



*St. John's United Church of Christ
500 West Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446*

Enlightener

October 2025 Vol. XLV, No. 8

Living Our Faith Together (The LOFT) – Opportunities to Share and Grow

What does it mean to be a person of faith in this time? Where do we go with our questions, our doubts, our hunches, our wisdom, and our longings? How can we try on new ideas and new practices to grow our Christian faith and deepen our capacity to live in a moment such as this? What traditions can we lean on to become more grounded and resilient and faithful? Are there places where we can receive support while supporting others?

Living Our Faith Together (aka The LOFT) is a new space to live into the questions and deepen our spiritual practices. It builds on the St. John's tradition of Adult Sunday School and Adult Bible Study, and offers opportunities for adult faith formation and occasional intergenerational engagement.

Beginning in October, at 9:00 on Sunday mornings (between the early and late services), we will gather each week to explore and reflect on a wide range of topics connected to our faith. This is a space where theological reflection and personal storytelling enrich each other, and where expanding religious experience can also mean expanding our understanding of the human spirit and the Christian tradition which grounds us. There will be other opportunities beyond 9:00 Sunday mornings as well.

We will begin with a LOFTy breakfast open to all on Sunday, October 5, which is also World Communion Sunday. As we gather at table and break bread (or muffins or donuts!), there will be time to build new connections and share ideas we have for topics we might explore together in the new year.

The current schedule for the fall:

October 5: LOFT Kick-off Potluck Breakfast

October 12 – November 2: Caring for the Caregivers

This four-week segment offers support for anyone who is currently or has recently been in the role of caring for a loved one, family member, or friend.

November 9 and 16: Living Our Faith Together in a Broken World

How do we name and notice the despair, fatigue, or overwhelm we may be feeling while leaning on spiritual practices that can sustain us in a painful time?

November 23 – December 7: Engaging Advent Across Generations

As we prepare for and enter Advent, this three-week segment includes scripture, reflection, and participatory experiences for people of all ages. Projects such as make-your-own Advent wreath will weave together ancient traditions and invite us to try on spiritual practices that deepen our experience of Emmanuel – God-with-us, and God-among-us.

December 14 and 21: Re-Membering Christmas

This is a set-apart time to reflect on our own experiences of the Christmas season – whether that includes loss, joy, grief, isolation, connection, or more. We'll consider questions such as, "How do we resist the cultural pressures to consume and over-function?" There will be space to share stories, memories, photographs, meaningful objects, and more.

We hope you can join us for any or all of these opportunities.

With gratitude and anticipation,

The St. John's LOFT Team

Deb Ahrens, Pat Rieker, and Pastor Linda



2025

Were You There?

Thirty Years Ago: Barbara Kershner Daniel, recent Beijing Conference participant, spoke at the October women’s retreat.




Twenty-five Years Ago: The Neighbors in Need offering on October 1 helped to promote public health, protection of sacred sites, and the dignity and equal treatment of Native Americans.

Twenty Years Ago: On October 23 the Youth Groups hosted a spud lunch following the 10:15 service.

Fifteen Years Ago: Build a Scarecrow contest was held on October 24 in the Courtyard. Materials were supplied. All that was needed was some imagination and a donation for Manna.

Ten Years Ago:

 <p>St. John's UCC HEALTH MINISTRY sponsored a Flu Shot Clinic.</p>	<p>Location: Activity Room</p> <p>Date: Sunday, October 11, 2015</p> <p>Time: 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM</p>
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Five Years Ago: Rev. Addie and Rev. Dr. Kim Stryjak developed the Carry-Out Connection program for use at home during the pandemic, with weekly activities that helped them connect with each week’s children’s sermon.

One Year Ago: Pastor Addie attended her last Council meeting before moving on to the next chapter in her career.

