

DECEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



**St. John United Church of Christ
10207 Lincoln Trail
Fairview Heights, Illinois**

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9-3

Office 397-6323

Pastor Rosemary Captain

**We are an Open and Affirming congregation,
where all are welcome.**



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It's Advent, the time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. The term is a version of the Latin word meaning "coming"; a time of waiting and expectation. Besides the birth of a baby, I wonder what else we are waiting for?

Our children await gifts, a tradition started by St. Nicholas. Unfortunately, for some families gifting and eating are the only thing Christmas means to them. They feel they must give everyone in the family including cousins, nieces, nephews, distant aunts and uncles, EVERYBODY in their family, close or not, gift and each year the gift should be bigger and better than last year!

I'm glad we in the church have other ideas and traditions of what Christmas is about. Baby Jesus is a wonderful gift to us. He will become our teacher, guide, and savior. That's the best gift any of us could ever expect.

May this Christmas you be blessed with knowing the best gift is with us now and forever. Peace to you and your family. Pastor Rosemary

P.S. AND SPEAKING OF GIFTS, PLEASE NO GIFTS FOR ME THIS CHRISTMAS. BEING YOUR PASTOR HERE AT ST. JOHN IS THE BEST GIFT I COULD EVER WRITE ON SANTA'S LIST. With all of you by my side, I need nothing else.

EVENING CIRCLE



The Evening Circle met November 18th. At our November meeting we had a special Thank Offering that went to OCWM. Jan and Tom Miller gave a presentation about their trip to Southeast Asia and China and Eileen had a Christmas craft for us to do. We will have our bake sale December 9th so get your ovens ready for baking some goodies. Please check the bulletin boards for information about Kaleah the child we are sponsoring from Kindercottage. Any gifts should be brought by Dec. 2nd. Our December meeting will be held on the 17th and will be our Christmas party which is always a fun time. All of the ladies will be bringing snacks and a special offering will be taken for the Fairview Heights Food Pantry

The Evening Circle meets the third Monday of the month and all ladies of St. John are welcome. Hope to see you all there!



CHOIR NOTES

Advent is certainly a time for preparation for the birth of Jesus. The choir is no different. We will be preparing for Advent Sundays and Christmas Eve singing. We will be using an Advent candle lighting liturgy that includes music for everyone and we will deliver anthems and sing-along hymns on Sunday mornings.

Christmas Eve service at 7:00 will provide all of you a time of peace and joy. Please come and enjoy the singing by candlelight. It is not too late to join us in celebrating! See Nancy at church or call her at 233-5894 for more details.



USHERS

December 2 – Tom and Jan Miller
December 9 – Mary Lou & Urban Baum
December 16 – Sue Ganschietz & Lew Thomasino
December 23 – Ginny Ganschietz & Tyler Underwood
December 24 – Ginny Ganschietz & Tyler Underwood, Amy
Brink & Conner Brink
December 30 – Wayne Schlosser & Carol Bulva

LITURGY AND LITURGISTS

DECEMBER 2, 2018	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – HOPE Jeremiah 33:14-16	Eileen Gammon
DECEMBER 9, 2018	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – PEACE Malachi 3:1-4	Jan Miller
DECEMBER 16, 2018	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – JOY Zephaniah 3:14-20 Isaiah 12:2-6	Sharon Banjavcic
DECEMBER 23, 2018	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – LOVE Micah 5:2-5a	Anne Brown
DECEMBER 24, 2018	<u>CHRISTMAS EVE 7 PM SERVICE</u> Isaiah 9:2-7	Sue Williams
DECEMBER 30, 2018	FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS Colossians 3:12-17	Mary Lou Baum

SHEPHERDING THE LIGHT!



St. John will be collecting the **UCCs Christmas Fund Offering** on Sunday, December 23, 2018. Special envelopes will be available in the bulletins that Sunday or you can include your gift with your regular offering, just be sure to mark what portion is for the Christmas Fund.

