

ST. JOHN'S CHIMES

Published monthly in the interest of



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

January 2025 Newsletter

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
204 Seventh Street ~ Lincoln, Illinois 62656
217-732-6957

E-mail address: stjohnucclincoln@yahoo.com | Website: stjohnucclincolnillinois.com

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

Rev. David Marquardt

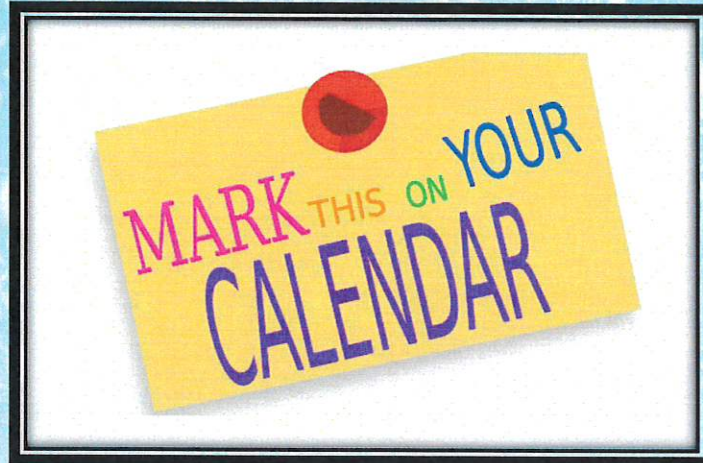
Darlene Begolka

Volume 56, No. 1

Bridge Pastor

Office Manager

January 2025



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025

Immediately following the church service

**Committee Reports for the Annual Report
are due in the Church Office by
Friday, January 3, 2025**

FROM OUR PASTOR

How to Explain God was written by Danny Dutton, age 8, from Chula Vista, California, for his third-grade homework assignment

"Explain God".

"One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grown-ups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way He doesn't have to take up His valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.

"God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times besides bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because He hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in His ears, unless He has thought of a way to turn it off. "God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting His time by going over your mom and dad's head asking for something they said you couldn't have.

"Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren't any who come to our church.

"Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the hard work like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of Him preaching to them and they crucified Him. But He was good and kind, like His Father and He told His Father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said O.K.

"His Dad (God) appreciated everything that He had done and all His hard work on earth so He told Him He didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So He did. And now He helps

His Dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones He can take care of Himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important.

"You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

"You should always go to Church on Sunday because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God. Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway.

"If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can't go everywhere with you, like to camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared in the dark or when you can't swim and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids.

"But you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and He can take me back anytime He pleases.

And that's why I believe in God.

Believing in our loving God,
Pastor David



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

**Monday, December 16, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

- Present:** Leland Semple, Silas Tockey,
Kaye Wilmert, Sandy Meinershagen,
Dan Row, Laura Lee, Roger Michalsen,
Randy Pech, and Darlene Begolka,
Office Manager
- Absent:** Keith Birnbaum,
Pastor David Marquardt

President Leland Semple called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 16, 2024. Leland Semple gave the Invocation.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

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

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor David was unable to attend meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Use of Sunday School Rooms: Building and Grounds committee has not had a chance to proceed with a recommendation. There was discussion of a broken window in the first room downstairs on the alley side as well as up in the Fellowship Hall on the alley side. Discussion about Scout storage practices.

Confirmation: This is still on hold awaiting a new pastor for guidance and curriculum.

Hoefer Memorial Tree: Waiting until spring.

Special Congregational Meeting: There is no longer a need for the meeting as the Pastoral Candidate has accepted a position at another church. The Search Committee was notified of the decision on Saturday. Pastor David has contacts for Pulpit Supply but has not proceeded, seeking approval from the Church Council to move forward. The Search Committee may reform depending on if members would like to continue on the committee. A Special Church Council meeting may need to be called depending on choices of the Search Committee. The current committee consists of

Troy Meinershagen, Verdeen Ingram, Donna Kessinger, Bill Gosda, Jr., Warren Goetsch and Silas Tockey. There was discussion on possibly remaking of the Search Committee. Chairman Goetsch has made contact with Rev. Kathy Lawes at the Illinois Conference Office to try to put together the next steps. There was also discussion on a part-time minister.

