

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
204 Seventh Street ~ Lincoln, Illinois 62656
217-732-6957

E-mail address: stjohnucclincoln@yahoo.com | Website: stjohnucclincolnillinois.com

"Letting God's love shine through us to the Community we Serve"

Rev. Laurie Hill
Darlene Begolka
Volume 51, No. 9

Pastor
Office Manager
September 2020



FROM OUR PASTOR...

Dear Friends,

Now that some have chosen to come and worship in the sanctuary, there have been some questions recently about why we are doing what we are doing with worship, so let me attempt to explain:

There are guidelines put out by many different places for church worship and, I'm I have been listening to pastors on three different chat rooms from all over the country and zooming every Wednesday night with the Western Association actively serving pastors. I say this because I don't want you to think I'm making stuff up on my own as I go. I'm listening to researchers, scientists, and learning a lot from the experiences of other pastors in other churches, especially the ones in our area. Everything I do and suggest to council is from what is now called, "wisdom sourcing" from other pastors/church leaders and guidelines posted by our conference

and denomination and IDPH or CDC. And yes, other churches and other pastors choose different things for their congregations. I am and council is trying to do what is best for us, at St. John UCC.

But please keep in mind there is something that is not usually considered by "factual data" on the scientific sites, which are our spiritual and emotional longings. This is extremely powerful especially after having been sheltered at home for a long time. I have many stories to support how suddenly, people throw caution to the wind because they are suddenly overcome by

emotion. Because of our strong need for both connection and for things to go back to the way we liked them, sometimes it feels like the pastor and/or council is being "mean" or too strict with the rules. I know our congregation and I know how well connected we all are. And I know that almost every single person is compromised to this virus in some way. **So, I will ALWAYS err on the side of caution and strictness when it comes to our worshipping in the sanctuary again.** You may disagree with me and council. That's okay to disagree, but for now, this is the way it needs to be as agreed upon by council.

I know some of these things seem extreme and maybe even condescending. But, I've noticed that sometimes even what seems simple, people forget and start doing what they always did, or they just plain don't read the directions. I'm sorry if I or the council comes across as too strict, but again, I/we will be trying my hardest to protect our worshipping community.

I hope you can join me in praying for the safety of our congregation and in doing each of our parts to help others stay safe. As it is said, “I do this (wear a mask, stay 6’ apart, wash/disinfect hands) because I love you and don’t want you to catch anything from me”. We are also approaching flu season. I will get a flu shot in September and hope you will, as well. The decisions the council and I make at this time are ones made with love for you and each other. If you ever have a question about why we do what we do (or don’t do), don’t hesitate to ask!

Thanks,
Pastor Laurie

ATTENDANCE

August 2nd

105 on Facebook, 19 services mailed and website = 124+

August 9th

142 on Facebook, 20 services mailed and website = 162+

August 16th

103 on Facebook, 20 services mailed and website = 123+

August 23rd

31 in person, 97 on Facebook, 20 services mailed and website = 148+

WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO...

Tonita Reifsteck and family at the death of her brother-in-law, Richard Swearingen.

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST UNAPPROVED CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES Monday, August 17, 2020 | 7:00p.m. (Gathered in Fellowship Hall following social distancing rules)

Present: Warren Goetsch, Laura Lee,
Carolyn Pech, Randy Pech,
Jack Leich, Edna Mara,
Tricia Pineda, Darlene Begolka
(Office Manager), and Pastor
Laurie Hill

Absent: Keith Birnbaum and
Troy Meinershagen

Guest: Bill Gosda, Jr.

President Goetsch called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. on Monday, August 17, 2020, and Pastor Laurie Hill gave the devotion and invocation.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

It was moved and seconded to accept the consent agenda as presented. All voting aye, the motion passed.

PASTOR’S REPORT

Pastor Laurie attended many Zoom meetings during the month. She made two hospital visits and had many counseling calls, and phone calls. She is still working on the Protocol for Opening Sanctuary Worship. The Conference-wide zoom meeting held on Wednesdays at 3pm is open to all. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact her.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Church re-opening:** The council decided to go ahead and continue opening the church for worship on Sunday, August 23 as decided at the last council meeting in July.
- **Protocols:** The Council was given a revision of the “Protocols for Safe Worship Attendance”. A few more changes were made. The Protocols list

will be given to all who attend Sunday services, and it will also be sent to those receiving the bulletin via email or mail.

- **Bell and Chime Rehearsals:** Rehearsals will more than likely begin sometime in September, but no performances until October.
- **Church use for other Organizations or activities:** Several organizations have requested to use the church building. After some discussion it was moved and seconded that any organization or group requesting to use the church building must understand and follow the established Church Protocols and the standards set forth by the government. All voting aye, the motion passed. Currently the Boy Scouts are meeting at a park.
- **Church phones:** The new office and church phones from Comcast have been installed and are working well and the answering machine message has been updated.

