

# January 2018 Newsletter



## **St. John's United Church of Christ**

**101 South Clark Street**

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*Rev. Dr. Tom Fritz, Pastor (920)268-5757*

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“The purpose of this congregation is to be a faith community promoting the kingdom of God through worship, teaching and action...GET READY!”

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>St. John's United Church of Christ</b> 101 S Clark St (PO BOX 264) Black Creek, WI 54106 Ph.: 920-984-3845	1 <b>Happy New Year!</b>	2	3 No Women's Guild meeting 6:30 p.m. Senior Choir practice	4	5	6
7 <b>Communion Sunday</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Study 10:15 a.m. <b>Worship</b>	8 No Men's United Dartball for St. John's	9  6:30 p.m. Council meeting	10 6:30 p.m. Senior Choir practice	11 9:00 a.m. Annual Reports are DUE in the office  	12	13
14 <b>Totenfest Sunday</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Study 10:15 a.m. <b>Worship</b> 11:15 a.m. Music Committee meeting	15 7:30 p.m. Men's Dartball at BC Lutheran	16 9:00 February Newsletter info due in office	17 6:30 p.m. Senior Choir practice	18 1:30 p.m. Annual Report Assembling in Gathering Room ( <i>if you care to help, please call around noon to confirm all is on schedule with Kim</i> ).	19	20 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Confirmation Class –Session 4
21 <i>Annual Reports will be available</i> 9:00 a.m. Youth Group, Bible Study, & Sunday School 10:15 a.m. <b>Worship</b>	22 7:30 p.m. Men's Dartball @ Seymour Lutheran	23	24 6:30 p.m. Senior Choir practice	25 1:00 p.m. Newsletter Assembly ( <i>please call to confirm on schedule</i> )	26	27
28 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Study 10:15 a.m. <b>Worship</b> 11:15 a.m. <b>Annual meeting</b> Followed by Potluck lunch 	29 7:30 p.m. Men's Dartball here vs. Oneida UM	30	31 6:30 p.m. Senior Choir practice			

## Annual Meeting



St. John's annual meeting is set for Sunday morning, January 28, 2018, following our 10:15 worship. Following our meeting, please plan to stay for a potluck meal and fellowship.

“O God, You are my God, ... So I have looked upon You in the sanctuary, beholding Your power and glory” (Psalm 63:1a, 2 NRSV)!

## Annual Reports

The deadline to submit reports to be included in our 2017-year-end Report is Thursday morning, **January 11, 2018**. All Committee Chairpersons, Financial Secretaries/Treasurers, Youth Leader, Pastor, and the Council President please submit your reports by 9:00, to give Kim time to compile and produce our 2017-Year-End Annual Report. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with Kim. You may submit the reports in neatly hand-written form or via e-mail. The office email address is [StJcreek@gmail.com](mailto:StJcreek@gmail.com). Thank you for your faithful service to Christ through St. John's.



**Happy Wedding Anniversary to those celebrating your wedding and marriage!**



***Pastor's Message:***  
***Wise Men (and Women), Wise Gifts, and***  
***Shaping the Future . . .***

As I write this article, I am basking in the glow of Christmas. Gifts were given and received, and everyone seemed delighted by what they gave and what they got. Love was renewed in acts of giving meant to bring happiness to both giver and receiver.



The gift giving of Christmas has its origins in the gift giving of those Wise Men, who sought out the Messiah. You remember the story, don't you? A star appeared in the East, and three Wise Men followed it—some say for years. Finally, it led them to the stable and the manger, where they found the Messiah. In joy and thanksgiving, they bowed and offered their gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gifts of the Wise Men are not only the foundation of our gift-giving practices; they offer an important message about what it means to seek the Christ-Child, to follow God's urgings. Each of the gifts given by the Wise Men was a gift directed to the future of the Messiah. Tradition teaches that the gold was what saw the holy family through when the threats of Herod forced them to flee to Egypt. One Wise Man knew that the Christ would face some financial challenges, so he gave gold to bankroll God's plan for the future. The second Wise Man offered frankincense, a gift given to acknowledge the royalty of Jesus. He was the future King of Israel, and kings deserve fragrant offerings. This gift proclaims that Jesus is part of God's future intentions for the creation—that the Christ should rule in the hearts of women and men. The myrrh also spoke of the future. It was an ointment used in preparing bodies for burial. It spoke of the

