

# St. John's United Church of Christ

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## February 2026 Newsletter

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

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# A Note From Pastor Debbie Jo...

Dear Friends:

I hope and pray that all of you have remained safe and warm during the snowstorms we have been experiencing. I am so grateful for all of you who have called, texted or emailed asking if I'm okay. You make me feel so loved. However, I was a Girl Scout for a long time, and I was prepared for whatever came. That said, I am truly grateful we didn't lose power. Scarlett and I have been hunkered down, watching the snowfall and catching up on some reading, writing and watching a few movies I've been meaning to watch for some time.

As I write this, it is Holocaust Remembrance Day, and I just watched *Nuremberg* with Russell Crowe and Rami Malek. It was very moving, and according to my research very authentic. I highly recommend it as educational and a way of remembering a horrific time in the world's history.

It is always disappointing when a church has to cancel Sunday worship due to the weather, and not a decision to be taken lightly. However, the safety of our worshippers is always our top priority. Several days before the storm we developed a protocol for closing and put together email and phone lists to notify our folks about the closing. Our next step will be developing a way to "worship" online when the building is closed. This may be setting up a Zoom worship or prerecording a service to keep handy if the situation should again arise. We will continue to adjust and improve our protocol. Our

Lent begins on February 18<sup>th</sup> and we have several new items on the schedule during this holy season. Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter (not counting the Sundays) and symbolizes the 40 days and nights Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted prior to the beginning of his earthly ministry. It is a time of self-discipline, self-sacrifice and self-examination. Please check out the announcements elsewhere in this newsletter for the Lenten Bible study, self-denial offering and other upcoming events. The color is purple for penitence.

Many traditions have Christians "give up something for Lent" as a self-sacrifice. I think that's an important part of spiritual growth, but I always encourage the "taking on" of something. What is a spiritual discipline you might consider? Some suggestions include daily Bible reading, attend worship each week, take part in a Bible Study, set apart a time of daily prayer, reach out to those who might be lonely or feel cut off, help a neighbor, volunteer with an outreach mission, and much more. I'm sure you can find a way to deepen your Lenten experience.

So, I invite everyone to "get their Ash in church for communion and the imposition of ashes on February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. as we begin our Lenten journey to the cross.

Peace,

Pastor Debbie



# Scarlett Speaks!

**SCARLETT SPEAKS! Woof! Woof!** I am not sure I like all this white stuff surrounding our house. It is very cold, especially on my belly since my legs are so short. It's been nice to have mom home with me, and I've been getting lots of ear scratches and belly rubs, but I can't get outside to do my business like I want. I get about three steps from the back door, quickly squat and head back inside. Mom isn't crazy about having to clean that up! Then I got really scared when a big machine came up and down our driveway several times. Mom explained they were removing the snow. Then today Lucas and Calvin Doggett came and shoveled our walks, stairs, deck and my special "potty place." They even brought their Dad to help. I barked a lot but as soon as they left, I went right on out and did my business. I hope all my friends are staying inside and being all cozy like. Can't wait to see everyone at church. I've got some new outfits to show off. Woof! Woof!



## Visioning

### Visioning for St. John's UCC

*The Visioning Committee reports the results of the Church wide Vision Survey Responses. We will be moving forward to bring your requests/results into a comprehensive format to move the church forward. Committee members include: Pastor Debbie, Kelly Alexander, Allison Cummins, Eric Meyer, Betsy Marchino and Sheri Stodghill.*

# Children & Family Ministries

The Children and Family Ministry had an active end of December into the new year. The year concluded with a Christmas Party on December 21, featuring a taco bar, games, and crafts. This celebration wrapped up the 2025 CFM calendar year with fun and fellowship. In the middle of January, the Children and Family Ministry had their Soup Fundraiser on January 18. The month ended with the Mini-Marvels (age 4-2 grade) having an opportunity to enjoy a winter afternoon at church on Saturday, January 24. There were crafts, activities and light snacks to enjoy too at the M&M event.

This past month the St. John's youth group for grades 7-12 had two meetings upstairs in the youth space. During the meeting times the youth had a lesson, an activity and a community outreach project. The youth helped prepare for Phoebe's Mission and processed garden seed packets for a community outreach. For the month of February, the youth will have 3 meetings.

## CFM Christmas Party: December 21



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!



With the heavy snow at the end of January the Mini-Marvels (age 4-2 grade) winter activity has been moved to Saturday, February 7 from 3-5pm at church. At the activity there will be crafts, games and light snacks to enjoy too! This will be a great activity to invite friends, grandparents and other family members to come to the fun activity too!

## Children & Family Ministry Age Groups

M & M (Mini-Marvels) Age 4-2nd Grade

KFC (Kids For Christ) 3rd - 6th Grade



# Children & Family Ministries



## February Youth Dates

2/1 (Sun): Youth Group **11:30am-1pm** Lunch Provided

2/4 (Wednesday): **7pm-8pm** After Messy Church

2/15 (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



Thank you for all the help and buying soup at the CFM fundraiser. The fundraiser was great success and proceeds will go towards the 2026 Children and Family In-town Mission Week in July and future CFM activities.



