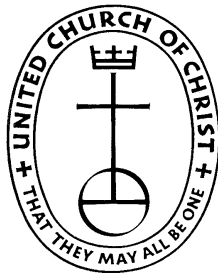


Forward in Faith

February 2012



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

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Rev. David Alfeld-Johnson, Pastor



Looking Back

Now that our 150th year is off and running, I have been reading through some of the documents that tell the history of St. John's. This month I have been struck by the innovation and change that has occurred in these 150 years. Some of the changes have been gradual. In 1907 we first worshipped in English at the Sunday evening service, but only once per month. It was under the next pastor, Rev. Kreis who began in 1917, that all evening services were conducted in English. Ten years later, the word "German" would be dropped from our name, and only one service each month was conducted in German. In just over twenty years we changed from being an exclusively German church, to being an English church with German roots.

Other change came more abruptly. In the early 1900's men and women did not sit together in worship. Men sat on the right, women and children on the left. In *The Story of Mokena*, Florence Pitman wrote, "At the turn of the century a few brave men escorted their wives to the center section and sat with them." From that point on, men and women have sat next to each other in worship. We have seen innovation in the formation of the bell choir, and puppet ministries. We have taken risks--when it was built, our sanctuary was the most expensive building ever built in Mokena. We have sought to keep up and catch up with the times, exchanging the King James translation of the Bible for the Revised Standard Version, and now the New Revised Standard Version.

I found the reasons for these changes to be more significant than the changes themselves. The 125th anniversary booklet states "Just after the turn of a new century changing times and new ideas encouraged change at St. John's." Holding services in English was an effort to "bridge the generation gap." Singing societies were organized to "bring generations closer together." Our commitment to our mission transformed ministry in ways that the founders never imagined. Throughout our 150 years, our forebears recognized that to remain vital St. John's would have to tell the old, old, gospel story in new ways. Our mission and message remain while the form continues to change and evolve.

It's not that we have finally found the right and good way to worship, teach, reach out, or care for people. The call and challenge to the church is to translate the gospel message to every culture and every age. Just as the words of Jesus had to be translated by missionaries into the native languages of people they were trying to reach, it is left to us to translate the gospel into a language that can be understood and received by people of every age and culture. As our culture and values change, we must continually retranslate the message into words and actions that can be understood by each generation.

As we celebrate our 150 years, let's carry on our legacy of ministry to Mokena and the entire Lincolnway area by finding new and old ways to make Christ known.

Pastor Dave

Children's Chatter

Bring your 3-5th grader to Young Shepherd's Club the second and third Sunday of each month. The dates for February are the 12th and 19th and March are the 11th and 18th. The children will continue to learn about the power of prayer and will be finishing up the study of the Old Testament. We are also looking for teacher volunteers to assist in the children's religious development.

JAM time lessons for February will teach the children the importance of following Jesus. The lessons focus on Levi, Martha and Mary, and all of Jesus' children. The good news of Jesus is for all his people to follow his path and he will change our hearts and lives.

PLEASE NOTE: FEBRUARY 22ND THERE WILL NOT BE CLASS AS IT IS ASH WEDNESDAY.

Please join us with your family for our Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 p.m.

The menu for February JAM:

- February 1th - Sloppy Joes, Tater Tots, Green Beans and Ice Cream
- February 8th - Mac-N-Cheese, Corn, Fruit, Rice Krispy Treat
- February 15st - Pizza Night, Cheese, pepperoni, sausage, sliced fruit, Choc. Chip Cookies
- February 29th - Chicken Tenders, Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Brownies

On February 15th we will be having a Valentine Popcorn and Movie night in the gym. We will have 30 minutes of lesson time followed by a family movie. The kids are invited to wear their pajamas. Bring a blanket or pillow and settle in for a fun movie.



Childcare for February

Below is a list of the volunteers that we have lined up for February. If you are unable to be here on your day, please call someone on the list to switch with. We want to sincerely thank everyone who helps out with this much needed ministry of the church.

February 5

Nursery: Cathy P

Kid's Club:

February 12

Nursery: Dawn B

Kid's Club:

February 19

Nursery:

Kid's Club:

February 26

Nursery: Dana B

Kid's Club: Rita B



Senior High Youth Retreat – "Who Is Jesus?"

