



“...but Jesus hid himself.

St. John's United Church of Christ
315 Gay Street, Phoenixville, PA 19460
Church Phone: 610-933-5311 / Pastor's Cell Phone: 484-500-1667
www.facebook.com/stjohnsucc / www.stjohnsucc.online

Consistory Officers

JoAnne Cooper, Consistory President
Marie Byers, Consistory Vice-President
Leslie Staley, Consistory Secretary
Herbert Woodruff, Treasurer

Elders

Randy Bottenfield, Marie Byers,
Larry Challenger, Joanne Cooper, Leslie Staley

Deacons

Virginia Filipovic, Mary Louise Miller
Herbert Woodruff

Church Staff

The Reverend Raymond J. Jachowski, Pastor
Matthew Valent, Director of Music
Virginia Filipovic, Church Administrator
J. Michael Staley, Sexton



Doris Selwitz, Organist Emerita



Vision Statement

*“Our vision is to worship the Triune God revealed in Jesus Christ,
to proclaim and learn God’s Word,
to minister to the needs of the congregation and community,
and to embrace change as we seek transformation.*”

**Facilitators sought for table discussions
at Spring Meeting**

In the evaluations of last year’s annual meeting there were requests for time to bring together like-minded individuals.

The planning team has heard this request and although our schedule is already extremely tight, it was decided that lunch time, and the round tables in the dining hall, would make for perfect, relaxed spaces to begin these conversations.

The next step is finding individuals with passions they want to share by leading these conversations. So, we are seeking anyone who is willing to take a topic and lead open discussions around that topic over lunch Saturday afternoon.

Topics could range from “pastors under 40”, “how do I help my church become ONA”, “LBGTQ”, “Consistory Presidents”, etc. There is no limit.

IF YOU have a topic and you are willing to lead that discussion during the lunch hour, please reach out to Susan at the PSEC office at susan@psec.org.



OFFICIAL CALL—  **ANNUAL MEETING 2023**
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference



Friday, June 2—Saturday, June 3
@ West Chester University
110 W. Rosedale Ave.
West Chester, PA

Register at: <https://psecannual23.eventbrite.com>

UNITED
CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Communitas

PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774

The Racial Justice Team wants to hear from you!

Let Justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream Amos 5:24

Dear Colleagues,

You most likely have seen information from the PSEC Racial Justice Team. One of the purposes of the Racial Justice Team is to be a resource for our pastors and local congregations in an effort to promote and increase engagement in racial justice work.

The Team hopes the work we have done through The Zachariah Walker Racial Justice Initiative, symposiums, book studies, prayers, and worship resources has been helpful to you and your ministry. If you would like to know more about our work, please visit the Zachariah Walker Racial Justice Initiative on the PSEC website.

We would like to hear about how you are addressing racial justice in your ministry setting and local congregations. We want to celebrate all that you are doing and to hold your ministry in prayer. Please let us know about it by emailing Rev. Dwayne Mosier at



Lay Leadership Convocation

Come out for a day of Lay Leadership training and fellowship. The event will include worship, workshops and a keynote address on *Empowering Lay Leadership*. When: **Saturday, April 15th**

Times: 9:00 am—3:00 pm (8:30 registration)

Cost: \$40.00 Lunch will be included

Where: The event begins at Trinity Reformed UCC, 60 N. Hanover St. Pottstown (some workshops will take place one block away at Zion's UCC)

For more info and to register go to psec.org and click the "Events & News" tab and then click the calendar and go to April 15th. Click on Lay Leadership Convocation.

JUDICA
THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
SERVICE OF THE WORD
March 26, 2023

Please respond at the bold print

MEDITATION

Psalm 43:1-3

The Fifth Sunday in Lent has traditionally been known as Judica, which is Latin for "judge", and is taken from the first word of the Introit in the old order of service, now our Call to Worship, "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation." The meaning of "judge" here really means, "vindicate me", and the words of the Introit are the words of Christ to his Father, "O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man, for you are the God of my strength." True deliverance for Christ, and for us over sinful man, will come on the holy hill, the hill of the cross...Calvary.

