



DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST,  
AND ON EARTH PEACE,  
GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.  
LUKE 2:14



606 N. Fifth Street  
Vincennes, IN 47591

(812) 882-2720

[stjohnsuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsuccoffice@gmail.com)

Website: [myucc.org](http://myucc.org)



## A Note From Our Pastor

Dear Friends:

Wow! What a month of surprises and joys. I celebrated a significant birthday (39 of course) with an amazing trip from my kids to Disney World. I had a fabulous time and got to visit all the new Star Wars attractions that had been added since my last visit and some new ones across the park. The weather (with the exception of a little rain one day) was perfect, and all the beautiful Christmas decorations were up. I had never seen Disney at Christmas, and it was delightful. I never waited more than 10-15 minutes for a single attraction, with the average wait time being about 5 minutes. I have favorite restaurants where I like to dine, and they are still as magical as ever.

Disney refers to its parks as “The Happiest Place on Earth,” and there is a lot of truth in that statement. From the moment you arrive at your hotel, you are greeted and treated as if you are the most important person on earth. The hospitality is amazing, and churches can learn a lot about treating one another so graciously and welcoming. It’s always a shock going to the airport following a Disney trip. Suddenly, you’re just an average person again, and people aren’t as kind. It’s a bit of culture shock, and I always wish the magic could continue.

I feel so very loved by this congregation and am so grateful for all the cards and gifts for my birthday. However, my favorite gift came when I had an overnight visit with my son, Nick, and daughter-in-law, Addison. They gave me a sweet little floral arrangement in a small pot with a bee painted on the front. Bees have always been special to me since the name, Deborah, means, *the wild bee* in Hebrew. I was admiring the flowers when they told me to turn the pot around, and I read, *Grandma to Bee*. I am so excited to welcome a new grandchild in May 2025. Then they told me I couldn’t tell anyone, so I had to sit on that news for three weeks. Torture!

My flight home was delayed so I arrived much later than planned. Nick is on the coaching staff at Brownsburg High School, and they were playing in the semi-state game. Addison kept me updated, and they WON!!! So now, our Thanksgiving plans are all asunder, and I will be going to Indianapolis to watch the Bulldogs play in the State 6A Finals on November 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. at Lucas Oil Stadium. So, hoping they win since Nick plans to step away from coaching in anticipation of the baby. I would love for him to go out on top.

And if all this wasn’t enough for an amazing November, I received a

picture of their dog, Murphy, sitting in front of a sign saying, "Will I have a brother or sister?" his nose was blue from the icing in his cake so they are having a boy, due May 16<sup>th</sup>. The first name is still undecided, but the middle name will be John, after my late husband and Nick's Dad.

I try to maintain a grateful heart at all times, but my cup of thankfulness is running over. I am so very blessed and appreciative of all God's gifts. For myself, thanksgiving is a way of life, not merely a holiday we celebrate once a year. As we enter the holiday season, I wish all of you hope, peace, joy, love, and fulfillment. May we all recognize and be thankful for all the gifts we receive from God's hand and share our bounty with others.

Peace,  
Pastor Debbie Jo



**SCARLETT SPEAKS:** Woof! Woof! In November, I met the Butterfly Preschool Class while my mom read the book Give Thanks to them. We had a great time getting to know one another, and they all posed for a picture with me. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, I attended worship for the Children's Moment dressed as a roasted turkey. The kids liked it when mom ripped one of my "drumsticks" off. It was funny. I can't wait for you to see my pretty Christmas dress, and I will be showing off my clergy robe and stole during the first week of December. Jerri Johanningsmeier created it with a *dog collar* just like my mom wears. Merry Christmas! Woof! Woof!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Sheri Stodghill who won the Chili Cook-off with her White Chicken Chili. It was delicious.

**ADVENT BEGINS** on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Each week, a family from the congregation lights the Advent wreath during worship as we anxiously await the coming of Christ's child into the world. Advent means *coming*, and we use this season as a time to prepare not only our homes but our hearts and minds for the birth of our Savior. At the Advent Celebration following worship on December 1<sup>st</sup>, the Christian Education committee will give out Advent calendars to each family filled with daily Scripture readings, prayers, and ideas to make this holy season more meaningful.

