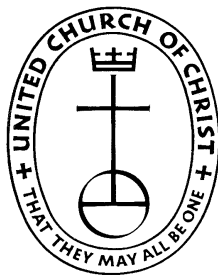


Forward in Faith August 2010



The Newsletter for St. John's United Church of Christ

11100 Second Street, Mokena, Illinois 60448

(708) 479-5123

e-mail: stjohnsmokena@att.net

Website: stjohnsmokena.org

Rev. David Alfeld-Johnson, Pastor

Heroes

I have spent this past week being SuperDave at Vacation Bible School, which means I wore a cape, attempted to fly, and generally did superhero type things. Throughout the week it was painfully obvious that there is more to being a superhero than attaching the word “super” to your name. In reality SuperDave was just a regular guy like the rest of us. But that’s O.K. because the message of VBS this week is that everyday people like you and I can do heroic things.

During the week kids learned about several different characters, many who aren’t even named, whose presence and actions saved the day. Jesus fed five thousand with a few loaves and a couple of fish, but a young boy played a crucial role by sharing his lunch with the disciples. The Hebrew people were saved from extinction by the brave actions of Esther, and the Apostle Paul was saved from a plot on his life by a young man who sounded the warning. All through the Bible we read about people who God used to save, to redeem, to restore humankind and to show us the nature of the kingdom of God. At VBS, SuperDave thought he needed super strength, super abilities (like flying), super gadgets, and a super outfit in order to be a hero, but he learned that he and we just need to take a couple of steps in order to be heroic.

Heroes step in. They get involved. One of the ways that our society has changed is that people are much more reticent to jump in to help solve problems or resolve conflicts. I’m sure there are numerous reasons for this. We feel we are already too busy taking care of our own problems and caring for our families. We’re afraid of being held liable, and maybe we’re reticent because we might make a mistake. Yes, the problems and conflicts of our age are large and complex, but heroes don’t shy away—they step in and get involved.

Heroes step up. Not only do heroes get involved, but they become a person who pushes or drives things forward. When flight 93 was hijacked back on 9/11, a group of passengers learned of the larger plot. They stepped up and sacrificed themselves to keep the plane from being flown into Washington DC. Heroes recognize that they can make a difference in the world, and step up by using the skills and gifts they have been given to make the world a better place.

Heroes step over. As I thought about the people I consider heroes in the world, I became aware that I am not so much impressed by the people who accomplish great things as I am the people who overcome great adversity. Competitors at the Special Olympics are heroes to me. Persons who overcome disabilities to find a way to serve our world are heroes in my book. Persons who aren’t defeated by poverty or injury or difficult circumstances, but step over them to live as a person created in God’s image are heroic.

Heroes step out. Faith involves acting on the belief that God is at work in our world through us. Heroes may not see how everything will work out, they may not have all the resources at their disposal, they may not have the support of the majority (or anybody); but they do believe that God is active in our world and has called them to this task. And they believe it enough to start living as if God were going to make it all happen. When they do, heroic things occur.

Mother Theresa was not well-known or wealthy when she began her ministry to the poor in Calcutta. She had a few pennies to her name and a big heart. When she encountered people dying alone on the streets her heart and her faith compelled her to get involved. She stepped in. When no one else was doing anything for them she stepped up and formed the Missionaries of Charity who were committed to caring for “the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone.” She and the sisters that joined her have stepped over the challenges of their call, and stepped out in faith to create a small corner of the kingdom of God in our world.

Every day, people do heroic things in our world when they step in, step up, step over, and step out in faith. What steps will you take to be a hero today?

Pastor Dave

GPS Update

In March, seven GPS Teams were formed to focus on the planning & organizing of various activities within the church. Each of these teams represents ideas that our congregation felt were of high priority to work on.

While some of these teams have been busy planning & doing, others will be getting into gear this fall. Regardless if a team has started or not, it's not too late for you to join in. Just contact the team's Navigator or a member of the GPS Committee to get more information.

Following is a brief description of each GPS Team. If you have an interest in any of these areas, we encourage you to get involved as we travel down the road to the future of St. John's.

