



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

Women's Night Out

We decided we needed an excuse to continue those relationships which began during the SeaSide Escape and to begin new ones. So, Women, you are invited to a game night. Come to socialize with other women even if you do not care to participate in any of the games.

What: Women's Game Night

When: Friday, January 18, 2019, 6-9 p.m.

Where: Fraunfelder Hall

What to bring: Board/Card games, your favorite mug, and a non-perishable item to donate to the Choice Food Pantry

What will be provided: drinks, light snacks, and lots of laughter

Sign-up: in the DeRemer Gallery on January 6 and 13 (we need your name & phone # in case of inclement weather)



Loaves and Fishes Stromboli Fundraiser

We will be taking orders from December 26-January 14. They will be made the week of January 28, just in time for the Super Bowl. You can find the order forms in the DeRemer Gallery on the Information Table.

Orders and money should be turned in to the St. John's UCC office no later than Monday, January 14. Checks should be made payable to "Loaves and Fishes".



Brunch Buffet Sunday, January 27

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

Fraunfelder Hall

Cost: \$8 - Adults; \$4 children 4-10

Tickets available beginning
January 13.



Epiphany Communion

**Sunday, January 6
8:00 & 10:45 a.m.**

Save the date...

St. John's Mardi Gras Dinner & Show

**Saturday, February 9, 2019
Dinner at 5:30 p.m. ~ Show at 7:00 p.m.**

*Watch for more details in the weekly
announcements.*

All Youth Groups and Families

Sunday, January 20 — Snow Tubing at Blue Mountain

Join us for an afternoon of fun! Details available in January on the bulletin board outside the church kitchen.



St. John's UCC Nursery School 2019-2020 Registration Info

Help us spread the news! Registration for the upcoming school year begins at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. Forms from the public will be accepted at that time but will not be added to our enrollment until Monday, January 14. 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.

Our curriculum incorporates various learning styles that captures interest and motivates learning for all of our children. As a bonus, we are one of the few preschools in the area to offer **3 hour classes versus the typical 2 1/2 hours.**

Classes fill up quickly. Detailed information, as well as our registration forms, are available online (www.sjuccnaz.com).

January Church School News

Happy New Year to all our Church School families! The preschool through 5th graders will continue to explore Bible stories through the interactive and engaging **Faithweaver Now** curriculum. The following Bible stories and scriptures will be used during the month of January:

January 6 — Jesus Grows Up - Luke 2:39-52
Bible Point - Jesus is Special.
Key Verse - "I and the Father are one"
— John 10:30

January 13 — The Word Became Flesh
- John 1:1-18

Bible Point - We can be God's children.
Key Verse - "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."
— John 1:12

January 20 — Satan Tempts Jesus - Luke 4:1-13
Bible Point - Jesus helps us resist temptation.

Key Verse: "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."
— Hebrews 2:18

January 27 — Jesus Performs His First Miracle
- John 2:1-11

Bible Point - Jesus can do miracles.
Key Verse - "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."
— John 20:31

~ Mark Your Calendar ~

- ~ February 9 - Mardi Gras
- ~ February 24 - Annual Congregational Meeting
- ~ March 2 - Sportsmen's Dinner
- ~ March 6 - Ash Wednesday
- 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.
- ~ March 30 - Italian Buffet and Basket Raffle



The Journey

We received notice that Melba will be going back to the "Seeing Eye" in Morristown, NJ on January 16. She will be 16 months old. But, let me back up a little to November 2, 2017,

when she was given to Sandy and me to raise as a 7 week old puppy. She was a fast learner, house breaking in just three weeks (and getting up every two hours to "Park" - the seeing eye lingo for going to the bathroom). At first she was afraid of steps, so with the aid of St. John's many stairs, this problem was soon cured. We asked you to pet her so she would not be afraid of strangers; an assignment you did well. She is now a social butterfly. Then, when she passed her test and received her vest at six months of age, we asked you NOT to pet her; an assignment not entirely understood by some, but you abided by our wishes and she now understands that when the vest is worn, that she is working and must be focused on the handler. We thank you for your understanding and help in raising Melba.

