

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

December  
2018

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

Volume 19 Issue 11

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Advent is upon us.

Our theme for this Season will be "What Child is This?" Christine Thatcher designed our bulletin cover. Our emphasis will be on the spirit of Christmas through music.

On December 2<sup>nd</sup> during our worship service, June Thomas will be coming to sing for us and we will celebrate Holy Communion. In the afternoon Craig and Nyke will be doing their annual concert.

December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm will be our church Christmas Fellowship dinner. This is a potluck dinner and friends and family are invited to join us. If you need a ride please speak to Pastor Teresa. Patrick will be playing as we do a Christmas sing-a-long to round out the night.

December 9<sup>th</sup> our own Patrick will be leading the special music. We will be having a Congregational Meeting right after service to approve the budget and nominations for Council. This will serve as the official call.

December 16<sup>th</sup> my granddaughter Alex and daughter-in-law Adrean will be singing. In the late afternoon Kato will be our Vespers guests.

December 23<sup>rd</sup> John Carelli will be performing during the service.

Christmas Eve will be a candlelight service at 7pm and Craig Thatcher will be performing. It will be a special season of music and preparing ourselves for the Christ child to once again take residence in our hearts and renew our faith.

December 31<sup>st</sup> we will be having short worship service to prepare our hearts and minds for the new year. Service will be at 4pm with Holy Communion. This will be a simple service of music and reflection.

If you miss any of these events you will truly be missing a chance to celebrate the holiday season in the most meaningful ways.

This is also a plea for Christmas cookies for the fellowship time after each of Craig and Nyke's concerts. The concerts are at 2 and 4:30. Please make a donations of cookies or a monetary donation to help us cover the cost. This is a chance for us to once again serve the community. It is also an important fundraiser for the church.

Keith and I want to wish everyone a *Very Blessed Christmas* and a *Healthy New Year!*

In Christian love,  
Pastor Teresa



**THUMBS UP** to John and Marlene Ruby and everyone who helped make the Wooden Ships concert (nice to have June back at St. John's!) and the Vesper service with musician, harmonica expert Steve Guyger! As always these events were fabulous!

THUMBS UP to Celebration Sunday service! Thanks to Pastor Teresa and Glenn Kranzley for putting together a wonderful service and to everyone who made this a meaningful service to celebrate our successful year with COB 2018! \$81,000 was disbursed to our moms and their families! We heard from Richard Cartegena, social worker from the VA clinic in Allentown and had a baptism of one of our recipients sons' and topped it off with cake!! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

THUMBS UP to Glenn Kranzley's informative sermon about the Last Supper painting in Milan, Italy. So interesting!



## DECEMBER MILESTONES TO CELEBRATE

### Happy Birthday

- 5 Martha Helverson
- 6 Gary Urmy
- 15 Terry Fegley
- 17 Beverly Bernd

### Happy Anniversary

- 3 Steve & Judy Mayer
- 9 Richard & Beverly Bernd

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



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>

## **CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH SPECIAL MUSIC**

- December 2** 10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship  
Special Music by **June Thomas**
- December 2** 2:00 & 4:30 p.m. Christmas Concert  
Presented by **Craig Thatcher & Nyke Van Wyk**  
FREE will offering  
Complimentary Holiday Reception follows both performances
- December 16** 5:00—6:00 p.m. Holiday Vespers  
Special Music by **KATO (Pat & Craig Kastelnik)**  
FREE will offering  
Wine & Cheese Reception follows performance
- December 23** 10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship  
Special Music by **John Carelli**, Italian Tenor
- December 24** 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve  
Special Music by **Craig Thatcher**



## **COB CORNER**

Whew! What a wrap-up of COB 2018! A wonderful Celebration Sunday service and disbursement of the remaining \$81,000 to our moms and their families!

We survived COB 2018 without the block party! However, we on the COB Team along with many others in the community, missed the day tremendously--but the mission was successful and remains strong!

We also were grateful recipients of a 5K held by Braveheart Restaurant and Pub in Hellertown on Nov 4--over \$3,000 was raised and donated to COB--WOW!!

The first fundraiser for COB 2019 was held in November on Tuesdays, hosted generously by the Brick Tavern Inn!! Thank you to all who enjoyed a wonderful meal at a lovely venue and supported the continuation of COB!!

**The COB Team appreciates all of you!**

## NEWS FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Greetings,

I have a couple of things to talk about. First item is Harvest Baptist Church.

Harvest has been renting space from St. John's for almost four months. Some growing pains ensued, to include the newness of our church being utilized a few days each week, in particular Sundays. Not much chatter from our members the first few months; now things have changed. I hear before and after church grumblings that include "Our church has been invaded", "This isn't my church anymore," We have lost St. John's". Let me give you 16,800 reasons why Harvest Baptist is a gift.

I met with our accountant to work on our 2019 budget. After totaling the amount of member giving, rent from the Senior Center, and the generosity of Craig Thatcher to donate all the proceeds from the Christmas Concert, we come up woefully short. That budget with those numbers alone had us facing very serious choices if not at this year's congregation meeting, but certainly by the spring. Now, add in the \$16,800 rent from Harvest Baptist and we may live to see another year. Another year to work collectively to increase our membership and another year asking for God's Will to be done.

