



St. John United Church of Christ Newsletter December 2017



Birthday Blessings

- 3 Ann Ford
- 4 Michelle Bauer
Daniel Castro
Jake Lee
- 7 Jack Soucheck
- 10 Sandy Britt
- 21 Katie Campbell
- 23 Judy Nikodem
Linda Offenbecher
- 25 Art Kapchinski
- 26 Shay Ader-
Steinhauser
- 27 Jason Bleyle Jr.
Brian Clyden
Kathy Hamlin
Janis Land
- 31 Sadie Bleyle
Meri Meier



Church Office Hours:
Mon-Thurs 9am – 3:30pm
Church email address:
stjohnkan@gmail.com
Pastor Barbara's
email address:
revlohrbach@gmail.com
Pastor Barbara's day off
is Monday

October 29th, 2017 Dedication Dinner



A time of fellowship



Sharing a wonderful meal



A time of worship and reflection



New addition key players

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- December 3 – 1st Sunday of Advent: Worship with Communion
12-3 pm Community Open House in Peace Hall
- December 10 – 2nd Sunday of Advent: Worship with play by children of J.A.M.
- December 17 – 3rd Sunday of Advent: Secret Santa Gathering @ 9:30, Worship
- December 21 – 7 p.m. Blue Christmas: Gathering to Remember
- December 24 – 4th Sunday of Advent: Worship
- December 24 – 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Carols and Candlelight
- December 31 – Worship: 1st Sunday after Christmas
- January 7 – Worship with Communion

Prayer List

Rhonda David,
Charlene Dybedock,
Dewana Eckstein,
Art Huffines,
Marge Jefferson,
Kellie Lafavor,
Jennifer Parris,
Evelyn Sass,
Harold Schriefer,
Sheryl Schriefer,
Phyllis Tatro,
Donna Yarno,
Jean Zak,
Ministry of St. John

Please know that not everyone is in the same situation, or is praying for the same outcome. Lift them up to God and ask that the best that God intends, the best that the healing hearts can give, and the best of our self-care and care by others be done.



WITH SYMPATHY

Our Heartfelt Condolences to:

Ann & Jim Ford, and Sue Lemenager
& Dave Frantzen at the passing of
their mother Glendoris Jensen on
10/31

*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give
to you; not as the world gives do I
give to you. Do not let your heart be
troubled, nor let it be fearful.*

John 14:27

SHARING
GOD'S
GIFTS

General Fund Contributions to date. 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month also include online giving totals.

Nov. 5	\$9,803
Nov. 12	\$1,782
Nov. 19	\$2,234

**October Blessing Bucket Total
\$197 - College Care Packages**



Pastor Barbara's Musings

Keeping Christmas

by Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933)

There is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day,
and that is keeping Christmas.



Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people
and to remember what other people have done for you?

To ignore what the world owes you and to think what you owe the world?

To see that men and women are just as real as you are,
and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy?

To close your book of complaints against the management of the universe,
and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness?

Are you willing to stoop down

and consider the needs and desires of little children?

To remember the weakness and loneliness of people growing old?

To stop asking how much your friends love you,
and to ask yourself whether you love them enough?

To bear in mind the things that other people have to bear in their hearts?

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world –
stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death –

and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem
is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love?

Then you can keep Christmas.

And if you can keep it for a day, why not always?





Merry Christmas from the Lohrbachs

What I'd really like to give you for Christmas is a star...

*Brilliance in a package,
something you could keep in the pocket of your jeans
or in the pocket of your being.*

*Something to take out in times of darkness,
something that would never snuff out or tarnish,
something you could hold in your hand,
something for wonderment,
something for pondering,
something that would remind you of
what Christmas has always meant:
God's Advent Light into the darkness of this world.*

*But stars are only God's for giving,
and I must be content to give you words and wishes
and packages without stars.*

*But I can wish you life
as radiant as the Star
that announces the Christ Child's coming,
and as filled with awe as the shepherds who stood beneath its light.*

*And I can pass on to you the love
that has been given to me,
ignited countless times by others
who have knelt in Bethlehem's light.*

Perhaps, if you ask, God will give you a star.

Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem, The Westminster Press, 1980.

With our love and a hope for peace in your heart,

Pastor Barbara and Dean

ANNUAL Report

All Committee Chairpersons

Annual reports are due by
January 15.