For 116 years, the Christmas Fund has been a tangible expression of God's love and light in the world that provides direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay church employees in the following ways:

- Monthly Pension Supplementation for lower-income retired clergy and lay employees.
- Quarterly Health Premium Supplementation for lower-income retired UCC clergy and lay employees.
- Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to lower-income retired UCC clergy and lay church employees.
- Emergency Grants for active/retired UCC clergy and lay employees.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY!!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

12/3 Rosemary Williams	12/14 Barron Arbeiter
12/3 Gene Ganschietz	12/14 Jakob Arbeiter
12/6 Abbey Cohlmeier	12/15 Aaron Drake
12/6 Wyatt Vance	12/20 Emily Whitaker
	12/30 Pat Bregen

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

12/1 Carol & Terry Randle	# 52
12/12 Eileen & Jack Gammon	# 48
12/19 Nancy & Jim Eisenhower	# 48

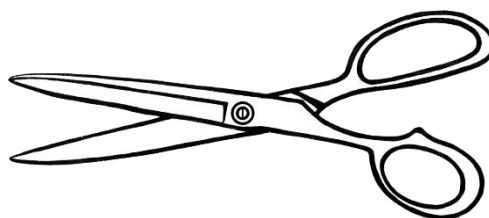
FEMININE HYGIENE KITS

We are getting ready to send our first shipment of kits to Peru in December! Barb will be going down there to meet with doctors. No kits will be handed out, but will be stored until her trip in April.

Our next work day will be on **Tuesday, December 4.**

We will start at 10:00 a.m. Stay as long as you like. Come later in the day as you like or are able. The church will be open until 4:00 p.m. Here are jobs that need to be done:

- sewing/serging
- turning/pressing
- tracing/cutting
- installing snaps
- installing ribbon
- counting and packing



Hopefully you can spare some time on Dec 4. We will have additional monthly work days, on the first Tuesday of each month, until we reach our goal. If you can come and have any of the following, please bring it with you that day:

- sewing machine and usual sewing supplies
- serger
- scissors that will cut fabric
- cutting mat, ruler and rotary cutter

You do not have to have sewing skills! Just bring a sharp scissors and come. We will train you.

Thank you so much for your support so far! You have given time, talent, materials and money so that St. John can serve our neighbors in Peru. I am asking that you still keep up the gifts of underwear (girls' sizes 10, 12, 14) and cash. We are to the point that we need to survey what we have and see what is still needed.

NOTE ABOUT JANUARY WORK DAY: Since the first Tuesday of the month is New Year's Day, we will work on the second Tuesday, January 8.

SUNDAY SCHOOL/CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Children and grown-ups of St. John will retell the story of Jesus' birth during Sunday morning worship on December 23. Join us for song and scripture. This year also marks the 200th anniversary of the first performance of "Silent Night". The kids will sing and sign that most beloved Christmas carol – a sight not to be missed! Pennies for Mission in December will go to Belleville Christian Center.

AMONG OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Recently hospitalized:

Eileen Cox, Terry Kissel

Funeral:

The service for Eileen Cox, a member since 1958, was held on December 1. Our sympathy and condolences to her daughters, Wendy and Cindy, and their families.

PRAYER LIST:

Tom Petroff, Dave Seneczyn, Roger Fox, Ardella Morris, Eric White, Alice Stidham, Sandy Fort, Darlene Bax, Stacy Bunetic, Ethan Riess, Sandy Frazier



POINSETTIA'S

It's time to order poinsettias for the CHRISTMAS GARDEN OF MEMORIES. We will be taking orders December 2 and December 9. The price is still \$10.00. You have a choice of red, white or pink. The flowers will be on the altar the 16th and 23rd. They can be picked up after the service on Christmas Eve.

If you prefer to give a memorial, please give that information and donation to Ruth or whoever is taking orders in the narthex on Sundays or call the church office before December 12 so your loved ones will be listed in the bulletin on the 16th.

ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE, REGION 9 (THAT'S US!)

