

ST. JOHN'S CHIMES

Published monthly in the interest of



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

April 2024 Newsletter

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

Rev. David Marquardt

Darlene Begolka

Volume 55, No. 4

Bridge Pastor

Office Manager

April 2024

Psalm 98:4

**Make a joyful noise unto
the LORD, all the earth:
make a loud noise, and
rejoice, and sing praise.**

FROM OUR PASTOR

Grace and peace,

On my heart this week is Holy Week, which we are just about to enter as I pen these words. Now ask any member of the clergy what bothers them most about Easter, and truthfully Christmas as well, are the crowds that normally fill our churches for these wonderful religious holidays. Christians so look forward to this time in worship as families gather to share the birth and resurrection of our Lord and Savior. But what about the other Sundays?

You see as I'm preparing bulletins, messages, and such for Holy Week, it must be said that Holy isn't just a week. Holy isn't just Christmas and Easter. Holy is a way of being. It is a way of life. And it is how we honor our God who sent Jesus to us on Christmas, and raised him from the grave on Easter. Holy is!

Now I could write about this for pages and pages, but my reading brought before me an author who said what was on my mind.

Yolanda Pierce writes, and portions shared:

I often attend church when I would rather be somewhere else. There are Sundays when the weather seems too perfect to be inside, when I'd rather sit outdoors at my local pancake house and read the paper. There are Sundays when my mind is racing or there are too many things on my to-do list....

I show up because God always meets me when I am faithful. God always shows up. Sometimes God shows up in the parking lot, in the person who greets me with a firm handshake or a hug. Sometimes God shows up in laughter over bagels during coffee hour. Sometimes God shows up in the face of the impossibly cute toddler who wants to play peekaboo with me all

service long. I show up and God shows up, and not necessarily in the sermon. I often encounter the holy presence of God before the pastor has spoken a single word.

Our churches are far too pastor-centric. We are so busy expecting the word of God to come from the pastor that we miss how God's presence arrives in other forms. Sometimes the word shows up in the person sitting next to you who hands you a peppermint. Sometimes the word comes from seeing the person who was in the hospital last month, now sitting in the pew in front of you. Sometimes the word comes from the audacious hat that one of the church mothers is wearing. God's powerful presence is all around us, not just streaming from the words spoken in the pulpit.

One Sunday, God showed up in the comments of a woman whose name I didn't even know. A creature of habit, I often sit in the same pew, as do many others in my church. I had seen her many times before; we had shared a hug and passed the peace on multiple occasions. As I arrived at my familiar pew after a few Sundays of being on the road for work, this woman leans over to me and says, "I missed your smile for the past few weeks. I want you to know I'm praying for you and miss you when you're gone." Tears welled in my eyes. The service hadn't started. The praise and worship team hadn't sung a single note, nor had the pastor even arrived at the pulpit. But surely God was present in that moment of deep human connection. She saw me, and she reminded me that God sees me.

But not every Sunday brings some new insight or revelation. Not every Sunday brings some transformative change into

my life. Not every Sunday soothes my doubts and calms my fears. Yet every single Sunday brings me joy. There is joy in the simple pleasure of being present among the people of God, showing up week after week. This is why the writer of Hebrews reminds us that we should not neglect to meet together, to assemble together and thereby encourage one another (10:24–25). And while I love that there is so much we can do as a community via all the remote tools we now have, nothing can ever replicate the beauty of being with one another in the flesh, fully present.

We invite God’s divine presence to show up where there is war, division, and despair and to bring peace. We invite God’s divine presence to show up where there is pain and confusion and to bring comfort. We invite God’s divine presence to show up where there is exhaustion, so we rest in the certainty that when our strength is not enough, God’s grace is always sufficient. And we can try to show up for each other with the same consistency and faithfulness with which God shows up for us.