Churches around us, north and south, are renting space in order to help pay their bills. We could have more yoga classes, meeting space for local businesses, AA, AL anon, and other support groups, all with a small return in rent. Harvest Baptist is a gift, Divine if you choose. Instead of the building usage examples mentioned, we have people occupying our sanctuary to worship God. St. John's has children learning the gospels. All this due to a simple ad offering space to any interested parties.

After every St. John's Sunday service a representative of Harvest Baptist meets with me to discuss any problems or concerns. These people want nothing more than to worship God while being good guests in our church. Every effort on their part to clean up some problems is always met with enthusiasm and a willingness to make things right. I personally could not be any happier with Harvest Baptist's leadership.

God has been very good to St. John's. Rich Guhl retires and in short order we find an interim pastor. June Thomas needed to move on as our pianist/organist. That position is almost impossible to fill due to the number of churches looking for the same person who hardly exists. Then along comes Patrick. Search and Call finds Pastor Teresa. Due to St. John's inability to continue with the COB block party, the good COB folks are able to re-invent themselves. Due to some departures council was able to function thanks to Glenn Kranzley and Martha Helverson stepping up to the plate. We lost our treasurer. McPhillips Accounting then makes a remarkably smooth transition to handle our account.

Pastor Teresa, council and I had a game plan to have multiple opportunities for foot traffic. I would say over the last three years more people have come to St. John's than in the last twenty. Vespers, Christmas Concerts and our partnering with Chestnut Hill Church for our out-reach seminars in addition to our Health and Wellness' Day. Unfortunately we have not borne the fruit of having these guests attend Sunday services. However, we did meet our commitment to serve God by providing outreach to our community.

Second: A few weeks ago I attended the Penn Northeast Annual Conference where I got a chance to talk with pastors and council presidents from other churches. I learned we have a lot in common. I asked about church security, if they have a plan and if so, how did the congregation respond? The host church for the conference and a few others scattered around the Lehigh Valley said they have people at the door for security. I asked how that went over with their members and I got the response that some didn't like it. I asked what did they do and I was told, "We guard the door whether they like it or not."

The other thing I learned is how many churches are fighting for their lives. Some rent space for additional income. Some haven't tried that approach yet but were interested after I told them about our renting to Harvest Baptist. I was told by another council president that their church is running a \$36,000 deficit and struggling to come up with a fiscal plan. I asked how many people does he have on council and he told me sixteen. Sixteen!!!!

St. John's needs one person so we can function as a council for 2019. I wish I had six more. There are a few weeks in which volunteers can step forward. Please start considering this now.

During the Search and Call Process I told anyone who would listen I would give all I have for St. John's. I have repeated that commitment over these last 2 ½ years. I stated if St. John's doesn't make it I would stand in the parking lot that last day knowing I could look everyone in the eye. I didn't quit, I didn't walk away and I tried my best right up until this end.

St. John's needs all who are able to stand and help with the task at hand; to lend new ideas for church growth, reach out to families on our rolls who for whatever reason do not attend regular worship services, and never stop volunteering.

I don't want to be standing in that parking lot saying goodbye. As in many life conundrums I pray to God for outcomes that will benefit me. A pastor whom I trusted with my early recovery life taught me to ask God for things but be prepared if He has other plans. If we can turn things around, we shall offer thanks and praise to God. If not, we can accept God's will knowing that we collectively tried our best.

Grace and Peace,  
John Ruby

## MISSION OF THE MONTH

Our Mission of the month is two-fold. Once again, poinsettias and gift cards will be given to our members with special needs. Please consider sending Christmas cards to them also. The remaining contributions will go to Bethany Children's Home.

### Mission

The mission of Bethany Children's Home is to provide a safe place of nurture, protection, and supportive care to aid our residents in their

self-understanding, growth, and healing toward a brighter, healthier future.



### A sanctuary of protection and support

Bethany's Children Home has been serving youth in the community since 1893. More than 300 youth who have been abused, neglected or abandoned are taking back their lives each year at Bethany Children's Home.

"In our unique and specialized programs, youth have access to a variety of therapeutic, spiritual, and cultural services in addition to recreational activities. Youth reside on campus in one of our historic cottages with a family comprised of house parents and support staff. Explore the tabs above to learn more about Bethany, how we support local youth, and how you can help us help our youth succeed in their goals to be reunified in the community." Bethany Children's Home is located in Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania.

### Christmas Gifts for a Betty Lou's Family

Due to last year's success, we are again adopting a family from the food pantry for Christmas giving. This year our family has five children ranging in age from one to thirteen. We have been given gifts suggestions and sizes for the children. If you would like to participate, please take a Christmas ornament with the gift you would like to give. Unwrapped gifts may be brought back to St. John's until December 10. Please label them so we know who they are for. Please do not wrap them.

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



POINSETTIAS

Order must be placed by December 2  
Give to Charmaine Fegley  
7" - 3 plants in pot  
red, white, pink  
\$7

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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



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[www.stjohnsuccoop.org](http://www.stjohnsuccoop.org)

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

### **OUR MISSION:**

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