The Senior High went on their Winter Retreat to the Phantom Ranch in Wisconsin on January 3rd-6th. We took 13 youth (Carly C, Camille P, Allison R, Tim H, Nick K, Nick E, Paige S, John M, Maddi S, Katie C, Ashley W, McClaren and Stafford H) and 3 adults (Pastor Dave, Brian W, and Elizabeth H). This year's theme was "Who is Jesus?" and we discussed Jesus Emmanuel, Jesus as Teacher, Jesus as Rebel, Jesus as Savior, Jesus the Crucified, and Jesus the Resurrected. The youth made Nativity sets out of blocks and felt, kept a retreat notebook with daily scriptures, made a beautiful banner, carried a wooden cross in silence to a bonfire, and had communion around the bonfire. Other activities included tobogganing, skiing, broom ball, horseback riding, and paintball.



Junior High Winter Retreat - January 20-22

The Junior High Youth Group attended a weekend retreat also at the Phantom Ranch. The theme for their camp was "Labels - Child of God". Society labels us in many ways and we are often judged by the labels of our friends, clothes, and electronics. The best label is "Child of God" and we discussed ways to claim this lifestyle. We took 11 youth (Alec M, Billy C, Brian V, Julia P, Claire C, Elena H, Camille V, Maddie W, Katelyn S, Katie B, and Meg C) and 3 adults (Tom M, Kim G, and Elizabeth H). The participants enjoyed live music, singing, a keynote speaker, and devotions. Outside activities included sledding, tobogganing, tubing, broom ball, paintball, and horseback riding. There were 125 6th -8th graders attending this weekend retreat, representing 8 churches from the surrounding areas.

Snacks for Super Bowl - February 5th

The Junior and Senior High Youth Groups will be selling "Snacks for the Super Bowl" after both church services on Sunday, February 5th. We will cook on Saturday, February 4th in the CCC from 10a.m. - noon. Menu items include sweet and sour meatballs, spinach artichoke dip, homemade fresh salsa, and taco dip. Please stop by their table to buy a goody or make a donation. The money raised will go towards the cost of their Winter Retreats. Thank you for your support!



Call to Worship Schedule:

February 5 - Stafford H
 February 12 - Paige S
 February 19 - Camille P
 February 26 - Tom H

Sunday Night Meals for Youth Groups:

February 5 - No Meeting/Super Bowl Sunday Youth Fundraiser after church (youth cooking on Sat. 2/4 10 a.m.-noon)
 February 12 - Hipps
 February 19 - No Meeting/President's Day Holiday
 February 26 - Meads

The Messiah Ballet - March 30th and 31st



The *Messiah* Ballet will take us back to Israel, as we hear the cries of the Israelites echo our own.... *Where is our Messiah? Who will save us? Where is the one who will set the captives free?* Experience the *greatest story ever told* in a whole new way through contemporary music, ancient prophecy, beautiful costumes, and new choreography.

Messiah, an original contemporary ballet, will be performed by Turning Pointe School of Dance. It tells the tale of a promise given by God, a baby born in Bethlehem, Jesus' three years of work and miracles, and his fulfillment of the charge to "set the captives free." Even as we wait for Jesus to return a second time, *Messiah* uses dance to celebrate Christ's work of sacrifice, redemption, and freedom to a new life.

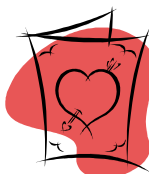
Come enjoy this amazing story during the Easter season. Tickets are \$15 per person, but there will be a group rate offered to churches. The performance is tentatively planned to be at Lincoln Way East. More details to follow. If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Hipp (stiyouth@att.net).

Elizabeth Hipp
 Director of Youth Ministry



GOODTIMERS SUPER BOWL PARTY

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun with the Goodtimers for their Annual Super Bowl Party at the Prui's home on Sunday, February 5th at 4:30 p.m. Please bring a dish to share. Call Ed or Bernetta for more information.



Card Making

Card-making will meet at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, February 13th. Four cards will be made including a get well card, sympathy, thank you and a thinking of you card. Hope to see you there!

150th Anniversary Supports Food Pantry

As a combined effort of the 150th Anniversary Committee and the Mission Committee, St. John's will be collecting items for the Frankfort Food Pantry throughout 2012. Each month you will be asked to contribute different items.

Food stamps do not purchase toiletries, and they are greatly needed by food pantries and shelters. During the month of February, we will be collecting the following: soap (liquid and bar), shaving cream and razors, shampoo and conditioners, toothbrushes and toothpaste, dental floss, deodorant, body lotion, feminine personal products, laundry products, paper towels and facial tissue.