Yolanda Pierce is dean and professor at Vanderbilt Divinity School

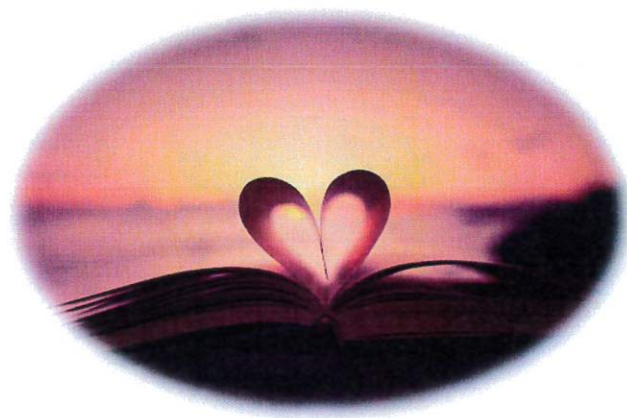
Please don’t ever get me wrong! I love seeing you, even if it’s just for C&E. And while I and others miss you the other weeks, it’s what you’re missing that most breaks my heart. It’s you missing out on the hugs, the conversations, the smiles, and hellos. It’s you missing out on singing your favorite hymn and hearing of the joys and prayer concerns of others, and sharing your own.

Again, please don’t ever think this is judgmental, that’s not my role. My role is to make every effort to share the immense love that showers down upon us as we share the Word of our God. My role is to help us hear God’s still small voice, whether

from the pulpit, the hymns, our readings, or the person who greets us with a smile. Our role together, is to be the church we’re called to be, which is more complete, when together happens.

There’s no easy way to end what’s on my mind, and I’m thankful for Yolanda’s words above. My prayer for each of us remains the same, that we can each grow closer to our God, as we think about the immense love and sacrifices, He has made for us, through Jesus Christ His Son.

Love and blessings,
Pastor David



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

**Monday, March 18, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

Present: Leland Semple, Silas Tockey,
Keith Birnbaum, Dan Row,
Roger Michalsen, Laura Lee,
Randy Pech, Kaye Wilmert,
Pastor David Marquardt, and
Darlene Begolka (Office Manager)

Absent: Sandy Meinershagen

Guests: Warren Goetsch and
Bob Meinershagen

President Leland Semple called the meeting order on Monday, March 18, 2024. Rev. David Marquardt gave the invocation.

It was moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT

The last week of Lenten Bible study is coming up. Holy Week will start on March 24th with Palm Sunday. Pastor David has asked that the April newsletter not be mailed until April 1st. A new process for Communion will start after Easter.

OLD BUSINESS

YMCA: Nothing new to report

Interim Search Team and Pastoral Search Team: Once the membership info is in, the Search Team will meet to update the profile and have it reposted. It is important to keep it up to date.

Membership Roles: Eight have requested to be removed from the St. John UCC in Lincoln, Illinois membership. It was moved and seconded to approve the request to remove memberships. Motion carried.

Parsonage Inspection: The inspection is completed. There is a letter in the Church Office.

Church Membership Directory: A new church membership directory will be compiled when the information is in.

Update to Cry Room: The Cry Room needs updating and babyproofing. A reflective window tint for privacy for the sliding door can be purchased. Need a new crib and changing table. It has now been turned over to the Memorial Committee to secure funding.

Open and Affirming: A new banner has been selected. It was moved and seconded to purchase the new banner. Motion carried.

Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs: The Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs have been notified to contact their proposed committee members and report back to the Church Office.

NEW BUSINESS

Special Funds Report: Warren Goetsch and Bob Meinershagen attended the Church Council to enlighten the Church Council regarding the Special Funds of the church. They had provided an updated chart regarding all the special funds and what can be spent and what cannot be spent and any stipulations on the funds.

Sound – Mics: Mics are needed for the music groups. It was also decided to purchase a new mic for the pulpit. It was moved and seconded to purchase the mics not to exceed \$700 with monies to come from Interest. Motion carried.