Reports can be placed in my mailbox or
emailed to the office

Thank You, Pam

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Tuesdays, December 5 and 12 at 6:30 pm

Pastor Barbara invites you to join her on either of the first two Tuesdays of Advent for a time of conversation and fellowship. Pastor will be in Peace Hall at 6; the coffee and tea will be ready. Come for an hour; come for 30 min; come just as you are for as long as you wish. Bring your favorite Christmas story, song, tradition, treat, picture or decoration and share the meaning of that favorite memory. Find a bit of quiet in the season of Advent and bring a friend, too.

Replenishment Items Needed at Church

13 gal garbage bags
Toilet Paper
Small paper plates

Thank you helping replenish items for
the church. It is very much appreciated.

Altar Flowers December



- 3 Joe Offenbecher
Glendoris Jensen
- 10 Poinsettias
- 17 Poinsettias
- 24 Poinsettias
- 31 Char Dybedock
*Available

*Available as of print date. Please
contact the church office 815/932-3336
for current information.

Your flower donation (**\$22.00 per vase**)
can be left with our Office Manager or
placed in the offering plate with your
name on the envelope.

Our Opening and Affirming Mission Statement

*All people are welcome to worship
at St. John United Church of Christ
and become members of our
congregation. No one is excluded
from enjoying fellowship with us
because of age, gender, race,
color, challenge, or sexual orienta-
tion and/or affectional preference,
gender identity and expression.*

*Our Christian congregation appreci-
ates differences in people and
encourages diverse views. We
worship God with one another. All
are welcome to participate fully in
the life of our church.*

www.stjohnucc-kan-il.org

BLUE CHRISTMAS—GATHERING TO REMEMBER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 7 P.M.

Christmas can be a painful time. The death of loved ones, the anguish of a broken relationship, the insecurity of employment, the weariness of health, the pain of isolation, or the pressure of making a “happy holiday”—all these can make us feel alone in the midst of the celebrations of the season.

St. John United Church of Christ offers a space and time to acknowledge the sadness and concern that may be present with a “Blue Christmas—Gathering to Remember”. The sanctuary will be filled with candle light and quiet as we take the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. We will hear scriptures of comfort and sing carols that are a reminder that the time when Jesus was born was not easy as well. All are invited as we remember the losses in our lives. During the 30-minute worship there will be an opportunity to light a candle to remember a loved one or a situation where the loss is most painful.



2017 CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE



The Mission Committee invites us to help others at Christmas. The children of St. John have been gathering “Pennies for Praise” all year long to help as well. We have also brought our food offerings through the month of November. This year we are partnering with the Kankakee County Juvenile Probation Department to help 6 families and their children. The probation officers will deliver gifts and food on Monday, December 18.

The Giving Tree will be decorated with tags labelled with clothing size and/or a gift wish for Christmas. Suggested gift cost is \$25 so not all gift wishes can be brought in. We can help you with other ideas. Also on the tree will be gift tags for a turkey, ham, or potatoes and bread. These items will be included with the non-perishable food gathered during November. Questions--ask Cindy & Bridget Bertrand-Essington.

How can you participate?

- Choose a tag and purchase a gift for the child or choose a gift tag and purchase food item listed
- Write your name on list located in narthex with what the tag you chose
- Return wrapped gift with star attached to top by December 10
- Bring turkeys, hams, potatoes and bread on December 17
- Volunteer to sort food and packages

December MISSION MOMENT UCC Christmas Fund

As part of our mission giving for the month of December, we will participate in the Christmas Fund Offering, a United Church of Christ mission that supports retired and disabled servants of the church. This Fund provides financial support to retired ministers, many of whom live on low-income pensions. The Fund also provides emergency grants to ministers who have extraordinary needs, such as medical bills, and pension and health care supplemental support. This is one of the five UCC missions.

Reminders:

All checks should be made payable to "St John Church"

When making contributions to specific Missions, please make sure you have it indicated on your envelope so, that the monies are properly distributed.

*The Mission Committee thanks you for your generous
contributions to help others in our communities.*

**Blessings in a
Backpack**
Feeding The Future Of America

Backpack Pack Day
12/06 at 10am - Need 5
packers & 12/20 6:30pm
Need 10 packers
at Central Christian



Fellowship Group December 5 12:00pm

The Fellowship Group will gather in Peace Hall for a Christmas lunch. You are welcome to join us. Please call the church office by December 1 to RSVP.

