

ST. JOHN'S CHIMES

Published monthly in the interest of



**St. John United Church of Christ
204 Seventh Street
Lincoln, Illinois 62656**

December 2023 Newsletter

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

204 Seventh Street ~ Lincoln, Illinois 62656

217-732-6957

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"Letting God's love shine through us to the Community we Serve"

Rev. David Marquardt

Bridge Pastor

Darlene Begolka

Office Manager

Volume 54, No. 12

December 2023

We are ready for the Advent Season at St. John United Church of Christ. The trees are up in the Sanctuary, the garland is hung, the poinsettias will be in their special place and the Advent Wreath is on the table. All we need now is **YOU!**



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3rd

Morning Worship Service with the Sacrament of Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Special Music – St. John Singers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10th

Morning Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Special Music – St. John Singers

The Church Council has planned a **"Church Family" catered dinner** following the morning worship service. The menu is Glazed Ham, Potatoes Au Gratin, Green Beans Almondine, Tossed Salad with dressing, dessert and drinks. We look forward to seeing everyone. We encourage you to invite someone who you haven't seen in church for awhile or someone who is looking for a church to join us for the morning worship service and stay for dinner. We would like reservations by December 4th if at all possible, but not required.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17th

Morning Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Special Music – St. John Chimers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24th

Morning Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Special Music – To be announced

Silent Night by Candlelight at 11:00 p.m.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Special Music – St. John Singers, St. John Singers, and St. John Chimers

FROM OUR PASTOR

Well, here we are, 7, almost 8 months into a 3-month contract, with Advent and Christmas right around the corner. I must admit that we have been happy worshipping here at St. John. We have been well received and both Gail and Joshua have enjoyed their many new relationships. I'm also grateful that you have allowed me to have a bit of fun over the last few weeks, sharing some of the contemporary worship music that is such a big part of our lives. This, along with our theme of 'what it means to be the church', has been really enjoyable to preach. But I must confess that the whole idea, was to sneak up on us with Stewardship Sunday.

Several weeks ago we discussed stewardship at the council meeting. It was explained that the church usually found a prepared theme and litany that was preached for about 4 weeks leading up to Ingathering Sunday. As we discussed this, I shared that in our last church we only did stewardship and pledges for the first year we were together. At that time the church was running a deficit budget, and it was easy to preach the necessity to 'pay our way', and not relying on savings to pay our regular bills. After that season of stewardship, I suggested that we should never ask for pledges again. It was my belief that stewardship isn't a time of year, but a way of life. And with that thought, we should preach stewardship all year long, and not just in November. Well long story short, we never ran a deficit budget again, and within a year or two, started putting surplus funds to work on capital projects.

I bring this to you, not to suggest that St. John change its stewardship and pledging program, but to enforce the idea, that giving isn't something we do out of obligation or to meet a budget, but out of thanksgiving for all we've been blessed with. Thanksgiving is upon us as I make these notes, and Advent is right around the corner. Before we know it, we'll be celebrating the birth of Jesus, singing all of our wonderful Christmas hymns, and be warmed by this special season, regardless of what the

weather outside might be doing. Only a few weeks after Christmas, we'll start Lent, with Ash Wednesday already on the 14th of February. No, I'm not trying to rush the season, it seems to do that on its own. What I'm trying to say to us, is that if there's ever a time for stewardship, a time of thanksgiving, a time of giving back to all of the blessings we've received, that it should be when we celebrate the birth of Christ, followed shortly thereafter, with the resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

So as I started out, my tenure here is rather unknown at this time. My guess is that we'll celebrate these next couple of holidays together and then see where the Good Lord is leading us. Your Pastoral Search Team has upcoming appointments with the UCC Transition Minister that we hope will get the ball rolling. As most of you know, there is a tremendous shortage of pastors out there, and the rate of those retiring is exceeding those seeking new positions. We know that God has a plan for St. John, so please continue being in prayer for your Search Team.

May God continue to bless each of us in ways we can't imagine.

