

Newsletter | Aug - Sept 2026



717-336-7600
churchoffice@denverstjohns.org
denverstjohns.org



St. John's U.C.C.
Denver | PA

Happy Birthday To You!



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

3 – Kimberly Coble	15 – David Wade	23 – Kaitlyn Werner
4 – Robin Althouse	18 – Drew Myers	25 – Joyce Wade
6 – Kevin Hall	18 – Del Rae Pannebecker	25 – Carmella Hoover
8 – William Rowe	18 – Matt Paul	25 – David Long
9 – Richard Palsgrove	19 – Justin Ulrich	25 – Denise Reardon-Colon
9 – Addison Strasser	19 – Colleen Hornberger	26 – Christie Shade
12 – Andy Gehman	19 – Kasey Hassler	27 – Caitlyn Carr
13 – John Dinger	20 – David Erb (son)	27 – Brenda Reed
13 – Larry Grill	20 – Richard Miller	29 – Lauren Leister
13 – Christopher Hall	21 – Brock Showalter	29 – Heidi Hassler
14 – Lori Wanner	22 – Brennan Mendenhall	31 – Paxton Sweigart
		31 – Jacqlyn Lash



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 – Dennis Martzall	9 – Chad Miller	19 – Linda Shelly
2 – Erica Bechdel	10 – Shirley Kemper	21 – Donald Ernst, Jr.
3 – Barbara Ostapuck	11 – Kenneth Grove	21 – Devon Fichthorn
4 – Alexis Vollmer	12 – Chester Behney	22 – Candice Wierzbowski
5 – Hanah Greenly	12 – Corbin Mendenhall	25 – Robert Althouse
5 – Kurt Reider	12 – Charlotte Miller	26 – Michelle Adams
6 – Emerson Paul	13 – Jennifer Maymik	26 – Sherri DeWitt
7 – Brock Sweigart	14 – Tamara Snyder	27 – Jessica Esparra
8 – Nicole Warfield	14 – Steven Weber	28 – Carly Hutchinson
9 – Ira Wierzbowski	15 – Adam Bechdel	29 – Ashley Martin
9 – Mariah Hatt	17 – Jean Kulp	30 – Ashley Fichthorn
9 – Joanne Hoover	18 – John Hassler	30 – Brenda Miller
		30 – Kathleen Scott

If there are any additions, corrections, name changes or deletions of members' birthdays, please contact the church office at 717-336-7600 or churchoffice@denverstjohns.org.

Pastor's Column: From a Minister to THE Ministers

As I'm typing this, I'm starting to think ahead to my week of vacation I have coming up in about 4 days or so. When (if) you read this (at least if you do so within the first day or two of receiving it), I'll likely be just about finishing the last couple of days of that vacation.

People ask me "Where are you going for vacation?" By now, if you've asked me that question, you know my patent answer: "It's not where I am going on vacation; it's where I am not going on vacation that makes it vacation for me." I'm not going to the church, I'm not going to see hospice patients, I'm not going to the hospital to answer an on-call page, I'm not going to train someone at the chiropractor office.

I might actually go somewhere out of the usual pattern of my day/week during my vacation time, but the real vacation for me is not going where I usually go. I suppose, for the most part, my vacation is one of those newly titled stay-cations.

What about your vacation this summer. Have you taken one? Will you take one? Did you or will you go anywhere? Or did you or will you not go anywhere?

Vacation... I sort of have had one of those love/hate relationships with it. Well, "love" and "hate" are pretty strong words and I can't say my feelings toward vacation are quite that passionate or intense. Let's just say vacation is something I feel both good and somewhat ill-at-ease about. It's not so much that I'm one of those always-have-to-be-busy types, or always-on-the-go people, or can't-stop-working individuals. That's not the source of my feelings. It's more that I value and appreciate and enjoy and look forward to the time of pause and rest and shut-down from the routine and busyness; while at the same time, when I'm on vacation, I realize that maybe there is more that I could be doing and/or going to.