On February 22, from 5-7:30pm the Children and Family Ministry will have an opportunity to enjoy a night at church with their church family. Some of the opportunities will be playing pool, foosball, giant board games and watching a movie. The families can also bring games from home to share with the other families. At this activity there will be a pasta bar and other snacks. 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.

## Children & Family Ministry Age Groups

M & M (Mini-Marvels) Age 4-2nd Grade

KFC (Kids For Christ) 3rd - 6th Grade

Youth 7th Grade - High School



# Prayer & Post

**We ask for continuing prayer requests for:** Gary Meyer, Marilyn Houchins, Tony Riley and Ellen Riggs. Mollie Joice, cousin of Darcie Bahr, Bobby Bahr. Prayers for Megan Jennings upon the death of her dad. Prayers for Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece)

## Shut-in Addresses:

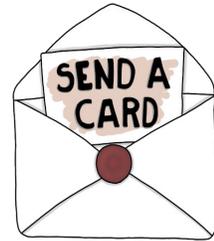
Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Leona Conway - Aperion Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501

### At Home:

Gary Meyer  
Mike Lankford



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Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Pastor Debbie 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 Pastor Debbie: [revdjatkins@gmail.com](mailto:revdjatkins@gmail.com) Text or phone call: 812-760-2226

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The first Church Board meeting of 2026 was held January 19, 2026. The Board wishes to thank all out-going members and officers, and requests prayers and support for all new and continuing members of the Church Board, especially new President, Saundra Lange; Vice President, John Riggs; Treasurer, Ren Simmons, and Secretary, Jill Doggett. The Board spent time organizing committee liaison assignments and usher duties for the upcoming year. The Board reviewed the current budget and anticipated expenses for the upcoming year and familiarized the new Board Members with the financial documents. The Board also discussed plans for February and the upcoming Lent and Easter seasons.

**LENT BEGINS** on February 18<sup>th</sup> with Communion and the Imposition of Ashes at 7:00 p.m. a Soup and Dessert dinner will be held beforehand at 6:00 pm.

**ASHES TO GO ON** Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Debbie will be in the parking lot from noon-1:00 pm for anyone who is unable to make it to a service. She will have a prayer, impose ashes and provide info on our church's Lenten activities. Share with your friends.

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDY** on Tuesdays beginning February 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each week. *The Room Where It Happens* is an exciting Lenten course written by Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, inspired by the filmed version of the award-winning stage musical *Hamilton*. The course has been written in the hope that all ages can be involved in the room where it happens for discussions about what the Bible and the experience of Christian faith teach us about some of the big issues faced in the musical by Alexander Hamilton: his responses to injustice, adversity, and temptation, his search for identity, and his realization that he (and all of us) can make a difference in the world. The course has five weekly sessions

- Identity and Belonging
- Forgiveness and Redemption
- Hope and Courage through Adversity
- Ambition and Temptation
- Love and Sacrifice

Each session includes suggestions for inspiring songs from the musical to watch, with relevant Bible passages and discussion questions. Invite your friends and join us.

**LAM Banquet:** St John's UCC is again sponsoring a table at the LAM (Life After Meth) banquet which will be held on February 19th at Highland Woods Community Center. This is an opportunity to learn about an important local ministry that we support and includes a meal. We encourage members who have never attended to consider attending. Doors open at 5:30 PM, program at 6:00 PM. Please place your name on the sign-up sheet in the back hallway no later than Sunday February 15<sup>th</sup> if interested in attending. Any seats not used by church members will be donated for LAM program participants. Contact Larry Marchino, the church office or LAM at 812-830-8238 or 812 899-2397 with any questions.

# 2026 LENTEN SELF-DENIAL

As a spiritual discipline, we invite everyone to set aside a special container and each day add the amount listed. Bring your offerings to church with you on Easter.