*Article continues on page 4*

**Happy Birthday!**  
***To all January birthday folks!***

***Council Member Opening***

If you are interested in serving as a member of our church council, please speak with Steve Hanson or Randy Miller as soon as possible. Time is running out; our annual meeting is January 28, 2018, after our worship service. Thank you to those currently serving and those who've served in the past.

**Pastor's Message: Wise...** *continued from page 2*

...future suffering and death that the Manger Child would face and declared that God's intentions are sometimes realized through sacrifice. The Wise Men gave gifts, which were directed toward God's future, and which helped that future to become reality. They were partners with God.

If we are to be Wise Women and Wise Men in our time, we also must look to the future to discern what God is calling us to do, and then, we must act selflessly and

*We must act  
selflessly and  
generously*

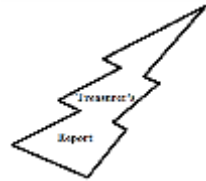
generously to bring God's intentions for creation into reality. The gifts that the Wise Men gave provided blessings in times of challenge and proclaimed God's presence in such times: gold for the time spent in Egypt; myrrh to soothe the pangs of death; and frankincense to proclaim a King's ascension—Easter's resurrection! If we want to be considered wise, our giving must do the same. Wise giving touches hurt with healing; touches despair with hope; touches the pain of death with the power of resurrection.

The Epiphany story also has lessons to teach us about facing the challenges of ministry. Most Biblical scholars think that the Wise Men began their journey about two years before the birth of Jesus. Some theorize that the two years ended on the day of Christ's birth. Others theorize that it began on the day of birth and that the Wise Men arrived when the Babe was two years old. While we are not sure which scenario is the most accurate, it seems clear that the Wise Men pursued that star for two years, and they did so at

*Article continues on page 6*

# Treasurer's Report—November 2017

<b>Building Fund</b>	Deposits	\$ 7,245.00	
	Interest	\$ .10	
	Disbursements	\$ (6,341.58)	
<b>Memorial Fund</b>	Deposits	\$ 40.00	* tree
	Disbursements	\$ -	
<b>Organ Fund</b>	Deposits	\$ -	
	Disbursements	\$ -	
<b>Turkey fund</b>		\$ 1,256.00	
<b>General</b>	Deposits	\$ 7,541.63	
	Disbursements	\$ (7,384.46)	
<b><i>Capital Campaign</i></b>	Deposits	\$ 320.00	
	Total YTD		\$3,764.85
	Goal for 2017		\$3,500.00
<b>OCWM</b>	Deposits	\$ 430.00	
	Disbursements	\$ (625.50)	
	Total YTD		\$6,691.00
	Goal for 2017		\$7,000.00



<b>Total</b>	Beginning Balance	\$ 16,522.13	
	Deposits	\$ 15,256.63	
	Interest	\$ 0.10	
	Disbursements	\$ (14,351.54)	
	Ending Balance	\$ 17,427.32	

<b>General Fund</b>	\$ 3,433.48	
<b>Building Fund</b>	\$ 4,429.84	
<b>Memorial Fund</b>	\$ 4,567.00	
<b>Organ Fund</b>	<u>\$ 4,997.00</u>	<u>\$17,427.32</u>
<b>Building Fund Balance</b>	\$ -	<b>PAID OFF!!!</b>
<b>Interest YTD</b>	\$ 1,685.05	
<b>Payments Made YTD</b>	\$ 53,163.41	
<b>YTD Giving</b>	\$115,422.01	
<b>YTD Expenses</b>	<u>\$ (95,200.68)</u>	<i>excluding building payments</i>
<b>Net Amount</b>	<u><u>\$ 20,221.33</u></u>	

**Pastor's Message: Wise...** *continued from page 4*

...great risk to themselves. The times that they lived in were perilous, and travelling with such gifts could have made them targets for thieves and robbers. They were willing to risk it, however, because they were inspired by a vision of God.

