



St. John's News

St. John's United Church of Christ
183 South Broad Street, Nazareth, PA 18064-2153
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Email: mail@sjucnaz.org

Welcome to **reVision** at St. John's!

reVision, a program from The Center For Progressive Renewal, is an initiative that seeks to strengthen and support individuals and congregations as they seek to bring about a more just and generous world. reVision, is a journey. It offers us strengthening of our spirits, our relationships with God and each other, and of discovering which ministries God is prompting our congregation to revitalize as we seek to transform our community.



You have been hearing about reVision for some time. The following is to provide you with some tools to learn more about reVision and to sign up to be a part of this exciting initiative. Please say yes to being a part of reVision.

This link is to a reVision introductory video: https://youtu.be/ZX_mLpJpK-w

This is a link for Annie Schaller's (a member of St. John's) introduction to reVision:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uiw6TqvO9hQ&feature=youtu.be>

This one is for Lori Deutsch's (a member of St. John's) introduction: https://youtu.be/V3_uD08xZuw

This one is for Keith Dawe's (a member of St. John's) introduction:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iCe2M4wkJw&feature=youtu.be>

The following link will take you to a page where you can sign up for reVision. Please note that this sign up will indicate your interest. We will get back to you in the future with specific small group meeting times and options.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BHMZKJW>

Finally, (for now) the link below will allow you to sign up for reVision emails (although you may want to wait to do this until your small group actually begins to meet.)

<https://qd994.infusionsoft.com/app/page/fa2b814e16d7c50a729f7f8b7a692b9a>



The Winter Doldrums Series

The winter months can be difficult for a lot of us for many different reasons; the holidays are over, decorations come down and that makes the house look lonely, the weather makes it harder to get out for fresh air, the sun is out less, we could go on and on. In recognition of that, the Parish Health Council will be sponsoring four different social opportunities over the next 3 months.

The **first** event will be a **FREE Movie Matinee** on **Sunday, January 14, 2018** from **3 to 5 p.m.** in the sanctuary. The presentation will be a Disney film that describes a day that will leave you feeling like life is completely out of control (call the office for more information if needed). This comedy will have the entire family laughing. Invite your family and friends for an afternoon out. Refreshments will be served.

The **second** event will be **The Wii Tournament** on **Sunday, February 11** from **12 noon to 3 p.m.** Sign-ups begin Sunday, January 28.

The **third** event in the series will be on **Sunday, February 25** from **12 noon to 2:30 p.m.** in Fraunfalter Hall. **BINGO!!!!**

The **fourth** event in the Winter Doldrums Series is **Game Night** on **Saturday, March 10, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.** in Fraunfalter Hall.

Please also stop at the Parish Health table (in the DeRemer Gallery) weekly as there will be different tips for you to consider that may just help the winter be easier to bear.

January 3 - 11:00 a.m.**Wednesday Communion**

Worship Invitation: Journey with us as we bring our gifts to worship the King. Come, share in the meal of the one who truly gives us life.

Message: **Follow That Star!**

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

**January 7 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.****Epiphany Sunday
Communion**

Preparing for Worship at Home: As you think about the past year, can you identify what was the biggest change for you?

As you think about the year ahead, can you identify what you hope will be the biggest change for you?

Worship Invitation: Join us for worship today and share in The Lord's Supper. Today we examine John's call to repentance, which is an invitation to transform our lives into something new. What new thing might God have in store for you, for us. Come and be part of the exploration.

Message: **Can My Life Be Changed?**

Scripture: Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

January 14 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.**Switch It Up Sunday****Bring Offering Forward**

Preparing for Worship at Home: Have you ever heard a voice talking to you and no one seemed to be there? Has God tried to get your attention? Think about the possibility that God is speaking to you and that God has something for you to do.

Worship Invitation: Come and listen with us for the call of God in your life, for the call of God in our lives.

Message: **Active Listening?**

Scripture: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; John 1:43-51;
1 Samuel 3:1-20

**Brunch Buffet
Sunday, January 28**

10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Fraunfelder Hall

Offering Envelopes

The 2018 offering envelopes are available in the DeRemer Gallery. Please take a minute to pick up your envelopes.