• **After School Program – Navigator: Steve & Kim Gignac**

A program to reach out to the community and provide a safe place at St. John's for children to come for recreational activities and tutoring.

• **Community Care – Navigator: Jeremy Kinder**

Develop outreach programs to care for the community such as homeless dinners, care casseroles, helping hands, military and college care packages, etc.

• **Multigenerational Intellectual Series – Navigator: Ron Cutshall**

Develop a series of talks or classes that provide information on various topics of interest to multiple age groups by bringing in outside speakers and/or utilizing the talents within our church.

• **Multigenerational Social Activities – Navigator: Pam Mead**

Create more opportunities for fellowship within the congregation that include multiple generations and promote more connection among our members.

• **Volunteer Member Care Program – Navigator: Richard Kinder**

A program for lay members of the church to be trained to reach out and provide care for members in our congregation during times of need.

• **Reconnecting with Members – Navigator: Judy Willis**

Forming and maintaining relationships with both new and established members.

• **St. John's Worship Experience – Navigator: Bettylou Linke**

Explore different possibilities to be included in worship services including styles, content, etc.

VBS

Many, many thanks to all the people who gave their time to make our Vacation Bible School program a great week with children. Over 100 kids were here and we taught them that they can be heroes if they take action, stand for the truth, do the unexpected, save the day, and step out in faith. Some of us stepped out in faith in order to teach a class or participate at all. Some of us found ourselves doing the unexpected as we spent the week in ministry with the children.

Everyone who came out and gave their time in big ways and small helped save the day, and are heroes in the lives of these children. Thanks for helping make this ministry happen.

The Board of Christian Education

Childcare for August

Below is a list of the volunteers that we have lined up for August. There are a few openings that are still available. If you can help out, please contact the church office to let them know which Sunday you can help out. We want to sincerely thank everyone who helps out with this much needed ministry of the church. Here is the childcare schedule for August...

August 1 – Nursery

Pam Mead & Cathy Prokop

August 1 – Kids' Club

Abbi Blake & Kathy Lewandowski

August 8 – Nursery

Peyton Young & _____

August 8 – Kids' Club

Tara McKenna & Stafford Hipp

August 15 – Nusery

Amy Young & Sue Laue

August 15 – Kids' Club

Abby Bicksler & _____

August 22 – Nursery

Rita Burkett & Cathy Prokop

August 22 – Kids' Club

Pam Schonwise & Alicia Funk

August 29 – Nursery

Brian Burkett & Shelley Maves

August 29 – Kids' Club

Ashley Wright & Cindy Wright



CONFIRMATION –

SAVE THE DATE!

If your child will be entering eighth grade this fall, he/she will be eligible to join the confirmation class. We will again require each student to ask a church member to be a mentor and attend classes and events with them. There will be an informational meeting on Wednesday, August 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the lounge for parents, students and mentors.



Rally Sunday



In the past, Rally Sunday has been a time to gather together as school begins to kick-off our fall season of ministry, worship, and programs. In the last few years, we have celebrated "Bee There Sunday," a tailgate party, and last year's "Taste of St. John's." These were enjoyable gatherings on the first Sunday after Labor Day that included worship, eating, play, and catching up on our lives—all things that we are good at. If we're going to have an event to kick-off this fall, we need some people to help put it together. If you are interested or willing, please contact the church office.

Memorial Committee Notes

The Memorial Committee recently met to discuss current needs/requests that memorial funds may be used for.

A request was made to update our sound system; especially for summer worship in the Christian Community Center. This would include: 2 lavalier mics, 2 hand held mics, transmitters, antenna system and carrying case. Authorization was given to purchase the equipment at a cost of \$3,360.19. John Funk proceeded with the purchase and set-up.

Purchase of a nativity for the sanctuary was discussed. This was considered a good idea and hopefully a committee could be formed to look into purchase of this item. Replacing the outdoor nativity scene may also be a future project.

