

St. Johns United Church of Christ

527 N. William Street, Marine City, MI 48039

News from Pastor Ken

Greetings to all! Happy New Year and Merry Christmas!

I realize that it sounds odd hearing these well wishes in this order but that is how it goes in the church world. According to the Liturgical calendar the church New Year officially begins the first Sunday in December this year with the first Sunday in Advent. For all of you keeping score this begins year B.

My understanding and appreciation for Advent continues to grow with every passing year. When I think of Advent is all about it is helpful for us to consider that Advent is to Christmas what Lent is to Easter. It is a time of spiritual preparation and discernment. It is that time when we can consider this incredible gift that we are about to receive and how we would like to use it. I like to think of the gift of Christmas as an unlimited gift card that we can use anytime and anyplace to shape and guide our lives. But like all gift cards, they only give us benefit if we use them.

I think my Christmas' have become richer and more fulfilling as my Advent practices become richer and more intentional. I use Advent as a time of spiritual centering, reflection and preparation for the year to come so when Christmas gets here I am really ready. Not necessarily on the outside but on the inside. I think part of what use to (and still can) make me crazy about Christmas is that I thought everything needed to be just right on the outside in order to be right on the inside, including gifts, decorating the house, the tree, the lights, the dishes, the...the..., the.... You see, I can make myself stressed just thinking about it. And in the course of potentially becoming overwhelmed about the outside, it becomes easier to forget to prepare and make ready the inside. The heart and the spirit of Christmas.

So, for the past few years it is first things first. Heart and spirit first and then allow some time to put up a little tree, a few decorations and a little bit of shopping. Just as a note, I don't buy things people won't use just because I don't know what they need. Ah.... Christmas

So once again I have gathered my meditation materials and have been making my short list of any specific things I am seeking God's direction about in my life. I have also printed my sunrise/sunset calendar and stuck it to the refrigerator in preparation for fasting.

Contents

News from Pastor Ken	1
Pastor Ken News Cont.	2
Upcoming Events	3
Military Prayer List	3
Prayers Needed	3
Birthdays	4
Anniversaries	4
Worship Ministry	4
Thank You	4
Kid's Page	5
Holiday Tour	6
Reports & Minutes	7
Report & Minutes	8
Reports & Minutes	9
Reports & Minutes	10
Scripture Readings	10



As many of you know I fast (nothing to eat or drink from sunrise to sunset) the purple seasons of the church calendar. Please don't do this without discussing it. However, if you would like to join me in spirit for a day in prayer, meditation or whatever practice you use to center your spirit, I would enjoy sharing that with you. I continue to be excited about the journey ahead. This year I invite you to join me in re-arranging our priorities and sharing with me in ways to more fully enjoy Advent and therefore Christmas.

First, slow down and take time to remember what this season is truly about. It is time for thinking about our individual relationships with God and listening for what it is God would have us to do and who it is that God would have us to be. It is a time of prayer, reflection and discerning. It is a time for considering and acting on how it is you want God to impact your life. I also want to remind you to expect the unexpected.

Secondly, Advent is the beginning of the new church year. It is a season for appreciating what is, together with the hope of what is to come. I look with anticipation toward this New Year both in my personal life as well as our life together as a community of faith. This has been an exciting year of growth and transition for me and our church family. There continues to be an exciting sense of energy and anticipation. I invite you to pray and prepare for what God is calling you individually and we as a community, to be and to do in the year ahead.

Third, Advent is the gateway to Christmas and all the joy and anticipation that comes with it. As I stated earlier, I am aware that during the holidays we are sometimes consumed with trying to do life perfectly. It seems that no matter how much we do or how hard we work there will always be a couple things more we could have done. Is not that the way life is. I think the key to happiness during the holidays as well as throughout life is to slow down, plan for what you can plan, do what you can do, and then relax and take time to enjoy the ride, knowing that things are always going to turn out a little differently than the plan. Make sure to leave room for the Spirit to do its thing.

