

St. Johns United Church of Christ

News from Pastor Ken

March 2024

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Greetings to all.
 What a fickle winter we have had and then there is the weather. No snow, then a bunch of snow. Single digit temperatures and 50 degrees in the same 48 hours. Snow, ice, sunshine, cold and gray. It is the time of year when Mother Nature starts to think about spring but still loves the way the snow clings to the trees and the ice twinkles in the moon light. I cannot say I blame her.

Nonetheless, I really enjoy March if for no other reason than it is the month that officially starts spring, even though it may not feel like it.

Many of us struggle to get through winter and what can seem like endless cold, grey days. Just a couple of days ago, as I was walking up the driveway looking at my icy-muddy dormant gardens and I felt the warm sunshine on my face for a few moments but then again today the afternoon clouds and cold took over. What a feeling of hope I had even though I knew in my heart there is more than a little winter left. That is what I like about March. Somehow, we know that regardless of what winter weather is left to come that spring will not be denied. So, I wait with anticipation as the snow melts to see the little buds starting to appear and the daffodil shoots pushing up. And I watch my bird feeders to see what new arrivals are making an early appearance. There is hope.

There is hope and preparation for greater things to come. That is what this month in the church calendar is about as well. This year we enter March in Lent and March is full of Lent right up until the last week. Lent provides us a wonderful opportunity to consider and pray about how we can get closer to being the person God would have us to be and to consider what it is God would have us to do.

Many consider Lent simply a time of giving up something we like for a few days, but I think that just as Jesus spent time in the wilderness contemplating his ministry, we too are called to spend time considering our own ministry.

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Pastor Ken Newsletter Continued

I do not just mean out role in church. In fact, I am thinking about our greater purpose in life. When I recognize that I have always belong to God, before-during and after this physical experience, I realize that all that I do and say is a ministry of some sort or another.

I encourage us all to use this time for a little, thinking, praying, planning, and preparing. Lent is a time of spiritual preparation. I invite you not to simply give up something but to take time to prepare your spirit for an exciting new journey. Here are a couple of suggestions. Consider one or two as a daily practice. Spend an few extra minutes each day in prayer and meditation. Read any book on spirituality, commit to reading the Upper Room or Daily Bread every morning with your coffee/tea (it is only a small page), read one proverb every day from the bible (there are 31), commit an anonymous daily and intentional act of kindness, you get the idea. Prepare yourself for what God has planned for you. Again, I encourage you to not just “give up” something but to add a little something that will feed your spirit. Who knows, you may find it rewarding enough to continue.

Although most of us think of Lent as not an uplifting time of year I would like us to think about Lent the same way gardeners think about March. It is a time of thinking, planning, and preparing for spring. It is a time of great anticipation. We dream about and prepare for new growth in our gardens, we remember projects from last year that we want to finish, we sharpen our tools and start ordering seed. We remember the exciting successes of springs past and prepare to start this spring full of expectation and optimism.

This is my vision for us. As we continue our journey into Lent, let us not think of this as a season of spiritual winter but rather a time of preparing for our own spiritual spring, as we close the month with Holy Week, both personally and as a community of faith.

Remember, whoever you are and wherever you are at on life’s journey, you are held in God’s unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. And there is a place for you here.

Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Happy Birthdays in March

3/14 Jacob Hincerick
3/14 Matthew Phelan

Happy Anniversaries in March

3/11 Bernetta & Joe Borneman



Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your love one's, family member or friend's name, rank, and branch of service to be placed on the list.

Joshua Bieske	Sgt. First Class	US Air Force
Lacey Tite	Security	US Navy

Worship Ministry

Volunteers Needed

Please sign-up

Please consider signing up for the ministries of Usher/ Greeter, Liturgists, Communion Servers, and Altar Care.

Prayers For

Prayers for Noah, Joe & Bernetta, Melissa, Jeff, Linda, Joe, Don, Lois, Joy, Sis, Bill, Tamera, Tricia, Nancy, Candi, Kathy, Dan, Lynn, Jim, Jenna, Krista, Dave, Darlene, Loretta, Gary, Wally, Virginia, Irwin & Judy

Families of St. John & St. James

Free Activity Sheet for Saint Patrick's Day

Make your own unique shamrock:



Find all ten words:

- Saint
- Patrick
- Ireland
- Roman
- Britain
- Priest
- Bishop
- Shamrock
- Trinity
- March

S	A	I	N	T	L	F	Y	P	A	I
H	S	R	O	M	A	N	X	R	T	H
A	A	E	J	E	B	M	L	I	Y	B
M	I	L	W	X	R	O	L	E	S	I
R	P	A	T	R	I	C	K	S	H	S
O	A	N	K	G	T	Q	V	T	A	H
C	T	D	P	M	A	R	C	H	M	O
K	R	M	A	Q	I	Z	G	O	W	P
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B	T	R	I	N	I	T	Y	L	C	O

Unscramble these Saint Patrick's Day Words

LRADNE) _____

RRMHCOS _____

KXTACPI _____

GRAHM _____

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St. Patrick's Day Poem



••• An Irish Blessing

May the sun shine bright
on your windowpane,
May the rainbow be certain
to follow each rain,
May the hand of a friend
always be near you,
And may God fill your heart
with gladness to cheer you.