**UGLY SWEATER DAY:** On December 8th, grab your "ugliest" Christmas sweater and wear it to worship. Join in the fun as we celebrate the season.

**CHRISTMAS EVE** worship will be held at 7:00 p.m., and Jonathan Clark will provide special music. It will be a traditional Candle lighting service of Lessons and Carols.

**MESSY CHURCH** is on December 4<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm. Our theme is **ADVENT-ure! Activities** will include a variety of crafts, including an advent wreath, manger ornament, games and much more. **Dinner** will be chicken & noodles, green beans and grapes. **Worship** will be interactive and include a recap of everything we learned. EVERYONE is welcome at Messy Church, including our own church families. **Messy Church** will continue on the first Wednesday of each month.

**CONFIRMATION CLASS** will meet on December 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:00-6:00 p.m. to discuss: *What is Advent? What we Believe about God, Jesus & the Holy Spirit.*

December Assignments: Complete and turn-in Old Testament Bible Study handout  
[Watch Jesus of Nazareth Part 2 on YouTube](#)  
Memorize New Testament Books of the Bible

December Service Opportunities

December 1<sup>st</sup>: [Advent Festival after worship till 2:00](#)

[Assist with Children's Christmas Program](#) (presented on 12/15)

### **DINNER & CONVERSATION**

Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 for *Dinner & Conversation*. Each week we visit a different restaurant and enjoy an evening of food and conversation. It's a great way to get to know our fellow church members better. A reservation sheet is in the back of the sanctuary each week, or you can call the church office. We'd love to see you there.

December schedule is as follows:

December 5<sup>th</sup>: Kelso's

December 12<sup>th</sup>: Café Moonlight

**COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S UCC** is open to EVERYONE, regardless of age, church affiliation, or non-affiliation, whether confirmed or not. If you belong to Christ, you are welcome at the table. It is God's table, not ours. No one should be denied God's grace through the sacrament.

**ONLINE GIVING** helps the church in so many ways. By signing up to have your contribution automatically withdrawn from your bank account and sent to the church regularly, you help keep a continuous flow of income so the church can pay its bills and see that our missions continue without any shortfalls that sometimes happen. You also don't have to remember to bring your envelope or check on Sunday mornings. You may sign up for online giving by visiting the church website at [myucc.org](http://myucc.org) and following the contribution prompts. Thank you for your continued support of our church and its mission.



## **Help Wanted!**

The church seeks volunteers to assist with the soundboard, video recording, and projection systems during worship services. No prior experience is required—training will be provided! Flexible scheduling and a supportive church community. Enjoy meaningful spiritual benefits while serving. Hurry before positions are filled! Contact Sandra Lange, Brian Fillingim, or Jana Vieck for more information.

## **Gifts for Pastor Debbie Jo**

Thinking of giving a Christmas gift to Pastor Debbie Jo this year? If so, you may want to consider contributing to a new fund to send her to Scotland. This is not a charitable deduction to the church, so it is not tax deductible and will not count toward your regular church giving. This will be a gift for her to make that dream trip one day. If you choose to give to this fund, please make it clear that this is for the “Scotland Fund.”



## Church Board Highlights November 18, 2024

### BOARD MEETING

**Joys and Concerns:** The chili cook-off dinner was a fun time. It was nice to have the pledge commitment cards blessed. Krisi Mattingly and Larry Marchino both did a great job on their stewardship comments. Jana did a great job on the pledge letter that was sent out to members. Congratulations to Steve on his newest granddaughter, Jillian Claire!

The amended agenda and secretary's report (after corrections and clarifications) were accepted.

Discussing the financial reports, Ed explained that the Wilhelm 2 fund should have approximately \$24,273 less (parsonage roof and revised parsonage utilities) and the Scholarship fund would also be \$10,360 less after reimbursing the general fund for 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary expenses. The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Pastor Debbie Jo's report was included the following highlights:

Confirmation class has begun with seven confirmands. Confirmation will take place on May 4, 2025.