Pastor David



**ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
UNAPPROVED CHURCH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, November 20, 2023

Present: Kent Paulus, Leland Semple, Silas Tockey, Jan Hahn, Keith Birnbaum, Bill Gosda, Jr., Sandy Meinershagen, Dan Row, Roger Michalsen, Pastor David Marquardt, and Darlene Begolka (Office Manager)

President Kent Paulus called the meeting order on Monday, November 20,, 2023. Rev. David Marquardt gave the invocation.

It was moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda. All voting aye. Motion carried. Minutes corrected to change date of the Christmas Dinner from October 10th to December 10th.

Leland Semple, Chair of Stewardship reported the following 2024 totals to date: Current = \$33,291; OCWM = \$4,476; Sister Church = \$866; Contingency = \$2930; Good Samaritan = \$486.

Jan Jeffries reported that there would be no St. John Gamers or St. John Diners in December.

Jan Jeffries also reported for the Veterans Celebration. 2023 was a great success and looking forward to next year.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor David reported that Ken Webster would be preaching on Sunday, November 26th. He also stated that he would be out at least one week in January. Pastor David connected with an interim minister at Starved Rock who will fill in that Sunday in January. He advised looking into new hymnals. Some Christmas Eve questions were answered.

OLD BUSINESS

YMCA: Nothing new to report

Interim Search Team and Pastoral Search Team:
The team will meet on Monday, December 11th for

a ZOOM call with the Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley from the Illinois Conference office.

Christmas Dinner: The Christmas Dinner will be held on Sunday, December 10th following the morning worship service. We are hoping to get some members back that Sunday who we have not seen for a while. The committee for the dinner includes Dan Row, Bill Gosda, Jr., Silas Tockey, Keith Birnbaum, Leland Semple, Kent Paulus and Darlene Begolka. The committee will meet following church on Sunday, November 26th to finalize plans.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Congregational Meeting Date: The Annual Congregational meeting date has been set for Sunday, January 28, 2024. The report will be available on Sunday, January 21st.

Appointment of Nominating Committee: The two out going Council members are Bill Gosda, Jr. and Kent Paulus and two will be appointed from the congregation.

2023 Treasurer's Books: The 2023 Treasurer's books will close at 12:00 noon on December 29th. Any monies received after that time will be counted toward 2024.

Reports for the Annual Report: Reports for the Annual Report are due by January 5, 2024.

Other: We learned that Mr. Moody who has been doing our snow removal for the parking lot for a number of years has now retired. Building and Grounds is searching for a snow removal service.

CORRESPONDENCE and EMAILS

We received an update from Western Association

TABLED ITEMS

- A. Youth Funds at Edward Jones
- B. Asking Pastor David to be Interim
- C. UCC campaign to raise money for racial justice ministry.

ADJOURNMENT and BENEDICTION

All recited The Lord's Prayer. It was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Silas Tockey
Church Council Secretary



CHRISTMAS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

Once again, we will be offering you the opportunity to make a donation to the Heifer Project in memory of your loved ones or as a gift.

You can learn more at heifer.org.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE...

For those who would like to participate an envelope was provided in your Thanksgiving mailing. Please fill it out and then enclose your donation inside the envelope. Drop it in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or drop it off at the church office or place it in another envelope and mail it to the church office. It's that simple. We will need them returned by December 17th so a listing can be made for the December 24th bulletin. **Look for the paper ornaments on the tree in the entryway with animals on them.**



Articles for the **January 2024** newsletter should be in the Church Office by **December 19th**.



OCTOBER FINANCIALS

Beginning Balance	\$15,580.02
Income	\$ 8,206.75
Expenses	\$ 18,146.43
Ending Balance	\$ 5,640.34

WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO...

Pastor David, Gail and Joshua at the death of Gail's aunt.

Hank and Lynn Spellman at the death of his sister, Ann Leeds Spellman Liesman.

The family of Robert Lenhardt, Jr.