Church Project: A committee is being formed to explore the possibilities of an all-church project. Roger Michalsen will chair the committee.

Fundraising Committee: A committee is being formed to investigate the church roof project.

New Members: We will be taking new members in on Sunday, April 7, 2024 during the morning worship service.

Maple Street Blue Light Up Sign: The sign to the entrance of the church has been fixed and now is lit at night.

ADJOURNMENT AND BENEDICTION

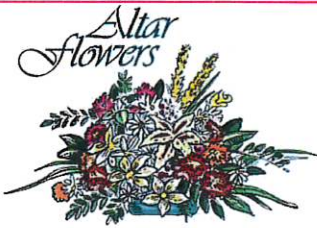
It was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. Everyone recited The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Silas Tockey
Church Council Secretary



FEBRUARY FINANCIALS

Beginning Balance	\$38,301.05
Income	\$43,911.46
Expenses	\$26,618.60
Ending Balance	\$55,593.91



April 7th:
 April 14th:
 April 21st: Taken
 April 28th:



Articles for the **May 2024** newsletter should be in the Church Office by **April 19th**.



The following is a thank you from our sister church in Chicago and written by Rev. Dr. Charlotte Nold, Pastor;

Dear Members of St. John UCC in Lincoln,

Thank you for your wonderful donation of \$550.50.



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 need food there.

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



Celebrate Life Birthday Group
Friday, April 12th
11:30 a.m.

Kickapoo Creek Park
 (weather permitting)
Bring your own lunch and drink.

April birthdays will be celebrated.



Saturday, April 6th
8:30 a.m.
Imo's Café

All Men of the Church are Welcome.

**St. John Diners
Saturday, April 20th
Wild Hare Café in Elkhart
11:30 a.m.**



For the April outing, St. John Diners will be going to the Wild Hare Café in Elkhart.

Leave the Church Parking Lot at 11:00 a.m. A sign-up sheet will be in the back of the sanctuary. As always you can either ride the bus or drive on your own. Just sign the sheet accordingly.

OUTREACH and PUBLICITY NEWS...

Tonita Reifsteck and
Jim and Leslie Wilmert, Co-Chairs

Outreach extends a heartfelt THANK YOU for all who supported their fundraiser by attending and/or supporting the POTATO BAR! Talk about “Loaded Potatoes”—we were amazed the plates were big enough to hold them! Generous diners donated a total of \$278. Outreach has bought 100 training cups for youngsters learning to drink after the bottle to a cup. This program was initiated by the WIC program at the Logan County Health Department noting sippy cups were not best tool.



OUTREACH sponsors the COFFEE HOUR – FELLOWSHIP TIME before worship every Sunday from 9:15 – 10:00 a.m. Hosts/Hostesses are welcome and appreciated! Setting up and making coffee is sole need. Treats will be furnished by Outreach. Sign-up sheets are in Narthex and also alongside treat counter at Coffee Hour. THANKS to Carol Webb (Girl Scout cookies!), Bob and Sandy Meinershagen and Marlene Wilmert for your help in March!! MUCH appreciated.

If you have questions about use of coffee maker or procedure (EASY) see Jack or Nancy Leich or Tonita Reifsteck. THANK YOU!!!!

Devotional Booklets for April, May and June are available in the Vestibule or entryway for the taking. A few copies of LARGE PRINT are also available. Any questions or concerns – please see member of Outreach Ministry.



Picture from Parkview Inn in Bloomington from the March St. John Diners outing.

**HISTORICAL EVENT
50 Year ANNIVERSARY
REMODEL – ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

50 years/remodeling of sanctuary

By: Tonita Reifsteck

In January of 1974 at the congregational meeting – the congregation voted to use the model presented as their pattern for remodeling the sanctuary of St. John United Church of Christ. The model was a cardboard 3-dimensional display - the work of several members who worked into the wee early hours of that Sunday morning in the parsonage of the church as a way to better explain what the committee's vision was.