In our fast-food world we sometimes lack for such patience. We expect everything to happen quickly, and waiting can lead us to frustration. If we are to be wise in our time, we must continually remind ourselves that doing God's work seldom leads to instant gratification. We seldom get to see the full extent of what we do in ministry, but we do it anyway—trusting that God's intentions will be fulfilled for others in some future time. Wise men and women see the "big picture" and trust that their efforts will lead to blessings for the future and bring the Kingdom of Christ a little closer to reality. Whether that reality is two minutes away, two years away, or two lifetimes away makes no difference. We do ministry because we want to shape the future in the short-term and the long-term.

This business of giving and planning for the future is of special importance for us as this New Year dawns upon us. My ministry among you is in its final chapters, and soon you will open a new chapter of ministry with a new Settled Pastor. As with all such new beginnings, there will be a period of acquaintance and adjustment as you get to know that new minister and that new minister gets to know you. We often refer to the new beginning of a pastorate as the "honeymoon". It is a time for learning and loving, and testing and planning, as you prepare for the short and long-term future. If the process is to be successful, all members

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**Pastor's Message: Wise...** *continued from page 6*

...and friends of St. John's UCC must embrace it wholeheartedly. You must give yourself and your resources to make it work.

This last fall we began preparing for these new chapters of ministry by gathering ideas for the future at our Cottage Gatherings. In the first weeks and months of this New Year, our leaders will process those ideas and begin planning new ministries and preparing to find the Settled Pastor who can help them become reality. Even as we are doing all of our work to get ready, God is already preparing to send us that new person. Like the Wise Men of so long ago, our new Settled Pastor is already on the way. We may not know the exact date that he or she will arrive, but we know that God is at work, preparing for those new chapters that lie ahead.



As you celebrate the New Year and consider resolutions and plans for your future, I invite you to add an item to your list. Resolve to give your best to our common ministry—give your heart and soul to the unfolding process, and then welcome your Settled Pastor with the same love that you welcomed me. Praise God, for God is doing a new thing—your next Settled Pastor is on the way. Give yourself to the process and marvel at all that is ahead of you!

*Peace and Joy, Pastor Tom*

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*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope (Jeremiah 29:11 NRSV).*

## January 2018 Schedule

### Sunday, January 7 @ 10:15 a.m. - Communion Sunday

Reader	Roberta Lorenz
Greeter/Usher	Roberta Lorenz & Esther Meyer
Usher	Lisa Raaths & Judy Samson

### Sunday, January 14 @ 10:15 a.m.

Reader	Connie Wheeler
Greeter/Usher	Connie Wheeler & Hollie Wheeler
Usher	Tori Scott & Makenna Scott

### Sunday, January 21 @ 10:15 a.m.

Reader	Sue Biese
Greeter/Usher	Joe & Sue Biese
Usher	George & Kerri Samson



### Sunday, January 28 @ 10:15 a.m.

Reader	Marian Zuleger
Greeter/Usher	Marian Zuleger & Barb Sassman
Usher	Duane Zuleger & Jennifer Sassman

## February 2018 Schedule

### Sunday, February 4 @ 10:15 a.m. - Communion Sunday

Reader	Randy Miller
Greeter/Usher	Randy Miller & Karen Arnold
Usher	David & Brenda Holz

### Sunday, February 11 @ 10:15 a.m.

Reader	Lisa St. John
Greeter/Usher	Todd & Lisa St. John
Usher	Tanner St. John & Jonathan Tesch

