

St John United Church of Christ

December 2017

"To Know Christ and Make Him Known"



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Hopefully everyone enjoyed a happy and safe Thanksgiving – there are so many things for which we should be thankful.

One of the things I am most grateful for is opportunity to guide the St. John's faith community.

It occurred to me after the Q&A session on November 12th that I really didn't share much personal information with you; which I will do now. As I mentioned I was born and raised in The Chicago area, have an older sister and a younger brother. My siblings and most of their families live out-of-state. My mother lives near me and I try to spend as much time with her as possible. I am not married, nor do I have children; but hope to add a dog to the household in early 2018. I am a huge dog fan and have been without one for too long.

In addition to hanging out with fur people I have a group of friends I enjoy being with, going out to dinner, theatre, and maybe a bit of traveling. I love to travel both in the US and internationally, although I have not had the opportunity for the last few years.

Books, books, books; I love books and reading them. Non-fiction history and biographies, fiction, mysteries, humor – you name it and I will probably read it. Losing one's self in a well written story is one my most relaxing activities. And I have to add listening to old time radio shows and watching movies from the 1930's and 1940's as great ways to enjoy an evening. I must admit that I have an odd sense of humor; I like worship to be joyful as I think God intends it to be, and I love having fun. There are many situations that require us to be serious, but loving and serving God should bring us great pleasure. I am a pretty open person; if you would like to ask a question or would like to meet with me, please let me know.

Again, thank for the honor of being asked to guide St. John's as we move into the future.

-Pastor Sandy

Listening to the Spirit

In November, twelve members of the St John community took a comprehensive survey. This survey was recommended by our council and Pastor David as a way to find God's leading for our church. The goal is to listen – to each other and the Holy Spirit. On Saturday November 18th, Rev Jeff Mikyska from the *Center for Parish Development* lead a discussion of the results of the "Listening to the Spirit" survey. We thank those who participated in the survey for your efforts to strengthen the ministries of Christ at St John.

Ten members of St John and Rev Sandra attended this meeting lead by Rev Jeff Mikyska.

The results of the survey were reviewed and a discussion of next steps for where God is calling St John took place.

The next meeting to further explore this topic will be scheduled shortly.

Those that attended were grateful to Rev Jeff for his leading in the topics, thoughtful questions, and encouragement.

The statement that touched this editor's heart was: "We are all here for a reason." I have believed that statement to be true on many levels in life. It is Something for each of us to ponder.

We Listen for a Still-speaking God.

FAITH IN ACTION

by Sue Jacobs



There are under-resourced families in our community whose financial situations will not allow them to experience a joy-filled holiday season. You can reach out and help one of these Palatine Township families by “adopting” them for the holidays. **The “Adopt-A-Family Program” provides new clothing, toys and gifts to these families within the Township.** When our family is assigned, gift tags for the items to be purchased will be made available. Please purchase the item you select and gift wrap it with BOTH TAGS on the outside of the package. Do not wrap gift cards or put them in gift bags. Just attach BOTH TAGS to the gift card envelope. The date for the 2017 Adopt-A-Family Program is Saturday, December 16 for turning in your donations which will be distributed later that day to your Adopted family.

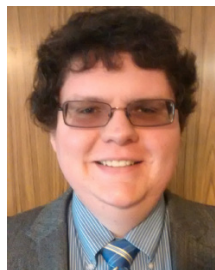
The last Sunday for drop-off at church will be 12/10. See Sue Jacobs if you have any questions or need shopping assistance. Instructions for the program will be available with the gift tags.



From the Council

by Lori Neumann –Trustee

A New column Coming this January . . .



The Seminarian Says

–from our intern Alex Wolf

It's the most wonderful time of the year! We're entering into one my favorite times of the calendar year as well as the church year. Throughout December, the church finds itself in the Advent season which culminates at Christmas.

Advent comes from the Latin term *adventus*, which means “coming,” which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*, which commonly refers to the second coming of Christ in the New Testament. Advent lasts four Sundays in which we celebrate the first coming of Christ. We remember and rejoice in how God's love and grace was manifested in Christ Jesus, born in a manger in Bethlehem all those years ago.

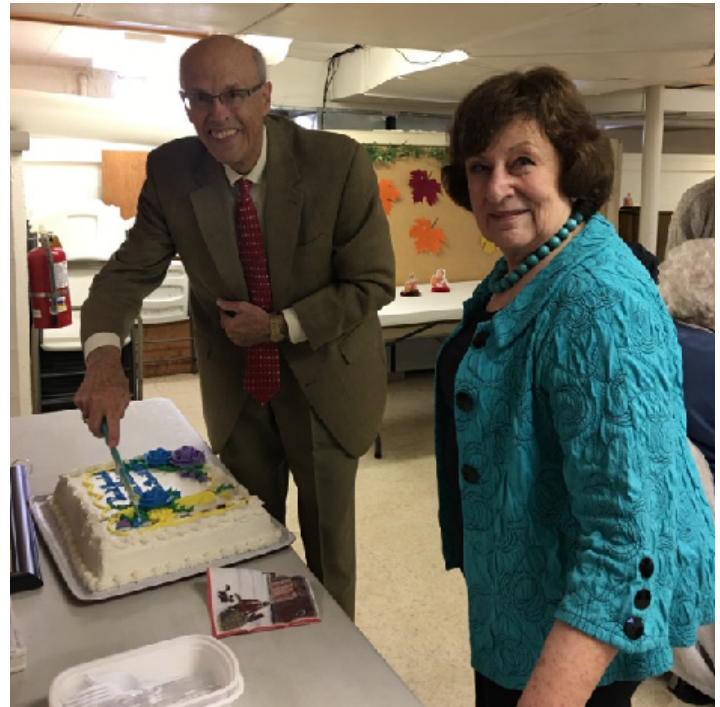
But this is not the only reason the church observes Advent. We also wait for the return of Christ in glory. Throughout the four Sundays in Advent, we read Old Testament passages, especially from the prophets, who wrote of Israel in exile, waiting, hoping and expecting the coming of Jesus. The New Testament readings throughout Advent see the church is in a similar situation. We live our lives with the hope and expectation that Christ will come again.