Fifteen people participated in the recent Bible study and a new Bible study will begin in January on the Gnostic Gospels.

Pleased with the initial Messy Church event. We had 14 participants and 12 volunteers and received lots of good feedback from those attended. The next Messy Church will be December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Advent begins December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Christmas Eve service will be at 7:00 p.m. with Jonathan Clark providing special music.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Music & Worship**

Reminder that help is needed on November 24<sup>th</sup> to decorate the church  
Advent is December 1<sup>st</sup>

Christmas program is during church service on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Christian Education**

CFM will meet on November 24<sup>th</sup> to prepare for the Christmas fundraiser

Will have a soup luncheon after the annual meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Pre-order of soup will be available

#### **Finance**

Stewardship theme is "Imagine Together". Pledge/commitment cards to

be returned on November 17<sup>th</sup> and we will celebrate and bless the pledges with a chili cook off following church.

Discussed changing from printed monthly newsletter to an on-line newsletter

Discussed methods to address shortfall in the Operating fund.

### **Membership and Evangelism**

Discussed a new church directory and has had a survey in the bulletin for members to respond to as to whether they wanted a printed directory or on-line directory or a combination. The discussion and investigation into this is still on-going.

A Block party was also discussed and the date is tentatively scheduled for April 6, 2025 from 4-6:00.

### **Church Facilities**

The lights in most of the rooms have been replaced, making a much better light. Mark and Marvin have been doing a lot of the work and by doing so, the electrician is just charging an hourly rate saving us money. Thanks to Mark and Marvin!

### **Technology:**

Would welcome anyone interested in helping with the sound and the slides on Sunday morning

A complete copy of the Church Board minutes and Treasurer's report are available after approval at the next month's Board meeting.

Betsy Marchino, Church Board Secretary



# Happy Birthday and Anniversary to...



## December Birthdays

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

## December Anniversaries

Garry & Donna Hall  
Douglas & Janice Affolder  
Chris & Lori Sanders  
Bill & Jan Henry







## ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

- Terry Goodman did well with the EPS (electrophysiology study). No defibrillator was needed. Terry's heart did go into Afib (atrial fibrillation), but he was able to go home because that subsided. The doctor was able to insert a loop recorder to keep track of Terry's heartbeats. Terry and Janet are so grateful for everyone's prayers.
- Laura Sanders, wife of Eric Sanders and the sister-in-law and aunt to the family of Chris Sanders in our church, had surgery on Nov. 26th. She has been approved for the trial with radiation tiles. Please keep Laura in your prayers for recovery from the surgery and the treatment plan to be successful. Her family would benefit from prayers of support, too.
- Prayer for Donna Gerhardt's brother, Mike Abel, and family, their daughter and grandson, all live together in Belleville, Mike has been hospitalized with COVID-19 and mobility difficulties. Sister-in-law, Mary Ann and their grandson, Micah both have Covid.

### 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, - Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Leona Conway**, **Leona Conway**, Aperion Care - (Willow Manor under new ownership) C&D Hall Room 35, request correspondence be sent to 2009 Forbes Rd. Vincennes, IN

**Marge Beamon**, The Villages at Oak Ridge, -1694 Troy Rd. Washington, IN 47501

### Home

**Bruce Deckard**

**Gary Meyer**

**Michael Lankford**

**Gayle Huffer**

**Ellen Riggs**

If you have a caregiving need such as a hospital stay, a visit or desire communion, please contact the church office, Janet Goodman (co-chair 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 (co-chair), Connie and Dan Coulter, Peggy Meyer, Ray Pieper, Terry and Janet Goodman, Lonny Vieck, Larry and Betsy Marchino.