*Schedule continues on page 9*

**February 2018 Schedule** *continued from page 8*

**Wednesday, February 14 @ 7:00 p.m. - Ash Wednesday**

Reader	Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Robin Schmidt & Carol Schmidt
Usher	Keith Kruse & Barry Zuleger

**Sunday, February 18 @ 10:15 a.m.**

Reader	Jan Rohloff
Greeter/Usher	Jan Rohloff & Trevor Rohloff
Usher	Mike & Connie Rohloff



**Sunday, February 25 @ 10:15 a.m.**

Reader	Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeter/Usher	VI Brown-Luebke & Gary Vander Linden
Usher	Bryce Vander Linden & Darwin Ethington

**March 2018 Schedule**

**Sunday, March 4 @ 10:15 a.m. - Communion Sunday**

Reader	Jim Rucci
Greeter/Usher	Jim Rucci & Steve Hanson
Usher	Duane & Carol Henke

**Sunday, March 11 @ 10:15 a.m.**

Reader	Carla Menning
Greeter/Usher	Bob & Carla Menning
Usher	Gary & Carla Lathrop

*March Schedule continues on page 10*

**March 2018 Schedule** *continued from page 9*

**Sunday, March 18 @ 10:15 a.m.**

Reader	Trudy Koon
Greeter/Usher	Trudy Koon & Morgan Vander Linden
Usher	Ryan & Stephanie Julius



**Sunday, March 25 @ 10:15 a.m. - Palm Sunday**

Reader	Sue Biese
Greeter/Usher	Joe & Sue Biese
Usher	Dallas & Lisa Waterstradt

**Sunday, April 1 @ 7:00 a.m. - Easter Sunday**

Reader	Kent Abel
Greet/Usher	Kent & Val Abel
Usher	Connie Wheeler & Cailey Wheeler

**Easter Sunday 2018 Schedule**

**Sunday, April 1 @ 10:15 a.m. - Easter Sunday**

Reader	Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Robin Schmidt & Bev Kruse
Usher	Mark Hooyman & Kelcie Hooyman

**Women's Guild**



**WOMENS GUILD**

The All-Church Christmas Party was held on Thursday, December 1, 2017, at 6:30p.m. Everyone was invited. There was a very nice group in attendance.

The program was under the direction of Sue Biese, Ila Mae Jens, Vi Brown-Luebke, Jan and Connie Rohloff. The evening started with an opening prayer led Trevor Rohloff. After the prayer, we shared a delicious potluck supper—

*Guild minutes continue on page 11*

**Women's Guild** *continued from page 10*

...prepared by many good cooks.

The program proceeded with Sue Biese and Cailey Wheeler with a dance and song of "Jingle Bell Rock." They had lots of moves! Very good.

Robin Schmidt read a poem entitled "A Politically Correct Christmas Poem."

We enjoyed a musical medley by Cailey Wheeler—"Carol of Bells," "Nearer My God to Thee" and "Nemo Egg." A very nice musical on her key board.

Carla Menning shared a reading entitled, "If You Look for Me at Christmas." Trudy Koon led the offering prayer; the offering goes to Good Shepherd. Bonnie Vander Linden and Connie Wheeler gathered the offering. Trudy also prayed the Dedication Prayer. Jan Boman played beautiful Christmas songs on the piano. Then, the lights went off and we were entertained with a play "Mary Did You Know?" by many youth and adult volunteers. It was very well done!

On each table were red slips of paper with questions, which we all became the wiser about the meaning of Christmas. The evening closed with the Lord's Prayer prayed in unison. Thank you all who participated and all who organized.

There will not be a January meeting of the Women's Guild. We will gather next on Wednesday, February 7, 2018, with devotions by Ila Mae Jens; our hostess will be Roberta Lorenz. Come, and join us!

