

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

March
2021

St. John's United Church of Christ
538 E. Thomas St.
Coopersburg, PA 18036
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Volume 22 Issue 3

From the Pastor's Desk

It's been a year! A year since we went into this Pandemic. I know we are all weary, short on patience, and just want to move on with life. Yet the Covid-19 virus is still a very real threat. Council and I have decided to continue recording only through the month of March. The good news is we feel we can open and be together for Easter Services! Please note - masks are required, as well as social distancing, and the other restrictions we have had in place and listed in this newsletter. We will be celebrating communion by using prepackaged containers. Easter service will be at **10am**. We ask that you email the office or call to let us know you are coming to worship and if you are bringing family. The office email is sjcoopoffice@gmail.com.

Reservations are to be made by March 28th. Those who made reservations will be guaranteed seating. Yes, I know this is different and uncomfortable, but we are taking everyone's safety very seriously. Also, we will not be purchasing individual flower's this year. However, if you would like to contribute to the altar flowers, we ask that you send in \$5 marked "Easter Flowers". We will purchase bouquets of flowers for our Easter altar and then deliver them to those who may not be ready to join us on Easter.

Some other fun dates. March 13th from 1-3 pm we are having a walk-in communion and a chance to record a greeting to all your church family. You will meet me in the parlor for communion and then go into the altar area where we will record your greeting. You may talk or you can just wave to your church family. We will be honoring safe practices. If you cannot join us this day, you may also send a recorded greeting off your phone to Marc Bamberger. His email is marc.bamberger@gmail.com. If you prefer we can schedule an appointment so you can avoid any crowds. Please reach out to Pastor Teresa if this is the most comfortable option for you. We will make a collage of the greetings for everyone to view.

Maundy Thursday will be a recorded worship with Morning Star Moravian and for Good Friday, Saint John's is joining other area UCC churches in a recorded service.

May this be a season of renewal and healing for all!

Pastor Teresa

“LENT: A TIME FOR RENEWING FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE”

As we enter Lent, we hear many comments about giving up a pleasure for forty days and about atonement for being miserable sinners and the need for Christ’s atonement for us. This is all true; we are sinners and Jesus did pay the debt we, as humans, could not. There are those who worry about fasting and the seriousness of a person’s sacrifice, prepared to judge those who “give up” something frivolous. Although the word “Lent” is derived from a word meaning springtime, many people consider it a gloomy season. However it need to not be so; rather, it is a season of serious seeking and rededication to following the way Jesus taught. Christ spent forty days in closeness with God in God’s creation. When he rejected Satan’s temptations, he reconfirmed that he would follow God’s ways. Christians can make Lent a similar time of rededication. Equally or more important, Lent is a time of hope and looking forward, even in our present chaotic world. Lent is a time when we turn to God—our eternal Lord who continues to care for us and for the universe he created, which we periodically abuse. Our hope for the world, ourselves, and all people rests solely in the Lord, and so we turn to God in hope, which points toward resurrection and the end of all tears. It is a time to pray to God and to listen for God’s words to us.

What may be most important is that Lent is a time of preparation to receive the greatest gift that has ever been given to humans—that of salvation. This is a gift that is centered on love. God and Jesus loved people enough that Jesus gave his life for us. He suffered and so did God to watch his son’s suffering; but both willingly gave us their mercy and the blessing of life hereafter. Lent prepares us to receive these blessings in humility and gratitude. Therefore, it is a time of joy, not jubilation, but the simple, quiet joy of being blessed beyond measure.

Love, such as this, prepares us to follow Christ’s example of sharing love. It asks us to have compassion and concern for all. It asks us to care about people we don’t particularly like and to remember that all are God’s children. Lent is a time of sharing, and a number of Christians, instead of giving up something for Lent, are taking on new acts of compassion, new charities, or even undertaking some part of caring for a person in need. We see a similar pattern with the receiving and granting of forgiveness. We receive forgiveness for our human shortcomings, but the very act of receiving it prepares us to offer forgiveness: “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”

Lent is a time to study God’s word and to pray for renewed and revitalized intimacy with God and to use our reinvigorated faith to reach out to others. “Lent is a time to open the doors of our hearts a little wider and understand our Lord a little deeper, so that when Good Friday and Easter come, it is . . . an opportunity to receive the overflowing of graces God has to offer” (Sarah Phillips).

My title is a quote from Pope Francis’s Lenten message.

Jane Matsinger

HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROTOCOLS

1. We ask that you wear a mask.
2. Refrain from physical contact.
3. Take it with you. Please take your bulletin and bottled water home and dispose.
4. The kitchen at the church is closed.
5. Wash your hands for 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer.
6. There will be no singing.
7. Please respect the signs up blocking pews to ensure social distancing. You should remain six feet apart from other families.
8. If you have any type of illness, including allergy attacks, we ask that you stay home. The greeters will be screening people to ensure the safety and confidence of all who attend worship. We will still be recording.
9. If an outbreak occurs in the state or community, we may reverse the decision to worship together.
10. Offerings are to be dropped in the plate in the church entranceway.
11. These protocols will be in place for as long as necessary.



MARCH MILESTONES TO CELEBRATE

- 10 Teresa Martin
- 25 Marlene Ruby
Ashley Humphreys
- 26 John Musgnung

Happy
Birthday!
Wishing you a
beautiful day
and many
blessings for
the year
ahead.

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



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



ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is now available through the app tithe.ly. Go to St. John's website, click on give, and then follow the cues. Credit or debit cards are accepted on our secure site. An email receipt of your giving will be sent to you.