December 3rd:

December 10th: Tonita Reifsteck

December 17th: Jan and Ed Jeffries

December 24th:

December 31st:



Celebrate Life Birthday Group

Friday, December 8th

11:30 a.m.

Cracker Barrel

December birthdays will be celebrated.

*Thank
you*



St. John UCC Church,

Thank you for participating in our Halloween Event!
Without you, it wouldn't be possible each year!

Allison Baker

The following is a note from Rev. Dr. Charlotte Nold, Pastor and the congregation of St. John Church in Chicago:

Dear Members of St. John UCC in Lincoln,

Thank you for your wonderful donation of \$159.16. We truly appreciate your continued support for our church and mission work. What an incredible blessing you are to us. Thank you.

Our food pantry is growing every week and it is a blessing for us to be able to feed the families in desperate need of food so that their children do not need to go to bed hungry. We also have many people who live alone who need and receive food. One of our clients is from Ukraine and is sending several boxes of food to her family overseas or whoever needs food there.

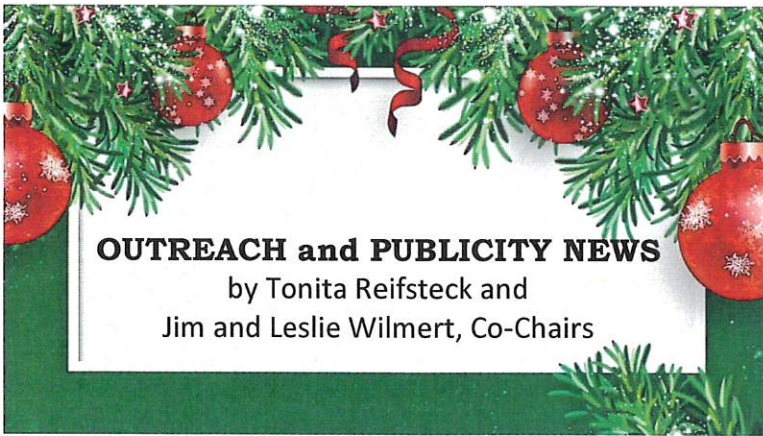
Thank you again for the wonderful blessing of much needed financial support that you are giving to our church.



The following is a note from Emily Paulus;

It was an honor to receive the church scholarship this year! It came in very handy when buying textbooks at the beginning of the school year. Your support means so much to me!





ST. CLARA'S REHAB and SENIOR CARE...

Drop gifts of personal hygiene or lotions, Senior coloring or puzzle books in Gift Bag by the Giving Tree by December 10th. Any questions on these see or call 217-855-1645 Tonita Reifsteck, Outreach

Outreach Ministry met on Thursday, November 1st in Fellowship Hall. Highlights were finalizing plans for the Christmas Parade, Hanging of the Greens, Upgraded décor of Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall, Decorating of bus for parade on Tuesday, December 5th – time to be announced;

- Bus riders sign up for CHRISTMAS PARADE – 2023 Theme is “Deck the Halls – A Christmas Light Show”. Bus leaves the parking lot at 5:30 p.m. Parade is at 6:30p.m. Boy Scout and Cub Scout troop 1102 will be a part of our entry, following us in the parade and helping pass out pencils. Others welcome to join in walking the route or riding the bus. Sign-up sheet in Narthex.
- All Church Caroling on Sunday, December 17th. Bus (if available) or cars will leave church at 1:30 p.m.
- Reported funding now available. Gas cards are in the office. Gas cards for those willing to furnish transportation for members with no other means to appointments locally, Springfield, Bloomington or Decatur.
- LCHS in need of personal hygiene items for the student commissary. Outreach voted to take this Project. Toni will get list from school.
- KROGER Rewards to St. John UCC for 3rd quarter (July 1st -September 30th) was 7 households earned \$30.72. This goes into the general fund of the church.

CHRISTMAS PARADE Thursday, December 7th 6:30 p.m.