Meeting Minutes / Reports

Call to Order: 6:35 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Ken

Council Members Present: Georgia Phelan, Carolyn Hosford, Miriam Guyor, Pastor Ken, Shari Faucher

Absent: Don Weichert, Katie Phelan, Linda Girard

December 11, 2023, Minutes: Motion to accept minutes as presented by Shari, second by Carolyn. Carried.

Calendar updates: February 4 and 18: Communion service

February 11 and 25: Service with Sunday School

February 12: Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

February 14: Ash Wednesday Service at St. James, 7:00 p.m.

February 21 & 28, March 6 & 13: Lenten Discussion Group on Zoom

Ministry Reports

Worship Service attendance in 2023 was up by 33% from 2022.

Fellowship Fundraiser dinner: Foxfire Fixin's closed until March. Miriam will contact Murphy's to schedule there for February or early March.

Outreach We have a new Christmas tote bag list available for 2024.

Spiritual Growth

A. Sunday School: Will be starting our annual Humane Society donation campaign in March

B. Mary Martha Guild: No report

C. Lenten Discussion Group: How to Live a More Christian Life, dates in calendar update above.

D. Pastor Ken will present a Passover Seder meal on April 24 at St. John's at 7:00 p.m.

Earthly Gifts

A. Treasurer's Report: Carolyn made the motion to approve as presented. Second by Miriam. Carried.

B. 2024 Budget Committee. The budget will be emailed to council members this week.

Building and Grounds: We are waiting on a new contract from Maple Landscaping for snow removal

Records/History Book: No report.

Pastor's Report: Previously discussed above.

New Business:

A. Our \$698 liability insurance is due. We will make one payment to avoid payment charges

B. Miriam made the motion to award two \$300 scholarships this year to Marine City High School graduates. Second by Shari and carried.

Unfinished Business: Council nominations and Annual Meeting. Shari made a motion to waive the by law requirement that two members of one household cannot serve on council at the same time.

Second by Carolyn. Carried.

Correspondence - none

Adjournment: Miriam made the motion to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. Second by Shari. Carried.

Closing prayer: Pastor Ken

Next meeting is February 12, 2024

The Mary Martha Guild Christmas Luncheon

Martha Mary Minutes from the meeting held on January 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by Loretta.

Members present: Loretta, Lois, Carolyn and Lynn.

Minutes from the December meeting were read. Motion by Carolyn, seconded by Lois, to accept as presented. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report - The balance in our checking account as of December 31, 2023 is \$252.00. Motion made by Carolyn, seconded by Lois, to close out our CD at Huntington Bank and transfer the funds to our checking account at Fifth Third Bank. Motion carried. Motion made by Lois, seconded by Carolyn, to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Old Business - The \$150. freewill offering was used to purchase groceries for a family with 5 children who live in the Shangri-La Mobile Home Park. A thank you was received from A New Dawn for the donation we sent them for last year. We will discuss the railroad quilt at a later date.

New Business - Our current officers will remain in office for the next year. President-Loretta, Vice President-Carolyn and Secretary/Treasurer-Lynn. We made our list of hostesses for the year. Lynn will type up the list.

Motion made by Carolyn, seconded by Lynn to adjourn the meeting at 2:05pm. Carried.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Reh
Secretary/Treasurer

President's Letter

I am honored to once again be in the role of Council President. I am dedicated to serving the congregation of St. John's to the best of my abilities.

I would like to thank those who have served out their term diligently on the council term and have gone off the council board. President Georgia Phelan, Treasurer Carolyn Hosford and Don Weichert. I speak for the congregation to thank you all for your hard work.

I would also like to thank those still serving on the council for their dedication. I look forward to working with you on our future endeavors.

As I have been the moderator for only a few weeks, I don't have a lot to talk about at this time. I will stress the importance of your continued support so we may offer outreach as much as we can. We are also collecting for the Christmas tote bags for St. James and collecting pet products for a project our Sunday school children are currently spearheading. There are lists of items needed for both are available in the Fellowship Hall.

We naturally ask GOD for a lot with prayers and concerns, and sometimes our gratitude lacks. I would like to close this letter with a prayer that I found fitting.

Lord GOD, our heavenly father, we give praise and thanks for your gracious gifts which you provide so faithfully.

Help us enjoy these blessings with gratitude and reverence, that we may be strengthened to praise you and serve our neighbors, thru Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt Schultz

March Activities

Saturday, March 2 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm.

Sunday, March 3 – Sunday Worship with Holy Communion – 11am

Wednesday, March 6 – Lenton discussion group on How to Live a Better Christian Life – Zoom at 7pm

Monday, March 11 – Council Meeting – 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 13 – Lenton discussion group on How to Live a Better Christian Life – Zoom at 7pm

Thursday, March 14 – God’s Grace Through Prayer - 11 a.m. in the Community Room.