I'm satisfied being a homebody. I'm satisfied doing nothing. I'm satisfied putzing around the house with stuff I don't take the time to do when I'm busy "working." BUT I'm also dissatisfied with not feeling as energetic, enthusiastic, adventurous as I guess I think I should. I'll be honest, the thought of taking an extended vacation trip would exhaust me even before I engage the seatbelt in my car seat.



On the other hand, there are those among us/you who thrive on such excitement and full schedules and travel itinerary, planes, trains, and automobiles; hotel rooms, campgrounds, and day treks to here and there and everywhere. (I'm already tired and looking for somewhere to relax even after typing that!).

AND YET... I/you/we all need times "away." I/you/we all need times apart from our routine and busyness. I/you/we all need something to remind us that life isn't just the way we've orchestrated and positioned it to be. There's more. There's other. There's different. There's "this" and "that" and "them" and "those" and "there". Vacation makes time and opportunity and space for more and other and different and else.

The one and only thing we do not vacate is who God has claimed us to be and what he has resourced us to do in Jesus Christ and His Spirit. We are to be and live and testify to the love God has for us in Christ Jesus our Lord. We never take a vacation from that. HOWEVER, vacation becomes the time and opportunity to show and share and speak that love to the other and the different, to "this" and "that" and "them" and "those" and "there" that we might not otherwise in the midst of our daily, "normal," usual living. Take a vacation!

Hope you've been having, have had, will have a good one!

Pastor Brad

Church News & Announcements

GUEST PREACHER ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

We welcome Rev. George Martz. Former pastor of St. Johns, Rev. George Martz will be returning to the pulpit to provide the morning message while Pastor Brad is off for the day. In case you weren't at St. John's during Rev. Martz's tenure, or you'd like to reminisce about where he's been and what he's done:

The Rev. George C. Martz served as Pastor of St. John's UCC from 1978 – 1998. From 1998 until his retirement January 2006 he served in Landisburg, PA where he helped merge three congregations into New Hope UCC. In 2002 George received the Alan S. Meck Award for excellence in ministry from Lancaster Seminary. In retirement Pastor Martz served as interim Pastor in a number of congregations until 2020, after which he has filled in for vacations and emergencies. Pastor Martz has also been active in the wider

church all of his ministry. He has been a delegate to three General Synods and visitor to one. He has also served as Adjunct Professor at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

George is married to Phyllis Crytzer Martz; they reside at 20 E. Main Street, New Bloomfield, PA 17068-0358, which is Phyllis' family home. The Martz's have three children – Calvin (deceased), Christine and Victoria (Mrs. Martin) Velez – three grandchildren and one great grandchild.

MISSION MOMENT: AUGUST

And speaking of Victoria Velez – she will be our Mission Moment speaker on Sunday, August 2 as she shares with us regarding our August Month Mission Partner, UCC Homes (Ephrata Manor). Victoria serves as Director of Public Relations and Fund Development for UCC Homes. We are always delighted to see Victoria each year and be reminded of the work and residents of the UCC Home network.

JOIN US FOR SUMMER COMMUNION ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 9

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL TO RESUME

Starting Sunday, September 13 at 9am we will again have an Adult Sunday School class meeting in the Conference Room and accessible on zoom. Pastor Brad will be leading the class through the second half of David's life, as we look at DAVID THE KING and the book of **II SAMUEL**.

FROM OUT OF SUMMER INTO "NORMAL" TIME

Even though the time doesn't change for us specifically, as we continue to worship at 10:15am, our biological timing kind of begins to move from vacation and summer time to what sometimes is called "normal" time. Whether that feels true for you or not, we try to rouse each other during the post-Labor Day season with our **CELEBRATION SUNDAY**.

CELEBRATION SUNDAY

Sunday, September 13 at 10:15am

"God Made the World and Me"

As we move our minds, attitudes, and senses from the frills and frolicking of summer to the... well, why not the frills and frolicking of non-summer! Move from worshipping God on vacation – from the beach, in a hotel, on the go, at the pool, or the reunion – to worshipping God in the sanctuary, the classroom and at home.