Sign up sheets for the following:

Ride the Church Bus in the Christmas Parade on Thursday, December 7th. Bus leaves the church parking lot at 5:30 p.m.

Want to walk and pass out pencils during the route?



CHRISTMAS CAROLING TO SHUT-INS Sunday, December 17th Leave the church at 1:30 p.m.

Transportation to be determined. If you have questions see Tonita Reifsteck, Outreach Co-Chair.

CELEBRATE LIFE BIRTHDAY GROUP...

by Tonita Reifsteck



CELEBRATE LIFE met on November 10th in the Odd Fellows Museum on Wyatt. After a sack lunch and signing birthday and Thanksgiving cards Karen Birnbaum read

the familiar and longtime favorite poem of Flanders Field in honor of Veteran's Day. We all then took a tour of the memorabilia in the Museum – common expression “oh my” at all the history and artifacts – only a portion of which were on display as they are switched out with those in storage. Interesting fact the guide, Secretary Janis Klockenga told us was that all symbols are Bible related.



December 14th Celebrate Life will be held at Cracker Barrel. It would be helpful if those planning on going would call Sandy Wilmert or Toni Reifsteck so we can reserve tables. The topic will be 'My most memorable Christmas' or 'My Favorite Christmas'. We will have a GIFT BAG for those wanting to gift the residents at St. Clara's with some personal item (i.e. body wash, Kleenex, puzzle book, coloring book, window décor, or any 'sweet' cookie or candy).



MEALS on WHEELS HELPERS NEED to deliver...

Church route: 3 spots open.
Co-helper needed on 1st and 4th Mondays.
Pair for the 1st Friday of each month.

If you know of someone
who might be interested or
have any questions see or call
CAPCIL at 217-732-2159.



Saturday, December 2nd
8:30 a.m.
Imo's Café

All Men of the Church are Welcome



SPECIAL OFFERING SUNDAYS...The Mission Committee has designated the following Sundays:

- **Second Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the **Children of Lincoln project.**
- **Fourth Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the **Diaper Project for Head Start at Community Action.**

The Mission Committee has been so blessed in the past weeks with the wonderful donations from the congregation.



55 hats, 71 pairs of gloves and 12 scarves were delivered to CAPCIL to accompany the winter coats. An additional 25 pairs of gloves were taken to Lincoln Jr High School.

109 Stuffed plush Christmas animals were delivered to Lincoln Memorial Hospital for distribution in ER or wherever staff feels there is a need.

And lastly, 33 boxes and bags were delivered to Lincoln/Logan Food Pantry. They were so appreciative as the number of families needing this service has increased and the food pantry was actually low on grocery items.



Certainly, hope all of you St. Johners are feeling the love those in need in our community are feeling from your generosity and caring. Thank you! Thank you! And God Bless!



You still have time to buy some toys! Toys, games, books and puzzles are all items that you can donate to Toys for Tots. Bring your toys to the Giving Tree by December 11th and drop them in the big box. There is also a can in the back of the sanctuary for your monetary donations.

Thank you for supporting Toys for Tots!

Christmas Cards

Greet your fellow St. Johners again this Christmas by putting your cards on the tree in the entryway. We want to hear from everyone! The tree will be up all month and the greetings will also be listed in the January Chimes.





LET'S REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND

ST. CLARA'S REHAB and SENIOR CARE

1450 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656

Judy Kline
Susan Webb
John Wilmert

CASTLE MANOR

1550 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656

Jerry and Mary Berglin
Bill Krepps

COPPER CREEK

203 Stahlhut Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656

Steve Aue

CEDARHURST OF SPRINGFIELD

3520 Old Jacksonville Road, Springfield, IL 62711

Helen Opperman

ASHTON PLACE

4151 Ashton Road, Sarasota, FL 34233

Patty McCann

IN THEIR HOME

Sandy Morgan
931 -1575th Street, Lincoln
Send mail to: 12 Pheasant Run, Lincoln

CHARITY GUILD NOTES...