Psalm 147:3

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

The Obituary for Reverend Hawk June 3, 1926 – January 28, 2021

Reverend Ernie Hawk died in State College, PA, simply and naturally, as he intended.

Those inspired by his life include his daughter, Tsultrim Datso (née Diane Hawk); and son, Philip Hawk and his wife Candace Smith; 4 grandchildren; his brother, Lowell Hawk and his wife Shirley; 7 nephews and nieces.

His first wife, Lucile Hendershot; his second wife, Jean Slates; his daughter, Marcia Hawk; and his three brothers, Willard, Edmund, and Carson Hawk preceded him in death.

Ernest was born to Anna and Clarence Hawk in Northampton, PA. He became the second member of his home church (St. Paul's UCC in Northampton) to enter the ministry. He graduated from Muhlenberg College and Lancaster Seminary before serving 17 years as a United Church of Christ pastor. Subsequently, he was as the Coordinator of Science and Society Programs at Pennsylvania State University.

Ernie was an enthusiastic sports fan, rivaled only by his lifelong love of choral singing. He was a philosopher poet who enjoyed country drives with stops at state parks in his beloved Penn's woods, where he live all his years.

Memorial gifts may be made to: Faith United Church of Christ in State College, PA.

Condolences may be sent to Koch Funeral Home in State College, PA online or by mail.



Condolence received:

Thank you so much! Having grown up in the parsonage at 528 Station Avenue and within the bosom of the St. John's church community, we also have fond memories of you all. Favorites were singing in the choir (with Mr. Evans), potlucks downstairs, Brownies in the basement after school, and the love of community members. Thank you for bringing our connection full circle.

Tsultrim

BETTY LOU'S PANTRY

The food bank is comprised of the following Southern Lehigh Area Churches (SLAC):

Assumption BVM Church
Calvary Bible Fellowship Church
Chestnut Hill Church
Cornerstone Presbyterian Church
Faith UCC
Morningstar Moravian Church
Saucon Mennonite Church
St James Lutheran Church
St Joseph Church
St Johns UCC
St Paul's Lutheran Church
President: Chris Page

Due to the pandemic, the Pantry changed from allowing patrons to shop in the pantry to placing prepacked orders in to patrons' cars. This practice started in March, 2020 and will continue for the foreseeable future. New volunteer groups were formed to work outside on distribution days and churches were given the option of bringing their own volunteers or taking a break during COVID. Patrons may come twice a month for food if they desire. The monthly average since March is 114 patrons.

For Thanksgiving, 107 families were given meals and 111 families received Christmas meals purchased at Giant using community donations which were delivered in the Peapod truck. Thank you Giant! Girl Scout troop 637 provided pies for both holidays. Thank you.

The Letter Carrier food drive in May was cancelled. The Boy Scout Food drive in November yielded a record 26,719 lbs, a 29% increase over the last year. Instead of gifts for the children, this year monetary donations were requested, and the astounding amount of \$13,293 was donated by churches, individuals and community groups. Each child and senior received \$50.00 gift cards and the other patrons received \$35.00 Walmart and \$10 Giant gift cards. The summer lunch program was continued from June to August to provide extra food due to the lack of school lunches.

Due to a tremendous outpouring of generosity from the area churches, organizations, individuals, and business in addition to food, each patron receives a \$25 Giant gift card each month.

Martha Helverson
St John's Representative to Betty Lou's Food Pantry



MISSIONS 2021

We continue to support Betty Lou's Pantry. Donations can always be left in the black bin on the church porch. They need macaroni and cheese, things like Hamburger Helper, pasta and cereal.

I continue to fill our own Blessing Box. We need personal items such as body wash, deodorant and socks; preferably over-the-ankle socks.

The UCC is collecting monies for Texas Relief. Please send in your donations and clearly mark: **Texas Relief**.

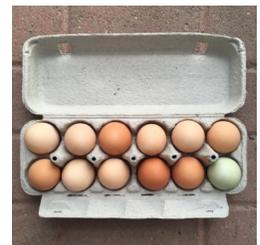
We have taken several months of packing lunches for the Bethlehem Emergency Shelter at Christ UCC in Bethlehem. Next month we are joining all the churches of the UCC Southern Area Mission Pack (SWAMP) in packing lunches. I will be putting a call out for people to help pack the lunches and we are providing the hard-boiled eggs.

Finally, we have taken on the mission of providing spiritual support to Valley Manor Nursing Home in Coopersburg. We provide a DVD of each of our services, and 10 CD's for those living in this facility. For Ash Wednesday we provided readings and communion cups. We are the only church that answered the call to meet this need. If you would like to donate to help offset the cost of the materials for this mission, please send donations marked: **Mission**.



EMPTY EGG CARTONS WANTED!

The Babb family has been graciously donating hard-boiled eggs every time we pack lunches for the shelter. They are in need of empty egg cartons. You can drop them off at the church and leave them in the black bin on the porch. Thanks!





If you are looking to give back in a small way, check out <https://www.blackoutcoffee.com>

This is some of the best coffee ever! (From Paul Belke) and with every purchase they support our troops or give you the opportunity to say thank you to our troops overseas by donating coffee.

Check them out on the internet!



CAT'S MEOW STATUES

We are taking orders for Cat's Meow Statues of our church. The cost is \$20. Please contact Linda Belke at LThomer712@gmail.com or contact the church office.



WE ARE PART OF THE AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM!

This is the way the corporation of Amazon.com gives back to the community. 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. Any questions, speak to Pastor Teresa. Her email is RevTeresaMartin@outlook.com <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-6286946>

**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.**