Mission Focus for August & September



Each month the Mission Team attempts to lift up one of our partners in ministry that we support here at St. Johns. We try to have a “Mission Moment” during worship on one of the specified Sundays of each month, bringing in a representative from the partner ministry to share an update with us regarding what’s happening and possible ways for volunteering and/or otherwise addressing needs the ministry has or efforts and work the ministry is undertaking.

Throughout each month the congregation is encouraged to consider offering a gift to the ministry being profiled, though this can be done anytime throughout the year (simply use your offering envelope and indicate what ministry you would like to support).

AUGUST MISSION: UCC HOMES



This Keystone Conference based ministry of six retirement and nursing homes, (i.e. Ephrata Manor) helps senior citizens to have a secure place to live in a retirement community.

Services include cottages, apartments, assisted living (personal care), skilled care (nursing care), and rehabilitation services. St. Johns also provides gift cards and donations for Christmas gifts for residents.

We have been especially focused on the local home connected to UCC Homes: Ephrata Manor. Our donations go with a designation that they assist with Ephrata Manor’s Benevolent Fund, an ongoing fund used to provide financial assistance for those in need, so Ephrata Manor will always be a facility where no one has to leave due to financial constraints.

Mission Moment Speaker, Victoria Valez, will join us Sunday, August 2.

SEPTEMBER MISSION: CITY GATE



City Gate is a ministry located on Main Street in Ephrata, the vision of which is to offer a safe place for those who need one by building authentic relationships through coffee, food, and conversation.

They offer churches the opportunity to get out of their building by sponsoring and serving free community lunches on Saturdays. They hold Bible studies, prayer groups, praise and worship nights and support groups including Main Point Ministries and Celebrate Recovery (a Christian-based recovery group). City Gate is a street level ministry serving those who may be without a home and those who may struggle with addictions and mental health issues.

Mission Moment Speaker, Kim Warner, will join us Sunday, September 13.

DONATE ONLINE

Upcoming Events at St. John's



UPCOMING MEN'S BROTHERHOOD STEAK SANDWICH SALES

Saturday, August 8, 11am-1pm

Saturday, September 12, 11am-1pm

Help is appreciated 10:30am-1:30pm for setup and clean up.

DENVER DAYS WORSHIP IN THE PARK

Sunday, August 23 at 10am in Denver Memorial Park, 801 Main Street, Denver, PA

Join with our brothers and sisters from Trinity UMC, Faith Lutheran and the community at large as we unite together in worship as the people of Denver. FREE Boehringer's Ice Cream after worship in the Park Pavilion.

In this service, we like to lift up the unity of our churches while also reminding us all of our community connection in Denver. We will hear from the ministry BUILDERS OF HOPE, who all of our churches have been supporting and of which our churches were part of the impetus for starting that program in the Cocalico area many years ago. We will also have an opportunity to meet the new pastor serving at Trinity UMC, replacing retired pastor Mike Roney.

Note: There will be NO service at St. Johns. We will be at the park at 10am. Also NO zoom for that day. This event will be at the park rain or shine.

BINGO & BAGS FUNDRAISER

Sunday, October 11

IronSpire Complex, Adamstown, PA

11:30am: Food concessions & Auction opens

1:00pm: Bingo & Cornhole Tournament begins

Join us for an afternoon of fun, fellowship, and fundraising at our Bingo & Bags Fundraiser on Sunday, October 11 at the IronSpire Complex in Adamstown!

Food concessions open at 11:30am, with Bingo and our Cornhole Tournament beginning at 1:00pm. Enjoy a chance auction featuring great prizes, 50/50 raffles, and plenty of opportunities to win.

Bingo tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door.

Cornhole Tournament: \$50 per team, with cash prizes and special awards. The first 10 teams registered are in, so don't wait!

