

# St. John's United Church of Christ

606 N Fifth Street  
Vincennes, IN  
47591

812-882-2720

stjohnsuccoffice  
@gmail.com



## DECEMBER 2025 Newsletter

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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



Dear Friends:

Wow! Where did the year go? As a colleague of mine used to say, "Life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer you get to the end, the faster it goes." It has been an exceptional year with many challenges and many joys. We struggled with finding new preschool staff and a new church secretary. We had to remind ourselves that it would happen in God's time, no matter how impatient we might be. God (as always) is good, and we welcomed a new outstanding preschool director (Laura Arial) and assistants (Hannah Lewis & Renessa Barthelemy) AND an awesome secretary (Kim Butler).

I feel I spent a lot more time traveling this year. General Synod was held in Kansas City, MO, the Conference meeting in Ft. Wayne, and the Association meeting in Terre Haute. Of course, I burned up the road between here and Indy once my grandson, Colsen Max Atkins-Harris was born on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

I hadn't used my vacation time and decided I needed to get away and recharge. I spent a few days at Universal Studios in Florida where I got my Harry Potter geek on. Loved being immersed in the *World of Harry Potter* and the Isle of Berk where I got to meet Toothless, the lovable dragon from *How to Train Your Dragon*. My granddaughter and her husband happened to be visiting there as well so we met up for dinner at *the Three Broomsticks*. Nothing like a hot butterbeer.

Then I went to Vegas so I could mark off Nevada as a state I've never visited. I got to see a wonderful exhibit about Princess Diana, including her wedding dress. Then on to see the *Wizard of Oz* at the Spere. It was incredible and I was terribly excited to catch an apple during the apple trees fighting scene. I treated myself to a delicious dinner at Ruth's Chris Steakhouse and then saw Donny Osmond again in concert. Donny never disappoints. Met up with Nick, Addison & Colsen, (who picked up Scarlett from the kennel) for a birthday brunch at Cracker Barrel in Plainfield. I swear the staff greets Scarlett by name even though we've only been there 3-4 times together. Then met Noah in Terre Haute on Monday for lunch and some Christmas shopping. Then right back into a multitude of things at the church. I have decided I've put off my Scotland pilgrimage to the Iona Community long enough and will be making that trip sometime next year. Thank you to all who have remembered by birthday or Clergy Appreciation Month or my ordination anniversary by contributing to the fund set up by the Search Committee to help with my expenses. I am so grateful to be with such a generous and loving congregation.

While the calendar year may be coming to an end, the church year is just beginning with the season of Advent, It is such a magnificent time of the year as we light the Advent wreath, sing carols, share the Christmas story, and prepare our homes and hearts to welcome the Christ Child into our midst. I pray you will have a blessed Advent season filled with Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

In Christ,

Pastor Debbie Jo





**ST. JOHN'S UCC**  
CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

The Children and Family Ministry group had many activity opportunities in November. The KFC (3rd–6th grade) and youth (7th–12th grade) were invited to a fun-filled evening at church on Friday, November 14, for “An Evening at Church”. At this activity the group made their own personal pizzas, followed by games and other activities. Also, in November 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, November 30.

This past month the St. John’s youth group for grades 7-12 had three meetings upstairs in the youth space. During the meeting times the youth had a lesson, an activity and community outreach. The youth helped prepare for Phoebe’s Mission, started processing garden seed packets for a community outreach in spring and helped get church Christmas decorations of storage. For the busy month of December, the youth will have 2 meetings.



On Saturday, December 6, 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.



The Children and Family Ministry will have an opportunity to enjoy a night at church with their church family at the 2025 Christmas Party on December 21, starting at 6pm until 8pm. At this activity there will be a taco bar and other snacks. Also, at the Christmas Party there will be games and crafts for all ages. This will be a great activity to invite friends, grandparents and other family members to come to the fun activity too!



### 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 14, for pickup starting Sunday, January 18. 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 2026 In-town Mission Week and future CFM 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 18-After church- 1pm

Monday, January 19- 4pm-5pm

\*\*\*Extra soup cups will also be sold on January 18 \*\*\*



The Children and Family Ministry families are asked to help prep for the CFM Soup Fundraiser on Saturday, January 17, at 9am in the kitchen and will be done by 11am. The families are also asked to help on Sunday, January 18, with preparing the orders. Please be looking for announcements in the bulletin and on Facebook group for future information. If there are any questions, please let Will know!



The St. John's Youth (7th- 12th Grade) meets at least twice a month upstairs in the youth space. During meetings the youth have a lesson, an activity and do mission work/community outreach. If there are any questions, please let Will Meyer know!

### December Youth Dates

12/3 (Wednesday): 7pm-8pm-After Messy Church

12/14 (Sunday): 4pm-5:30pm

Will Meyer  
Children and Family Ministry Coordinator

### Stay Connected:

Be sure to check the church bulletin, our CFM Facebook group, and the Children and Family Ministry mailboxes for upcoming announcements and schedules.