**January 21 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.****Anointing with Oil for Healing**

Preparing for Worship at Home: Take note of whether or not different people give you conflicting advice on a course of action you should take. To whom do you decide to listen?

Worship Invitation: Come and worship with us today as we hear the call of "follow" and decide whether or not we actually will.

Message: **Say What?**

Scripture: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Mark 1:14-20

January 28 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.**Bring Offering Forward****New Member Sunday**

Preparing for Worship at Home: Keep track of how many times you follow the example of someone else this week.

Worship Invitation: Worship with us. Pray with us. Encourage with us. Experience the power of faith in your life.

Message: **Not What I Say, but What I Do**

Scripture: Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111;
1 Corinthians 8:1-13

New Member Classes

Are you interested in learning more about joining St. John's? We will have classes on **Sundays, January 14 and 21 at 9:15 a.m.** in the **Wotring Parlor.**

Get a brief history of St. John's, learn about the United Church of Christ, and give us a chance to get to know you better! New members will be received on **Sunday, January 28** during worship. Join us if you would like to be a part of this gathering.

From the
Parish Nurse

January 14 is Blood Pressure Day. One of our registered nurses will be in the Miko Chapel following the worship services to check your blood pressure.

We extend warm and friendly **Birthday Greetings** to our members who are homebound and having a birthday in January.

January 29 - Robert Roth
31 - Nancy Anderson



Happy Birthday, with our caring thoughts and prayers.

From Our Friends in Melsungen

We wish you all the best dear sisters and brothers, and for your families in our partner community in Nazareth for the Advent and Christmas and for the coming year and God's blessing.

We are grateful for the wonderful time this summer in which we officially extended the partnership and experienced many intense encounters. Friends and families from both communities celebrated the partnership worship together. To honor the same God and to travel together in everyday life is an enrichment for many. We hope that this partnership will bring many people closer together in the future and make many more new friends.

A peaceful holiday season and a happy new year - all the best and God's blessing.

Best regards from the Partnership Committee of the Evangelical Church Community of Melsungen.



St. John's UCC Nursery School 2018-2019 Registration

Registration for the upcoming school year will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 9, 2018. Forms from church school and nursery school families will be accepted at that time and forms from the public will be accepted, but will not be added to our enrollment until Monday, January 15. Children must be three for our two-day class and four for our three-day class meeting the Nazareth School District's cut-off date of September 1, 2018. Enrollment is on a first come, first served basis and classes fill up quickly. Detailed information regarding the classes and our registration forms can be found online at www.sjuccnaz.com.



From The Nazareth Area Food Bank...

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'd like to thank you for the many generous donations of non-perishable food collected during the autumn months. All food donated is a blessing to our clients, who face a daily struggle to feed their families. We are very grateful for your consideration of those less fortunate in our area.

We consider the gifts from St. John's among the Food Bank's many blessings and we couldn't do it without you!

— Kay Stracko, Corresponding Secretary

Sparks (Grades 3 -5)

January 7 — It's the Winter Olympics (well, sort of) — Time Change — Meet at **noon** and bring a bag lunch. Third graders, you are now a part of this group.

Leaders: Connie Rought and Marge Baltz



Xplosion and Seekers (Grades 6 -12)

January 12-13 — Ice Skating and Sleepover — Meet at the church at **7:15 p.m.** on Friday. Details to follow.

January 21, 7:00-8:30 p.m. — A card can make someone's day! We'll **create some cards** for the homebound members!

Leaders: Pam Dawe and Connie Rought

Seekers (Grades 9-12)

January 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m. — **Snow Sculptures, etc.** I hope there'll be snow!

Leaders: Pam Dawe, Lori Rogora and MargeBaltz

Summer Crew (Grades 9-12)

January 28 — Let's Do Brunch!

Animal Food Bank Donations



For the **month of January**, St. John's will be collecting pet supplies for the Animal Food Bank of the Lehigh Valley. Food, in particular dry cat food, toys, treats for dogs, cats, birds, fish, gerbils and rabbits will be greatly appreciated.



Rummage Sale Reminder

Cleaning out your closets after Christmas?