On Easter Sunday, April 14, 1974 the new council robes were dedicated. The last Confirmation Class who took their vows the Sunday before on Palm Sunday, at the old altar, took their first communion on Easter: Gary W. Conrady, Terry L. Denney, Terri L. Gockel, Amy B. McCann, Diane K. Opperman, Randall C. Paulus and Kathy M. Wilham.

Following worship, the Council joined the recessional carrying the altar cross, Bible and other articles for worship. This was the last Sunday of worship in the sanctuary until the remodeling was finished.

On Monday morning following Easter several men of the congregation joined in helping remove the pews, lectern and pulpit to be taken to Blue Mound for refurbishing by Bekenmar Church Furniture Company. In the following months worship and some weddings were held in Fellowship Hall, funerals were held at the funeral homes or a few were held in churches in community (as were some weddings).

On Saturday morning of November 16th, a young bride came to St. John to put decorations, candles and bows in sanctuary for her wedding that afternoon! Tears flowed.....they had promised that the work would be done by her wedding day – and lying on the floor of the center aisle was the

Reredos! At that point workers vowed it would be done by noon And it would be cleaned and polished as well.

At noon several women of the church helped the bride and her mother decorate and place the flowers at the altar. Later that afternoon Barbara Heinzl and Mark Hopwood were married – the first to marry at St. John UCC with a center aisle instead of 2 inner aisles and 2 outside aisles. (Throughout the years a few brides had chosen other churches for their wedding because of the aisle arrangement)

The following day, Sunday, November 17, 1974 worship returned to being held in the sanctuary. Special interest were the new 'beams' across the ceiling of the sanctuary. Although they look like 'wood' they are actually a plaster created to look like wood and painted as such. The lights hanging in the sanctuary were left in their original place



now hanging above the pews instead of over the 2 aisles of old plan. The new chancel featured the organ (moved from the sanctuary floor), 2 choir lofts, lectern and the pulpit brought down to the main chancel floor level instead of elevated center. Most were happy with changes – cushions on pews were optional – there if you wanted them – some were left bare for those who did not want cushions – Wood from the old chancel steps was used by a member to make the Grandfather Clock that stands in Wilmert Lounge. Clock works came from Germany.

Ironically the calendar dates are the same in 2024 as 1974– 50 years later except April 14 is not Easter this year. November 16 will fall on a Saturday/the date of completion – November 17 will be on a Sunday.

CELEBRATE LIFE BIRTHDAY GROUP...

by Tonita Reifsteck



Fifteen gathered at Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant for the March CELEBRATE LIFE lunch. Birthday and Easter cards were signed and Happy Birthday sung for celebrants

present Donna Kessinger and Jim Wilmert – twice as group finished singing the employees sang their native Birthday song after presenting a head gear to the birthday folk.

Sandy Wilmert gave all present an Irish card/blessing and then those that were of Irish decent shared a tidbit or two.

Celebrate Life has paid the membership fee for St. John UCC and reserved Kickapoo Park Pavilion #1 for 11 a.m. beginning in April – if weather permits. This will mean everyone brings their own lunch – remember this is open to anyone who wants to join the fellowship and CELEBRATE LIFE. If park isn't possible due to weather, a restaurant will be chosen, and notification sent. Topic: "Share your spring plans or memories".

RESERVATIONS are not needed for the Park – only if we have to go to a restaurant then they need to be called in to Sandy Wilmert or Tonita Reifsteck.



St. John Family,



Thank you all so very much for the cards, balloon, thoughts and especially the prayers. We appreciate your kindness.

*Sincerely,
Amy and John Tabor*

MISSION COMMITTEE
by Verdeen Ingram, Co-Chair

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

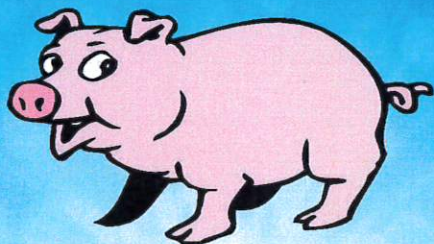
- **Second Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the **Children of Lincoln project**.
- **Fourth Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the **Diaper Project for Head Start at Community Action**.