This event, coordinated by the Hands of Grace Mission Service Team, supports St. John's UCC's Legacy Campaign as we work toward completing our pavilion project. Come out, bring your friends, and help us reach our goal while enjoying a great day together!

For bingo tickets or volunteer opportunities, contact **Dina Hornberger** or **Deb Antol**. For cornhole registration, contact **Kevin Antol**.

More details, ticket information, and prize announcements are coming soon. Be sure to follow and watch the St. John's UCC Facebook page for updates! Great prizes, great food, and great fellowship await. We hope to see you there!

RESERVE YOUR BINGO TICKETS HERE

RESERVE YOUR CORNHOLE TEAM HERE

St. John's Annual Church Picnic



ST. JOHN'S UCC CHURCH PICNIC: AUGUST 16, 2026

Join us on Sunday, August 16, for a special day of fellowship, food, and celebration as we gather for our annual St. John's UCC Church Picnic!

This year, we give thanks for the faithful service of our members and the many ways our congregation has supported our community and mission ministries over the past year. We will also celebrate a major milestone in the life of our church: the payoff of our mortgage, allowing us to honor our biblical commitment to be debt free and focus even more fully on God's work.

The picnic will also mark the launch of the final phase of our three-year Legacy Campaign: the construction of a new pavilion that will serve as a gathering place for Men's Brotherhood steak sales, outdoor worship services, and other special events. We are close to reaching our fundraising goal and invite everyone to help us cross the finish line.

Of course, no St. John's picnic would be complete without Andy and Cory's famous ribs! Come hungry, bring your family and friends, and enjoy great food, fellowship, and fun. A good time is guaranteed for all!

Sign up to let us know how many people are attending and what side dish or dessert you will bring. Please sign up in the narthex, call us at 717-336-7600, or click the link below.

We look forward to celebrating with you on August 16!



Click here to follow
St. John's UCC
Facebook Page

SIGN UP FOR A SIDE DISH OR DESSERT

Back to School at the CCC



Summer has passed quickly and the 2026-2027 school year session will be up and running shortly. The staff and students of the Cocalico Care Center have enjoyed outdoor games, watching the heavy equipment as work was done on the parking lot and trike track, as well as participating in field trips to places like Dutch Lanes, Middle Creek, and the Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre, just to name a few.

At the end of the month we look forward to welcoming back some of our students that took the summer off with family and friends as well as meeting the new Elm children that will begin their school year with Ms. Stephanie Martin in early September. Our hope is to fill the last few preschool openings by mid-October as we begin the new school year and look forward to the holidays that will be quickly approaching before we know it.

UPCOMING CHILDREN'S FUN EVENTS

Sunday, August 16 during our after-worship Church Picnic there will be games and fun

September event TBD

Sunday, October 25 after worship

All of our St. John's and CCC families and friends are invited to attend! Join our mailing list to stay up-to-date on our Children's Fun Events or follow us on Facebook.

ST. JOHN'S MAILING LIST SIGN UP



◀ *A big thank you to everyone who generously donated to help create our new CCC Trike Track! It is now paved and fully fenced in. The CCC children have enjoyed riding their trikes in this exciting new space throughout the summer as we look forward to having the track painted.*

Remember In Prayer

Please continue to remember those who have suffered from loss of family, friends, and homes this past year due to terrorism, war, and natural disasters.

If you are going to have surgery, or entering or coming home from the hospital, we would like to hear from you. Hospitals DO NOT automatically notify the church when one of our members in the hospital. If you know of a church member or a family member who is in the hospital, please notify the church office at 717-336-7600 or Pastor Brad Haws at 717-587-3424.