Don't forget to save your "stuff" for our April 14, 2018 Rummage Sale.

REFLECTIONS

Let Change Begin with ME!

by Pastor Jeff

As 2018 begins, I look back over the past year and cringe about the message of exclusivity and isolationism the United States is sending the world. We want to build walls to keep people out, we want to ban travel from countries where terrorists have come from in the past while ignoring the fact that increasing numbers of terrorists now become terrorists once they are already living here in the United States. We have pulled out of climate agreements at a time when global warming and its effects are becoming more and more apparent. Racial tension, discrimination, and a resurgence of hate groups are on the rise. If I am correct in my observations, then the message we are sending the world is that we are more important than you are and what we want comes first. What are we saying in all of this about the value and worth of people; of our own people and of the world's people?

When it comes to things, to stuff, the question is much simpler. As many of you know, Lisa and I sold our home in Whitehall in 2017. We sold it for less than we paid for it twelve years ago, because as both our realtor and Lisa said, it is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it. Go to a garage sale and see the same principle in action. What we deem as the value of something is usually far more than people are willing to pay for it. Calculating the value and worth of people is different. Do we value people based on their productivity? Do we value them based on what they can do for us or what they can give to us? Do we de-value them when we are afraid that they will take something from us or get an unfair advantage that we will not get? Do we de-value a person when our perception is that they are "takers" from society rather than "givers or contributors?" Do we de-value people because they look different, eat different food, or talk in different accents? Is immigration such a divisive issue because on some level we feel that others will take something away from us, something we deserve and therefore we should de-value those people?

Perhaps we can only begin to address these questions when we consider how we assess our own value. Do we tend to define ourselves by the prevailing standards of society; do we make judgments of our worth based on what we can produce, what kind of car we can afford, how big of a house we can live in, or how we look physically? Do we value ourselves to the extent that we are contributing to society, paying our taxes and doing what we can to make the world a better place? What are the guidelines you use when it comes to you? Incidentally, is it easier for you to believe all the negative things that people say to you about you than it is to believe all the positive things? Is it easier to de-value yourself? Is your sense of self-worth based on the perceptions of others?

What if we began judging others and judging ourselves beginning with a knowledge of God's love for us and for all of Creation? God values us with different standards. John 3:16 tells us how much God values us. God made sacrifices for us. If we look at ourselves in this way, is it easier to determine our value? If we are able to look at others the same way, will we suddenly find that the value of others is radically different than we have assumed? My hope for all of us this year is that we can fully embrace how much we are loved and valued by God. God went to great lengths to offer us Salvation and resurrection through our faith in Jesus Christ. God loves us so much! When we truly understand how much we are loved, when we truly understand that our worth to God is not based on whether or not we are productive, beautiful or contributing to the wealth of the world, we might just be able to look at others in a different light. If God loves me just because God created me and not because of what I do for God, then what must I conclude about how God values the rest of the people in the world? When I begin to understand my worth and my value have nothing to do societal standards and values, I can begin to look at others through a different lens as well. The fact of the matter is that when I can embrace my own worth in God's eyes, I am free to see the worth of others in a different light as well. I am free to see them as people for whom God also has incredible love.

Imagine, if you dare, what the world would be like if all people were valued. Imagine all people living with the certainty that they were valued. Could it be that this is what God wants us to share, this news of love and value? Could it be that our actions as disciples are supposed to point to the fact that God is a God of love? Could this new self-understanding possibly lead to a new understanding of ourselves as citizens of this nation and of the world? My prayer for us this year is that we may come to see others and ourselves through God's eyes and make a small step toward peace. My prayer is that we change the world to recognize the worth of all human beings.

Happy New Year!

~ Mark Your Calendar ~

~ February 4 - Boy Scout Sunday
~ February 14 - Ash Wednesday

~ February 25 - Annual Congregational Meeting
~ March 3 - Sportsmen's Dinner



The Wills and Memorials Committee has received contributions to the Fund during the month of November 2017 in memory of **Gladys Ashenfalder, Janice Rader, Robert Keck and Anita Keck.**

St. John's is appreciative of these memorial gifts. Please speak to your attorney as to how you can save taxes by leaving a bequest to your church.

