches Valley Over the Edge. I will be rappelling down from the top of Two City Center, a mid-rise 11-story Class A office/retail building on the corner of 7th and Hamilton Streets in downtown Allentown.



You may go on line to support me at the Lehigh Council of Churches (Website/donations/Teresa Martin) or put a specially marked envelope marked "Pushing Pastor Teresa Over the Edge" in the collection or secretary's desk. All the money I raise will benefit the homeless in Allentown.

Please consider supporting me!

LENTEN SCHEDULE

Dinner at 6 pm at Host Church. Soup, bread, and beverage provided by host church.

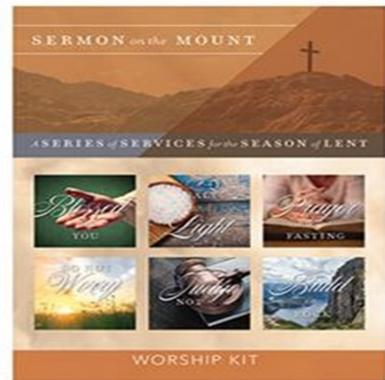
Service at 7pm.

Lenten Schedule

April 2nd Friedens Lutheran

April 9th St John's UCC

Potluck (including desserts) for those who have been attending the worship series. St. John's will provide place settings and beverages.



HOLY WEEK SERVICE SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday April 14th. We will remember Jesus' journey into Jerusalem!
Service at 10 am-- Craig Thatcher will be providing special music!

Vespers April 14th at 5 pm featuring "Maggie Spike" Theme--
"Great Awakenings" Wine and Cheese Reception follows!

Maundy Thursday April 18th-- Service at 7 pm. Special Musician Harpist Joanna Mell will be providing special music. We will remember the Last Supper and Jesus' journey to the Cross.

Good Friday April 19th Church will be open for personal prayer in sanctuary
12- 2pm.

Easter Service with Holy Communion-- Sunday April 21st at 10 am
Special Music Bob Sedlock, Trumpet Player. Hallelujah! He is Risen!



EVENING VESPERS – SAVE THE DATES

APR 14	New Awakening	Maggie Spike (Maggie & Eric Gerner)
MAY 19	Imagine – Fulfill Hidden Promises	John Carelli
JUN 9	Sunshine and Growth	Mike Holliday

Looking forward to seeing you at Evening Vespers.

THUMBS UP to everyone who works so hard to make Vespers happen!
Lou Franco was superb once again!

COB CORNER

The Team continues to plan for COB 2019 with raffle decisions, golf tournament ideas (the end of July will be here before we know it!), DeSales University meetings about the 5K in October, etc! If you have any grant writing expertise, the COB Team could certainly use your volunteer time and talents! Please let us know! We have reached out to a Quakertown service organization, Quakertown Community Outreach who are willing to assist this year and are looking forward to their help. Stay tuned for Raffle Ticket info and MORE! Please see our website:www.cobcares.org

The COBCares task force is working on this year's Community Outreach Benefit, our 18th. We will have more details soon about our golf tournament, 5K Costume Dash and other fund-raisers, but now, we want to introduce one more family we will be helping.

Dana and Maddy Kershner, mom and daughter from Quakertown, each has serious diagnoses. Maddy, 8, has epilepsy and has endured thousands of seizures since 2015. Brain surgery in Boston in 2016 stopped the seizures but she still needs testing, medications and other treatment. Her family fears that the seizures can return at any time. A modern sleep monitor, which the family can't afford, would bring some peace of mind. Also in 2016, Dana was diagnosed with metastatic thyroid cancer. Surgery, chemo- and radiation therapies continue, but Dana's prognosis is uncertain. Maddy's dad, Lee, is a carpenter and she has a brother, Colton, 5. They need help paying for medical care and travel for both Maddy and Dana, and they face foreclosure proceedings on their home, on hold for now.

NEWSFLASH! COB recipient Stacie Herceg received new lungs March 23. Surgeon says the surgery was successful and she is currently doing well!!



APRIL MILESTONES TO CELEBRATE

- 1 Gwen Pritsch
- 5 Debbie Loew
- 10 Neil O'Brien
- 13 Nancy Strauss
- 27 Alice Eckardt



Please help keep this listing up-to-date by contacting the office with additions and/or corrections! Thank you!

BETTY LOU'S PANTRY

We are collecting liquid laundry detergent, (we need 80 bottles) for the Saturdays we are manning the Betty Lou's Pantry in **April**. They also could use Tuna Helpers and box potatoes. Please put donations in the marked bin by the coat rack. Thank you!



EASTER FLOWER orders will be available until Monday, April 15. We will be offering tulips this year, at \$7 each. Order forms are at the church and in the bulletin.

Please see Charmaine Fegley for further information.