*Guild Secretary Audrey Hooyman-Blake*

# Council Minutes

## November 14, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Menning, with Aron Rasmussen, Gary Vander Linden, Judy Samson, Connie Wheeler, and Lisa Waterstradt present.



The meeting was opened with a prayer from Bob Menning.

A motion was made, by Aron Rasmussen and seconded by Judy Samson, to accept the minutes from last month. Motion passed.

A motion was made, by Connie Wheeler and seconded by Aron Rasmussen, to accept the Financial Secretary's and Treasurer's reports. Motion passed.

### **Pastors Report (October 2017)**

- Conducted 5 Worship Services and 1 Baptism
- Attended 4 church meetings, 2 administrative meetings, and 4 group meeting
- Made 3 home visits and 7 other visiting time

### **Committee Reports**

**Membership:** With the Cottage Nights the holidays coming up, we will look into a date for new members in February 2018.

**Christian Ed:** We have chosen a play/skit for the children to perform during the church service on Sunday, December 17, 2017, at 10:15 a.m. Practices will be announced in the newsletter.

**Worship:** *Nothing at this time.*

*Minutes continue on page 13*

**Council Minutes...** *continued from page 12*

**Music:** We are looking for members to join the choir. Please talk to Bonnie V.L. or Jan B., if interested.

**House:** The thermostat needs to be programmed so it is not running at a higher temperature when no one is there. Aron will look into this.

**Stewardship/Mission:** Cottage Nights are being set up for the last week in November and the first week of December.

**Campital Campaign/Mission Projects** - For the month of October, we collected \$230.00; YTD total is \$3,444.85. Our goal for the year is \$3,500.00, and we are almost there.

**Old Business:**

- New copier is in place.
- Shrubs in front of church have been removed.

**New Business:**

- The Christmas Eve schedule was voted on; it has been determined that we will hold our 10:15 a.m. traditional service and a 7:00 p.m. Christmas service with candlelight. Communion will be served at both services.
- There will be a pulpit exchange on December 3, with Pastor Jill Meyer from the UCC in Clintonville here, and Pastor Tom there.

**Prayers and Thanks:**

None mentioned.

A motion was made, by Lisa Waterstradt and seconded by

*Minutes continue on page 15*

## Notes of Gratitude!

A sincere **thank you** to all the people, in our congregation, for your prayers for me during my hip surgery. I believe it helped my recovery and rehabilitation. Bless you all—

*Thanks again, Ila Mae*

**THANK YOU** to all who contributed to the family in need. The monetary gifts helped us make it through a very difficult financial situation. Also, thank you to those who prayed for and are praying for us. The Lord is our strength in good times and in the hard times. It is the body of Christ that stands in the gap and prays each other through. Thank you very much. “Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You” (Psalm 33:22 NRSV)!

*Recipients of your generosity*

**Thank you** to those who gave me Christmas gifts and cards. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are blessings beyond words. Thank you! May the Lord bless you a thousand-fold for all your love, support, and gifts to me/us. It truly is a blessing working with you and for you. Happy and Jesus-filled New Year, Friends!

*Kim*





**Council Minutes...** *continued from page 13*

Aron Rasmussen, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

**Next Council Meeting** is Tuesday, December 12, 2017, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

## **Christmas and New Year's Greetings Received via USPS**

**Merry Christmas to my church family,**

In His birth we are blessed

In His name we rejoice

at Christmas and all through the year.

*Merry Christmas, LeRoy (Mike) Minschmidt*

### **Hope, Peace, Joy**

"This is how God showed love among us: God sent the One and only Son into the world that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9).

A just world for all is filled with

LOVE.

Let each of us be filled with the love of God and share our love of neighbor, love of children and love of creation, during this Christmas Season and throughout the year.

*Rev. John Dorhauer, General minister and president; Rev Jim Moos, executive minister; and Rev Traci Blackmon, executive minister*

*United Church of Christ*