There are many questions that I am sure you will have for us. What happens to her now? Will you ever see her again? Will you know to whom she will be assigned? Will you get her back if she does not qualify as a "Seeing Eye" dog? Will you do this again? Was it a satisfying experience? I can only answer some of these questions. We know that Melba will be going back to the "Seeing Eye" in Morristown, NJ. And she will be given extensive medical testing and evaluations. If she passes these tests, then she will be assigned to a trainer for four months of rigorous training to become a "Seeing Eye" dog. Oh, there are other avenues that she could follow, such as a drug sniffing dog, explosive sniffing dog, or a breeder for the "Seeing Eye" breeding program. (These dogs are all bloodlines of the "Seeing Eye") There are many avenues that could be pursued. It is out of our control. Oh, getting her back is a possibility if she does not pass her medical testing, but that is a slim chance. Yes, we would like to do this again, but we will take a break from puppy raising for the immediate future. All the other questions are out of our control, and we have no answers. We have done our job of raising her to the best of our ability.

Yes, Sandy and I both know it will be hard letting Melba go on to her next step in this process; going to "Puppy College" as the puppy club calls it. But we understood that we were here to do our part in raising the dog; now it is up to the next trainer to carry on the process.

Would we recommend this process to others? **ABSOLUTELY!!!** If you love dogs and you are willing to commit your time, then come talk to us and we can point you in the right direction to help a blind person gain mobility, pride, independence and self-worth through a guide dog. What better mission through GOD than raising a guide DOG. Thank you for all your help!

—Neil and Sandy Boyer



Thoughts About Life — Pastor Jeff

Never be afraid
to do something new.
Remember, amateurs built the Ark;
professionals built the Titanic.
- Anonymous -

How often do you decide not to do something because you are afraid it won't turn out right, or be perfect?
How often do you decide not to say something that is heartfelt because you are not sure you have the right words?

How often do you play it safe because taking a risk is just that – a risk?

As I was thinking about 2019, its promise and its possibility, I stumbled across the above quote. Do you live your life with the notion that God expects you to be a perfectly poised professional disciple or an amateur who does their best to follow Jesus and often messes up? The God I have experienced is a God who loves amateurs who try their best. So my hope for 2019 for all of us is simple: Don't be afraid to be a disciple in a new way or in a new context. Don't hesitate to serve God in ways you have not previously served. Don't be afraid to try and fail. Who knows, you might just try and succeed! May all of us be on the lookout for new Arks to build!



Monday, November 12, 2018

Dear Friends,

For many people in our conference, we have spent the last number of years developing relationships with our southern neighbors in Pennsylvania Southeast. We began to develop relationships through invitations to meetings, events, and educational opportunities such as annual meetings, clergy convocation, ministry days, and more. In 2016, we began a formal discernment process by approving a transition team to help us discern whether we were being led into a merger process. For the past two years (2017-2018), the Joint Conference Visioning and Development Team has been charged with discerning God's vision and calling for the churches of Eastern Pennsylvania. Team members from the north and south worked faithfully in this discernment process. The JCVDT held team meetings, interviewed staff, planned a joint retreat for the PNEC Board and PSEC Consistory, held a workshop for Committees on Ministry, and more. Together, we believed God was leading our Conferences to develop something new, a new way of living into ministry and relationships as a Conference of the United Church of Christ.

On Saturday, November 3rd, our conference voted by an overwhelming majority to move forward in the process of developing this new vision. This was the next step in the discernment process.

On Saturday, November 10th, the PSEC voted against the motion. There was a majority in favor of moving ahead. However, the body was divided, and there was not a 2/3 majority to move ahead in our work.