This can be difficult to keep in mind while we revel in holiday celebrations and in the midst of shopping, all the lights and decorations and singing Christmas carols. I charge you to take the time to reflect this Advent season and remember God's grace and love in Christ Jesus. May we also live a life that anticipates Christ's return: do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.



THANK YOU PASTOR DAVID

We are joyful for the time Pastor David gave to us, preparing St John for the future and our next Pastor. We are thankful for all you did serving us in our walk with Christ. May God bless you. AND come back to visit us!



**The Farewell
Luncheon**
November 19th



Our church community had fun. There was much to celebrate, we will miss YOU both!



OUR ORGAN REPAIRED

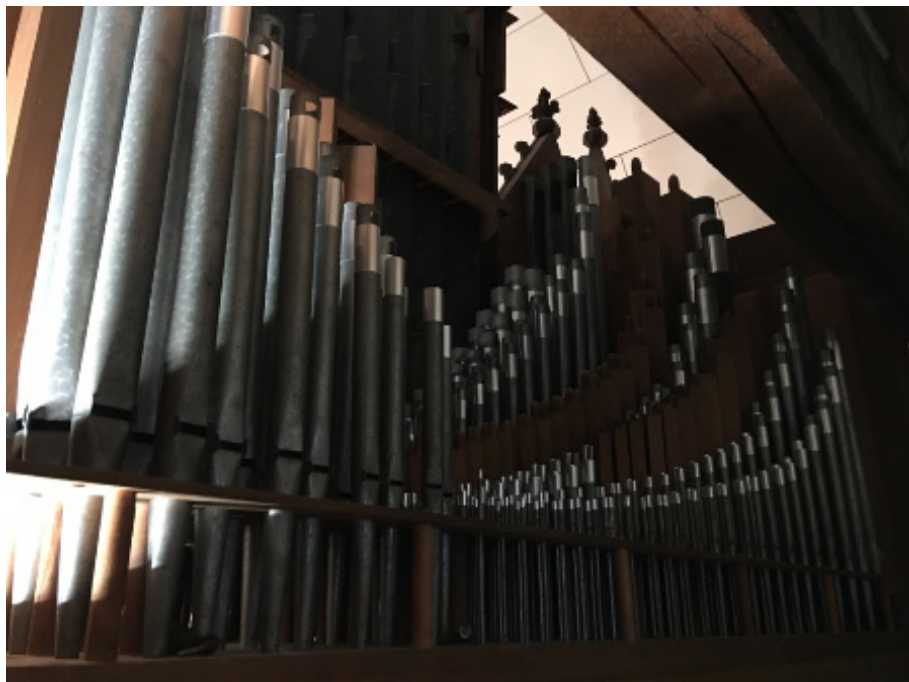
Our beautiful organ has been repaired by Glen Tallar (seated at the organ) and his crew. We appreciate his tender loving care in restoring our treasure.

The pipes are once again singing worship and praise to our Lord, just in time for the Christmas season. Join us this Christmas. Thank you Glen!



Above photo: The new bellows are being installed.

Below: This is the backside/inside view of the pipes that are played each week.



Thank you to all who generously donated to the Organ repair fund!

An "All Good" thumbs up from the crew. Thanks guys!



WILLOW CREEK FILMING FOR CHRISTMAS

Willow Creek church filmed at St John for their Christmas service video. They were looking for a Civil War era church to recreate Longfellow's poem, *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*.

We were the perfect place.

You may have noticed the swags on our church posts. The film crew left them as a thank you. We also received a donation from Willow Creek church for the use of our historic church.



Photos:
Day of filming
Re-enactors playing the roles of our forefathers during the times of the civil war. The film crew even went up into the bell tower to film. To see the video, check out one of their Christmas services. Merry Christmas to the Willow Creek Church family from all of us.





Service 10:30 am – All Year

Children's Church every Sunday, following the Children's Message

Older kids from 9:30 to 10:15 am, before the service

Pastor Sandy has church office hours weekly. Please call the church to make an appointment for a visit.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Women's Guild Lunch

Meets the first Wednesday of the month at 10:30.

All are welcome.

November 26th

Alex Wolf preaches

December 3rd

New Pastor's
first service with us.

Pastor Sandy Kolar

Christmas Services

Sunday – December 24th

Christmas Sunday 10:30 am

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service 10:00 pm.

January 2018

Look here for next years events.

*With God
All Things are Possible.*



*A New Year 2018
Be a Light for Christ.*

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

– John 8:12



Fellowship

Come to the lower level after worship to enjoy refreshments and conversation. Please bring a dish to share whenever you can.



Last Sunday of the Month

- Communion
- Food Pantry donation pick up.

Did you know you can donate to St. John Church via paypal?
Go to stjohnUCCpalatine.org and click on the Donate button on the home page OR click on the link below to go directly to giving
<http://stjohnUCCpalatine.org/giving>

St. John Church

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