A committee will be formed to look into getting a new communion table. The communion table we presently have has a somewhat small table top. This presents a problem with crowding of all the trays, tops, chalice and plates that must fit there and could lead to something possibly falling from the table. We hope to be able to work with master woodworkers/furniture makers to build a table that will fit into the décor and style of our sanctuary.

MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITY

What & Where: A weekend trip to Emmaus Home in Marthasville, Missouri. Emmaus Home is a faith-based mission of families, staff and volunteers, working together to provide compassionate care to adults with developmental disabilities.

When: Friday, October 8th to Monday, October 11th.

Who: All are invited who are of Confirmation age or older!

Transportation: Van or cars

Lodging: Dormitory style (2 to a room) in the work camp area of the Emmaus Home. We will be cooking our own food.

Work Camp Experience: Set up for Emmaus Home's Fall Bazaar and Quilt Auction. Work involves setting up tents, flea market & dining hall, also food prep and finishing outside decorations. You name it; there is a place for you on this mission trip.

Want To Hear More? We will hold an informational meeting after the 9:30 service on August 15th. If you have any questions please email Abby Bicksler at abicksler@msn.com.

Check your calendar and sign up on the Mission bulletin board in the church hallway or call the church office.

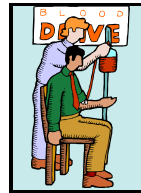
Mission Outreach Team



GOODTIMERS CONCERT IN THE PARK



Please join the Goodtimers for our annual Concert in the Park featuring Franz Bentler's Royal Strings on Sunday, August 8th in Crestwood. The concert starts at 7:00 p.m. and we will meet at St. John's at 5:30 p.m. Bring drinks, snacks to share and lawn chairs. Everyone is welcome! If you have any questions, please contact Carol & John Beebe at 708-479-4794.



ST. JOHN'S BLOOD DRIVE

St. John's has again joined other churches in Mokena by hosting a yearly blood drive. On Sunday, August 29, Heartland Blood Center Mobile Coach will be at our north parking lot from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. They are a not-for-profit, independent medical organization providing blood products and related services to 33 hospitals across 12 counties in northwest Indiana and northeast Illinois. Each year, 4.5 million American lives are saved by blood transfusions. If you decide to be a donor, call the church and set up an appointment. There will also be sign-up sheets in the CCC between services in August. Anyone in good health, at least 17 years old and at least 110 pounds may donate blood every 56 days. You could very possibly be giving "the gift of life". Each donor will receive a coupon for a free quart of Oberweis ice cream.

Thank you, Mission Outreach

Thank You

Dear St. John's Family,

Thank you for all the cards that you sent to me during my surgery. They really helped to brighten my days. It has been about two months since my surgery and I am doing great! I am back at ballet and have even gone horseback riding. I really appreciate all of your prayers. Thanks again.

Love,
McClaren Hipp



Free Concert

For the last 10 years, Dee Block has been the local Chairperson for Blue

Lake 's International Understanding Through The Arts. Best known for the Fine Arts Camp run each summer, the International Exchange program began in 1970 when a 90 member choir visited Europe. Since then over 10,000 high school musicians from all over the U.S. have visited 650 communities in Europe. In return almost 10,000 members of 450 European and Japanese bands, orchestras, choirs and dance troupes have come to the Midwest to perform in communities in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin . This year, the Stadkapelle Wertingen Jugendorchester, a 75 member youth band from Wertingen, Germany , will visit the Lincoln Way area from August 14 - 18, 2010.

The group will perform a free concert in the afternoon on **Sunday, August 15th at 4:30 p.m. on the village green** here at St. John's. In the event of inclement weather it will take place in the CCC building. Their performance will include Bach's *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring*, Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus*, Gayane Ballet's *Sabre Dance*, Satz' *Concerto for Two Trumpets* and the *Hunters' Chorus* from "Der Freischutz". We are also hoping to arrange for a small ensemble to play and participate in our Sunday morning service.