At this time, we will continue to discern where God is leading us. We have done incredible work together as a conference over the past three years. We have developed new structures to encourage new ministries. Our Committee on Ministry has restructured to be more creative and accountable in its work. We have revised our Constitution and Bylaws to help us become more nimble in our governance. We have a new vitality team to help connect and support our local churches. All of this work has been done through the presence of the Spirit encouraging us and strengthening us as the Body of Christ. Together, in relationship with God and one another, we are experiencing a renewal of the Spirit!

The Conference Board will continue to cast a vision for us in the Penn Northeast Conference to be bold and courageous in following God's call. We will be compassionate and caring in supporting the work of our local churches and pastors. In all things, we will be led by the Spirit to discover what God is calling us to next.

Faithfully,

Joanne Marchetto, Conference Board Moderator

Doug Taylor, Conference Board Assistant Moderator



January 2 - 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Communion Service

Worship Invitation: Come and worship with us in a brief service of Communion.

Message: **Strangers: My Relatives**
Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12; Ephesians 3:1-12

January 6 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Epiphany Communion

Preparing for Worship at Home: Think about your encounters with strangers. Are they usually comfortable experiences? Can you imagine having to leave your home and find a new country in which to live? Can you imagine the circumstances of your life being so desperate that you would even consider such a move? Reflect on how you would hope that others would treat you in such a scenario.

Worship Invitation: Come and worship with us this Epiphany Sunday when we meet a God on the move in a new and threatening time and a Missionary with a mandate.

Message: **Strangers: My Relatives**
Scripture: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Matthew 2:1-12; Ephesians 3:1-12

January 13 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Reaffirmation of Baptism

Bring Offering Forward

Preparing for Worship at Home: Sometime this week, when you wash your face, splash water on yourself three times. The first time think about God creating you. The second time, think about Christ's love for you. The third time, about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Worship Invitation: Join us as we reflect on the meaning of our baptism and have the opportunity to reaffirm your baptism during worship.

Message: **Does it Make a Difference?**
Scripture: Isaiah 43:1-7; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Special Offerings in January

Our special offerings give each of us the opportunity to give a double blessing to our congregation as we engage in making and empowering disciples of Jesus Christ. In the month of January, our special offering envelopes will support the following:

- January 6 - Property Improvement
- January 20 - Social Concerns

From the Parish Nurse

January 13 is Blood Pressure Day. One of our registered nurses will be in the Miko Chapel following the worship services to check your blood pressure.



January 20 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Anointing with Oil

Preparing for Worship at Home: What would you say is the most significant social change in your life time?

Worship Invitation: Can our world change? If Jesus could change water into wine and Martin Luther King, Jr. could change attitudes of people, of course we can change the world — with God's help. Come and help us figure it out.

Message: **Oh Yes He Did!**
Scripture: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; John 2:1-11

January 27 - 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Bring Offering Forward

New Member Sunday

Preparing for Worship at Home: Think about each person in your family. Then think about the functions (jobs, roles, expectations) of each one living in your household. Do you all have the same responsibilities? How many times are you frustrated because others think differently than you do?

Worship Invitation: Join us as we celebrate our differences! As much as we would like everyone to agree with us all the time, God made us different for a reason. Let's figure out the reason together.

Message: **Different by Design**
Scripture: Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Friendly Reminders

Offering Envelopes

The 2019 offering envelopes are available in the DeRemer Gallery. Please take a minute to pick up your envelopes.




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

- January 29 - Robert Roth
- January 31 - Nancy Anderson

Happy Birthday, with our caring thoughts and prayers.

Our Youth in Action



Arts and Crafts at Christmas in Nazareth

Sparks

Sunday, January 6, 12:00 noon — Will there be snow? Let's have some fun! Bring a bag lunch.

Xplosion

Sunday, January 6 — What's New? New year, new school, new friends, new clothes, new family?