During this time of Advent, I invite you to follow that simple formula, plan a little, do a little, and enjoy, remembering that the biggest gift that you will receive is not under the tree. It is the gift of God's unending love for you, the gift of boundless, unconditional, unearned, mercy, grace and forgiveness. So, sit a moment, wait a while, take a deep breath, expect the unexpected and then prepare to open the Gift that will transform your life forever. Expect a miracle.

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are held in God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. And there is a place for you here.

May you know the love and grace of God in your life. May your heart and life be filled with the Spirit. Merry Christmas!!

Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Upcoming Events and Services

- December 3 - 11am Divine Worship with Holy Communion & Sunday School. Coffee Hour following worship
- December 4 - 2:30pm Prayer Group meets in the Fellowship Room
- December 9 - 4:00-9:00pm Marine City Holiday Home Tour
- December 10 - 11am Divine Worship and Sunday School
- December 11 - 2:30pm Prayer Group meets in the Fellowship Room
6:30pm Council Meets
- December 14 - 12:30pm Mary Martha Guild Annual Christmas Party in the Fellowship Room. Loretta and Nelson Prange are hosting
- December 15 - 6:30pm Family Movie Night
- December 17 - 11am Divine Worship with Holy Communion and Sunday School Christmas Program
- December 18 - 2:30 pm Prayer Group meets in the Fellowship Room
- December 21 - 7pm Blue Christmas Service at St. James UCC
- December 24 - 11am Divine Worship and Christmas Eve Service
No Sunday School
- December 24 - 11pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at St. James UCC
- December 31 - 11am Lessons & Carols and Healing Service. No Sunday School



Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your love one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to be placed on the list.

Prayers For

- Beth Baysinger
- Janet Bulgrien
- Helen DeLude
- Margaret Fenton
- Brenda and Tom Fisher
- Peggy Galvin
- Tamara Gorence
- Judy and Mickey Lester
- Karen Jolicoeur
- Betty Reynolds
- Kurt Schultz
- Betty Summerville
- Joyce Wiinikainen
- Jim Wood
- St. John's Congregation

Happy Birthdays in December

6 Mary Galvin
19 James Reynolds
25 Rev. Ken Gadd
26 Loretta Prange
31 Andrew Hincherrick

Happy Anniversary's in December

17 Mickey and Judy Lester

Worship Ministry

Volunteers Needed Please sign-up

Please consider signing up for the ministries of Usher/Greeter, Liturgists and Altar Care. We need Advent Readers for this upcoming Advent Season.

Thank you!!!

With the happy arrival of Rev. Ken Gadd, our Search Committee work is officially concluded! I would like to thank our Committee members for their dedication and prayers to this task. It takes many hands to make a church community work and these fine folks are to be commended for this effort:

Denise Beattie, Mary Galvin, Miriam Guyor, Georgia Phelan, Loretta Prange, Kurt & Dorothy Schultz

Many thanks to those who served St. John's during this time, including Rev. Rebekah Rathman-Wingrove and especially Rev. Woody Nelson, who so unselfishly sacrificed his winter in Florida (Ruth's, too!) for us.

Thanks to all in our congregation who remembered our efforts in their prayers since the start of our search in December of 2015.
With love and prayers,
Georgia