October Calendar

Worship	Sundays	8:00 AM & 10:15 AM
Connect3	Sundays	10:45 AM
LOFT (Adult Education)	Sundays starting 10/12	9:00 AM

Events

10/3	Lansdale First Friday	6:00 PM
10/4	Women's Retreat	9:30 AM
10/5	LOFTy Potluck Breakfast	9:00 AM
10/11	Choir Retreat with Trinity Lutheran	9:30 AM
10/19	Congregational Dinner	12:00 PM
10/23	Community Game Night & Trunk or Treat	12:00 PM
10/31	Halloween	

Rehearsals

Artist Series Chorus: Christmas Festival	Wednesdays starting 10/8	7:30 PM
Chancel Choir	10/1	7:30 PM
Chancel Choir	Wednesdays starting 10/8	8:30 PM
United Ringers	Wednesdays	6:30 PM

Meetings

AA	Tuesdays	7:00 PM
Council	10/13	7:15 PM
Chess Club	Fridays	6:00 PM
Enlightener Folding	10/23	9:30 AM
Fireside 12 Step Program (CA)	Mondays	7:00 PM
Girl Scouts	10/9 & 10/23 Thursdays	6:30 PM
Praying Hands Stitchers	10/5	9:00 AM
St. John's Stampers	10/9	1:00 PM
Art of Living Foundation	Saturdays	9:30 AM

Deadlines

College Goodie Box Addresses	10/5
College Goodie Box Donations	10/12
Enlightener	10/12

**News
From
Church
Council**



Financial Report, Susan Donahue:

Financial report by Grace Bruen.

1. Income vs. Budget:

- Income during August was \$85,386. Total year-to-date operating income is \$502,289 including \$142,686 of investment transfers.

2. Expenses:

- August expenses were \$101,265, of which \$50,000 was payment towards the steps. Total year-to-date operating expenses without the step repair are \$422,994.

3. Overall Impact:

- We are approximately \$19,000 behind where we projected to be at this time.

OCWM:

- Donations to Our Church's Wider Mission year-to-date total of \$31,761 is higher by \$2,598 of our year-to-date goal.

Please feel free to share your questions or concerns with Susan Donahue, Treasurer.

Staff Reports:

Rev. Noonan: Introducing the LOFT series: Living Our Faith Together. Adult faith formation class beginning in October, with LOFT breakfast kickoff October 5th at 9AM Sunday.

Rev. Tom: He will be one of the LOFT teachers at the October 12 to November 2, 9 AM, four-session series: Care on the Caregivers.

Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music:

No report.

Abbie Lampe, Connect3 Director:

Preparing for special Love Gift service on December 7.

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Kay Peebles, Office Manager (email report):

The 2026 printed calendar will be printed by All Saint's Sunday, November 2.

Grace Marchione, Communications Coordinator:

New program year brings adult, children's, and family programs. The branding project is exciting and a main focus right now. Our visioning of who we are goes hand in hand with branding project.

Board Reports:

Trustees: Steve Hendricks

Trustees made a motion to purchase steel cabinets with a plaque to honor the Vada Timco family for the fireside room.

Deacons: Judy Leslie

Social hosts are needed for the last quarter of the year, October through December. Fall Congregational Dinner will be held on October 19. Signup sheets will be in the Narthex and Elevator lobby the last Sunday of September.

Educators: Mary Billy

VBS was a huge success: 25 participants. Last day for donations to fall goodie boxes is October 12. Mandated Reporter training is being offered on September 27 from 9 AM to noon in the Assembly Hall. Discussing October to be Trunk or Treat.

Elders: Chriss Bodde

Confirmed the early Christmas Service will be held at 5 PM. Preparing for the Service of Installation for Rev. Linda on Sunday, September 21, at 3 PM and Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, September 28, at 2 PM. October 5 is World Communion Sunday. Average August attendance was 101.

Current Business:

- We are very close to assembling our team for Search & Call for the Associate Pastor. It will comprise Elders and at-large members.
- The Tech Ambassadors group is working very hard to get bids for audio, visual, lighting, and networking upgrades.

[continued a]

New Business:

- Discussed a team map for reaching out and working together with community partners and stakeholders, e.g, Gaza food relief fundraiser. It was suggested we use \$1000 of St. John’s GEM (Going the Extra Mile) fund to match contributions.
- Youth Protection Policy Addition: We need to update our current policy to establish more comprehensive guidelines.
- Rev Linda’s Installation: Sue Fitzpatrick, Team Chair
 Preparing for the Installation service. Menu details are being solidified. We might possibly need some help with side dishes and desserts—Emilie Truscott will be the point of contact. Monetary contributions (marked as Installation Ceremony) will be greatly appreciated.

Here is the chancel flower donation list for October 2025. Please review this list and contact the church office if you would like to remove, add, or update any information.