In honor of our 150th Anniversary, the goal is to collect at least 150 items each month. You may place your items in the container in the hallway outside the church office. Items will be delivered to the Frankfort Food Pantry on a weekly basis, and a tally will be posted.

Thank you for your efforts to support those in need in our area!

Preschool News

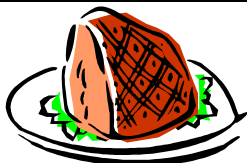
Our open house and public registration is on Saturday, January 28th from 9 a.m. until noon. We continue to register students throughout the year.

Our progress reports will be sent home the last week in January and parent/teacher conferences are scheduled for February 2nd and 3rd.

If you need to use any church rooms at the last minute, please check with the office and the church calendar. The preschool sometimes uses other rooms during the week and have reserved rooms on certain days.

We are looking forward to our Valentine parties on the 13th and the 14th.

Don't forget our Preschool/Relay for Life Ham Dinner on Saturday March 24th from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. Raffle prizes, face painting, silent auction.



RELAY FOR LIFE

St. John's will once again be participating in the Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society. We are planning some new opportunities for fun and fundraising this year. Chase those winter blues away and mark your calendars for the following dates:

Monday, February 13, 2012 - Eat and Earn at Francesca's Restaurant in Frankfort. Dine with a friend or take your sweetheart for some delicious Italian cuisine and help a great cause. 15% of your bill (either dine-in or carry-out) will be donated to the American Cancer Society. Watch for an upcoming flyer!

Saturday, March 24, 2012 - Second Annual Ham Dinner to benefit St. John's Preschool and the Relay for Life. There will be St. John's famous homemade food, a silent auction, and fun for the entire family.

Friday, June 8, 2012 - Relay for Life at Lincoln-Way East High School in Frankfort. Our team will be forming soon!

Ongoing - Pay it Forward Program sponsored by Creative Carpet, 19420 S. LaGrange Road in Mokena. Present a voucher when you purchase any type of flooring and 3-6 % of your purchase will be donated to the Relay for Life on behalf of St. John's. All sales promotions and incentives will still apply. Vouchers will be available on the Relay for Life bulletin board or see Kathy or Jeff.

Please see Kathy or Jeff for more information on how to get involved in the Relay for Life 2012. We are looking forward to a great year!



Friends-N-Fun

Are you ready for some football? After the night of hockey and basketball on January 21st, let's continue the sports theme in February with a Super Bowl Party! On February 5th at 4:00 p.m. at the Gignac Home. Bring your own beverage and a dish to share. If you have any questions, please contact Kim.



From the Church Records:



ATTENDANCE:

December 24, 2011

6:00 p.m. - 141
11:00 p.m. - 140

December 25, 2011

9:00 a.m. - 62

January 1, 2012

9:00 a.m. - 83

January 8, 2012

8:00 a.m. - 43
9:30 a.m. - 199

January 15, 2012

8:00 a.m. - 18
9:30 a.m. - 136

DEATHS:

Hans Mueller passed away on January 19th. His Memorial Service was held on January 26th at St. John's United Church of Christ.



Thank You

Thank you to Pastor Paige and Pastor Dave for all the visits and prayers while I was in the hospital and while staying at Bill and Bev's home. A big thank you to all my friends at St. John's for the many cards and prayers I received. Thank you also to the Junior High Youth Group who came to sing Christmas carols at the house—it made my day.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year!

Alma L



FINANCE

YTD FINANCIAL STATUS, December, 2011

<u>Operating, Income (1)</u>	305,322.16
(1) Amount to match YTD budget	313,024

Operating Expenditures

Worship Ministry	31,405.36
Christian Education Ministry	28,495.90
Discipleship (not incl. Missions)	6,076.80
Office Operations	47,907.91
Building Operations	68,455.56
Pastoral, Administrative	122,974.33
TOTAL	\$305,315.86

<u>Gain/(loss) - this year</u>	6.30
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<u>Balance, previous year end</u>	-9,939.83
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<u>Present Operating Fund balance</u>	-9,933.53
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<u>Mission Income (2)</u>	25,416.00
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(2) Amount to match YTD Budget	27,300
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Mission Fund Expenditures

O.C.W.M. Basic Support	17,000.00
Local Mission and Direct Support	4,710.00
TOTAL	21,710.00