UCAWQWEBWLMJRQECOI VHD OUIGKGFHU
YPOSFVDNLI SHYENNZUOBRPKRAZUFLS
TCRPJLKOQNSWLMPUQJALEIKUYTATVA
HKZCNOCIHVNEONUEGZNAHWGPRSRQSH
CPJXYPNQARLRMKUSERACPPDSYLYNOA
MSERMYAZE EHBTEMSEK SVEGBSGBMDAU
LIXSDRMEGLMEYTNBEGNJHWZDRZPRGD
WBRXOCJNHFNOWFLBVKVNSDZWT SNTAI
PAEAMJANGOGYDRALOYRDIQNXWKK SJH
WIVHCCG P VCMHTVIYINARZLXGTSJILC
PKDRFLVIWSPNGZPFIOYLDZJGMANGER
LTZUCIECGLFPJKSIAIMRFKSSIHIEK
QRYKETOSUPDXTIJEIQMVKMYRLBMNST
YOTBZSSZAALTGUSHQSYVQDRYRNBKOH
FLIYBKEJGTMLIVMEJJKCURWAQLDKES
OXVXTACWRCULJCTWIPDGP RNTNUNDEN
NHIJQC COIJLBEXULCIHZTZYSMCEVPW
IATQZQIGTWJHGND DPF IYIXPAMMAAPM
KRAQPUTYISQQOQLRGHRXBNECVSJMHH
IQNNLKDUJESUSMYRZTXXLITVMEKKEK
OAQPLKTVLMX BZCFVRBJSNLSFJZGLL
SLSURTIMEMNALJCVPHMMRKIRXLKCZM
PWZUFUCWRMCAFYLWBDIKFWXOIVJLFB
JPGJMHQFRDXFPZVAFFIKTEATPCDGDZ
GNNAHCDHPSECNUBUYAHLWCEFIKMDG
TFRQBZTXPEUHLTYVBT L FUDQWKPS PNU
XYXFYRYOEPKZWAYEAYEK NODMAVNAVO
FKHOILJPIJASYTNLDBDLCQGGPDHDSXA
HLNBBQH KCQFYUVBPQIPEWBMNTRYIDI
BEEZATJTYRVVBETHLEHEMLDVC GAKTC

Christ, the Saviour,
is born!

- ANGEL
- BABY
- BETHLEHEM
- BIRTH
- CAMEL
- DONKEY
- INNKEEPER
- JESUS
- JOSEPH
- MANGER
- MARY
- MIRACLE
- NATIVITY
- SHEEP
- SHEPHERD
- STAR
- WISEMEN



Merry Christmas

Holiday Home Tour



We're happy to announce the inclusion of our new St. John's UCC church building in this year's **Holiday Home Tour**, presented each year by the Civic Women's Club of Marine City! Although primarily a Home Tour, they like to include a church each year. As we are anxious to show off our new digs, we volunteered St. John's for the 2017 tour.

Taking place on Saturday, December 9, several hundred visitors can be expected during the 4:00-9:00 hours of the tour. The first hour is to give other participants a chance to view homes/church before the official start time of 5:00. To be prepared, we are looking for volunteers to help with this effort.

We will need several people to act as greeters/tour guides that evening. Additionally, we may want to have light refreshments, so we need to accommodate that. Or we may want to fashion small "St. John's UCC" decorations to send home with our visitors. Or sing carols. It will be up to our volunteers to decide what we'll do. Or just show folks around, if we so choose.

Christmas decorations are expected and I'm sure we'll be doing that anyway. However, we are in a new space, so this may take a little more effort than usual to accommodate our current inventory of décor to our new space. With that in mind, please raise your hand when the time to decorate is upon us!

I'm looking forward to chairing this event! Please let me know if you'd like to help "show off" St. John's this December. If you can't help, maybe you'd like to take the tour. Tickets will be available, usually for \$10, at several locations, including The Sweet Tooth and Vera Grace Emporium.

Georgia Phelan

Reports and Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for September, 2017

Beginning Cash Balance	\$ 48,660.28
Receipts	38,453.29
Expenses	<u>2,721.30</u>
Ending Cash Balance	\$ 84,392.27
Savings Account	\$ 47,407.39
Savings Account-Flagstar	33,717.66
Checking Account	<u>11,719.98</u>
	\$ 92,845.03
Expenses from Fah's Savings	<u>8,452.76</u>
Total	\$ 84,392.27
St. John's CD	\$ 8,735.94
Fah's Endowment Savings	<u>2,368.42</u>
Total	\$ 11,104.36

