

# St John United Church of Christ

January 2018

*"To Know Christ and Make Him Known"*



## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

– Pastor Sandy Kolar

### ***Provisions for the Journey***

We've all just been handed something very special: a 'fresh brand new' New Year with which to do some very special things. OR not. It's really up to us.

As we prepare for the New Year, I'd like to offer a different focus for our New Year's enthusiasm. Let's focus on provisions for the journey through the year. Just as our ancestors had to stock up for their journeys westward, we need to be sure we have ample supplies.

Focusing on the year ahead, what are the most important "provisions" that you will need for the journey? When you think about the most challenging times in your life, what are the most important things that have tided you over? Personally, I can think of some prized things that have gotten me through. The majority of these cost little or nothing; and, take up little or no physical space, which make sense because Jesus encourages light travel. In Mark the disciples are told to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; just wear sandals and not to wear two tunics. Jesus' point was to focus them, not to be impoverished, but to clear their vision of material things so that they can clearly see the most precious provisions of all: other people, and the presence of God in those people. Of the most precious things on my journey, I count the kind presence of friends and family in dark hours. I stockpile in my mind the sound of their voices. I also hoard in my heart those moments when I have been transported by beauty far beyond the ordinary. The ring of truth in scripture; wonder in the beauties of nature, or words of wisdom from a spiritual master. And those transcendent moments when I hear the voice of God through music or song.

These are my provisions for the times when the journey is challenging. So at the beginning of this new journey of 2018, as you prepare to venture forth in new experiences, I ask you to contemplate this: who and what are the real provisions of your life? Think of them, and tuck them away in that special part of your heart that you reserve for precious things.

Wishing all of you a Blessed New Year!

*–Pastor Sandy*

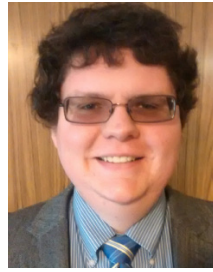
## Council's Corner

– by Lori D. Neumann – Trustee/Council Clerk

**2018. A measure of the passage of time on the calendar of life.** There were many losses in 2017 within our St. John Family. It is paramount that we honor that sorrow and look toward the new year with a sense of purpose and continuity. The New Year is filled with hopes and promises to be kept. Just as we build upon our robust traditions and add the zest of new contributions, so we reflect on the last year's accomplishments and are inspired to new fruitful ventures in 2018. So many things were accomplished in 2017: A permanent part-time Pastor answered our Call, an intern came on board to be mentored and to assist, the Center for Parish Renewal came in and conducted 'Listening to the Spirit', we had a bible study as well as a Reformation Commemoration study, a stewardship campaign was introduced; the Plant Sale, Ladies' Luncheon, Ham Supper as well as the storyteller with the combined historical tour; a Scout project by the gazebo was built, tree and bush trimming along with some landscaping was completed, repairs to the riding lawn mower were made, a new water line was installed, a new electrical line for the lift was installed, extensive repairs to the organ as well as signing up for a maintenance plan were completed, the cross was restored, building exterior lighting was replaced/updated, a thorough cleaning of the basement in preparation for its face lift was completed; e-blasts were put together, a new website was instituted, the newsletter has been on point and wide-spread, Facebook has been brought into view and our social media presence has become stronger – the list goes on. None of these things would have happened without the dedication, involvement and grace of so many of our members. God has truly made our community strong and united in His name and our efforts.

Looking to 2018, we are filled with hope for renewal and continued forward momentum. In the new year, we look toward a furtherance of 'Listening to the Spirit' and applying some of the things we have learned about our path, finding a Director of Music (or at a minimum signing up rotating organists for several months at a time); basement and kitchen paint completion, kitchen cabinet replacement, continued

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## The Seminarian Says

– by Intern, Alex Wolf

Happy New Year!

With a new year often come New Year's resolutions. And if you're like me, those resolutions typically take the form of eating healthy, exercising more, being more generous...you know, the things I wanted to accomplish last year that I really didn't.

I'm not saying those resolutions are bad. Those three resolutions are on my list again this year. But one New Year's resolution I'm adding for this year is daily Bible reading. I've been amazed at my neglect of reading the Bible for spiritual growth. Too often I've studied the Bible only for my seminary classes in a rigid way. I've forgotten how the Bible can enrich my spiritual life. I'm reminded of the psalmist's words from Psalm 1, "Blessed is the one...whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night" (Ps. 1:1-2).