# December

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 Adult Sunday School 9:15 <b>Worship 10:30</b> Children's Church <b>Youth Group</b> (7th-12th Grade) 6pm-7:15pm</p>	<p>2 BABE Store 12-5:30 pm <b>Friends 5-6:15 pm</b> <b>Holiday Dinner</b> Evangelism &amp; Membership 6:30 pm</p>	<p>3 Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30pm</p>	<p>4 Choir 7pm  Messy Church 5:30-7pm</p>	<p>5 Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30pm <b>Girl Scouts 4-6 pm</b> Dinner at 6pm Kelso's</p>	<p>6 Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6pm</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 Adult Sunday School 9:15 <b>Worship 10:30</b> Children's Church (Children's Christmas Program Practice ) Children and Family Ministry Family Holiday Dinner 6 pm</p>	<p>9 BABE Store 12-5:30 pm  <b>Friends 5-6:15 pm</b>  Outreach &amp; Missions 6:30</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11  Christian Ed 6 pm  Choir 7pm</p>	<p>12  Dinner at Café' Moonlight 6pm</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 Adult Sunday School 9:15 <b>Fellowship 10 am</b> Worship 10:30 <b>Children's Christmas Program</b></p>	<p>16 Friends 5-6:15 pm  Worship Comm. 6 pm Church Board 7pm</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18  Choir 7pm  <b>Laundry Love 6-8</b></p>	<p>19 <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b>  Girl Scouts 4pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p><b>22</b> Adult Sunday School 9:15 <b>Worship 10:30</b> <b>Children's Church</b> Sealing of the Time Capsule <b>CFM Christmas Party 6-8pm</b></p>	<p>23 BABE Store 12-5:30 pm</p>	<p>24  <b>Christmas Eve</b></p>	<p>25 <b>Christmas Worship 7pm</b>  <b>Merry Christmas</b> Office Closed</p>	<p>26  Technology 10am</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 .</p>
<p>29 Adult Sunday School 9:15 <b>Worship 10:30</b> Children's Church</p>	<p>30 BABE Store 12-5:30 p.m.</p>	<p>31 New Years Eve</p>				

## Music & Worship



A big thank you to all of you that stayed and helped decorate the Church. You all did a great job and everything looks wonderful!



The Youth and Children's Christmas program will be during 10:30 am worship on Sunday, December 15. Please plan to attend and see this special event!

If a child or youth has not yet been given their part when this newsletter is received, please contact Jill Lopez asap! Practices will be during Children's Church on Dec. 8th and during Sunday School the morning of Dec. 15th.

## Pastoral Relations Committee is Formed

To maintain a healthy relationship between the congregation and the pastor, St. John's has formed a Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC)

The PRC achieves this purpose by:

serving as an advisory group to the pastor: sharing ideas, dreams, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor,

providing support for the pastor's leadership: interpreting roles, functions, boundaries, opportunities, and needs of the pastor to the congregation.

The PRC maintains an atmosphere of confidentiality, support, care, and honesty with the pastor while promoting healthy communication with the congregation. This committee serves as a safe space for the pastor to share ideas and concerns in a confidential setting and for church members to share concerns with the pastor. Dealing with issues as they arise in a healthy, Christian environment is in the best interest of the church and the pastor.

Ideas or issues for the PRC may be directed to any of the following committee members: Hope Clausman, Brenda Cummings, Eric Meyer, Sheri Stodghill, and Jana Vieck.





# ADVENT CELEBRATION!

Sunday, December 1, 2024  
St. John's United Church of Christ



*11:30 – 12:00* Sandwich Luncheon

*12:00 – 2:00* Crafts and More

Come, bring your family and friends, and join us for food, lots of crafts, bell ringing, Christmas card making, games, tree trimming, and great fellowship!



© 2024 by St. John's UCC



**On November 18**, the Vincennes University Blazers Achieve Student Support Services Program recognized St. John's UCC's Sandy's Pantry for support directly impacting VU student success. The program supports the increase in retention, graduation, and/or transfer to a four-year institution and fosters independent growth through student-centered services for first-generation, income-eligible, and/or students with disabilities. Brian and I are blessed to be a part of this program that invests in students who will be our future. Thank you for your continued support of Sandy's Pantry. May we all be blessed by supporting the future by showing the Love of Jesus through all our Mission programs.

Brenda Fillingim

Sandy's Pantry Director





# Preschool News



In November, we talked about everything for which we are thankful. Families, friends, home, and health were the most popular topics.