Ephrata Manor:
Gladys Getz

Stone Ridge:
Brenda Sheaffer

Ongoing Prayer:

John Brensinger
Dan Fichthorn
Mike & Patty Leshner
Barbara Libengood
Cindy Mattu
Harlan Martzall

Linda Meckley
Ronald Petery
Amy Burkholder Strasser
Sally Sholmartin
Phil & Colleen Hornberger

**The Highlands
at Wyomissing:**
Roland Gehman

Keystone Villa:
David & Joyce Wade

The Garden at Stevens:
Barbara Hackman
Nevin & Pat McQuate

PRAYER LIST – FRIENDS

Curtis Althouse
Dawn Smith, friend of Dave & Marcy Donmoyer
Ben & Sarah Day, in-laws of Ernie Dunkelberger
Jens Bender & Family
Barbara Martzall, daughter-in-law of Harlan Martzall
Justin Mattu, husband of Cindy Mattu
Yuki & Michi, friends of Linda Meckley
Faith Moyer, cousin of Cara Miller

Linda Clark, sister of Janet Neville
Dalton Wieder, cousin of Janet Neville
Karen Woerner Kim, friend of Janet Neville
Brett Meckley, friend of Janet Neville
Caroline Newman, sister of Sally Sholmartin
Margie Strine, friend of Bruce & Karen Sweigart
Chase Weiler, grandson of Mary Weiler
Katie Weitzel & Charlotte Weitzel

OUR MEMBERS & FRIENDS IN THE MILITARY

Members:

Cpt. Seth Grubb

Friends:

Jerry Beck III
Aaron Derr

Ashley Gruebel
Michael Leshner, Jr.

Tyler Moyer
Brett Rettew
Ronald Sweigart

REV 07-2026

If you are able to update us on any of these prayer requests, please contact the church office at 717-336-7600 or churchoffice@denverstjohns.org.

AUGUST 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Pastor Brad on Vacation
2 Pastor Brad on Vacation 10:15am Worship w/Rev. George Martz Mission Moment: Victoria Valez, UCC Homes	3	4 7:45pm Bible Meditation	5 8:00am Bible Meditation 6:30pm Full Day Preschool & SACC Back to School Night	6	7	8 11:00am-1:00pm Cheesesteak Sale
9 10:15am Worship & Communion 11:30am Christian Ed Team Meeting	10 6:00pm CCC Staff Meeting & Dinner 6:30pm Finance Team Meeting	11 7:45pm Bible Meditation	12 8:00am Bible Meditation	13 8:30am Staff Meeting	14	15
16 10:15am Worship 11:15am Church Picnic (<i>after worship</i>)	17 6:30pm Consistory Meeting	18 7:45pm Bible Meditation	19 8:00am Bible Meditation 6:30pm Half Day Preschool Back to School Night	20	21 Last Day of Summer Camp	22
23 10:00am Denver Days Worship in the Park (<i>NO Zoom or Worship in the Sanctuary</i>)	24 6:15pm EASS 7:00pm Property Committee Meeting	25 7:45pm Bible Meditation School Starts	26 8:00am Bible Meditation	27 8:30am Staff Meeting	28	29
30 10:15am Worship	31					

September 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 7:45pm Bible Meditation	2 8:00am Bible Meditation 6:30pm Strategic Planning Committee Mtg	3	4	5
6 10:15am Worship	7 Church Offices & CCC Closed <i>Labor Day</i>	8 1:00pm Altar Guild Meeting 7:45pm Bible Meditation	9 8:00am Bible Meditation	10 8:30am Staff Meeting	11	12 11:00am-1:00pm Cheesesteak Sale
13 9:00am Adult SS 10:15am Worship Mission Moment: Kim Warner, City Gate	14 6:00pm CCC Staff Meeting & Dinner 6:30pm Finance Team Meeting	15	16 8:00am Bible Meditation 7:45pm Bible Meditation	17	18	19
20 9:00am Adult SS 10:15am Worship 11:30am Christian Ed Meeting (<i>after worship</i>)	21 6:30pm Consistory Meeting	22 Pastor Brad attending "Tent of Our Making" meeting in Cleveland, OH	23 Pastor Brad attending "Tent of Our Making" meeting in Cleveland, OH	24 Pastor Brad attending "Tent of Our Making" meeting in Cleveland, OH	25	26
27 9:00am Adult SS 10:15am Worship	28 6:15pm EASS 7:00pm Property Committee Meeting	29 7:45pm Bible Meditation	30 8:00am Bible Meditation			