Computer for Financial Officer: We are waiting till books are closed for 2024 to have the "oil change" that RTech has suggested done to see if that speeds things up. If not, there is an extra computer upstairs for the Sound Desk that will be used.

2024 Treasurer's Books: The books will close at 12:00 noon on December 31, 2024.

Annual Congregational Meeting: The meeting date is set for Sunday, January 26, 2025 immediately following worship or the next Sunday in the event of bad weather.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Appointment: The Nominating Committee consists of two (2) outgoing Church Council members and two (2) from the congregation. The 2 outgoing Church Council members will be Leland Semple and Dan Row. Several names were suggested for the 2 from the congregation. Leland Semple, Dan Row and Sanday Meinershagen leave the Church Council in 2025.

Communion Schedule: For December 24th Leland Semple and Dan Row were on the list, but Roger Michalsen and Silas Tockey were added. Sunday, January 5th Communion will be done by Kaye Wilmert and Keith Birnbaum. There was a discussion on Communion supplies.

Custodial Update: A cleaning service has been contacted by the Building and Grounds committee, estimate for services fits within the proposed budget for 2025, cleaning service is coming Wednesday, December 18th for ½ day of cleaning with potential of returning for a ½ day after Christmas. Starting 2025 cleaning service will come on a weekly basis for a temporary amount of time, current custodian is on maternity leave.

Drinking Fountains: A question about the drinking fountains. The drinking fountains in Fellowship Hall are in need of repair. The one in basement has

been turned off due to concerns about respiratory issues.

Kitchen Oven: The oven was not working properly on Sunday, December 15th for the Christmas Dinner. There are issues with the left side oven is not heating properly, stove is between 30-40 years old.

Email security concerns: Regarding emails to all church participants, members would like their email addresses hidden.

Photographs: Additional concerns about perceived violations of privacy in photographs.

New member packet: It's in the works.

ADJOURNMENT AND BENEDICTION

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. In closing, all repeated for The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Silas Tockey
Church Council Secretary



At the October Church Council meeting Pastor David submitted his letter of resignation effective January 28, 2025.

The Church Council invites you to a Farewell Dinner for Pastor David and family on Sunday, January 19th

Join us for morning worship at 10:00 a.m. Meal to follow the service.

Join us for...

SCOUT APPRECIATION SUNDAY
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th
at the 10:00 a.m. Worship Service
All scouts will be recognized.

Reception/social hour after church in Fellowship Hall

Taking Down the Greens will be on Monday, January 6th at 7:00 p.m. We had lots of hands to put them up. Let's have lots of hands to take the greens down.



January 5th:
January 12th:
January 19th: Church Office
January 26th:

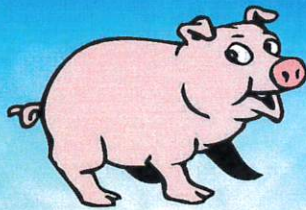


MISSION COMMITTEE
by Verdeen Ingram and
Marlene Wilmert, Co-Chairs

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.**

JANUARY IS PORK PROJECT MONTH...



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



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM...

Wishing you HEARTFELT JOYS, happy memories, and heavenly blessings for a delightful Christmas and new year.

Merry Christmas to All

Esther Denney

Wishing you all the gifts of the holiday season

Peace, Joy and Happiness – may it be plentiful throughout his holiday season and last into the New Year.

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Shanda and J. D. Ryer

St. Johners –

Because you have been generous all year, many are ware and well fed. So – here are Warm and Cozy Wishes for wonderful holiday!

Merry Christmas

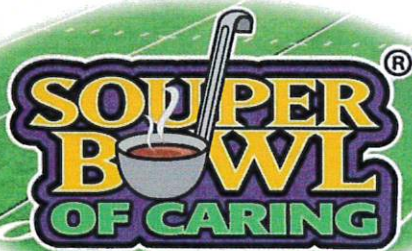
Your Mission Committee

All good things to you this Christmas and in the coming year.

God Bless all my church.

I love you all.

