

# DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



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**Mission Statement Adopted March 12, 2000**  
*We are a family of many hearts and voices faithfully worshiping God. We encourage one another in our living, learning, and growing as God's people. Led by the Holy Spirit, we joyfully promise to serve others as we share the love and hope of Jesus Christ.*

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## The Pastors' Ponderings December 2023

December brings the Advent/Christmas seasons to the Church Year Calendar. This is a month of Joy and happiness as well as a month of grief and loneliness. For those who have lost loved ones and dear friends during the last year the next month will be a difficult month of "firsts". May you find comfort in your family, friends and your church in these bittersweet days.

Advent begins on Sunday, December 3. The greens have been hung, the first candle on the Advent Wreath will be lit and we will gather for an Advent Celebration provided by the Sunday School and the Christian Education Committee. Lunch, Advent/Christmas projects, candy making, games and tree decorating are on the agenda.

Tis' the season of gift giving. Black Friday and Cyber Monday have passed. The stores continue to lure us in the search of just the right gifts. Online shopping beckons us to check off another item of the family gift lists. Did you know there are also Giving Tuesday and Wise Giving Wednesday? Just another gimmick? Maybe not.

Giving Tuesday, the day after Cyber Monday, encourages you give a gift to your favorite not-for-profit. This is a way to help many of our neighbors who are facing difficulties this holiday season.

Wise Giving Wednesday encourages you to begin end of the year financial planning. Discern how you have been blessed this year and how you might share some of those blessings. Perhaps you might want to give a special end of the year gift to St. John's current fund or to one of the church's special mission ministries.

We rejoice that our heating situation has been resolved and worship has returned to the Sanctuary. Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year so St. John's will gather for worship both at 10:30 am and 7pm. The morning service will be our usual liturgy and the evening service will be Communion and Candlelight.

From us to you and yours, may this Advent/Christmas Season be most Blessed.

Pastor Dennis and Pastor Linda

# Church Board Highlights

## November 19, 2023

The October minutes and Treasurer's report were reviewed and approved.

**Joys and Concerns:** The following joys and concerns were shared: Good news that we have secured a permanent Minister. The services that have been held in Memorial Hall were "cozy" and thankful for everyone pitching in to make it happen. Jana Vieck has a new great niece; and prayers for Elaine Workman's daughter-in-law's aunt that was having a liver transplant.

### Committee Report Highlights:

**Music & Worship.** November 28 is Memorial Sunday. Christmas Eve Service will be at 7:00 p.m. on December 24<sup>th</sup>. We will have communion on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and both services on December 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Christian Education.** Advent festivities will be held on December 3<sup>rd</sup> after church services. We will have a light lunch and activities for all ages. Everything will be on the first floor with different stations set up for crafts & activities. All are invited to attend. **Membership and Evangelism.** Working on a process of securing greeters for Sunday mornings.

**Church Facilities/Improvements.** New boiler was turned on today which covers the upstairs and the office. The new boiler should save us some money. Jeff Cunningham, who is working on the boilers, is confident that he has found a piece to fix the other boiler and it should be up and running soon.

**Pastor Search Committee.** Pastor Debbie Jo Atkins has been selected by the Committee as their candidate for St. John's full time minister. She will conduct the worship service on December 10th. A letter was sent out to all members from the search committee about Pastor Debbie. We will have a congregational meeting directly following church on December 10th to vote on Pastor Debbie and would like to have a unanimous vote of acceptance. We encourage everyone to attend on Sunday December 10th.

Complete Church Board minutes and Treasurer's report are available after approval at the next month's board meeting.

The next Board meeting will be December 18, 2023

Betsy Marchino, Church Board Secretary

St. John's Search Committee would like to announce we have unanimously selected Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins as our candidate for the full time minister of St. John's.

The members of our committee look forward to talking with you about our joyful interactions with Pastor Debbie. We hope you make every effort to attend one of the **Meet and Greet** opportunities listed below. This will give you a chance to get to know Pastor Debbie in a more informal setting, in addition to hearing her preach at the Sunday morning worship service.