Thursday, March 14 – Mary Martha Guild - 12pm in the Fellowship Room for lunch and a business meeting. Bring a sandwich, dessert and beverages will be provided. Lynn Reh is the hostess for March.

Saturday, March 16 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm

Sunday, March 17 – Sunday Worship with Holy Communion – 11am

Sunday, March 24 – Sunday Worship – 11am

St. James Corn Beef Dinner at Perch Point at \$16.00 per adult ticket, children 12 and under – free will offering – 4pm to 7pm

Lenten and Holy Week Schedule **St. Johns and St. James**

March 3 – Holy Communion 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 6 – Discussion Wednesday 7pm Zoom How to live a better Christian Life

March 10 – Morning worship 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 13 – Discussion Wednesday 7pm Zoom How to live a better Christian Life

March 17 – Morning worship with Communion 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 24 – Palm Sunday 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 28 – Maundy Thursday w/ Communion, Stripping of the Alter, 7pm St James

March 29 – Good Friday service w/Stations of the Cross 12:00pm St James, 7pm St Johns

March 30 – Great Easter Vigil 7pm St James

March 31 – Easter Communion Service (potluck breakfast 8am) 9am St James, 11am St Johns

Giving Lasts All Year!

St. John's & St. James' Christmas Charity Tote Bags: Some needed items:

We are starting over again for the next year. The tote bags are for both boys and girls between the ages of 2 and 14. The items accepted anytime: hygiene items such as: toothbrush holders, toothbrushes, toothpaste, washcloths, dental floss, comb/brushes, hair accessories such as head bands, ponytails, clips, bows, and barrettes and school supplies such as: notebooks, crayons, colored pencils, colored markers, pencil sharpeners, scissors (for youngsters and older children), rulers, large erasers. Pens, pencils and socks, hats, scarves and gloves/mittens and toys.

Please donate travel size items, we only have so much space to store the items in for the year and we need to get all items to fit in the bags. Please try to **stick to the list** so we receive enough of the items we need and not a little of items that are considered extra items.

Thank you!!!

Donations accepted all year to accumulate 100 of each item.
distribution is via local organizations. Donation box & COMPLETE LIST on table.

Scripture Readings for March

Sunday, March 3
Third Sunday in Lent
IEX 20: 1-17
Ps 19
1 Cor 1: 18-25
John 2: 13-22
Beautiful Law

Sunday, March 17
Fifth Sunday in Lent
Jer 31: 31-34
Ps 51: 1-2 or Ps 119: 9-16
Heb 5: 5-10
John 12: 20-33
Deep in Our Hearts

Sunday, March 10
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Num 21: 4-9
Ps 107: 1-3, 17-22
Eph 2: 1-10
John 3: 14-21
No Matter What

Sunday, March 24
Palm Sunday
Liturgy of the Palms
Ps 118; 1-2, 19-29
Mark 11: 1-11
or John 12: 12-16
Into Jerusalem

Sunday, March 31
Easter
Acts 10: 34-43 or Isa 24: 6-9
PS 118: 1-2, 14-24
1 Cor 15: 1-11 or Acts 10: 34-43
John 20: 1-18 or Mark 16: 1-8
Now What?

Additional Activities

Sunday Services

Sunday Service is held at 11:00 a.m. each week. This service is also available live via online streaming at 11:00 a.m. St. James' service is streamed at 9:00 a.m. Both are available to view as a video any time after the live streams. www.facebook.com/Stjohnsuccmarinecity or www.facebook.com/St.James-United-Church-of-Christ-10150090210425008

Council Meetings

The Church Council's next meeting is March 11th at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

Sunday School

Sunday School is held the second and fourth Sundays of each month. Students are encouraged to attend services on the first and third Sundays as well. Lynn Andrews and Miriam Guyor are teachers this year.

Mary Martha Guild

Mary Martha Guild meets the second Thursday of each month at noon in the Fellowship Room for lunch and a business meeting. Bring a sandwich, dessert and beverages will be provided. Lynn Reh is the hostess for March.

Coffee Donations

There is a container on the counter by the coffee pots for freewill donations to help pay for the cost of Coffee Hour. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

Prayer Group

God's Grace Through Prayer meets the second Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. in the Community Room. We will be praying for our family and friends. Anyone is welcome to join us. Please let us know if you have any prayer needs.

Coffee Hour

Although we gather for coffee, visiting and goodies each Sunday after service, we have a special Coffee Hour the first Sunday of each month when special food is prepared and shared. This is provided by members. To take a turn to host, please sign up in the Community Room.

Hundreds of older and disabled neighbors in our community need help getting to doctor appointments, the grocery store or other essential errands. Being able to get food and medical care can make it possible for them to remain in their homes as long as possible. The **Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers** program is in need of drivers who are available during daytime hours. If you have just a couple hours a month that you can give to someone in need, you can make a huge difference in the life of a struggling neighbor. You tell us what days, times and areas are convenient for you and we call you with specific appointments that meet your criteria. If you are free, say yes. If you're not, simply decline and we will call you another time. Even one more ride a year makes a big difference to the person who needs it! Please call our office today at (586) 757-5551. Learn more at www.ivcinfo.org

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NEWSLETTER