Region 9 churches include UCC churches in East. St. Louis, O'Fallon, Belleville, Smithton and Fairview Heights. Last summer we sponsored a concert and ice cream social. (That was fun!) On November 3, over 65 youth from Region 9 participated in the first youth activity we have had in a long time! The youth gathered at St. John for a brief get-to-know-you activity and then they all went to Sky Zone for an afternoon of fun.

Our next project for keeping youth involved is a couple of mission projects. **On Sunday, February 10, 1:00, at O'Fallon UCC, 206 West Adams, O'Fallon**, the kids will be making Valentine boxes for Kindercottage. They will also be preparing colored, plastic bags for use in making mats for the homeless.

Here is how you can help!

The kids need some supplies – please sign up for the following at church:

- shoe boxes
- valentine gift wrap
- Sweethearts or other wrapped candy
- printed Valentine cards (packages for little ones, think school)
- plastic bags from any store, preferably white or brightly colored

The kids will be using the plastic bags to make “plarn”, or plastic yarn. If you crochet and would like to take some of the plastic yarn and crochet a mat or two, we will get the instructions along with materials to you.

CHURCH COUNCIL

It's time to begin thinking of new faces on the Council for next year! If you would be interested, please talk to Pastor Rosemary or one of the Council members – Lew Thomasino, Sharon Banjavcic, Nancy Eisenhauer, Sue Ganschinietz, Rosemary Williams, Ginny Ganschinietz, Janice Petroff, or Wayne Schlosser.



THE CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES ARE BACK

If you had the opportunity to attend last year's hilarious musical, you will enjoy their sequel. The members of St. John are once again invited to join the members of St. Paul, Lebanon for an afternoon of fellowship and laughter, Sunday, December 30. The play is at 2 pm and we can car pool from our church. After the musical, for those who wish, we will stop at Our Lady of the Snows Shrine for supper. The tickets for the show are \$32, possibly less if we get a block of tickets. Please RSVP at our church office or with Pastor Rosemary.

**I GUARANTY YOU WILL NEVER FORGET
THE FUN YOU WILL HAVE WITH THESE
CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES**



**We can all relate to one of these characters,
or at least remember a lady just like them.**

Here's a little more information about the musical -

"And out of the basement shall come a Church Basement program of good tidings, great humor and joy! The ladies are serving it up again, This time around it's an all-new holiday show. *Away in the Basement: A Church Basement Ladies Christmas* takes us back to 1959 and the day of the Sunday School Christmas Program. In the midst of holiday preparations and sprinklings of love in the air, the ladies in their witty, down-to-earth style are creating their own memories from Christmases past and present. Content to do things the way they have always been done yet pondering new ideas, the reality of everyday life hits home as they plan the Sunday School Christmas Program. As the children rehearse up in the sanctuary, several of the ladies of the kitchen are finishing up the treat bags filled with apples, peanuts and ribbon candy while the others put the final touches on the nativity pieces. As they mend old bathrobe costumes, discuss the politics of who's going to play the various roles, little do the ladies know what surprises are in store for them. Known for their hilarious antics and subtle charm, they are once again called upon to step in and save the day!"

**BY THE WAY – THE PLAY IS NOT JUST FOR WOMEN.
THOSE OF THE MALE GENDER WILL HAVE FUN, TOO!!**

December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<u>1</u>
<u>2</u> ● <u>Worship at 10am with Holy Communion. Decorate the church after worship.</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> ● <u>Sewing day for Peru project, 10am - 4pm</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>9</u> ● <u>Worship at 10am</u> ● <u>Poinsettia orders are due</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u> ● <u>Church Council Potluck and Meeting 6pm</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> ● <u>L-room booked, 4pm</u>
<u>16</u> ● <u>Worship at 10am</u>	<u>17</u> ● <u>Evening Circle 7pm</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> ● <u>L-room booked, 6pm</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>23</u> ● <u>Worship at 10am with Children's Christmas Program</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>30</u> ● <u>Worship at 10am</u>	<u>31</u>					