Sandy Wilmert



The Challenge is on between St. John UCC and Boy Scout Troop 1102. What challenge you might ask. The challenge is to see who can bring in the most cans of soup in January and up to Super Bowl Sunday (February 9th). You are invited to bring your can(s) of soup anytime during the month of January and up to Super Bowl Sunday (February 9th) and place them by The Giving Tree. After Super Bowl Sunday they will be taken to the Lincoln/Logan Food Pantry. Monetary donations are welcome also. On Super Bowl Sunday, February 9th, we will announce the winner and how many cans were collected. Bring your cans of soup in!!! Let's have some FUN!!

May peace, hope and love be with
you always.
Merry Christmas
Janet Johnson

To our church family –

Bringing you happy holiday greetings
and wishing you all the simple joys
of the season.

Have a great Christmas!
Larry and Verdeen Ingram

Merry Christmas 2024
Carolyn, Remi and Oreo

Christmas 2024
Thankful for our friends at
St. John Church
Loren and Karen Birnbaum

May the quiet beauty of the
Christmas season bring you peace
Love,
Sandy and Bob Meinershagen

To my St. John family –

Peace, Love and Happiness
May all the gifts of this wonderful
season be yours!
In Christian Love,
Tonita Reifsteck

May the beauty of the season bring
you PEACE.
May the spirit of the season bring
you HOPE.
Merry Christmas
Jack and Nancy Leich

Wishing you the happiest
Holiday Season.
Merry Christmas Blessing
Rev. Dan and Nancy
May the miracle of Christmas find
you safe in the warmth of God's
light.
Donna Kessinger

Sending holiday blessings as we
celebrate the true meaning of
Christmas
Dave and Marilyn

To Our Church Family,

Remembering you this Christmas
and praying your celebration
brings a heart full of joy
as you remember God's amazing love
shown through His Son, Jesus.
Love and Blessing for a Merry
Christmas and Blessed New Year!
George and Marlene Wilmert

Dear Church family,

At Christmas
may your heart
rejoice in knowing
you've received
from Him
The Greatest Gift of All.
With love from Nancy Gehlbach and
family. Remembering Iola, who loved
"redbirds", Jerry, Albert and my Mom
and Dad and Norm

Merry, bright days,
 Calm, silent nights...
 Warm, wonderful season to you!
 To all of my church family, blessing
 at Christmas and throughout the
 new year.
 Lynn and Hank Spellman



Articles for the **February 2025** newsletter should be in the Church Office by **January 19th**.

ATTENDANCE

December 1st
 43 In-Person, 31 on Facebook, 12 bulletins mailed
 and website = 86+

December 8th
 41 In-Person, 40 on Facebook, 12 bulletins mailed
 and website = 93+

December 15th
 59 In-Person, 12 bulletins mailed and website = 71+

December 22nd
 64 In-Person, 47 on Facebook, 12 bulletins mailed
 and website = 123+

December 29th
 31 In-Person, 32 on Facebook, 12 bulletins mailed
 and website = 75+



NOVEMBER FINANCIALS

Beginning Balance	\$10,048.12
Income	\$ 9,315.23
Transfer	\$15,000.00
Expenses	\$21,306.91
Ending Balance	\$13,056.44

St. John Dinners
Saturday, January 18th
11:30 a.m.



OLD COUNTRY STORE

Those who are planning to attend St. John Dinners in January should sign up on the reservation list in the back of the sanctuary so we have count. Then on Saturday, January 18th just meet at Cracker Barrel for the 11:30 a.m. reservation.

BIRTHS IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY...

Stevie Marie Pridemore was born on November 2, 2024. Her parents are Jon and Kristan Aue Pridemore; and big sisters are Piper and Amelia. Grandparents are Steve and Elaine Aue; Great-Grandmother is Tonita Reifsteck.

Miles Andrew Meeker was born on December 12, 2024. His parents are Eli and Sarah Meeker; grandparents are Ed and Michelle Spellman and great-grandparents are Hank and Lynn Spellman.



Celebrate Life Birthday Group
Friday, January 10th
11:30 a.m.
Rio Grande

January birthdays
will be celebrated.