We are now part of the Amazon Smile Program! This is the way the corporation of Amazon.com gives back to the community. You must shop through Amazon Smile every time. Your Prime membership and passwords stay the same and are not shared. .05% of every sale goes to the church. Below is the link to take



you directly there. Please share with family and friends! This is an easy way to give back to the church. Any questions, speak to Pastor Teresa.

Her email is RevTeresaMartin@outlook.com
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-6286946>



RISE AND SHINE YOGA Wednesdays, 9 - 10 a.m. St. John's parlor, \$10 class. Please contact Carol at 610.428.1236 to register.

To the people of the Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ:

Dear Friends,

In 2016, the Penn Northeast Conference began a search process for a Designated Conference Minister. At the time, our Conference Board had been in the process of discernment of the formation of a new Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. In consultation with staff from the national setting of the United Church of Christ, we decided to search for a designated term conference minister. This person would serve with a specific task: to help assist us through the discernment process of the possibility of forming a new conference.

The Conference Board called Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates to serve as our Designated Conference Minister. She has a wealth of experience. Prior to coming to PNEC, she served as Associate Association Minister for Congregational Vitality and Development for the Eastern Ohio/Western Reserve Associations of the Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ. Prior to this she served as local church pastor in the New York Conference. Her first career focus was in organizational management and human resource development in non-profit companies.

Bonnie was an excellent leader and resource for us through the discernment process with Pennsylvania Southeast. She had led a similar process of restructuring which brought experience to us. She helped us in discerning a vision, mission, and purpose for our new Conference. She was thoughtful and resourceful in helping us through the discernment steps to explore the structures and ministry of a new Conference. She was open, attended meetings throughout our conference, met with many churches, and was always communicating openly and honestly throughout the process.

In the fall of 2018, when the PSEC conference voted “no” to continuing the process, our conversations with the PSEC stopped. The PSEC Consistory has voted to continue these conversations. Our Conference Board has asked for some time, and we may resume our conversations in the fall of 2019. We are engaged in many excited and wonderful ministries together, and these will continue! We are good friends with the folks in PSEC, and we will continue to discern where God is leading us together.

Since Bonnie was called for three years for the specific purpose of helping us through a unification discernment process, and because that process has taken a turn, the Conference Board has begun the visioning our more independent future. As the Conference Board has discerned next steps, we have asked Bonnie to help us develop a vision for our conference as we move into the next years. Additionally, the Conference Board has voted to present her to the Conference at our 2019 fall conference meeting to be our called Conference Minister. Bonnie is a gifted leader who has helped us, the conference board and the conference congregations, develop vision and mission statements and core values for our conference. She has worked faithfully in developing relationships and connecting congregations for working together.

Bonnie has led worship and preached in many churches throughout our conference because she believes every person and every congregation matters. She has helped us through our grief in letting go of our previous beloved Conference Minister. She has been a resource and encouraged us through the changes in authorization for ministry in the new Manual on Ministry. Additionally, she has assisted us in moving into a leaner and more flexible governance and ministry model of leadership and decision-making. In the last 18 months since Bonnie has been with us, she has been guiding us to grow into a faithful and vital church through coaching with local congregations, a congregational vitality program for faith communities, and supporting disaster response and ecumenical ministries in the conference. Bonnie continues to encourage connections among communities so that we can work together to bring the good news of God's love throughout the Penn Northeast Conference.

Through the next nine months, Bonnie will be holding zoom meetings which will be announced in our e-newsletter "This Week in PNEC." These are meeting over the computer where you click a link to a video chat. Bonnie will be answering questions, and she wants to hear from you about your hopes and dreams for our conference. She will also hold two in person meetings at coffee shops (one in the Lehigh Valley and one in the northern region of our conference) to have meet and greets with people in our conference.

Our Conference Board also wants to hear from you. We value your thoughts, input, prayers, and discernment for our conference. At our May 4th spring conference meeting, Bonnie will be engaging us in conversation, and we would like to have small groups that receive your input toward the vision of our conference. The Conference Board will receive your input from the spring conference meeting, and we will evaluate your responses at a Board retreat following the meeting. Bonnie will also be listening for your input at her zoom meetings and meet and greets.

Then, we will share all that we have learned at our November 2nd fall conference meeting. Bonnie will share a vision for the Conference based on your responses and input from the Conference Board. She will be presented to the fall meeting to be our next called Conference Minister of the Penn Northeast Conference. Together, through prayer and by God's grace, we will continue to be the Body of Christ, build relationships, and work together so that all may know the love and grace of our amazing God.

Peace be with you,

Joanne Marchetto

Moderator, Conference Board

**PLEASE REMEMBER OUR WEBSITE:
(STJOHNSCOOPERSBURG.ORG) OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE
(ST JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, COOPERSBURG)
HAS UP-TO-THE-MINUTE CHURCH INFORMATION**

St. John's United Church of Christ
538 Thomas Street
Coopersburg, PA 18036

www.stjohnsuccoop.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OUR MISSION:

**To know and share the love of God through worship,
fellowship and outreach to the community.**

HAPPY
april