Mailing List

STAY CONNECTED WITH CHURCH UPDATES

If you are signed up for our mailing list but are not receiving Pastor Brad’s emails on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, please check your spam, junk, promotions, and other email folders. We also recommend adding Pastor Brad’s email address to your contact list to help ensure future messages are delivered to your inbox.

Not yet on our mailing list? Click the link below to email us a request or call 717-336-7600. Please include your name and the email address you would like us to add.

Our mailing list is a great way to stay informed about church activities, community updates, newsletters, and important announcements.

[SIGN ME UP!](#)

2026 Giving Summary: As of July 12, 2026

	Total Received	Budget	Amount Remaining
*Weekly Offering (incl Legacy Campaign, Bequest & Memorials)	\$ 147,095	\$ 216,000	\$ (68,905)
Fundraisers (incl Men's Brotherhood)	\$ 24,579	\$ 45,000	\$ (20,421)
	\$ 171,675	\$ 261,000	\$ (89,325)
Missions for 2026			
January - Peter's Porch	\$ 790	\$ 1,000	\$ (210)
February - Good Samaritan Services	\$ 605	\$ 1,000	\$ (395)
March - Ephrata Area Social Services	\$ 820	\$ 1,000	\$ (180)
April - Habitat for Humanity	\$ 640	\$ 1,000	\$ (360)
May - Lighthouse Vocational Services	\$ 1,370	\$ 1,000	\$ -
June - UCC Connections (UCC OCWM, Penn Central Conf, Lanc Assoc.)	\$ 1,364	\$ 1,000	\$ 364
July - Cocalico Ministerium (incl Acts of Love)	\$ 435	\$ 1,000	\$ (565)
August - UCC Homes (incl Ephrata Manor)	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ (1,000)
September - City Gate	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ (1,000)
October - Real Life Community Services (incl Power Packs)	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ (1,000)
November - Builders of Hope	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ (1,000)
December - UCC Youth Homes (incl Bethany Children's & Hoffman Youth)	\$ 20	\$ 1,000	\$ (980)
Other Missions:			
Meals on Wheels	\$ 595	\$ -	\$ 595
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 665	\$ -	\$ 665
	\$ 7,304	\$ 12,000	\$ (5,066)

*Memorials \$280, Bequests \$27,107, Legacy Campaign \$32,737

Foundation Financial Report: May 1 - June 30, 2026

Checking Account Activity

Beginning Cash Balance - May 1, 2026	\$ 4,899.67
Cash Receipts:	<u>0.00</u>
Total Cash Available	4,899.67
Cash Disbursements:	
Cocalico Care Center Tuition Assistance	<u>875.00</u>
Total Cash Disbursements	<u>875.00</u>
Ending Cash Balance - June 30, 2026	<u><u>\$ 4,024.67</u></u>

Investment Account Balance

Beginning Balance - May 1, 2026	\$ 1,054,314.78
Deposits / Additions:	
Investment Income	5,307.66
Increase in Value of Investments	<u>37,690.17</u>
	42,997.83
Withdrawals / Deductions:	
Investment Fees	0.00
Transfer for Church Operations / Legacy Campaign	0.00
Transfers for Mortgage Payments	13,600.00
Decrease in Value of Investments	<u>0.00</u>
	<u>13,600.00</u>
Ending Balance - June 30, 2026	<u><u>\$ 1,083,712.61</u></u>

Allocation of Account Balance:	Beginning	Ending
Foundation	\$ 938,583.47	\$ 981,047.83
Legacy Campaign	<u>115,731.31</u>	<u>102,664.78</u>
	<u><u>\$ 1,054,314.78</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,083,712.61</u></u>