Seekers

Sunday, January 6 — It's a birthday party! — Bring a birthday hat to celebrate! (Sure, it's ok to make one.)

Sunday, January 13 — How creative are you?— We'll find out this week!

Summer Crew

Sunday, January 27, 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. — Let's Do Brunch!



Parents afternoon out.



Pumpkin Pie Baking

Are You an Amazon Shopper?

The amazonsmile program will donate .05% to St. John's.

- Sign into www.smile.amazon.com with your current Amazon login information
- Under *Your Account* select *Change your Charity*.
- In the *Find your Charity* type in St. John's United Church of Christ, Nazareth PA
- Hit select and you're ready to shop!



From The Nazareth Area Food Bank

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am delighted to thank you for the generous donations of food collected during the autumn months, as well as a check for \$1,000 from Social Concerns. Every dollar and food item given is a wonderful 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 the Nazareth area.

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

Kay Stracko, Corresponding Secretary

SAVE YOUR STUFF

SAVE THE DATE

For the Rummage Sale

May 4, 2019



The Endowment Committee has received contributions to the Fund during the month of November 2018 in memory of **Chester Meixsell, Gladys Ashenfalder and Lillian Meixsell.**

St. John's is appreciative of the funds received in remembrance of loved ones. Won't you please make your wishes known to your family for memorials to be designated to the church.

ATTENDANCE

Average Attendance	8:00 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
November	94	122



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.

In case of inclement weather on a **weekday...** please call the church office at 610-759-0893, as the church follows the Nazareth Area School District office/building closures.



Welcome 2019

- Ministers: All Members of the Church
- Senior Pastor: The Rev. Jeffery A. Brinks
- 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
- 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, Kacy Miller
- Photographers: Peggy Benfield, anonymous

Those Who Serve ~ February

February 3

8:00 Head Usher Richard Kraemer
Sound Board Steve Kraemer

10:45 Worship Host Ruth Shirer
Sound Board Mark Walter
Acolyte Emma Dorko

Counting Chair - Willie Donnelly

February 10

8:00 Head Usher Richard Garr
Sound Board Pat Stracko

10:45 Worship Host Nancy Thorne
Acolyte Anna Estrada
Sound Board John Muscler

Counting Chair - Richard Garr

February 17

8:00 Head Usher Debbie Claycomb
Sound Board Walter Fries

10:45 Worship Hosts Scott & Lisa Hoffman
Acolyte Vanessa Garren
Sound Board Chris Manzo

Counting Chair - Charles Spohn

February 24

8:00 Head Ushers Les & Ruth Anderson
Sound Board David Weikel

10:45 Worship Host Nancy Thorne
Acolyte Kate Madson
Sound Board Mark Walter

Counting Chairs - Lou & Sue Murante

Everyday Miracles

When Joan Luise Hill's son survived a dire medical diagnosis, two friends recognized that divine intervention had occurred. Hill wasn't so sure, though. "How could I have experienced a personal miracle in today's world?" she writes in *The Miracle Chase* (Sterling Ethos). "Wasn't that something that only happened in the Bible or to someone else?"

Then one day, during a visit to the park, Hill learned a lesson about everyday miracles. "There's a white rainbow!" shouted her 5-year-old son. She told him it was just a jet trail, but the boy replied, "Not to me. It's beautiful."

That was an "aha!" moment for Hill. "Why couldn't a rainbow be white?" she asks. "Maybe it was time to shift my thinking. Perhaps there are 'rainbows' all around us; but since we only see them a piece at a time, we mistake them for something else. Miracles happen. We may not always notice them, but they exist, and the choice to recognize a miracle is up to each of us."

NewsLetter DEADLINE 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.

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Return Service Requested

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US POSTAGE
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LEHIGH VALLEY PA

We are especially thankful for:



- ~ Nursery School Registration
- ~ Brunch Buffet
- ~ Women's Night Out
- ~ 2019 Offering Envelopes
- ~ Mardi Gras