### Children and Family Ministry Age Groups

CFM: Children from age 4 to high school and their family

M&M (Mini-Marvels): Age 4-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

KFC (Kids for Christ): 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Youth: 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade



In December to early January the Children and Family will once again decorate their lamp post near the pickleball court at Gregg Park. If you are out looking at Christmas lights, be sure to check out the CFM lamp post for the holiday season.

**We ask for continuing prayer requests for friends and family:**

Gary Meyer, Don Osborne Jr., Conway Wilson. The family of Mark Schutter, Kelvin Strange, Lynne Simmons, Jasmine Zeller, Cindy Utley, Jessica Conner, Marilyn Houchins, Jo Tarrh , sister of Jill Lopez and Jerri Johanningsmeier. A kidney donor has been found for Katrina Memering. The transplant surgery is scheduled for December 11. Please continue to keep her and the donor in your prayers.

**Shut-in Addresses:**

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591  
Leona Conway - Aperion Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**At Home:**

Gary Meyer  
Mike Lankford  
Vern Houchins



Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Janet Goodman during the evening/weekend. Email: [st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com) or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1 pm.

For Janet: [terrybaseball@gmail.com](mailto:terrybaseball@gmail.com) Text or phone call: 812-887-2797.

## THIS MONTH IN PRESCHOOL

Our preschoolers have had a wonderful and busy month! We took a fun field trip to The Big Peach, where the children enjoyed exploring, learning, and spending time together. In the classroom, we've been focusing on the letters N, B, R, L, and H, and the children are practicing how to isolate beginning, middle, and ending sounds—a big foundational skill for early reading.

We've also been building number and letter recognition through one of our favorite classroom games: Bingo! The students absolutely love it, and it's become a joyful way to reinforce learning.

As we head toward Thanksgiving break, our class is excited to celebrate with a little Thanksgiving feast of our own, sharing food, gratitude, and fellowship together.

We are thankful for each sweet child and the growth we see every day!



## Scarlett Speaks!

**SCARLETT SPEAKS!** Woof! Woof! November was a busy month. I was so happy at the reaction to my Halloween costume. Mom has wanted to do the drapery dress from *Gone with the Wind* ever since she named me Scarlett. My personal stylist, Jerri Johanningsmeier made Mom's dream come true by recreating the Carol Burnett version with the curtain rod across her shoulders (to view Carol's dress go to YouTube and search Carol Burnett Went with the Wind dress). I visited with the Preschool classes and got lots of belly rubs while Mom read, *The Very Hungry Zombie* to the children. Then Mom followed the yellow brick road to Vegas and left me in jail, AGAIN. But now I'm home and glued to her side during these thunderstorms. I'll be at church several times during Advent, showing off my Christmas sweater and my pretty dress (fur collar no less) so hope to see you soon. Woof! Woof!



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

A big THANK YOU goes out to St. John's Youth who have been moving totes and other items "up and down" from the half-way closet near the kitchen. Music and Worship Committee is very appreciative of their help.

And THANK YOU to all who stayed after worship November 23rd to decorate for Advent and the Christmas season. Likewise, thank you to those who stop by during the week to help out wherever needed.

Don't forget to bring family and friends to the **7PM Christmas Eve service**. Jonathan Clark will be singing a solo and will join the choir in their anthems. This special service ends with the traditional candle-lighting in the pews as we sing "Silent Night."

**The Blessing Box** needs donations. Here are suggestions: cereal, peanut butter, jelly, Velveeta mac & cheese (doesn't require milk or butter), canned pasta, soups, crackers. Cans with pop top lids are best.

**ACOLYTES** have been a wonderful addition to our worship. The acolytes carry the light of Christ into our sanctuary by lighting the candles on the altar as we prepare for worship. At the close of the service, they carry the light out into the world where it can shine forth to all. Five young people attended a training and they in turn have offered a *crash course* to others. Will is scheduling them to participate in worship and we are so excited to have them with us!

**MESSY CHURCH/ADVENT EVENT** will take place on Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm. This year the Messy Church Core Team, Christian Education Committee and the Membership & Evangelism Committee have united to combine these two events. Our theme is *Jump for Joy: It's Christmas!* We will have a bounce house in addition to our regular activities which include Worship, Dinner (soup & sandwiches and a fruit plate), a mini cake walk, tree decorating, a cookie bar & punch, foam Advent wreaths, Joy necklace, candy making with Elaine, melted crayon ornaments, painting and MORE! Advent coloring/activity books & crayons will be sent home with each child. Join us for an exciting evening of food, faith, fun and fellowship!

**ADVENT BEGINS** on November 30th. This year members of the Youth Fellowship will light the Advent wreath during worship as we anxiously await the coming of the Christ 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.

**UGLY SWEATER SUNDAY:** Grab your "ugliest" Christmas sweater and wear it to worship on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Join in the fun as we celebrate the season.