<u>IL Conference Capital Campaign(3)</u>	2,158.50
(3) amount to match YTD budget	0.00

<u>Building Fund/Project 150 Income</u>	21,031.50
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CCC Profit/Loss Statement - Year To Date 2011

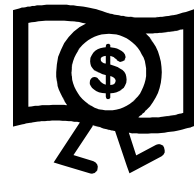
<u>Rental Income</u>	11,467
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Expense:

Custodian	1,921
Gas	4,522
Electricity	6,178
Water/Sewer	1,284
Maintenance	3,346

Total	17,251
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Net	(5,784)
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St. John's Youth Group;
Thanks much for the big Christmas Greeting and all the glitter. It's nice to be remembered by the young people!

Love,
Vera R

Thank you to all my church friends for all the lovely birthday cards and well wishes for my birthday. Also thanks to the Congregational Care team. It is so nice to be thought of.

Thanks Again,
LaVerne R

A special thank you to our wonderful Jr. High Youth and their adult chaperones, who came to our home to sing carols for us at Christmas time. You sang so beautifully and we really enjoyed your visit.

In sincere appreciation,
Marvin & Marion H

Thanks to everyone for the "Get Well" cards, phone calls and visits when I was in the hospital/nursing home. Thanks to Pastor Dave and Paige for their visits and encouragement. Also thanks for the delicious food, gifts and plants.

Sincerely,
Ellen B



"Here I Am To Worship"
(Here You Are To Worship)

Sunday morning is a special time at St. John's, as individuals, couples and families come together to worship. It is a sacred time, when we are invited to lay our stresses – our jobs, school, family and other relationship responsibilities – at the feet of Jesus and to focus our hearts and minds on God. It may be one of the few times during the week that a family is together for any length of time. The hope is that when we leave the church we will be more peace-filled than when we came and will be ready to face whatever our work/school/home life week has in store for us.

St. John's is blessed to have a highly competent office staff who are available Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Our staff also happens to be members of our church, and they are usually in worship on Sunday morning. Like the rest of us, they need to be refreshed and renewed for the week ahead, and that may not happen if they are approached with matters on Sunday mornings that could easily and more appropriately be addressed during the week. While Sunday is a work day for our ministry staff, it is not for our office staff.

Please be considerate of our church staff and allow them the same worship experience you expect, by not bringing questions/requests/concerns which should be handled during the week to them on Sunday morning.

Your consideration and cooperation will be appreciated!

ST. JOHN'S BLOOD DRIVE



Our first blood drive this year will be on Sunday, March 18th. Last year, because four new hospitals joined the Heartland Blood Centers hospital network of 35 hospitals the demand for blood increased, but blood donations dropped by over 5,000 units. Heartland Blood Center will be at the CCC 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 35 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 on March 4th and March 11th after each service. 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".

Thank you, Mission Outreach

**ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2012**

Members Present: Dick Cantwell, Brian Burkett, Neil Pellmann, DeAnna Kertson, Jim Madorma, Kay Stanek, Terry Ciszek, Chris Maluta and Pastor David Alfeld-Johnson.

Members Absent: Tara McKenna

Guests: Paige Cantwell, Director of Care Ministries and Marc Schonwise representing the Facilities Board.

Meeting called to order at 7:10p.m.

Paige Cantwell addressed the Council with concerns about the future of the Membership Committee. President Terry Ciszek stated that the new Council will designate Council members to meet with the Membership Committee to help determine what our members need. A preliminary meeting of the Stewardship Committee and the Membership Committee will be scheduled for the next Commons Meeting.

Marc Schonwise addressed the Council with three bids for new carpeting in the sanctuary. The best bid was from Creative Carpet, a 26 oz., nylon carpet for \$8,586 with a 6% check back to the church to be used for Relay for Life. A discussion was held about the widening of the steps in the chancel, the restructuring of the choir loft, the location of the sound system, and the electrical wiring that would accompany the restructuring, and when the new carpet should be installed. It was decided that this will be discussed at the Annual Meeting on January 29th. Terry thanked Marc for all his hard work in obtaining the carpet bids and helping to coordinate the installation.