VOLUNTARY: "*My Song is Love Unknown*"

R. Vaughn Williams

The congregation may stand as you are able.

OPENING HYMN: "*What Wondrous Love Is This*"

Hymn #257

INTROIT: "*Because You Live, O Christ*"

Hymn #292, Stanza 1

SOLEMN DECLARATION

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation. O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man, for thou are the God of my strength.

O send out your light and your truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto your holy hill.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching God, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

The congregation may be seated.

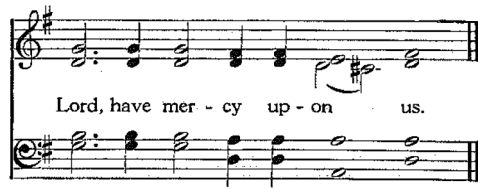
PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty and most merciful God, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But you, O Lord, have mercy on us. Spare those, O God, who confess their sins. Restore those who are penitent, according to your promises declared unto humankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful God, for Jesus' sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

Silent Confession and Reflection

KYRIE

*Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.*



DECLARATION OF PARDON

Hearken now unto the comforting assurance of the grace of God, promised in the Gospel to all that repent and believe: As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their way and live. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Unto as many of you, therefore, beloved brothers and sisters as truly repent of your sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, with full purpose of new obedience, I announce and declare, by the authority and in the Name of Christ, that your sins are forgiven, according to his promise in the Gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The congregation may stand as you are able.

PRAISE

Praise the Lord.
The Lord's Name be praised.

GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen. Amen.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We ask you, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon your people, that by your great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading: *Genesis 22:1-14*

¹After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ²He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you." ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." ⁶Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. And the two of them walked on together. ⁷Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the

REDNER'S "SAVE-A-TAPE" PROGRAM: Remember to save your Redner's receipts. You may deposit them in the bin above the mailboxes or on Ginny's desk. The tapes have an expiration date of 3 years from the date we submit them, so get them in as soon as possible. Note: you must use your Redner's card when paying for your order. Make sure that the 1% information is on your receipt or it will not be accepted for reimbursement. Thanks!

PRINTER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING: St. John's continues to collect your old printer cartridges for recycling and a refund. Leave them in the bin above the mailboxes, or on Ginny's desk. Thanks!

RELAY FOR LIFE: Relay 2023 has begun! Mark your calendars for 5/20/23. Visit our website at relayforlife.org/pacc. Keep updated on event fundraisers, resources and information for cancer patients. Team member registration is open. Register on line for our team (St. John's UCC of Phoenixville). If you can't attend the day of relay or you can't walk - you can still join the team. There are many ways of raising money. Facebook is a great way - it's linked to your Relay page so you don't have to physically collect any money. Don't want to be on the team but want to help - collect money from friends, family, co-workers and give to a team member to turn in. See me for information or give me a call (610-547-0532). Thank you for your continued support of our mission to fight for a world without cancer.

RELAY FOR LIFE EASTER EGGS:

Again this year, St. John's Relay for Life team will be making and selling the chocolate covered eggs. Lots of ingredients are needed. A sign-up sheet and a bin for donations is in Gruber Hall. An order form is also on the bulletin board in Gruber Hall.

Below are a list of the ingredients needed:

- ◇Cream Cheese
- ◇Confectioner's Sugar (2 lb. bags)
- ◇Sticks of Butter
- ◇Creamy Peanut Butter
- ◇Coconut (bags)
- ◇Chocolate Powder
- ◇Chocolate Morsels (DARK and MILK CHOCOLATE)
- ◇Cooking Oil
- ◇Wax Paper

Thank you in advance for your donations!!