**FAMILY CHRISTMAS MOVIE** will take place on December 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm in Memorial Hall with a light supper served. The movie will be Disney's A Christmas Carol featuring the voices of Jim Carrey, Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Cary Elwes, Bob Hoskins and Robin Wright. Everyone is invited, but please sign the sheet in back of church if you plan to attend so we can plan the food.

**CHRISTMAS EVE** worship will be held at 7:00 p.m. with the Choir and Jonathan Clark providing special music. It will be a traditional Candlelighting service of Lessons and Carols. Invite your family and friends and join us.

Dear St. John's UCC Church and Family.

Thank you for your generous donation to the basketball team. that will not only help me but my teammates and friends as well. I am grateful for having such a strong and supportive church in my corner always supporting in many ways.

Thank you,

**CHRISTMAS EVE** worship will be held at 7:00 p.m. with the Choir and Jonathan Clark providing special music. It will be a traditional Candlelighting service of Lessons and Carols. Invite your family and friends and join us.

**HAT & MITTEN TREE:** A bare Christmas tree stands in our entry ready to be decorated with hats, mittens, gloves and scarves to be given to children in need at Riley Elementary. Please help decorate our tree with these items.

#### **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 4th-Luigi's  
 11th-Dragon 2000  
 18th-Procopio's  
 25th-Christmas Day-No Meeting

**COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S UCC** is open to EVERYONE, no matter their age, church affiliation or non-affiliation, 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 on a regular basis, you help keep a continuous flow of income for the church to use in paying its bills and seeing that our missions continue without any shortfalls that sometimes happen. You also don't have to remember to bring your envelope or a check with you on Sunday mornings. You may sign up for online giving by going to 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.

Looking ahead on December 3rd,. The **Advent Festival** will coincide with **Messy Church** , from 5:30pm until 7pm . Family and Friends are encouraged to share this special occasion with others.

A big THANK YOU goes out to St. John's Youth who have been moving totes and other items "up and down" from the half-way closet near the kitchen. Music and Worship Committee is very appreciative of their help.

And THANK YOU to all who stayed after worship November 23rd to decorate for Advent and the Christmas season. Likewise, thank you to those who stop by during the week to help out wherever needed.

Don't forget to bring family and friends to the **7PM Christmas Eve service**. Jonathan Clark will be singing a solo and will join in the choir in their anthems. This special service ends with the traditional candle-lighting in the pews as we sing "Silent Night."

If you would like to **reserve Memorial Hall** for any activity, please contact the Church office and they will check the schedule and put down your reservation.

# 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

## Anniversaries

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

Please mark your calendar for Monday, December 1st. Familiar faces from St, John's UCC will be manning the Salvation Army red kettle inside at "Save-A-Lot" on 15th. Street from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. They would love to see church family come by to greet them and to deposit a bit of Christmas cheer (a monetary donation of any amount.) The Salvation Army is grateful for our time and treasure to assist those in need in our community!

## **Dinner & Conversation**

Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm. 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 weekly or you can call the church office to add your name. The November schedule is as follows:



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December 2025</h1>						
	<b>1</b> BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm Friends 5:30 - 6:15 pm Salvation Bell Ringing Finance Comm. Meeting @ noon	<b>2</b> Girl Scouts 4:30 - 6:30 pm Preschool Meeting @ 6pm	<b>3</b> Messy Church @ 5:30 pm Choir Practice 7 pm Youth Meeting from 7-8pm	<b>4</b> Dinner & Conversation - Dogwood's @ 6pm	<b>5</b> Phoebe's Mission @ 4:30-6:00pm  Pastors Day Off	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Communion 10:30 am	<b>8</b> BABE Store 12-5:30 pm Friends 5:30 - 6:15 pm	<b>9</b> Nominating Committee Meeting @ 6pm	<b>10</b> Choir Practice 7 pm Christian Education Meeting @ 6pm Messy Core Meeting @ 5:30pm	<b>11</b> Tech Mtg 10:00 am Dinner & Conversation - Dragon 2000 @ 6pm Outreach & Benevolence Mtg. @11am	<b>12</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Fellowship Worship @ 10:30 am Movie @5pm Childrens Program and Youth Worship Youth Meeting @ 4-5:30pm	<b>15</b> BABE Store 12-5:30 pm Friends 5:30 - 6:15 pm Church Board 7 pm Mission and Worship @ 6pm	<b>16</b> Girl Scouts 4:30 - 6 pm	<b>17</b> Choir Practice 7 pm January Newsletter Items Due In Office Today	<b>18</b> Dinner & Conversation - Procopio's @ 6pm	<b>19</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship Time 9:45 am in Memorial Hall	<b>22</b> BABE Store 12-5:30 pm Friends 5:30 - 6:15 pm	<b>23</b> Cadette Girl Scouts 4:30 - 6 pm	<b>24</b> Laundry Love 6 - 8 pm Choir Practice 7 pm	<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Office Closed</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am	<b>29</b> BABE Store 12-5:30 pm Friends 5:30 - 6:15 pm	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>Office Closed</b>			