Charity Guild met shortly after the CELEBRATE LIFE in October for reorganizational meeting and conversation on Christmas donations. The officers for 2023 - 2024 will remain the same as follows:

President: Karen Birnbaum
Vice-President: Marlene Wilmert
Secretary: Tonita Reifsteck
Treasurer: Sandy Wilmert.

In November the Christmas gifts from the generous donations received by Charity Guild during the year were given to St. John UCC, Chicago; Pastor Charlotte Nold at St. John UCC, Chicago; Boy Scout Troop 1102, Lincoln; Habitat for Humanity of Logan County; Veteran's Commission of Lincoln for building of 'little houses' and to Odd Fellows Museum in Lincoln.



2023 TREASURER'S BOOK CLOSE



The treasurer's books for 2023 will close on Friday, December 29th at 12:00 noon. Any monies to be counted toward 2023 must be in the

Church Office by that time. Monies received after that time will be counted for 2024.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Committee reports for the Annual Report are due in the Church Office by Friday, January 5, 2024.



DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Dean Meinershagen
Dustin Paulus
Rich Reinwald
- 8 Peggy Goetsch
Silas Tockey
- 10 Meredith Wilmert
- 14 Marilyn Armbrust
- 17 Bill Gosda, Jr.
- 19 Roger Michalsen
Marlene Wilmert
- 20 Doug Reifsteck
- 24 Pastor David
- 29 Carolyn Pech
- 30 Greg Conrady
Meghan Kurtz
- 31 Angie Kurtz

ATTENDANCE

October 30th

43 In-Person, 85 on Facebook, 14 bulletins mailed
and website = 142+

November 5th

35 In-Person, 75 on Facebook, 15 bulletins mailed
and website = 125+

November 12th

42 In-Person, 64 on Facebook, 15 bulletins mailed
and website = 121+

November 19th

53 In-Person, 68 on Facebook, 15 bulletins mailed
and website = 136+

November 26th

31 In-Person, 77 on Facebook, 15 bulletins mailed
and website = 123+

DECEMBER

ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Larry and Verdeen Ingram
- 9 Glenn and Terri Shanle
- 18 Leland and Becky Semple
- 27 Roger and Jenna Michalsen

GREETERS

- December 3rd: Marlene Wilmert
- December 10th: Wayne Mara
- December 17th: Randy Pech
- December 24th: Bob Meinershagen
- December 24th: Alice Paulus



December Calendar

Saturday, December 2nd

Men's Fellowship at 8:30 a.m. at Imo's Café

Sunday, December 3rd

Coffee Hour at 9:15 a.m.

St. John Singers practice at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service with Communion at 10:00 a.m.
(In-Person/Live-stream)

St. John Ringers following church

Monday, December 4th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 5th

Decorate Church Bus for Christmas Parade

Wednesday, December 6th

YMCA from 1:45 to 6:00 p.m.

St. John Chimers practice at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 7th

Christmas Parade

Friday, December 8th

Celebrate Life Birthday Group at 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 10th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 a.m.

St. John Singers practice at 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. (In-Person/Live-stream)

Christmas Dinner following church

Monday, December 11th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 13th

St. John Chimers practice at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 16th

Wedding

Sunday, December 17th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 a.m.

St. John Singers practice at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. (In-Person/Live-stream)

St. John Ringers practice following church

Christmas Caroling to Shut-Ins at 1:30 p.m.

Monday, December 18th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Church Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 20th

YMCA from 1:45 to 6:00 p.m.

St. John Chimers practice at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. (In-Person/Live-stream)

Christmas Eve Service at 11:00 p.m.

Silent Night by Candlelight with Communion

Monday, December 25th

Office closed – Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 31st

Coffee Hour at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. (In-Person/Live-stream)

NOTE:

The YMCA will be here Monday – Friday from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. unless there is an earlier out which is noted on the calendar.