RELAY FOR LIFE "PAINT THE TOWN PURPLE":

Relay for Life is hosting an event in Reeve's Park on April 30th from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The information for this event can be found on the bulletin board in Gruber Hall.

TODAY'S BULLETIN is given to the Glory of God.

CHAIRLIFT: Mike Staley and Mike Hendricks

LECTOR: Mike Hendricks

ALTAR FLOWERS/BULLETINS: If you would like to sponsor flowers for the altar or bulletins on a specific Sunday, please sign up using the **forms located on the desk in the admin's office**. Altar flowers are \$25.00, bulletins are \$11.00. A two-week notice is required prior to the specific Sunday; and your order needs to be prepaid. Make checks payable to St. John's United Church of Christ and make a note in the memo line.

BUILDING AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT PLAN - CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: Our Capital Campaign is for ongoing and future building improvements. Please designate your gift as "Capital Campaign" when submitting your donation.

PACS: Donations are again being encouraged and accepted for PACS. Bins are located in the rear of Gruber Hall for your donated items.

LINUS PROJECT: Project Linus blankets continue to be produced and members are encouraged to tie when they have extra time. Please remember to tie a tight double knot. Your work is always appreciated. Thank you!

CODE BLUE: St. John's is collecting items in support of Code Blue. The following items are being accepted:

High Priority Items:

- ◇ Canned (single serving) soups, chilis or prepared pastas (like Chef Boyardee)
- ◇ ACME, BJ's or GIANT Gift Cards - used to purchase milk, etc.
- ◇ Lysol Disinfecting Spray
- ◇ Toilet Paper (Septic Safe)
- ◇ Disposable Microwave Safe Bowls (10oz. or larger) - paper (not Styrofoam)

Non-Priority Items:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◇ Paper Towels | ◇ Instant Decaf Coffee |
| ◇ Facial Tissues | ◇ Tea (individual packets) |
| ◇ (Boxes or Individual Packs) | ◇ Hot Chocolate (individuals packets) |
| ◇ Paper Napkins | ◇ Men's Socks (NEW) |
| ◇ Plastic Utensils | ◇ Men's Underwear (NEW in package) |
| ◇ Disposable Microwave Safe Bowls (10oz or larger) | ◇ Women's Socks (NEW) |
| ◇ Paper plates | ◇ Women's Underwear (NEW in package) |
| ◇ Disposable hot liquid cups and lids (for coffee/tea) | ◇ Lysol Disinfecting Spray |
| ◇ Paper drinking cups | ◇ Lysol Disinfecting Wipes |
| ◇ Ground Coffee | ◇ Daily Shower Cleaner (Spray) |
| | ◇ Multipurpose Cleaner (Clorox or similar) |
| | ◇ Sponges |

lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." And the two of them walked on together. ⁹When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹²He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." ¹³And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called that place "The LORD will provide," as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Psalm: Psalm 43

(Sing the refrain, respond at the bold print)

PSALM 43 C. M. EDMESTON Isaac B. Woodbury

1 Judge me, O God, and plead my cause A - gainst a god-less race; From men de-

ceit - ful and un - just De - liv - er in Thy grace, De - liv - er in Thy grace.

¹Give judgement for me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people; deliver me from the deceitful and the wicked.

²For you are the God of my strength; why have you put me from you? And why do I go so heavily while the enemy oppresses me?

³Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling;

⁴that I may go to the altar of God, to the God of my joy and gladness; and on the harp I will give thanks to you, O God my God.

⁵Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? And why are you so disquieted within me? **Put your trust in God; for I will yet give thanks to the One who is the help of my countenance, and my God.**

(Sing ₃ refrain)

Second Reading: Hebrews 9:11-15

¹¹But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), ¹²he entered once for all into the holy place, not with the blood of goats and calves but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. ¹³For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, ¹⁴how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! ¹⁵For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.

GRADUAL: “Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love!”