In Psalm 1:3, the psalmist claims that the one who delights in Scripture is like a tree planted by water. That water feeds and nourishes the tree so that it grows and produces fruit. Sometimes we see the Bible as an old, dusty book that seems irrelevant to our current lives. But the psalmist claims that the Word of God in the Bible helps us grow. When we read the Bible and meditate on it, we can see God in the pages and know God's will for our lives.

My goal for this upcoming year is to not see the Bible as a textbook but as a great way in which God speaks to me. I also hope you join me this year in delighting in reading Scripture and growing through the Word of God in our lives. May you have a blessed 2018!







# HAROLD BERGMAN

*June 1, 1916 – December 9, 2017*

*With great sorrow and love we said goodbye to our friend Harold.*



*Harold, and his family have been a part of St. John Church's history since 1852, giving hands and hearts to the growth of St. John Church and the mission of sharing God's word. His faithfulness, and commitment will always be remembered.*

Our little Angel in the narthax is from the Bergman farm. A reminder Harold is watching over us.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Women's Guild** meets the 1st Wednesday of the month at 10:30 am
- **Church Council** meets 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm



## *January*

**Jan. 13th** Saturday 9-11:30 am Survey Committee meets

**Jan 14th** after service Craft Fair/Flea Market Meeting

**Everyone is asked to attend to determine if and how we will proceed.**

**Jan. 29th** Annual Meeting after service

## *February*

**February 14th** Ash Wednesday

## *March*

**March 25** Palm Sunday

**March 29** Maundy Thursday

**March 30** Good Friday

## *April*

**April 1** Easter

## *May*

**May 12th** Flower Sale

## *June*

**June 25th** Semi-Annual Meeting after service

## *September*

**September 22** Craft Fair/Flea Market

**>TO BE DETERMINED at the January 14th meeting.**

**Everyone is asked to attend to determine if and how we will proceed.**

## *October*

**October TBD** Ham Supper

## *November*

**November 18th 5:00 pm** Turkey Hymn Sing

**November 25th** Totenfest

## *December*

**Monday – December 24th** Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service 10:00 pm.



**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.

## FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST



When you read the *Council's Corner* column your first thought might be amazement at all that is getting done at St. John. Your second thought might be "how?" There is a lot of volunteering, from the day to day stuff that gets done to the big event stuff. Sometimes you see the faces or hear of "who did that", many times you will never know the servant that saw a need and filled it.

If you don't know the people at St. John, you might even ask "why?" The expected quick response might be, "Somebody's got to do it." But if you get to know the St. John community you will find they are a family and not only care for each other, and God's church building, but do it for Christ Himself. There is a sense of care for all those who came before us and those who will come after. It is the hearts of our church family that wants to share those hearts for Christ with our community. Some one once asked me how does that little church survive? My response was, "God." I am looking forward to seeing what God does with our open hearts and serving hands in 2018. –Laura D'Argo

## *Council's Corner*

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electrical updates, stairwells to the balcony repairs and painting, another Scout project in the Spring to bring the front of the church into focus, continued painting throughout the bathrooms, offices & sanctuary; external window paint and repair as well as painting the top of the bell tower, parsonage roof repair, and looking into re-grading/adding gravel to the driveway, and professional cleaning of the stove/oven as well as the furnaces.

With these projects to look forward to, as well as the upcoming events (Craft Fair, Plant Sale, Ladies' Luncheon, Ham Supper, and a special outreach), there are many opportunities to come together and make them all great as only we can. Any contribution of time is always appreciated; whether it's phone calls and research, baking, cooking, helping with coffee hour, coordinating events (research marketing and holding meetings), calling contractors and meeting them at the church to get bids, mailing hard copies of the newsletter, providing articles to be posted to our Facebook site (funny stories and serious), participating in city parades and events, food pantry donations – and so much more. Please see Laura or a Council member to ask about opportunities to help. Thank you for a wonderful and memorable 2017 and all the joys coming in 2018.

Sincerely, Lori

### *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](http://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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