Treasurer's Report for October, 2017

Beginning Cash Balance	\$ 84,392.27
Receipts	6,433.78
Expenses	<u>4,175.90</u>
Ending Cash Balance	\$ 86,650.15
Savings Account	\$ 47,409.40
Savings Account-Flagstar	33,720.43
Checking Account	<u>13,973.08</u>
	\$ 95,102.91
Expenses from Fah's Savings	<u>8,452.76</u>
Total	\$ 86,650.15
St. John's CD	\$ 8,735.94
Fah's Endowment Savings	<u>2,369.52</u>
Total	\$ 11,105.46

Submitted by
Dorothy Schultz, Treasurer

Mary Martha Guild Minutes

Mary Martha Minutes from the meeting held on October 12, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 1:40pm by Loretta.

Members present: Tamara, Lois, Carolyn, Loretta, Brenda, Linda, Judy, Marian and Lynn.

Loretta welcomed our newest member, Marian McKeller.

Lynn read the minutes from the September meeting. Motion made by Lois, seconded by Brenda to accept the minutes as read. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report was given by Lynn. The current balance in the checking account is \$1,422.13. Motion made by Brenda, seconded by Tamara to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried. Brenda paid her annual dues.

Old Business - We have received over 100 recipes for the CHRISTmas cookbook. Loretta has typed them for us. Pricing of printing and putting together the books has been checked into. To print on card stock is going to be expensive, so alternatives will be explored. We will let everyone know what is decided and set a time to put the books together ourselves, if we are going to pursue this project.

Lynn made a motion, seconded by Tamara to table our free lunches until after the first of the year. Motion carried. Dishcloths have been donated to a humane society in St. Clair and also to Helping Hands. Dishcloths will be displayed in the fellowship room and on sale for \$1.25 per cloth.

New Business - none at this time.

Motion made by Lynn, seconded by Judy, to adjourn the meeting at 2:30pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Reh, Secretary/Treasurer

Reports and Minutes Continued

St. John's United Church of Christ
Council Meeting
October 17, 2017

Present: Kurt Schultz, Dorothy Schultz, Don Weichert, Loretta Prange, Lynn Reh,
Miriam Guyor, Denise Beattie, Rev. Gadd

Call to order at 6:34 p.m. Opening prayer by Rev. Gadd.

- I. Georgia Phelan updated Council on the Home Tour. It will be held Dec. 9 from 5 to 9 p.m. Offices will not be open to the public during the tour. The parking lot entrance will be open for this event. Coffee, hot chocolate and cookies will be served to our guests. A pamphlet will be prepared for hand out. Denise will be here to open, and Georgia will get volunteers to serve as hosts. Kurt will touch base with Terry in case there is snow.
- II. Minutes of the September 12 meeting and the special meeting of September 19 were presented by Miriam. Motion by Lynn, second by Loretta to accept both as presented. Carried.
- III. Reports
 - A. Treasurer's Report presented by Dorothy. Motion by Denise, second by Lynn to accept as presented. Carried.
 - B. Financial Secretary's Report presented by Loretta. Motion by Lynn, second by Denise to accept as presented. Carried.
 - C. Mary Martha Guild
 1. They are proceeding with the cookbook and will be putting it together this week.
 2. The free lunch program will be on hold until after the first of the year.
 3. Judy Lester's daughter went to Israel and is interested in doing a presentation. MMG would host and will coordinate a date with her.
 - D. Sunday School
 1. Lynn reported that the children will be trick or treating on Oct. 29.
 2. Preparation for the Christmas program will begin the first Sunday in November. The program will be presented on Dec. 17.
 3. Confirmation class. Both students are in Junior National Honor Society and need to do service hours. Lynn will ask them to help at the Home Tour.
 - E. Building and Grounds
 1. Don reported that the parking lot light has been taken care of. We need to survey other outdoor lights as some are not working.
 2. Kurt installed the boiler pump.
 3. We will contact the Scouts regarding raking of the leaves.
 4. Don talked to our various groups to make them aware that a window had been left open and occasionally the kitchen hasn't been cleaned.