Linda Barrow
Sherri Mester
Drake Miller
Alissa Smith
Leslie Wilmert
Cheryl F.
Katrina Opperman

Lynn

Kurt

David

Kathy Staten

James and family

Jim Walsh

Kristen

Lee Wolfe

Joyce (Gail Marquardt's mom)

Lynn (Friend of Donna)

Mary Ann Bock Landon

Debbie (Friend of Jan Jeffries)

Janet (Ed and Jan Jeffries niece)

"Pete" Luckhart

Zach (Friend of Pastor David, Gail, Joshua)

Ronda Howard

Michelle Schneider

Abigail

Middle East

Cierra

Raymond

Stephanie Opperman

Tracey (Dana Denny's Mom)

Janet Dullard

Janet Johnson

Rev. Steve Blaum

Jean (C.J.) Sutton

Anita

Marlene Wilmert

Illinois Conference/Western Association

FACILITIES AND HOMEBOUND:

Steve Aue

Jerry and Mary Berglin

Judy Kline

Bill Krepps

Patty McCann

Sandy Morgan

Helen Opperman

Susan Webb

John Wilmert

This page and the following page are thank you's from the First Grade at Central School

Thank You

Dear

friend

Thank you for

buying us book

boxes.



Your Friend,

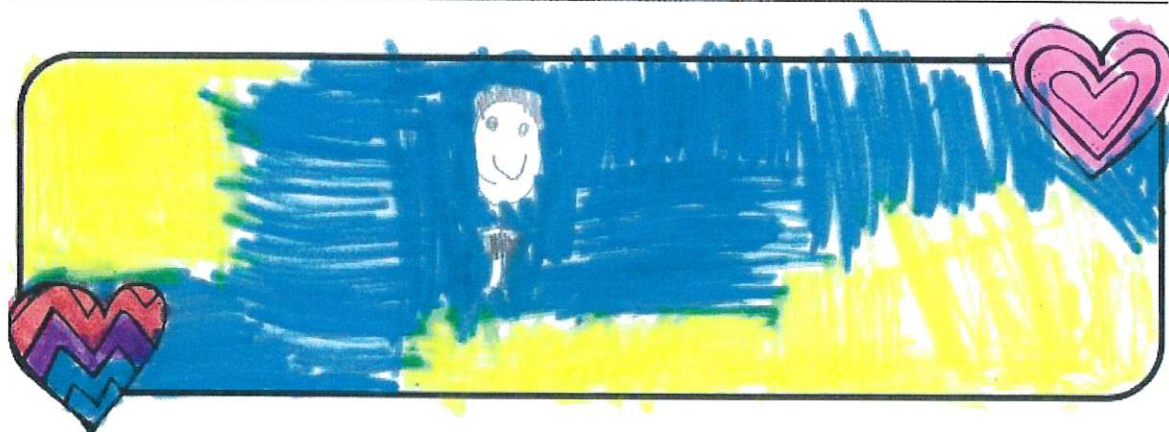
Caroline (Mrs. Anweiler's)
1st Grade

Thank You

Dear FRIE M

Thank you for

buying book boxes.



Your Friend,

KALEB

(Mrs. Anweiler's)
First Grade

Staff of St. John United Church of Christ

Members and Friends of St. John UCC

Rev. David Marquardt

Darlene Begolka

Carolyn Pech

Dana Denny

Laura Lee

Darlene Begolka

Calob Pluhm

Ministers

Bridge Pastor

Office Manager

Financial Manager

Custodian

Organist

St. John Chimers Director

St. John Ringers and St. John Singers Director

Church Council for 2023-2024



Kent Paulus (Elder), President

Leland Semple, Vice President

Silas Tockey, Secretary

Jan Jeffries, Current Fund Treasurer

Dan Row, Special Funds Treasurer

Bill Gosda, Jr., Financial Secretary

Keith Birnbaum

Sandy Meinershagen (Elder)

Roger Michalsen (Elder)

Contact us:

Email: stjohnucclincoln@yahoo.com

Website: stjohnucclincolnillinois.com

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