Parish Ministrations

Deaths

Marilyn Sylvius, born November 1, 1925 died December 13, 2017
 Adrienne Beck, born February 11, 1943 died December 20, 2017



ATTENDANCE

Average Attendance

November 8:00 - 101 10:45 - 118
 First Wednesday - 15



In case of inclement weather on a Sunday... please call the Church Office at 610-759-0893 and press 2 for weather related information, visit WFMZTV Channel 69 News Storm Center, or online at www.wfmz.com/weather/storm-center.



The deadline for submitting newsletter articles is the 15th of each month. Articles may be submitted to the Church Office, the church's email or the editor's email, pjbring126@yahoo.com.

Ministers: All Members of the Church
Senior Pastor: The Rev. Jeffery A. Brinks
Student Pastor: Kathy Sofie
Parish Nurse: BrendaLee Howell, RN
Youth Ministry Coordinator: Marjorie Baltz
Director of Music: Susan L. Frickert
Handbell Director: L. Rick Hilborn
Director of Nursery School: Jane Radio
Child Care: Tammy Bacak
Nursery Coordinator: Stephanie McLaughlin
Office Manager: Corinne Remaly
Office Secretary: Kristina Caka
Financial Secretary: Pamela Wallaesa
Building Manager: Anthony Regec
Sextons: Shirl Young, Dawn Trapp, SuLin Flanagan, Nicolas Muscler
Editor: Peggy Benfield
Reporters: Linda Danner, Lou Murante

Those Who Serve ~ February

Greeters are needed for all services. If you would like to volunteer, please call the church office at 610-759-0893 or sign up in the DeRemer Gallery.

February 4

8:00 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Head Usher Richard Kraemer
 Sound Board Walter Fries

10:45 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Acolyte Katie Madson
 Worship Hosts JoAnn and Bill Dorko
 Sound Board Chris Manzo
 Child Care Janel Ziegenfus

Counting Chairs — Bill & Ruth Shirer

February 11

8:00 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Head Usher Carl Solt
 Sound Board Steve Kraemer

10:45 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Acolyte Luke Madson
 Worship Host Annie Schaller
 Sound Board Michael Goch
 Child Care Julie Schmittel

Counting Chairs — Clare & Aletha Kiefer

February 14 — Ash Wednesday

7:30 Acolyte Cecelia Rought
 Head Usher Richard Garr
 Sound Board John Muscler

Counting Chairs — Al & Sandy Lynn

February 18

8:00 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Head Usher Debbie Claycomb
 Sound Board David Weikel

10:45 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Acolyte Addison Schmittel
 Worship Host Nancy Thorne
 Sound Board Mark Walter
 Child Care Kacy Miller

Counting Chair — Willie Donnelly

February 21 - 7:00 - Lenten Service

Counting Chair — Richard Garr

February 25

8:00 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Head Ushers Les & Ruth Anderson
 Sound Board Pat Stracko

10:45 Greeters **2 Volunteers needed**
 Acolyte Daynika Ziegenfus
 Worship Hosts Bill & Ruth Shirer
 Sound Board Emma Dorko
 Child Care Susan McNamara

Counting Chair — Charles Spohn

February 28 - 7:00 - Lenten Service

Counting Chairs — Lou & Sue Murante



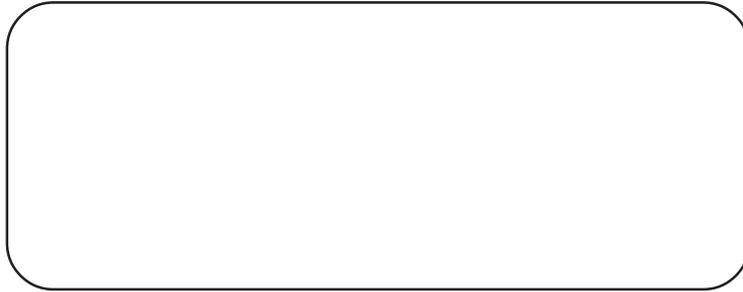
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We are especially thankful for:



- ~ reVision
- ~ Winter Doldrum Series
- ~ New Member Classes
- ~ Epiphany Communion