- IV. Unfinished Business
 - A. We may have to organize some assistance for church cleaning.
 - B. We may want to look again into a floor cleaner that does carpet and hard floors as it would be a time saver. Tabled this item until the November meeting.
 - C. Don will ask our Thursday group to put up the chairs after their meeting to accommodate cleaning.
 - D. Don will get a plumber to address the boiler room drain.

 - E. Time change for worship service.
 - 1. Lynn made a motion to change our service to 11 a.m. beginning with the Nov. 5 service. Second by Denise. Carried. Kurt will announce at the upcoming services.
 - 2. We will use the emergency call list to notify/remind congregants of the new service time and a reminder to set their clocks back the night before. This will also be an opportunity to check for “good” phone numbers.
- V. New Business
 - A. Lynn made the motion to change our Council meeting dates to the second Monday of the month beginning November 13 to accommodate Rev. Gadd’s attendance. Second by Dorothy. Carried.
 - B. Communion Service.
 - 1. We will be using bread instead of wafers. This bread is not white bread and it is gluten free.
 - 2. In the future, Rev. Gadd would like to see the Sunday School students attend the beginning of our service. We had done this in the past when we had a regular pastor and will do so again.
 - C. Pastor
 - 1. Rev. Gadd reviewed with the Council the new verbiage added to our contract with him, per Conference requirements.
 - 2. Rev. Gadd suggested we set a time for congregants to ask him questions, etc., to get to know him better. We will hold an open forum after the Oct. 29 service to do this.
 - 3. Music/organist. Diane is good with our time change on her days to play at service. Rev. Gadd has some people who could possibly fill in on the other Sundays.
 - 4. Bulletin. Cindy had formatted, but is no longer with us. Denise makes the copies. Rev. Gadd will check with the person who does the St. James bulletin to see what her charges would be to do ours. We will run on letter size for the time being.
 - 5. Rev. Gadd is working on updating and rebuilding our web page. Miriam will have Patrick Phelan contact him regarding our Facebook page.

D. Use of Building Requests

1. Don reported that we have had two requests: Dec. 2, 5- 10 p.m., approximately 30 people for a “31” party and Nov. 10, 6 - 8:30 p.m., 12 to 15 people.

Both requests are from church members.

Motion by Lynn to allow these members to use our fellowship room.

Second by Denise. Carried.

We will revisit our policy and discuss the types of uses that will be allowed at no charge to members.

Denise made the motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Second by Lynn, carried.

Submitted by Miriam Guyor
Secretary

Scripture Reading for December 2017

Sunday, December 3
First Sunday of Advent
Isa 64: 1-9
Ps 80:1-7, 17 -19
1 Cor 1: 3-9
Mark 13: 24-37
Where Are You, God?

Sunday, December 17
Third Sunday of Advent
Isa 61: 1-4, 8-11
Ps 126 or Luke 1: 46b-55
4, 19-26
1 Thess 5: 16-24
John 1: 6-8, 19-28
Shouts of Joy

Sunday, December 10
Second Sunday of Advent
Isa 40: 1-11
Ps 85: 1-2, 8-13
2 Pet 3: 8-15; 24-37
Mark 1: 1-8
Messengers of Hope

Sunday, December 24
Fourth Sunday of Advent
2 Sam 7: 1-11, 16
Luke 1: 46b-55 or Ps 89: 1-
Rom 16: 25-27
Luke 1: 26-38 Eph 1: 15-23
Birth of a Promise

Sunday, December 31
First Sunday after Christmas
Isa 61:10-62:3
Ps 148
Gal 4: 4-7
Luke 2: 22-40
Long-Awaited Gift

St. Johns United Church of Christ
527 N. William Street
Marine City, MI 48039

Phone:
(586) 727--1623

Fax:
(586) 27-0833

E-mail:
kgadd@stjohnsmarinecity.org

We're on the Web!
stjohnsmarinecity.org



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER