

St. John's Cecil Soup For The Soul

Sunday December 28th



**Don't cook after the holidays!
Fill your belly & your soul with our
Famous Chicken Noodle Soup
Soup is \$10/quart**

PRE-ORDERS ONLY!!

**Look for the order forms
OR talk with Pastor Moira**

**Cooking begins at NOON
Worship at 4pm DOWNSTAIRS
Supper after worship together**

**Soup will be delivered to our
parish churches on Monday
December 29th OR you can
pick up at Cecil at 5pm**



**It's Important To Laugh
(or groan)...**

What do gingerbread men use to
make their beds? *Cookie sheets*

What do gingerbread men use when
they break their legs? *Candy canes*

What do you call a gingerbread man
who goes to school? *A smart cookie*

What's a Christmas tree's favorite
candy? *Orna-mints*

What did one snowman say to the
other? *Do you smell carrots?*

Youth Group Turkey Fundraiser

Thank you to everyone who
contributed. The auction and
your generous gifts help us raise
more than \$1600
(and some
donations are still
coming in at the
very end of
November).



Stock The Pantry Shelves

"When I was hungry, you fed me."
Matthew 25.35

December Focus Items

JELLO & PUDDING MIXES



**It never needs to be
name brand.**



**If you are able to help with any
additional items or monetary
donations to our pantries (please
put "food pantry" in the memo),
it will be most appreciated in
these challenging days.**

US Mass Shootings in 2025

1/1 - 11/28: 379

According to the Gun Violence Archive

From Pastor Moira...

Every year when Advent comes, and I read through the scriptures, typing them into the bulletins and projection for our screens, I find myself holding my breath. Many years ago, I was assigned the part in our church Christmas program of reading about the census ... "In those days a decree went out from Ceaser Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria" (Luke 2.1-2). When I asked my momma where Syria was, she took me to the maps and the encyclopedia so I could look it up and learn about the places where the Christmas story took place. And then, I read the words of Zechariah as he sings about his son, John's birth, "By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1.78-79) And there's Mary's incredible song of faith and trust as she agrees to participate in God's plan to bring love to the world, the song known in many parts of the tradition as the Magnificat, "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of this servant. ... God has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts, brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty." (Luke 1.46-55)

There are also all the songs and carols we'll sing this time of year, some I learned at my momma's knee with her momma playing the piano, and some I've learned to love more recently ... singing about the angels on high, all those glorias and learning to pronounce "in excelsis Deo", learning "O Come All Ye Faithful" first in Latin and still singing the first verse as "Adeste Fidelis", and the words of "Lift Up Your Heads" ... "Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to you; here, Christ, abide! Let me your inner presence feel, your grace and love in me reveal".

All of those words, along with the beautiful trees and ornaments, the lights that brighten our Wisconsin nights, the gatherings and holiday treats, the smell of evergreen and fireplaces, the Advent calendars and cards in the mail all lighten my spirit, particularly in the challenging days of our lives and the world. It kindles the spark of hope that lives inside me to burn brighter and brighter, trusting in the incredible goodness of our God who dared to become human, to come to earth and know our lives, to live like us that we might truly understand how great God's love and grace is, how big it is, how it never, ever excludes, and how it can help us through all that life brings. I pray that, in this season, you might nurture the spark of hope within you, and if you need some help, call me up ... I'll even bring cookies (or fruitcake) if that helps!

In love and hope, Pastor Moira

Readers & Greeters Schedule

The full January through March calendar is on the bulletin board in the Gathering Room
If you need to make a change, please find a substitute & let Pastor Moira know.

Sunday December 7 ~ Communion:

Advent 2

Reader Ethan Bohn
Greeters Steve Hanson & Sally Dickinson
Sue Biese
Bonnie Vander Linden

Sunday December 14 ~ Program Sunday

Greeters Kelly Stevens
Lisa Waterstradt

Sunday December 21 ~ Advent 4

Reader Audrina Bohn
Greeters Steve & Pat Schomisch

Wednesday December 24

Christmas Eve ~ Communion

Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Bob & Carla Menning
Keith Kruse
Barry Zuleger
Denis Shepard
*we are looking for **THREE** more
communion servers for
Christmas Eve*

Sunday December 28

Memories of Christmas Past

Greeters Jan Rohloff & Randy Miller

Sunday January 4 ~ Communion

Reader Isaac Schmidt
Greeters Steve Hanson
Barry Zuleger

Sunday January 11 ~ Pastor vacation

Reader Emma Holz
Greeters Robin Schmidt
Kelly Stevens

Sunday January 18 ~ choir sings

Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Steve & Pat Schomisch

Sunday January 25 ~ Annual Meeting

Reader Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeters Vi Brown-Luebke
Jan Rohloff

Sunday February 1 ~ Communion

Reader Jan Rohloff
Greeters Mike & Connie Rohloff
Trevor & Sarah Rohloff

Sunday February 8 ~ choir sings

Reader Sally Dickinson
Greeters Mike & Sally Dickinson

Sunday February 15 ~ kids sing

Reader Lindsay Seefeldt
Greeters Steve & Lindsay Seefeldt

Sunday February 22 ~ Lent 1

Reader Emma Holz
Greeters Duane & Carol Henke

Guild News

Gatherings are Wednesdays at 1:30pm unless otherwise noted.
The person bringing snacks is also in charge of a gathering prayer.

SUNDAY December 14, 2025

All Church Christmas Potluck &
Program after worship

May 6, 2026

Service Project Planning
Snacks ~ Judy S.

January 7, 2026

Popcorn snowman project
Snacks ~ Sally D.

June 3, 2026

Pizza & Ice Cream Outing
Meet AT CHURCH at 1pm

February 2026 ~ No meeting

July 1, 2026

Service Project Work Day
Snacks ~ Pastor

March 4, 2026

Garden theme project
Snacks ~ Vi B-L

August 5, 2026

Planning Meeting
Snacks ~ Donna S.

April 8, 2026

Get ready for the rummage sale
Snacks ~ Roberta L.

Interested in The Wider Church?

Our parish is part of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ. Every year they have their annual meeting, two days of worship, news, information, learning, and fellowship. The meeting this year will be held on Friday April 10 and Saturday April 11 at Green Lake Conference Center (near Ripon). We are entitled to **two delegates** and we pay for registration, room & meals. All you have to do is get there and we can help with carpooling. The meeting begins at 10am on Friday and is done by 5pm on Saturday (though we can arrange for you to stay over Saturday night too). If you're interested, have questions, or would like to attend, please talk with Pastor Moira.

Garden of Eatin News ...

The garden will soon be under a blanket of snow, taking a well deserved rest after a productive growing season providing fresh vegetables for the food pantry.

But we're already dreaming of next year's crops ~ beans, tomatoes, bell peppers, cucumbers, and carrots for sure, plus our experimental bed will have broccoli in it to see how it grows in our location. Thank you for your support of our garden & its work for people in need in our community.



Parish Celebrations ~ for all three churches

If your special day is incorrect let Pastor Moira know.

December Birthdays

1st ...	Brandy Burrows Wyatt Witterholt Julie Hein Portia Fenske Catrina VanDeraa	19th ...	Debby Carpenter Justin Kruse Michael Felton
3rd ...	Mona Ashenbrenner	20th ...	Hollie Wheeler Mark Schmidt Scott Sassman
5th ...	Brian Holz	22nd ...	Allison Schultz Mitch Sorenson Samantha Shepard
7th ...	Lella Baker Sheila Neff	23rd ...	Keira Neff
9th ...	Cathie Hansen Kennen Peotter	24th ...	Mike Rohloff Abigayle Baxter
10th ...	Pastor Moira	25th ...	Mary Tesch
12th ...	Lisa Raaths	27th ...	Austin Nieland
14th ...	Joe Engelbert Ila Mae Jens	30th ...	Montgomery Bohn
18th ...	Brandon Rohloff		

December Anniversaries

8th ... Wes & Angie Biese

Church Christmas Program ~ Sunday December 14

Recording of program parts will be on Saturday November 29th and Saturday December 6th (both at 3pm). Then we'll edit it all together and show it in worship at all three churches and our video ministry!



All Church Christmas Party & Potluck Sunday December 14th

It's our Christmas program Sunday upstairs in worship so just come on down after and enjoy even more food, fellowship & fun. (The Packers don't play until 3pm)



St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report ~ OCTOBER 2025

GIVING BREAKDOWN

	10/5/2025	10/12/2025	10/19/2025	10/26/2025		DIRECT DEPOSIT	TOTAL
Checking deposit	3,468.00	623.00	1,000.00	1,275.00		300.00	6,666.00
Online Giving	673.00		445.25				1,118.25

MEMBERSHIP GIVING

General Fund	2,468.00	613.00	1,415.25	1,199.00		300.00	5,995.25
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Operating Funds

Building Fund		10.00					10.00
Endowment							0.00
Total Operating Funds	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	10.00

Special Funds

Fall Festival	50.00						50.00
Food Pantry	50.00		10.00				60.00
Neighbors In Need	50.00		20.00	76.00			146.00
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS	150.00	0.00	30.00	76.00		0.00	256.00

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP GIVING	2,618.00	623.00	1,445.25	1,275.00		300.00	6,261.25
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Other Income

Fall Festival	1,523.00						1,523.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	1,523.00						1,523.00

TOTAL GIVING	4,141.00	623.00	1,445.25	1,275.00		300.00	7,784.25
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NOTE: The Council did not have a business meeting in November so there are no minutes to include in this newsletter.

St. John's United Church of Christ Treasurer's Report ~ OCTOBER 2025

Building Fund	Beginning Balance	\$17,524.27
	Deposits	\$10.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>(\$1,014.00)</u>
	Ending Balance	\$16,526.27

Memorial Fund	Beginning Balance	\$6,844.73
<i>no deposits or disbursements</i>		

Organ Fund	Beginning Balance	\$4,455.00
<i>no deposits or disbursements</i>		

General Fund	Beginning Balance	\$12,920.79
	Interest	\$0.30
	Deposits	\$7,774.25
	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>(\$7,429.59)</u>
	Ending Balance	\$13,265.75

Youth Group	Beginning Balance	\$1,222.00
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>(\$200.00)</u>
	Ending Balance	\$7,379.72

Plastering Fund	Beginning Balance	\$7,379.72
<i>no deposits or disbursements</i>		

Sunday School	Beginning Balance	\$355.85
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>(\$50.72)</u>
	Ending Balance	\$305.13

Gardening Project	Beginning Balance	\$3,784.08
<i>no deposits or disbursements</i>		

**We appreciate your continuing
to send contributions by mail
as you are able:
St. John's UCC
PO Box 264
Black Creek, WI 54106
If you have questions,
please be in touch with
a member of the Council**

YTD Membership Giving	\$69,096.13
YTD Expenses	(\$88,888.43)
Net Amount*	(\$19,792.30)
* excludes contributions and disbursements for special offerings	

FUND TOTALS	
Beginning Balance	\$54,562.44
Deposits	\$7,784.25
Interest	\$0.30
<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>(\$8,694.31)</u>
Ending Balance	\$53,652.68

UCC Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund supplements the annuities (pension) and health insurance premiums of lower income retired clergy and lay employees of UCC churches, as well as providing emergency grants for clergy with emergencies including medical expenses and disaster recovery. Look for the envelopes at both doors to the sanctuary, or send a check with "Christmas Fund" in the memo.

Pastor's Going On Vacation & We Need YOUR Help

Pastor will be gone to New Mexico January 6 through 13th (hopefully this will be vacation & her father will not be in the hospital this time).

For worship on Sunday January 11th, Pastor will prepare the service, but it will be led by members of the parish.

If you're interested or able to help, please talk with Pastor as soon as possible

Congregational Annual Meeting Sunday January 25, 2025 after worship

light snacks will be served after the meeting in the gathering room

We will review 2025, approve the 2026 church budget & elect council members.

If you have a report to submit for the Annual Meeting book, please get them to Pastor Moira as soon as possible after the new year!

Report books will prayerfully be available **by Sunday January 18th.**

SCRIP NEWS ... Gift giving season is here!

Let us help you make your holiday shopping easier!

SCRIP is a great way to get gift cards for everyone on your list.

We've got something for everyone on your list ~ restaurants, stores, and even online retailers, all delivered right to you!

Remember SCRIP is a great way to plan your budget— for groceries, gas, and other regular expenses.

Talk with Pat or Brani Schomisch

December 2025

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080
email pastormoira73@gmail.com

Pastor's In The Office
Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays
Please call/text to make sure

Sunday Schedule: Trinity ~ Worship 8:45am
Black Creek ~ Sunday School 9am & Worship 10:15am
Cecil ~ Worship 4pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:30pm BC Confirmation <i>World AIDS Day</i>	2	3 6:30pm BC Choir	4	5	6 3pm BC Christmas Program Recording
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Key to locations: BC = St. John's Black Creek T = Trinity C = St. John's Cecil A = Ascension Lutheran</p> </div>					
7 Advent Two <i>Communion</i> BC Youth Group Bell Ringing	8	9 10am A Pantry Board 2pm T Circle 6:30pm BC Council	10 6:30pm BC Choir <i>Human Rights Day</i>	11 9am C Closet work day 5:30pm T Council	12	13 Wedding at Black Creek
14 Advent Three Christmas Program BC All Church Christmas Potluck	15 4:30pm BC Confirmation	16 Noon-3pm C Closet	17 4-6pm A Pantry 6:30pm BC Choir	18	19	20 9-11am A Pantry
21 Advent Four BC Choir sings	22	23	24 Christmas Eve <i>Candles, carols & communion</i> 3pm Cecil 5pm Trinity 7pm Black	25 <i>Merry Christmas Blessings</i>	26	27
28 BC Memoires of Christmas Past Cecil Soup for The Soul	29 Cecil Soup Delivery	30	31 Have a safe & happy New Year's Eve	January 1 <i>Happy New Year</i>	January 2	January 3 Tomorrow... Communion SCRIP

December
2025

"The purpose of this congregation is to be a faith community promoting the kingdom of God through worship, teaching, and action ... get ready!"

St. John's United Church of Christ
101 South Clark Street (PO Box 264)
Black Creek, Wisconsin 54106

Church Phone 920-984-3845
Office email stjcreek@gmail.com
Website www.stjucbc.com
Facebook: St. John's UCC Black Creek
YouTube: search for Moira Finley

Pastor Moira Finley
Phone 715-851-3080
Email pastormoira73@gmail.com

Wisconsin Conference UCC
www.wiucc.org

United Church of Christ
www.ucc.org



Christmas Eve ~ Wednesday December 24th



Join us for worship with candles, communion, scriptures & music as we welcome the newborn Jesus.

Cecil ~ 3pm

Trinity ~ 5pm

Black Creek ~ 7pm

A special edition of our print & video outreach will be posted to Facebook & YouTube and emailed no later than the morning of Christmas Eve.