**Saturday morning, December 9th, between 9 am - 11 am:**

*Breakfast with Pastor Debbie and the Search Committee. You are encouraged to stop by Memorial Hall in St. John's to have some breakfast and meet with Pastor Debbie before you head out for your last minute Christmas shopping.*

**Saturday evening, December 9th, between 5 - 7 pm:**

*Pizza Party with Pastor Debbie and the Search Committee. After a full day of Christmas preparations, who wants to cook? You are invited to stop by Memorial Hall in St. John's to participate in this opportunity to meet Pastor Debbie and enjoy some pizza.*

**Sunday morning, December 10th, 10:30 am Worship Service:**

*Pastor Debbie will conduct the Worship Service. Following the service, a congregational meeting will be held to vote on the Search Committee's recommendation to call Debbie Jo Atkins as St. John's new pastor. Assuming a positive vote, it is our hope that Pastor Debbie will join our church family sometime in February.*

We believe that God has led us to this exciting moment in our ministry. We look forward to growing together as a faith community, serving others and proclaiming the good news of God's love.

A sign-up sheet is located in the church hallway to sign up for one of the meet and greets! We are trying to get a rough estimate at each event for food. If you forget to sign up, please stop by and meet Pastor Debbie anyway...we always have plenty of food!

**175 Anniversary—What's Coming Up!**

January 7, 2024—the start of St. John's 175th Anniversary Celebration. The committee has been working hard this past year to provide lots of events, entertainment, and fellowship to celebrate this amazing time in St. John's history.

Starting in January, with the unveiling of our new anniversary logo and theme, we will be offering special logo clothing that you can purchase and wear proudly throughout the next nine months of our festivities. New banners to hang inside and out, an archive table, church history tidbits, and yard signs in late Spring to continue our celebration. We will enjoy special music, singers and dancers, as well as many wonderful performers who will help us celebrate. Honoring our pre-school, building a parade float, special youth work camp t-shirts, celebrating our missions, and don't forget all the food we will be serving during fellowship, after church dinners, picnic, and ice cream social. And, as if this weren't enough, everything will culminate with a special 175th Anniversary Celebration Worship Service and Dinner on Sunday, September 15 with lots of surprise's!

We hope you will join us throughout 2024, and to help you plan ahead, we will give out quarterly handouts that will list our events and dates to mark on your calendar so you won't miss anything! It's a special time for St. John's, so make sure to bring your family, friends, and neighbors to help us celebrate our past 175 years and our future!

## St. John's Facebook Page

St. John's Facebook page is getting in on the 175th Anniversary in a big way! Starting January 7th, our Facebook page is getting a facelift. We are introducing many special features that will occur weekly or monthly during our celebration. Look for these wonderful ways to help strengthen your faith, add resources in your family life, and inspire you when you might need it. We will also have church events, history tidbits about St. John's, information about the United Church of Christ, and what we predict will trend big...Flashback Fridays with pictures of, you guessed it, many members and events from our church past. If you haven't seen us, please go on Facebook, type in "st john's united church of christ vincennes" and hit the "follow" tab! You don't want to miss out on all the wonderful things going on in 2024.

***If you don't know how to get on Facebook on your phone or computer, follow the instructions below.***

1. Go to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and click **Create New Account**.
2. Enter your name, email or mobile phone number, make up a password, date of birth and gender.
3. Click [Sign Up](#).

To finish creating your account, you need to [confirm your email or mobile phone number](#).

# December

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6pm	2
3 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Advent Festival Children's Church	4 BABE Store 12-5:30pm Friends Evangelism & Membership 6:30pm	5	6 Dinner at 5pm Senior Tequila  Choir 7pm	7 Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30 pm	8	9 Breakfast with Pastor Debbie 9-11am Pizza Party with Pastor Debbie 5-7pm (Both @ St. John's UCC Memorial Hall )
10 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Pastor Debbie will be doing Service	11 BABE Store 12-5:30pm Outreach & Mission 6:30pm Friends 5-6:15pm Preschool Christmas Program 7pm	12	13 Dinner at 5pm Kelso's 19th Hole Choir 7pm Christian ED 6pm	14	15 Newsletter Deadline	16
17 Sunday School 9:15 Fellowship 10am Worship 10:30 Children's Christmas Program	18 BABE Store 12-5:30pm Worship Committee 6pm Church Board 7pm Preschool Christmas Party	19 Preschool Christmas Party	20 Dinner at 5pm TBA Choir 7pm Preschool Out	21  Preschool Out	22  Preschool Out	23
24 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Christmas Service Children's Church	25 BABE Store 12-5:30pm Merry Christmas Office Closed Preschool Out	26 Preschool Out	27 Dinner at 5pm TBA Choir 7pm Laundry Love Preschool Out	28 Preschool Out	29 Preschool Out	30 New Years Eve
31 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Children's Church	HAPPY NEW YEAR!  Page 4					



On Sunday, December 17, the youth and children of our church will be giving their Christmas presentation during our 10:30 am worship service. December has much going on, but we hope you will make a special effort to attend on

the 17th. Please come and support our special young people as they share their talents.