Reminder: The requested donation for the chancel flower listing is \$40. Thank you!

October 5 World Communion Sunday

In memory of loved ones from Doris Latta
 In memory of Madeleine Bruen from her son, Mark, and Grace, Ben, and Allison Bruen

October 12

In memory of George Ruth from Chriss Ruth Bodde and family
 In memory of Stewart and Louise Wells from Kathleen Wells and family

October 26

In memory of Ian Brown’s October 29th birthday from his wife, Vivienne Brown

Summary Of Last Month And YTD Income And Expense	March 2025	January–March 2025
Income		
Current Tithes/Offerings	23,181.57	264,457.05
Event Income/Fundraisers	251.00	4,947.00
Flowers	80.00	2,611.00
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	1.47	11.92
Investment Transfers	59,817.20	129,957.16
Memorial Fund Transfers	2,030.00	12,022.19
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	25.00	65,461.76
Rental Income	0.00	20,100.00
Use of Building Income	0.00	2,250.00
Youth Group	0.00	25.00
Total Income	85,386.24	501,843.08
Gross Income	85,386.24	501,843.08
Expenses		
Building Operation Expenses	4,167.44	53,472.11
Deacons Expenses	859.84	7,568.75
Educators Expenses	0.00	644.18
Elders Expenses	79.34	2,825.68
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	184.20
Operating Expenses	7,873.76	65,442.41
Salaries and Benefits	37,174.14	274,972.35
Trustees/Building Expenses	51,110.75	107,884.35
Total Expenses	101,265.27	512,994.03
Net Operating Income	-15,879.03	-11,150.95
Artist Series Income—Special	250.00	36,849.00
Benevolence Offerings	3,052.50	40,148.00
Soup/Cookies Sales	0.00	1,557.00
Special Accounts	1,981.00	57,386.00
Total Other Income	5,283.50	135,940.00
Other Expenses		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	954.63	51,198.23
Benevolence Disbursements	3,372.50	43,932.67
Charitable Gift Market	0.00	0.00
Petty Cash, Decreases/Spending	0.00	14.60
Soup Sale Expenditures	0.00	1,580.07
Special Fund Expenditures	98.00	21,663.84
Total Other Expenses	4,425.13	118,389.41
Net Other Income	858.37	17,550.59
Net Income	-15,020.66	6,399.64

Chancel Flower Ministry

Thank you for being part of this amazing ministry! Many lives have been touched by your efforts! The flower room is through the door on the left side of the Chancel—the side where the pastor preaches.



All the supplies you need will be in this room.

- Plastic & Glass Floral Containers
- Rubber Bands
- St. John's Address Directory
- Ribbon
- Chancel Flower Cards
- Bouquet Wrap
- Paper & Writing Utensils
- Address Stickers

If you cannot make your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone else and let me know!

Remove the flowers from the brass vases and green liners.

Put the flowers in the plastic containers located on the shelf or the donated glass containers beneath the rolling cart or wrap them in the foil on the shelf in the flower room.

Be creative! You bring something to this ministry that only YOU can bring. Let that shine!

Return the green liners to the brass vases. These belong to the florist.

You may separate the flowers into as many bouquets/vases as you wish—just please keep in mind that the containers need to last the month.

Include a card for each bouquet. You may use rubber bands or ribbon to secure them to the container if you wish—some cards have holes punched to allow this.

Write a personalized letter if you wish!

Write in the signup book about who the flowers were delivered to on your assigned Sunday. Thank you so much for being part of this life-changing ministry!

Kay Peebles, Church Office Manager

October 2025

5	Marcia Stacy
12	Amy Faga
19	Lisa Thim
26	Tracey & Mark O'Neill

Hospitality October 2025

5	Team 3: Methlie
12	Team 4: Bruen
19	Team 1: MacMullen
26	Team 2: Leslie



Information needed for Fall Goodie Boxes for college students!

Please send name(s) and complete address(es) of student(s) to Bonnie Weber at bonweber@gmail.com or Church Office at office@st-johns-ucc.org by Sunday, October 5, 2025. Collection of items for goodie boxes will be from Sunday, September 14, through Sunday, October 12. See the posting on Educators bulletin board for requested items.

The October Women's Retreat will meet on Saturday, October 4, at 9:30 AM in the Church Library.



This is one week earlier than usual due to a scheduling conflict. The presenter will be Luchi Luzares, who will speak about her mother's remarkable legacy and long-standing connection with Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

Light refreshments will be served.

All women are welcome.



Dear Rev. Linda and the Staff of St. John's Church,

On behalf of LMS [Lansdale Montessori School], I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the beautiful luncheon in celebration of our school. Rev. Linda's excellent leadership has truly created a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where the church and the school come together as one family. (So reminiscent of our time under Rev. Sue.)

We are so grateful for the opportunity to share ideas, celebrate our long and meaningful partnership of 32 years, and continue to build upon the strong foundation we have established together.

The food was absolutely delicious, and the company outstanding. It was such a joy to spend time with the Staff of St. John's and to get to know everyone on a more personal level.

Many thanks for your generosity and kindness. We look forward to many more successful school years together!

With appreciation,
Michelle and the
Staff of LMS



Our Fall Congregational Dinner will be held on Sunday, October 19, immediately following our 10:15 AM service. This year there will be a spaghetti dinner. Signup sheets will be available in the Elevator Lobby and Narthex or by contacting the Church Office. We look forward to having you join us for an enjoyable occasion of fellowship.



*St. John's 17th Annual Women's Christmas Tea
Saturday, December 6, 2025*

10 a.m. to noon in the Assembly Hall

*Tea Sandwiches ~ Desserts ~ Variety of Teas
Gluten-Free Foods*

Christmas Carols

*Wonderful fellowship and a speaker from
"Redeemed for a Cause," a program that works to help
trafficked women and girls realize their intrinsic worth
and true potential*

*Donations will be accepted to offset costs and to
benefit "Redeemed for a Cause."*

*Please contact Janet Morton at
mortfam116@gmail.com
if you would like to bring a food item to share.
Gluten-free items will be available.*

*Please RSVP by Wednesday, December 3,
to Sally Jarinko: text 215.421.6678,
call 215.256.8289,
or email sjarinko@comcast.net.
(Space is limited!)*



Lizzy the Librarian wants St. John's congregants to know that the book rummage sale at fellowship hour will be ongoing!



Neighbors in Need

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
-Galatians 6:2

Advocacy is essential to participating in God's mission in the world.

Gifts to the **Neighbors in Need** offering support ministries of justice and compassion in the United Church of Christ, including the UCC Office of Public Policy & Advocacy in Washington D.C.



The UCC Washington D.C. Office was called into being by a resolution at General Synod 10 in 1975. The office was assigned to identify, analyze, and forecast social issues which called for the attention of the church. The work has always been guided by the discernment of the UCC through General Synod gatherings and resolutions that collectively witness to God's call.

Each week the Washington D.C. Office creates an action alert to help give church members the opportunity to contact legislators simply and easily. In 2025 these weekly alerts have encouraged church members to fight for disability housing accommodations, to stop the gun violence epidemic, and to support environmental justice for all.

Thank you for your generosity!

Thursday, October 23rd, 2025

Time: 6:30-8:30 pm

Community Game Night & Indoor "Trunk or Treat" *



Join the Board of Educators for a Halloween-Themed Community Game night! All are welcome.

Come in Costume, bring some games to share and enjoy a fun night of gaming with your family and ours.

* *Beverages will be provided.
Bring a snack to share.*

There will be Halloween goodies at Themed "Trunk or Treat" tables for ghouls & goblins of all ages!

St. John's UCC

in the Assembly Hall

Please RSVP via our Facebook Event Page, the sign-up sheets in the elevator lobby or Narthex OR by contacting the church office so we have enough tables available.

500 West Main St.
Lansdale, PA 19446

215-855-5489
office@st-johns-ucc.org

FB: St John's UCC Lansdale, PA
<https://st-johns-ucc.org>
Under the "events" section





**ST. JOHN'S
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



RECOGNIZING & REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT FOR MANDATED REPORTERS

KNOW YOUR ROLE IN PROTECTING CHILDREN



**SATURDAY,
SEPT. 27, 2025,
9AM-12PM**



**ST. JOHN'S UCC
500 W. MAIN ST.
LANSDALE, PA**

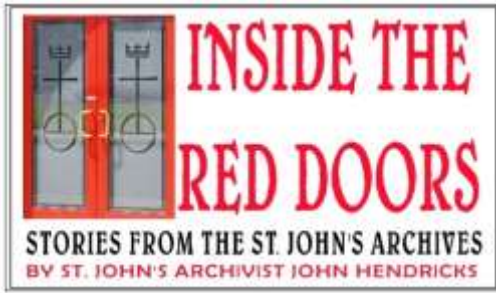
Join us for this state-approved training course that fulfills requirements for mandated reporters in accordance with Act 31 of 2014 and Act 126 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

- CEUs available upon request.
- PCCD credit approved course.
- Free registration & donations welcome
- RSVP required to attend.
- Child care available.