OFFICER REPORTS:

Secretary's Report – There were no additions or corrections to the December 13, 2011 minutes. Motion made by Neil Pellmann and seconded by Jim Madorma to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary's Report – Brian's written reports were reviewed. He stated that we had a great end of the year with the giving in December 2011. For 2012 however, we have lost \$15,000 in pledges and we will need to up our giving about \$3,000 each month to meet our new budget and cover salaries and insurance. Motion made by Dick Cantwell and seconded by Kay Stanek to accept the reports as presented. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – DeAnna presented her written reports and stated that there was nothing out of the ordinary to add. Motion made by Kay Stanek and seconded by Jim Madorma to accept the reports as presented. Motion carried.

President's Report – Terry thanked the Council for sharing their time and talents during 2011.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Dave opened his report with thoughts for the New Year, St. John's 150th year. We need to recognize that change is coming and that we will make mistakes, but that if we will be faithful to God's church and stand together and make our mistakes boldly, we will be successful. He led a brief discussion on "outside weddings", where he is not officiating, which will be finalized at the next Council meeting. Five church members: Jason B, Michael B, Scott B, Laurie E, and Jan O have requested to be removed from the church rolls. Motion made by Terry to remove these persons from the St. John's Church rolls. Motion carried. Pastor will be attending the Men's Retreat from March 16-18th. Rev. Tom Norwalk will preach that week.

CHURCH BOARD REPORTS:

Facilities Board – Jim Madorma presented a priority list of projects for consideration for a capital campaign for the 150th Anniversary. The projects included: a handicapped bathroom in the church building, possibly renovating the existing bathroom at the base of the stairs leading up to the sanctuary, at a cost of \$5,000 - \$10,000; air conditioning the church offices downstairs and upstairs at a cost of \$7,000; a new entrance door on the east side of the educational wing at a cost of \$7,000; replacing the existing wooden louvers on the bell tower with vinyl as a more permanent solution to just painting them at a cost of \$10,000; installing a suspended ceiling in the educational wing to cover the wires of the alarm

system at a cost of \$5,000; and installing new windows in the educational wing at a cost of \$60,000. A new sound system for the sanctuary including a new video camera at a cost of \$40,000 or a bit more was also discussed. The Fellowship Hall decorating was discussed. It will cost around \$4,000 of which \$1,200 is set aside. It is hoped this will be completed by March 4, 2012. A financial campaign of \$150,000 will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Preschool Board – had no meeting.

Cemetery Board – Brian reported that they are trying to get the records all in one place, possibly on a computer at the church. There are three vacancies on the board to be filled.

Music & Worship – Kay reported that at their meeting they discussed and will recommend to Council that the time of the second service be moved from 9:30 to 9:45 to give the musicians ample time to warm up before the congregation begins to arrive.

CHURCH COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Stewardship – had no meeting

Evangelism and Growth – no report submitted.

Mission Outreach – The Missions for 2012 were discussed at the meeting. For February, they will ask for donations of paper goods and personal products for the Frankfort Food pantry as these items are in great demand and go quickly. Possible Mission trips were discussed including Biloxi, Joplin MO, and other places which are closer.

Technology – Dick reported that Church Windows is now up and running; that phones are now working as needed; and that the CD duplicator machine, a stand-alone system, has been installed.

150th Anniversary – Chris reported that preparation for the mailings for the March 4th kick-off for the anniversary are being prepared. These will be sent to all past persons who were confirmed at St. John's and current church members. The extra anniversary calendars will be sold for \$10.00. The food pantry item for January is peanut butter and in February the item will be personal and paper products to go along with Mission Outreach.

Board of Christian Education – they need three new members for their board.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Annual Meeting agenda will include: a financial campaign of \$150,000 to go along with the 150th Anniversary; the 2012 budget; and proposed changes to the choir loft.

Pastor Dave thanked Terry, DeAnna and Brian for their years of service to St. John's. They each in turn expressed their final thoughts.

Pastor closed the meeting with a prayer.

Annual Meeting is on January 29, 2012 after church.
Next Commons Meeting February 7, 2012.
Next Council Meeting February 14, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Maluta
Church Council Secretary

Women's Bible Study Monday, February 13 at 9 a.m.



We will be studying the 5th Commandment, "Honor Thy Mother and Father" Exodus 20:12.

Please join us for breakfast and fellowship as we discuss:

As a kid, what were some rules you had to obey that you thought were crazy or you didn't like?

What does "honor" mean?

What are ways to honor parents at different stages of life?

What is the greatest thrill about showing honor to your parents?

If you are a parent, what would it feel like to be honored?

Leader: Donna S
Refreshments: Kim G
Questions: Call Elizabeth H