LET'S REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND

ST. CLARA'S REHAB and SENIOR CARE
 1450 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656
 Jerry and Mary Berglin
 Ruth Post
 Susan Webb

CASTLE MANOR
 1550 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656
 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



Saturday, January 4th
8:30 a.m.
Imo's Café

All Men of the Church are Welcome.

GREETERS

January 5th: Randy Pech
 January 12th: Bob Meinershagen
 January 19th: Alice Paulus
 January 26th: Sandy Meinershagen



OUTREACH and PUBLICITY

By: Jim and Lelsie Wilmert and
Tonita Reifsteck, Co-Chairs



December became a whirlwind of activity as Outreach Ministry helped decorate the church on December 2nd with the Scouts Luke, Elliot, Cameron, Kaleb, Jackson, Calvin, Soren, Riley, Caleb, Asher, Dean and Jacob along with their leaders Mark Mathon, Bret Aukamp, John DeWilde, Jason Maxheimer. Workers from the church helping were Silas Tockey, Leland Semple, Jack Leich, Bob Meinershagen, Ed Jeffries, Kent Paulus, Brady Curry with his daughters Emma and Paige, and Toni Reifsteck. The windows were decorated and poinsettia arranged by Altar committee Laura Lee, Donna Kessinger, Lynn Spellman, and Becky Semple. Jack and Brady had pulled all the decorations out of storage and put them in sanctuary and put out the Nativity Scene figures on the lawn. The Scouts also decorated the tree and strung the roping in Fellowship Hall. Lots of hours so all could enjoy the beauty it lends.

Come the next day, December 3rd Jack, Nancy and Toni met in the barn to decorate the bus "Songs of Christmas" theme (then went home to thaw out)! Thursday, December 5th Bob Meinershagen had the bus warm for Sandy Meinershagen, Carolyn Pech, Jack and Nancy Leich and great-granddaughters Braxton and Olivia and Toni Reifsteck. The Boy Scouts followed in a float behind but due to weather/communication glitch – pencils did not get passed out.

Scout History at St. John presentation is being planned for January.

Another activity this month brought smiles and many residents sang with us during the caroling to the Shut-in's on December 15th. Marilyn Armbrust, Nancy Gehlbach, Laura Lee (on piano), Carolyn Pech, Tamera Turner, Carol Webb, Sandy Wilmert and Tonita Reifsteck shared carols. They left each Senior Care and both units at Copper Creek a St. John pencil plus a Christmas treat given by Christmas Dinner crew to take with us for them. Life happens and it has in the life of one of the drivers for Meals On Wheels, who has had to quit—so again our route is in need of a Once-A-Month delivery on the 3rd Friday of each month (unless a holiday). A team of 2 is best – takes approximately 1.5 hours (10:30 a.m. till noon) weather and unforeseen circumstances. **If interested** see Tonita Reifsteck.

OUTREACH always appreciates the volunteers who help with COFFEE HOUR. Make coffee and clean-up afterwards. Treats are furnished by Outreach unless someone shares on occasion. See Jack or Nancy Leich or Toni Reifsteck with questions or sign up on sheet in Narthex or in kitchen. Enjoyable fellowship prior to worship every Sunday from 9:15 until 10:00 a.m.

REMINDER: Expired and/or unused prescription drugs or over the counter drugs ARE ONLY DISPOSABLE AT CVS Pharmacy at Woodlawn and College. DO NOT LEAVE at LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT – they are NO LONGER a collection site.

**CHARITY GUILD and CELEBRATE LIFE
DECEMBER HAPPENINGS**



Gathering at CHI’s Restaurant for the December Celebrate Life were Mary Fuller, Nancy Gehlbach, Janet Johnson, Wayne Mara, Carolyn Pech, Tonita Reifsteck, Dan Row, Lynn Spellman, and Sandy Wilmert. Many Birthday and Get-well cards were signed. Christmas cards to the shut-ins were also signed. Sharing the ‘White Elephant Gift’ exchange brought laughter, ‘yummy at party mix’ and although no vote taken/favorite was a hat! Janet modeled her gift – a Christmas hat!