Robert J. Powell

The congregation may stand as you are able.

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ is written in the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to St. John beginning at the first verse.

Glory be to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READING: *John 8:[42-45] 46-49*

⁴²Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God, and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. ⁴³Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. ⁴⁴You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God.” ⁴⁸The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” ⁴⁹Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death.” ⁵²The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets, yet you say, ‘Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.’ ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?” ⁵⁴Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, ‘He is our God,’ ⁵⁵though you do not know him. But I know him; if I would say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I keep his word. ⁵⁶Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad.” ⁵⁷Then the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” ⁵⁸Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.” ⁵⁹So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

VEILING OF THE CROSS

The congregation may be seated.

PRAYER UPON ENTERING THE PEW: O God, I know that you are the Lord, for you gave me my life, and caused me to rise this day. Put your Spirit within me, and let my words and actions help others to know that you are my Lord and my God. Amen.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, March 26

10:00 a.m.: We will be collecting today for One Great Hour of Sharing. Please use the envelope found in your bulletin.

Tuesday, March 28

10:00 a.m.: Parkside Bible Study. Check your email for Zoom information.

Wednesday, March 29

11:00 a.m.: Bible Study - Leiby Chapel. We are studying the book of Acts, chapter 20:17-38. All are welcome!

Thursday, March 30

6:00 p.m.: Evening Prayer and the Holy Eucharist.

Sunday, April 2

9:15 a.m.: Palmarum - Palm Sunday - Holy Communion

Thursday, April 6

12:00 noon: The Order of Service for Maundy Thursday, The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

7:00 p.m.: The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, Tenebrae, Stripping of the Altar

Friday, April 7

7:00 p.m.: The Procession of the Cross **at Parkside United Church of Christ, 505 Main St., Phoenixville, PA 19460**

Sunday, April 9

9:15 a.m.: Easter Day Service, the Festival of the Resurrection of our Lord with Holy Communion at 9:15 a.m. **at St. John’s United Church of Christ, and...**

10:45 a.m.: at Parkside United Church of Christ.

ATTENDANCE

Last Sunday: 26

Views: 7

General Receipts:

Envelopes: \$1156.70

Plate: \$10.00

Easter Flowers: \$51.00

One Great Hour of Sharing: \$75.00

Turkey/Syria Relief: \$10.00

Ladies’ Tea: \$50.00

Total: \$1352.70

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

2 David Firestone

4 Mary Stepp

13 Frank Cook

23 Jessie Foulds

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

2 Benjamin Benes

3 Brett Foulds

9 Sheila Bottenfield

9 Hannah Jachowski

10 Herb Woodruff

10 Nicholas Giannopoulos

12 Tina Miller

13 Michele Stubanas Marosek

13 Kathy Kappel

17 Janet Perillo

18 Margie Pavlik

18 Mary Louise Miller

19 Madison Kappel

22 Walt Kappel

God of compassion, we praise you that you look upon our frail lives with love and understanding, and that you desire for us all new life in Jesus Christ. We are overwhelmed by your love, which goes to the cross for us, endures the grave, and leads us to new life. By your Spirit, strengthen our souls to be brave and bold in Christ's service. Take our offerings, and use them and us for your purposes, in the name of Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

CHARGE

Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.

John 8:47

BENEDICTION

The Blessing of God Almighty: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: "*Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies*"

Hymn #91

SORTI: "*Jesus, Still Lead On*"

Paul Manz

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St. James Press – Account #17763*

SERMON: "*Hiding*"

The congregation may stand as you are able.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - *Apostles' Creed*

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

On the third day, he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN: "*O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*"

Hymn #589

VERSICLE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

The congregation may be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

After each petition:

God in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

FIVE MINUTES TOGETHER

OFFERING

Through our hands, the Lord will provide for his people.

Genesis 22:14

The congregation may stand as you are able.

OFFERING RESPONSE: "*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*"

Hymn #261, Stanza 4

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.