



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

– Pastor Sandy Kolar

God's Desire for Us

Lent is often seen as a season to be introspective, a time to check in on our relationship with God. Have we been praying and keeping in touch? Have we given thanks as much as we have asked for help? If we think God has been ignoring us, Lent is a great time to be honest about how often we have ignored God.

The season of Lent allows us to shift gears, turn around (repent) and take stock of our relationship with the Creator and Giver of all life. After all, it is so easy to get wrapped up in our daily agendas and forget that the God who loves us unconditionally truly desires to be in relationship with us.

In Lent we are reminded of what God has done for us, and the lengths to which God was willing, and is willing to go to show us that love. There is nothing we can do to destroy God's love for us. Our God is like a parent who keeps vigil until his prodigal child comes home. If we've been absent, can we see Lent as a time to turn back to God?

Ultimately, Lent is what we make it; we can ignore it, or we can embrace it. Lent has also been described as a wilderness time. Our quest for God can feel like a journey into the wilderness; perhaps a little scary, perhaps a little dangerous. But in the end, it is a journey inward; a road of twists and turns that ultimately finds its home in our heart.

According to the gospel of Mark, Jesus was driven into the wilderness right after his baptism. The wording seems a little harsh. Yet Jesus would return to the wilderness again and again to be in prayer with God, to reconnect, rest and be strengthened for whatever was coming. Can we do the same?

The wilderness can be a scary place, and so can the journey inward when we come face to face with the wild beasts that live inside us: the beasts of anger, fear, grief, anxiety, guilt and shame...who wants to go there?!

Wherever Lent takes us this year, I pray we will be surprised by God, and discover how profoundly loved we are. God seeks; God knocks; God wants to be close. God only desires our joy, and our joy is a sign of God's presence.

–Pastor Sandy



The Seminarian Says

– by Intern, Alex Wolf

On February 28 and March 1, our Jewish friends celebrate the Festival of Purim. The origins of Purim are outlined in the Old Testament book of Esther. The book of Esther is often a forgotten book of the Bible, but a book whose message is still important for Christians to know.

The book of Esther tells the story of Esther, a Jewish woman who became the queen of Persia and saved her people from a plot to destroy them. Esther is assisted by her relative, Mordecai. The book ends with an explanation of how a special festival, called Purim, was established to remember and celebrate the deliverance the Jewish people had experienced.

Esther is one of only two books of the Bible that doesn't explicitly mention God. But there are many hints of God's presence throughout the book. The story tells of no signs or wonders, no prophets like Moses. Yet the way the story is told makes it clear that, even when God is most hidden, God is still present and working to protect and deliver his chosen people.

This Lenten season, we've been talking how we can sometimes find ourselves in the "wilderness," wondering where we are and where we are going. May I assure you that while we may be tempted to wonder where God is in this time, God is still with us and is currently working to show us the way forward. Let us have the confidence that God has redeemed us in Christ and trust that the Holy Spirit will guide us out on the right path.

MEMORIAL FUNDS

These are the totals to date for memorial contributions to St John UCC Church. These funds are dedicated to the **St John Beautification Memorials Fund.**

Annie Armstrong \$265.
Harold Bergman \$1,360.
Heinz Breit \$2,775.

Tithing Report
January, 2017 \$3,534
January, 2018 \$3,125
↓\$409



– by Lori D. Neumann – Trustee/Council Clerk

March – In like a lion . . . we certainly are coming into March that way! A few things on the schedule ahead:

End of February/beginning of March Installation of Accessible signage and Restroom signage

End of March – 3 selections of cabinets for the Women's Guild to choose from

End of March/beginning of April – Installation of back-up sump pump

Beginning of March – Completion of Fellowship hall repair & painting – special thanks to Allen Ghimenti, Jr. for his excellent plastering skills!

March 17th – St. Patrick's Day Parade in Palatine (still room to sign up!)

To assist us in opening communication, Maintenance has instituted an App – not only so that there's a list of daily/weekly/monthly/quarterly/yearly tasks and initiatives, but also so that Gary Hartfelder (Caretaker) and I can stay apprised of issues and concerns inside and outside of the building and grounds.

Laura D'Argo and I will be putting together baggies of our church postcard, our coming events postcard and candy to be passed out at the parade – thank you for donating your time Laura – to the newsletter and to prepping for the parade! Can't wait to see the new banner – and I know we'll be better able to 'represent' St. John at the parade with it!

Sincerely, Lori

Feed My Starving Children



If you joined us last week to help fill Manna Packs you helped . . .

Box 88 boxes containing 19,008 meals and fed 52 kids for a YEAR!

*Thanks to:
Laurie Beisterfeld for organizing the event.
And Robin and Lori for the photos.*



Well done Faithful Servants.



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 7:00 pm



January

Annual Meeting after service

February

February 14th Ash Wednesday

February 22nd Feed My Starving Children

March

March 3 5:00 pm Chili Cook-off

Laura and Greg – Chairpersons

Sign up to submit a pot of chili or
bring some corn bread, fixin's or dessert.

March 17 St Patricks Day Parade – Palatine

Join us walking the parade,

Jared Cooley - Chairperson

This is Palatines 8th Annual "Paint the Town Green" event. The Parade kicks off at 11 a.m.



March 25 Palm Sunday

March 29 Maundy Thursday

March 30 Good Friday

April

April 1 Easter

May

May 12th Flower Sale 8:00am to 2:00pm

Committee: Ellen Kayler, Samantha Wheeler

Julie Heiderman, Judy Hartfelder

Laurie Biesterfeld, Jody Moody

June

June 25th Semi-Annual Meeting after service

September

September 15 Craft Fair/Flea Market

Committee: Jody Moody, Gary Hartfelder, Jenny
Cooley, Robin Turpin

October

October 21 Ham Supper

Lori Neumann - Chairperson

November

November 18th 5:00 pm Turkey Hymn Sing

Robin Turpin – Chairperson

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 email her at PastorSandy500@gmail.com to make an appointment.



St John Church joins Palatine's St Patrick's day Parade

March 17 – St Patricks Day

Put on your green, t-shirt, hat or socks and join us walking the parade. This is a new event for us and lots of planning has gone into it. Jared Cooley is the Chairperson and is looking for people to walk and hand out our info packets with candy. The lady in charge of the cool giveaway packets is our own leprechan – Lori. The more people representing St John UCC, the more fun it will be.

Help our church get the word out that we are a vital part of the community and we welcome all each and every Sunday for worship.

Let us know you will be walking by signing up.

**This is Palatine's 8th Annual "Paint the Town Green" event.
The Parade kicks off at 11 a.m.**

Daylight Saving Time Sunday, March 11, 2:00 am



Spring Ahead one hour

I wonder what it would be like to actually save daylight. Imagine putting it into a jar and in the middle of a dark winter's day you could open it up and out would pour sunshine. I could use a little of that today.

It is not quite what daylight savings time is. Ever wonder how it got started? The clocks in the German Empire, and its ally Austria, were turned ahead on April 30, 1916—2 years into World War I. The rationale was to minimize the use of artificial lighting to save fuel for the war effort. It was first implemented in the US on March 31, 1918. It is folklore that it had anything to do with the farmers.



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.

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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