Lunch Bunch

When: Wednesday, 12/20
11:30 a.m.

Where: Papi's Pizza Café
150 E Station Street
Kankakee

Please R.S.V.P. to
Sheryl Bacon by 12/17

Please come even if it isn't
your birthday.

DYI Workshop Fundraiser for Blessings in a Backpack

Join us in efforts to raise funds for Blessings in a Backpack with St. John. We will be transforming raw materials into one of a kind rustic wood signs! No experience needed! Registration is required by phone or online.

Wine Paper Scissors

45 N. Main Street

Manteno

815-216-7595

www.winepaperscissors.com

Click on December 10th on the event calendar

Click on Register Now

Password:backpacks



SECRET SANTA

The children and youth will be drawing the name of a senior who attends worship (age 75 and up) to whom they will be a secret Santa.

On Sunday, December 3 and 10, the seniors chosen will receive a small gift from a child (no name as it's a secret) who attends J.A.M. We will let the seniors know ahead of time that they are being gifted. On Sunday, December 17, the children and the seniors will gather at 9:30 am in Peace Hall for refreshments and a time of fellowship. We encourage the children (and parents of younger children) to sit with their senior in worship that Sunday.

Courtyard Paver Orders

There is still an opportunity to place an order for a paver for the courtyard. If you would like to purchase a paver in memory or in honor of someone, please pick up an order form on the table in the narthex. When we have 15 paver orders, we will contact David Cook of Art's Landscaping and place the order.





Scrip Card Program
Raise Funds for St. John as You Shop!
Still Time to Order Gift Cards
Before Christmas!!



This is an ongoing fundraiser for the church which helps with the budget shortfall on every card purchased so please consider buying cards for your own use as well as for gifts.

Profits from this program go into the "General Fund"
to help with any monthly budget shortfall.

Profit as of November 2017: \$673.36

Orders are due on December 10

Please take some time and remember those who can not be with us on a regular basis and send them a Christmas greeting and let them know that you are thinking about them during the Christmas season and throughout the year.

MaryAnn Bade

Heritage Lodge
 995 N. Entrance Ave.
 Kankakee, IL 60901

Eleanor Lefave

300 E River St, Apt 710
 Kankakee, IL 60901

Emily Stovall

Heritage Lodge
 995 N Entrance, Apt 11
 Kankakee, IL 60901

Joyce Dimpfl

Miller Rehab & Nursing B101
 1601 Butterfield Trail
 Kankakee, IL 60901

Joyce Meier

4501 Concord #231
 Northbrook, IL 60062

Marge Jefferson

Our Lady of Victory
 20 Briarcliff Lane
 Bourbonnais, IL 60914

Evelyn Sass

Citadel Care Center
 900 W. River Pl.
 Kankakee, IL 60901



St. John Book Club

**Book Club Meets
at the Home of Charlene Dybedock,
1711 Oak Tree Lane, Kankakee**



In December we will be meeting on **Tuesday, 12/12 at 5:30pm.**

We will be discussing the book:
Mindfulness by Ellen J. Langer

Ellen J. Langer, Harvard professor of psychology, determines that the mindless following of routine and other automatic behaviors lead to much error, pain and a predetermined course of life. In this thought-provoking book, her research has been "translated" for the lay reader. With anecdotes and metaphors, Langer explains how the

mindless--as opposed to the mindful--develop mindsets of categories, associations, habits of thought born of repetition in childhood and throughout schooling. To be mindful, she notes, stressing process over outcome, allows free rein to intuition and creativity, and opens us to new information and perspectives.

Looking ahead at the future reads of the Book Club

- 1/09 - *The Nightingale*
by Kristin Hannah
- 2/13 - *Barkskins* by Annie Proulx
- 3/13 - *In the Time of the Butterflies*
by Julia Alvarez

Cookie Bake & Open House



Join us on **December 2 at 1:00pm** for a cookie bake in our new Peace Hall kitchen!



Bring your favorite recipes and ingredients along and whatever you would like to use for baking and join us for a fun afternoon.

On **December 3** from Noon – 3:00pm, there will be an open house and a bake sale with all the great cookies we made on Saturday.