We made turkeys, Indian corn, and rain sticks! Every child decided which costume to wear for the preschool Thanksgiving Feast.

The **Butterflies** are working hard to write their name to get into the name-writing club.

The **Caterpillars** are working so hard learning how to use scissors. We must hold the scissors correctly and cut on the line.

We are working on mid-year evaluations to see how smart all our preschoolers are!



## **Preschool Hours** **Butterflies Class**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-3pm  
(doors open at 8:55 am)

## **Caterpillars Class**

Tuesday and Thursday, morning class 9-11:30 am  
(doors open at 8:55 am)  
afternoon class 12:30apm-3:00 pm  
(doors open at 12:25 pm)



# DECEMBER



The month of November was busy for the Children and Family Ministry group. To start the month the youth group had a meeting on November 3. The M&M (age 4-2<sup>nd</sup> grade) group on Saturday, November 10, had an opportunity to enjoy a Fall evening activity. There were crafts, games and light snacks. The youth (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) had a lock-in at church on November 8 and KFC (3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade) had a lock-in on November 22. To finish the month The CFM group made Mason Jar Cookie Mixes, Homemade Hot Chocolate Mixes, Christmas cards and Christmas gift bags as a fundraiser for the group. The items will be on sale starting Sunday, December 1.



On Sunday, December 8, the Children and Family Ministry will have a Family Holiday Dinner starting at 6:00pm. The meat and drinks for this event will be provided! Please sign-up on Facebook or the sign-up by the nursery to bring a side dish or dessert to share with the other families! There will extra side dishes or desserts provided in case your is family running from one activity to this one. This activity would be a great opportunity for the families to invite friends.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY



The Children and Family Ministry will have an opportunity to enjoy a night at church with their church family at the 2024 Christmas Party on December 22, starting at 6pm. At this activity there will be a taco bar and other snacks. Also, at the Christmas Party there will be games and crafts. This will be a great activity to invite friends, grandparents and other family members to come to the fun activity too! Come and go to fit your schedule or stay the whole time.



A red rectangular graphic with the word "DECEMBER" in large, white, 3D-style letters hanging from thin white lines. Below it, the text "Calendar of Events" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

# DECEMBER

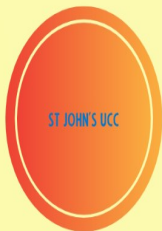
Calendar of Events

## UPCOMING CFM ACTIVITIES

12/1-Youth Group (7th-12th Grade): 6pm-7:15pm

12/8-CFM Family Dinner: 6pm

12/22-CFM Christmas Party: 6-8pm at church



CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY MINISTRY

## St. John's UCC Children and Family Ministry Soup Sale Order Form

Needing an easy lunch or dinner? The Children and Family Ministry Group has a solution for that! We are selling soup for you to reheat & eat at home. Please order for presales by Wednesday, January 15, for pickup starting Sunday, January 19. Order forms can be turned in to the church office, offering plate or by emailing Will Meyer at [stjuccfamilyministry@yahoo.com](mailto:stjuccfamilyministry@yahoo.com). Payment is due with pickup. Checks can be made out to Children and Family Ministry. Free-donations will also be accepted. Proceeds will go towards the 2025 In-town Mission Week and future activities.

**12oz Soup Cup (Great for lunch or small meal)-\$3.50**

**16oz Soup Cup (Great for a dinner serving)-\$4.50**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 12oz Potato Soup

\_\_\_\_\_ 16oz Potato Soup

\_\_\_\_\_ 12oz Chili

\_\_\_\_\_ 16oz Chili

\_\_\_\_\_ 12oz Chicken Noodle

\_\_\_\_\_ 16oz Chicken Noodle

\_\_\_\_\_ Total 12oz soup cups at \$3.50 per container =  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Total 16oz soup cups at \$4.50 per container =  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \$

\_\_\_\_\_ balance due at pickup

**Pickup Times of Preorders**

**Sunday, January 19**-After church- 1pm

**Monday, January 20**- 4pm-5pm

\*\*\*Extra soup cups will also be sold on January 19 \*\*\*

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

**NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 9  
VINCENNES, IN**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**