Questions? Contact Jessica Carson at
Jessica-Carson@vscmontcopa.org

RSVP at victimservicescenter.org/events



Number 2, October 2025:

Raise the Song of Harvest Home!

If someone asked what ‘**harvest home**’ means, you’d probably think of the familiar Thanksgiving hymn (NCH #422) with the opening lines, “Come, O thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home.” Some of our long-time members will remember that ‘harvest home’ was once a special day in the church year!

The Reporter newspaper of December 23, 1897, wrote “Wherever throughout the earth there is such a thing as a formal harvest there appears to be an inclination to mark it with a festive celebration. In England this festival passes generally under the endeared name of harvest home.” In our area, going back to the late 1800s, Harvest Home was not only observed in all the local churches with special services, but also in special outdoor ‘fun’ festivals held by lodges and civic groups, with picnics, games, and speeches. These were held in late summer on various dates. There is not much information on these early services at St. John’s, but The Reporter noted a Wednesday night Harvest home service here in 1887, and by 1905 said it was an “annual service.”

By the 1900s the secular observations had ended but Harvest Home services continued in area churches. At St. John’s, the ‘golden era’ of the Harvest Home services began with the arrival in 1923 of Rev. Sayres, our third pastor. A tradition started that the church was colorfully decorated for autumn, and the congregation brought home-preserved food for charity. The Reporter of October 15, 1923, noted “St. John’s Reformed Church was [the] perfect type of a Harvest Home church...and embraced everything that could be desired to make a showing. Rev. Alfred Sayres preached eloquently from the subject, “God, the Liberal Giver...the liberal gifts of food which made the church resemble the finest section of a most progressive county fair, are to be sent to the Phoebe Deaconess and Old Folks Home in Allentown and Bethany Orphans Home in Womelsdorf.” (Note: we still support Phoebe Allentown and Bethany Children’s Home.)

Harvest Home continued as an annual service through the 1940s. There were a few revivals after that, but fewer members grew and preserved foods now, and the ways of collecting and donating food changed, culminating with our founding Manna on Main Street in 1980 as a year-round food bank. But for many years, especially during the Depression, Harvest Home was an important part of our St. John’s outreach, sharing God’s bounty!



Harvest Home Alter 1947



Harvest Home Calendar 2002

2025-26 GIVING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Patron	Up to \$99	Your name or business will appear in all concert and gala programs.
	\$100 – \$249	The previous giving level benefits plus acknowledgment in The Enlightener, a monthly newsletter from St. John's UCC that reaches hundreds of households.
	\$250 – \$499	The previous giving level benefits plus acknowledgment in Artist Series electronic newsletters, reaching over 600 email addresses.
	\$500 – \$999	The previous giving level benefits plus one complimentary gala ticket.
	\$1000 – \$1999	The previous giving level benefits plus one complimentary gala ticket, for a total of two tickets.
Sponsor	\$2000 – \$3499	Your name or business will be announced as a "bronze level sponsor" at the concert of your choice.
	\$3500 – \$4999	Your name or business will be announced as a "silver level sponsor" at two concerts of your choice.
	\$5000+	Your name or business will be announced as a "gold level sponsor" at every concert.

All sponsor tiers include the highest level of Patron benefits.

Make your gift online today!

WWW.STJOHNSARTISTSERIES.ORG



PREFER TO GIVE VIA CHECK OR CASH?

Mail or drop off your gift at St. John's UCC (500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446) along with the below form completed. Please make checks payable to *St. John's UCC* and indicate *Artist Series* in the memo line.

**Please print your name as you would like it to appear in our publications.
Donate before October 24th to become a Patron or Sponsor of the 2025-2026 season!**

Name: _____ **Donation Amount:** _____