## February 18, 2024 Lent Begins

- Feb 18: Add \$.25 if you attended Ash Wednesday service; \$.50 if you did not.
- Feb 19: Add \$.05 for every magazine or newspaper lying around your house.
- Feb 20: Add \$.02 for every book on a single bookshelf in your home.
- Feb 21: Add \$.25 for every movie you watched today.
- Feb 22: Add \$.25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Feb 23: Add \$.10 for every load of laundry you did this week.
- Feb 24: Add \$.25 for each meal eaten outside of home this week.
- Feb 25: Add \$.50 if you have spring flowers blooming in your yard.
- Feb 26: Add \$.05 for every doorknob in your house.
- Feb 27: Add \$.50 for each pet your own.
- Feb 28: Add \$.05 for every pair of shoes you own.
- Mar 1: Add \$.25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Mar 2: Add \$.25 for every book read today.
- Mar 3: Add \$.25 for every handbag you own.
- Mar 4: Add \$.05 for each song listened to or sung today.
- Mar 5: Add \$.25 if you took a walk today; \$.50 if you did not.
- Mar 6: Add \$.05 for each pair of socks you own.
- Mar 7: Add \$.25 if you worked in your yard today; \$.50 if you did not.
- Mar 8: Add \$25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Mar 9: Add \$.10 for everyone you greeted with a smile today.
- Mar 10: Add \$.25 for each room in your house.
- Mar 11: Add \$.05 for each item donated to the Blessings Box this week; \$1.00 if you did not donate.
- Mar 12: Add \$.50 if you were ever a Girl Scout or Boy Scout. Add \$1.00 if you made it to Eagle Scout or received the Gold Award.
- Mar 13: Add \$.05 for each bird you see today.
- Mar 14: Add \$.50 if you see any lilac or forsythia in bloom.
- Mar 15: Add \$.25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Mar 16: Add \$.05 for each mile driven today
- Mar 17: Add \$.50 if you ate corned beef & cabbage today; \$1 if you're Irish.
- Mar 18: Add \$.10 for each meal you ate at home today.
- Mar 19: Add \$.10 for each craft project completed this month.

# 2026 LENTEN SELF-DENIAL

## Continued

- Mar 20: Add \$.10 for each item you baked this week.
- Mar 21: Add \$.25 if the first day of spring is sunny; \$.50 if it is not.
- Mar 22: Add \$.25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Mar 23: Add \$.05 for every pot/pan you own.
- Mar 24: Add \$.05 for every item donated to Phoebe's Mission this week; \$1.00 if you did not donate.
- Mar 25: Add \$.10 for each prayer said today.
- Mar 26: Add \$.05 for every squirrel you see today.
- Mar 27: Add \$.05 for each place setting of dishes you own.
- Mar 28: Add \$.25 if you have company coming for Easter dinner; \$.50 if you are going to someone else's home.
- Mar 29: Add \$.25 if you attended worship today; \$1.00 if you did not.
- Mar 30: Add \$.25 if you have an April birthday; \$.30 if you do not.
- Mar 31: Add \$.50 if you have bought new clothes or shoes for Easter.
- April 1: Add \$.25 for any April Fool's joke you played today.
- April 2: Add \$.25 if you attended worship tonight; \$1.00 if you did not.
- April 3: Add \$.25 if you attended worship tonight; \$1.00 if you did not.
- April 4: HAPPY EASTER! Add a gift for the conclusion of the Lenten Season

## February 2026 Birthdays

Daniel Goodman  
 Derek Daniels  
 Connie Coulter  
 Peggy Meyer  
 Kyle Doggett  
 Dan Coulter  
 Brenda Fillingim  
 Ann Riley  
 Garry Hall  
 Caleb Schlag  
 Ellery Miller  
 Beckett Daniels  
 Don Black  
 Allison Cummins  
 Mark Schultz  
 Jeffrey Watts  
 Harper Coomes  
 Rylan Coomes  
 Donna Klein  
 Delaynee Coomes  
 Taylor Fuller

## Anniversaries

No Anniversaries in February

## 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 schedule is as follows:

## Church Board Highlights

# February 2026

<b>1</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Communion <i>Youth Group 11:30am-1pm</i>	<b>2</b> Babe Store 12-5:30pm Membership/Evangelism Meeting @ 5pm	<b>3</b> Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30	<b>4</b> Messy Church 5:30-7pm Choir @ 7pm Youth Meeting 7—8 pm	<b>5</b> Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30 Dinner & Conversation— Café Moonlight @ 6pm	<b>6</b> Pastors Day Off Phoebe's Mission 4:30—6:00pm	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Movie (Saved) @ 4 pm	<b>9</b> Babe Store 12-5:30pm Evangelism & Membership @ 6:30	<b>10</b> Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm	<b>11</b> Messy Core @ 5:30pm Christian Ed @ 6pm Choir @ 7pm	<b>12</b> Technology Mtg. @ 10am Outreach/Bene @11am Dinner & Conversation - Applebee's @ 6pm	<b>13</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>14</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b>
<b>15</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Fellowship Time @ 9:45 Worship 10:30 am Youth 4—5:30 pm <b>Transfiguration Day</b>	<b>16</b> Babe Store 12-5:30pm Music/Worship @ 5pm Board Meeting @ 6pm <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>17</b> American Table @ 11am Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm	<b>18</b> Ash Wednesday 12-1 pm Supper @ 6pm Worship @ 7pm	<b>19</b> Dinner & Conversation - Procopio's @ 6pm Lam Banquet @ 6 pm	<b>20</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Adult FF Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am First Sunday of Lent	<b>23</b> Babe Store 12-5:30pm	<b>24</b> Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm Hamilton Bible Study @ 11 am and 6pm	<b>25</b> March Newsletter Items Due In Office Today Choir @ 7pm Laundry Love 6-8pm	<b>26</b> Dinner & Conversation - Bobe's in Washington @ 6pm	<b>27</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>28</b>