The Christmas Fund offering will be taken up on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Gifts may also be made anytime during the month of December. Please give prayerful thought to what you might give to support the faithful retired clergy and lay staff who have served congregations in the United Church of Christ.

The **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross** is an annual UCC offering that expresses our thanks to retired and active UCC pastors and lay church workers and their families facing financial need, providing direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with the cost of medical insurance, a thank you gift at Christmas, and funds to meet emergency needs.

This year's Christmas Fund theme is "Grace upon grace," from John 1:16:

***"From Christ's fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."***

**Join with others in the United Church of Christ to help return "Grace upon grace" to those who have given so much to each of us and to our churches by encouraging your congregation to give generously to the Christmas Fund this year.**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

- **Continuing Prayer Requests** Bruce Deckard, Don Osborne, Jr., Dale Linneweber, Tammy Abendroth, Darcie Bahr's aunt. For all church family members who are serving our country, Dan Roark & Family, The families of Hank Lopez, Robin Root, Mark Lange. For the silent trials and struggles everyone is carrying let's include all in our prayers.
- Pam Meyer has asked us all to please pray for her husband, Gary Meyer. He has been diagnosed with esophageal cancer, and will begin treatments soon.
- Angie Robinson, church secretary wants to thank everyone very dearly for all the prayers for her daughter, Olivia, and newborn baby girl, Rayleigh Gail, who had to be taken to Evansville by ambulance after birth because of possible seizures, and lack of oxygen at birth. Both Olivia and Rayleigh are

### **Addresses for Shut-ins and Others**

**Norma Meyer, Colonial Assisted Living** - Room 142, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Susie Milligan, Colonial Assisted Living** -1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Joy Tooley, Willow Manor** - 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Leona Conway, Willow Manor** - Send correspondence be sent to 2009 Forbes Rd. Vincennes IN

**Marge Beamon, Remains in rehab** - Please send cards and notes to, 1401 Ritterskamp Avenue.

**Franklyn Schroeder, Oak Village Health Care Center** – 200 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Oaktown, IN 47561

**Dan Roark—Gentle Care** - 1202 S. 16th St., Vincennes, IN 47591.

### **Home**

**Alexander Family**

**Bruce Deckard**

If you have a caregiving need such as a hospital stay, a visit or desire communion, please contact the church office, Janet Goodman (chairperson of Caregivers) or any caregiver listed below. We would appreciate your help and want to make sure everyone is blessed by St. John's when you need it! **St. John's UCC Caregivers**- Ed and Brenda Cummings, Cindy Deckard, Connie, Dan Coulter, Peggy Meyer, Ray Pieper, Terry and Janet Goodman, Lonny Vieck, Larry and Betsy Marchino .





### **December Birthdays**

Chad Deckard  
Delilah Bilskie  
Becky Brockman  
Jerri Johanningsmeier  
Marge Beamon  
Marilyn Houchins  
Carole Klein  
Betsy Marchino  
Jill Doggett  
Mark Strange  
Scott Marchino  
JESUS  
Eli Holka  
Chloe Lindsey  
Joy Tooley  
Leona Conway  
Sheri Stodghill  
Lori Sanders  
Chris Vieke

### **December Anniversaries**

Garry & Donna Hall  
Douglas & Janice Affolder  
Tim & Carmen Horton  
Dan & Brenda Roark  
Chris & Lori Sanders  
Bill & Jan Henry

**If your birthday or anniversary is  
not listed, but should be, PLEASE  
CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE!  
Thank you**

# Advent Celebration!

Sunday, December 3, 2023  
St. John's United Church of  
Christ  
606 N Fifth Street  
Vincennes, Indiana

*9:30 – 10:15*      *Special* Advent Sunday School lesson for children &  
youth

*10:30 – 11:30*    Worship Service

*11:30 – 12:00*    Sandwich Luncheon

*12:00 – 2:00*      Crafts, candy making, games, tree trimming, and more

*Everyone is invited for any or all parts  
of the celebration!*

**St. John's United Church of Christ  
606 North Fifth Street  
Vincennes, IN 47591**

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