April Food Item Is...



**All non-perishable items are
WELCOME.**

APRIL IS PORK PROJECT MONTH...



**Be sure to memo your check
Pork Project**

April is showers, flowers and Earth Day. Here at St. John, we can celebrate Earth Day not only on April 22 but every day.



Our Giving Tree is filled with buckets for recycling. We collect egg cartons, pop tabs, greeting cards and aluminum cans, just to name a few. We are doing a good job, but we can always do better, so take a few minutes to gather up your recyclables and bring them to the church.

The Charity Guild ladies have set up a table outside the kitchen where you can drop off those items you know longer use and pick up items that look interesting. This is just another way of recycling. We can make Earth Day resolutions too. We might resolve to spend some time picking up litter. Or we can resolve to use less plastic. If we spend the month of April doing something for the Earth, we are on our way to making it a habit.

Remember that we are called to be stewards of the Earth. It doesn't really belong to us - it belongs to God!





LET'S REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND

ST. CLARA'S REHAB and SENIOR CARE

1450 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656
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



BIRTHDAYS

- 9 Esther Denney
- 13 Brady Curry
- 16 Emmett Nowack
- 17 Heather Goetsch
- 20 Karen Birnbaum
- 25 Mary Fuller
Laura Lee
- 27 Wayne Mara
Betsy Pech
- 29 Becky Rader



ANNIVERSARIES

- 12 Randy and Betsy Pech
- 13 Steve and Elaine Aue
- 20 Rich and Rochelle Joseph



Are you or someone in your family graduating from 8th grade, High School or College this year? Please let the church office know as soon as possible. Thanks!





April Calendar

Monday, April 1st

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 2nd

Cub Scouts at 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday, April 3rd

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

Thursday, April 4th

Outreach and Publicity at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 6th

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

Sunday, April 7th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

Morning Worship with Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Monday, April 8th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 9th

Cub Scouts at 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10th

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

Friday, April 12th

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

Sunday, April 14th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

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

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

St. John Ringers practice after church

Monday, April 15th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Church Council at 7:00 p.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 17th

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

Saturday, April 20th

St. John Diners at 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 21st

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

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

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

St. John Ringers practice after church

Monday, April 22nd

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24th

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

Sunday, April 28th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

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

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

St. John Ringers practice after church

Monday, April 29th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

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.



Prayer List

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)
Debbie (Friend of Jan Jeffries)
Janet (Ed and Jan Jeffries niece)
"Pete" Luckhart
Zach (Friend of Pastor David, Gail, Joshua)
Abigail
Middle East
Cierra
Raymond
Stephanie Opperman
Janet Dullard
Janet Johnson
Jean (C.J.) Sutton
Sandy (Donna Kessinger's niece)
Sandy Wendt
Amy Tabor
John Tabor
Karson

Ruth Post
Duane Ingram
Sharlene
Elizabeth Miller, Lainey, Lucy, Hunter
Tami
Alexis and baby Maverick
Steve
Ann Holloway
Emily Hyde
Rachelle Riggs
Raelynn Babbs' family
Mike Meares
George Wilmert
Kerrie
Community of Rushville
Bill Post
Jen Steele
Miguel Durban family
Tim Leich
Pat O'Neil

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

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 2024-2025



Leland Semple, President
Roger Michalsen (Elder), Vice-President
Silas Tockey, Secretary
Keith Birnbaum, Current Fund Treasurer
Dan Row, Special Funds Treasurer
Kaye Wilmert (Elder), Financial Secretary
Laura Lee
Sandy Meinershagen (Elder)
Randy Pech

Contact us:

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