January Celebrate Life will be on Friday, January 10th at 11:30 a.m. at Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant in downtown Lincoln. The topic for January is share a BLESSING you had last year and what you HOPE FOR in 2025.

Following the gift exchange, with absence of President and Vice president, Toni called the Charity Guild meeting to order with business being the election of officer for 2025. Lynn Spellman made a motion we retain the current slate – Carolyn Pech seconded, and motion passed. The Officers will for 2025 will be Karen Birnbaum - President, Marlene Wilmert - Vice President, Tonita Reifsteck - Secretary and Sandy Wilmert - Treasurer. Sandy noted that we continued our policy of donations and memorials given to Charity Guild this past year for services given for luncheons

had been gifted to our sister church: St. John UCC Chicago and their pastor, Pastor Charlotte Nold; Boy Scout Troop 1102, Habitat for Humanity of Logan County, Tiny Homes for Vets of Logan County, and Hope on 5th Street. Charity Guild will meet as it is necessary and will continue to be available to families for funeral luncheons. The ‘guidelines’ for that service will be updated early in 2025 for distribution.

Prayerfully submitted,
Tonita Reifsteck, secretary



**January
BIRTHDAYS**

4	Colleen Pech
7	Ty Row
17	Jackie Curry Bret Paulus
18	Janet Johnson
22	Jonathan Pagel
26	Connor Costello Brandon Muhlach
27	Jean Meinershagen
28	Kyle Atteberry
30	Lori Christensen

Would you be willing to
be a liturgist?

Sign-up sheet on the
table in the back of the
Sanctuary.



January Calendar

Wednesday, January 1st

Happy New Year!!! – Church Office closed

Thursday, January 2nd

Outreach and Publicity meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, January 3rd

Reports for the Annual Report are due

Saturday, January 4th

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

Sunday, January 5th

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

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

St. John Ringers practice after church

St. John Chimers practice after ringers

Monday, January 6th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Taking Down the Greens at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 8th

Boy Scouts at 6:15 p.m.

Friday, January 10th

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

Sunday, January 12th

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

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Scout Appreciation Sunday

Reception for Boy Scout Troop 1102 following church

Monday, January 13th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 14th

Cub Scouts at 6:15 p.m.

Saturday, January 18th

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

Sunday, January 19th

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

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Dinner for Pastor David and family following church

Monday, January 20th

Jubilant Feet at 8:00 a.m.

Church Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 26th

Coffee Hour at 9:15 p.m.

Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Annual Congregational meeting after church

Monday, January 27th

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28th

Cub Scouts at 6:15 p.m.

NOTE:

The YMCA After School Care Program
(Monday – Friday)
3:00 to 6:00 p.m.



Prayer List

Alissa Smith
Cheryl F.
Katrina Opperman
Lynn
David
Kathy Staten
Jim Walsh
Kristen
Lee Wolfe
Joyce (Gail Marquardt's mom)
"Pete" Luckhart
Abigail
Middle East
Raymond
Stephanie Opperman
Janet Dullard
John Tabor
Karson
Sharlene
Jen Steele
Pat O'Neil
Donnie Kirk
Ellen Schweizer
John Hebenstreit
Beverly
David Dennis
Louise Jeffries
Martha
Debbie
Mike
Tim
Kelli Thomas

Tim Schippel
Baby Reese
Donna Pokorski
Duke
Chris
Allen
Linda Barrick
Caitlyn Hodges and family
Deborah Lichtenwalter
Wil Buse
Kyle Atteberry
Drake Miller
Bill Dennis
Josh Glazik Family
Patricia Southerd
Hayden Kovanik
Cheryl Hartbank
Justin Brickey
Dwayne Robinson
Cheryl Robinson
Alice Paulus
Leslie Wilmert
Sandy Sanders
Karen Birnbaum
Darren Atteberry

Illinois Conference/Western Association

FACILITIES AND HOMEBOUND:

Steve Aue, Jerry and Mary Berglin, Judy Kline
Bill Krepps, Patty McCann, Helen Opperman
Ruth Post, Susan Webb, George 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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"Letting God's love shine through us to the Community we serve"