Members of the 75-piece orchestra will stay in private homes while visiting the Lincoln Way area. Members of our church family are welcome to host students and if interested, should contact Dee Block at deeblock@aol.com. Visitors are housed two to a host family for the comfort of all concerned. The group will travel into Chicago on Monday and Tuesday by Metra to do some shopping and sight seeing and will return to Germany on Wednesday.



BIRTHDAYS:



Gladys Oetter will be celebrating her 88th birthday on August 7th. Her address is: 11026 Denny Ave., Mokena, IL 60448.

Art Benson will be celebrating his 83rd birthday on August 18th. His address is: 19820 Mokena St., Mokena, IL 60448.

ATTENDANCE:



June 20, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 40
9:30 a.m. - 97

July 4, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 73

June 27, 2010

9:30 a.m. - 30
8:00 a.m. - 131

July 11, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 24
9:30 a.m. - 113

BAPTISMS:

Aubrey Jade Burkhardt was baptized on June 27, 2010. Her parents are Jason & Christy Burkhardt. Her sponsors are George Ludolf and Erin Pence.



Robert Donald Stanek, Jr. was baptized on July 11, 2010. His parents are Robert and Katherine Stanek. His sponsors are Amy Bennett and Craig Yunker.



NEW MEMBERS:

We would like to welcome Pat Kraling, Francis & Jennifer Zeiger, Paula Rogers and Nancy Sixbey to our church family.



FINANCE

YTD FINANCIAL STATUS, June, 2010

Operating, Income (1)	142,725.83
(1) Amount to match YTD budget	155,056.00

Operating Expenditures

Worship Ministry	9,096.59
Christian Education Ministry	12,782.81
Discipleship (not incl. Missions)	1,774.21
Office Operations	23,335.99
Building Operations	32,651.10
Pastoral, Administrative	47,150.62
TOTAL	\$126,791.32

Gain/(loss) – this year 15,934.51

Balance, previous year end -41,957.19

Present Operating Fund balance -26,022.68

Mission Income (2) 12,493.33

(2) Amount to match YTD Budget 13,650

Mission Fund Expenditures

O.C.W.M. Basic Support	8,500.00
Local Mission and Direct Support	3,350.00
TOTAL	11,850.00

IL Conference Capital Campaign(3) 2,402.00

(3) amount to match YTD budget 5,000.00

Building Fund/Project 150 Income 12,006.67

CCC Profit/Loss Statement – Year To Date 2010

Rental Income 4,145

Expense:

Custodian	1,254
Gas	3,354
Electricity	2,334
Water/Sewer	588
Maintenance	1,210
Total	8,740

Net (4,595)



FACEBOOK

You can follow us now on facebook. Go to the St. John's Mokena page for pictures, schedules and discussions.



ALL CHURCH JACKHAMMERS GAME

Please join us on Sunday, August 22nd for an afternoon of fun, fellowship and baseball at Silver Cross Field, home of the Joliet Jackhammers. The time of the game is 2:10 p.m. The group rate is \$9.00 per person. For those who wish we will be taking the train from the church to the game or you may meet us at the ballpark. There will be a sign up sheet after church or you may call the church office to sign up. Payment will need to be made by August 13th so that tickets can be purchased at the group rate.



ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Minutes from Special Church Council Meeting July 11, 2010

Members present: Steve Gignac, Richard Cantwell, Bernetta Pruiam, Sheree Kinder, Chris Maluta Abby Bicksler, Brian Burkett, DeAnna Kertson, Terry Cizek, and Pastor David Alfeld-Johnson. Meeting called to order at 9:00a.m. by President Steve Gignac.

A letter written by Dawn Funk resigning her position as Director of Older Youth Ministries was read by the council members. A motion to accept her resignation was accepted unanimously.

The council had also received and accepted a letter from Kerri Gorecki and Karalyn Schroeder resigning their positions as Directors of Children's Ministries effective July 31, 2010.

A letter will be sent to all church members informing them of the resignations of Kerri Gorecki, Karalyn Schroeder and Dawn Funk.

Pastor Alfeld-Johnson had previously asked for council approval for Pat Kraling to become a member of St. John's. There was unanimous approval of the request.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Maluta, Church Council Secretary