NEW BUSINESS

- **LAMS (Lincoln Area Music Society):** The board has made a request for having their meetings here as they have previously. As per council decision above this was approved.
- **Special Offering:** A family who has been involved in several church activities and attends on occasion, but are not members, has asked for some financial help with a home repair. The total amount needed for the repair is not known at this meeting time. It was moved and seconded that Pastor Laurie contact the contractor doing the repair to determine the cost. Then the church will have a special offering to raise that amount. If more money is collected than needed, the extra would be put into the Charity Guild's Fund for Friends (since the Good Samaritan Fund is for members, the Charity Guild began a fund for those in

need that are not members). All voting aye the motion carried. The Special Offering will be collected on Sunday, August 23 and will continue until the contractor cost has been reached.

- **Kirby Rodgers trainee:** Kirby's replacement has been in training and prepared some of the reports used at this council meeting.
- **Financial Summary in CHIMES:** Laura Lee asked if a financial summary including the income, revenues, and transfers be put in the CHIMES each month. Since we haven't been receiving in person offering it would be helpful to know how the church finances are doing. President Goetsch said that could be done. Darlene will bring some examples to the September Church Council meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE AND E-MAILS: None

ADJOURNMENT AND BENEDICTION

With no further business to discuss a motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 8:25pm with the council reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting – Monday, September 21, 2020 at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Laura Lee,
Church Council Secretary





Articles for the **October** newsletter should be in the Church Office by **September 19th**.

ST. JOHN UCC TURNS 160 IN SEPTEMBER...



A FEW NOTES...

- We will continue to Live Streaming every Sunday.
- Thank you for remembering to send in your gifts and offerings. We are very grateful, since just like at home, all the costs of life continue. If you don't want to mail in your gift, you can drop it off in the mailbox, (outside of the sunken gardens).
- Don't forget to continue checking the church's Facebook page and website for information!
- NOTE: If you need to talk or have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Pastor Laurie! 217-521-7747!



A great attitude
becomes a great
day which becomes
a great month
which becomes
a great year
which becomes a
great life.

- Mandy Hale

DID YOU REMEMBER?? DID YOU KNOW??

St. John UCC will celebrate 160 years of being a Faith Community on September 10, 2020. Although in existence for many years prior it was formally organized on September 10, 1860. Ironically, this year is also the 95th anniversary of the procession from the Church being located on Fifth Street to its present address down Maple Street on July 12, 1925. With all this history to celebrate (although we can't at present) I am preparing a celebration of our history for later (I'm praying for Thanksgiving season) to share and celebrate this milestone. Some historical materials have been 'uncovered' that we can tap and share. In talking with Lynn Spellman and Nancy Gehlbach who have been key historians also – I'm inviting anyone who is interested in being 'tapped' to help to contact me – after all it is 'a family affair/celebration'. This can be something we can look forward to in sharing a possible 'rebirth' of our heritage and our Church. By the grace of GOD, we were born – with the Grace of GOD we will continue to be a light until the world. Thanks! Tonita Reifsteck (see me in person or call 855-1645).



MISSION COMMITTEE...

By: Verdeen Ingram, Co-Chair

SPECIAL OFFERING SUNDAY...The Mission Committee has designated the following Sunday:

- **Second Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the new **Children of Lincoln project**.
- **Fourth Sunday of each month** a special offering will be taken following church for the **Diaper Project for Head Start at Community Action**.

Just a reminder: donations can be made to these 2 great projects by mailing them to the church.

will be glad to accept your monetary donations if you would rather, we do the shopping.

Learning is easier when kids have the tools they need. Thank you for helping to provide those tools.

Some of the school supplies that have come in are decorating the tree in the entryway.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES...

What will school look like for our local kids this fall? We don't know the answer to that question yet. But no matter what the school year looks like, we know that these kids will need school supplies.



The Mission Committee will be collecting school supplies until the end of September. If you would like to purchase supplies, please drop them off under the Giving Tree. (Remember to call before you come.) We

CHECK OUT...THE GIVING TREE CORNER



Caps and Lids
Pop Tabs
Aluminum Cans
Athletic Shoes
Printer Cartridges
Box Tops
Eyeglasses
Cell Phones
Cancelled Stamps
Re-chargeable Batteries
Greeting cards (both new and used)
Food Pantry
Diapers

RECAP...

**The Church Office is open from
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and
1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday.**

- All visits to the Church must be made by appointment only. You can call the church office (732-6957) to make an appointment (we need to know when and who is in the building).
- All visitors must either wash their hands or sanitize upon arrival.
- All visitors must wear a mask.
- All visitors must stay 6' away from each other.
- Restrooms will be cleaned weekly but sanitizing wipes will be supplied in restrooms for you to use before and after your own use.
- **Meetings:** are to be scheduled with the church office and take place in Fellowship Hall.
 - Only essential meetings and under 10 people.
 - All must wear a mask and stay 6' feet apart.
 - Wipe down seat and table after meeting.
 - Wash your hands or sanitize them upon entering the building.

OUTREACH and PUBLICITY HIGHLIGHTS...

By: Jim and Leslie Wilmert, and
Tonita Reifsteck, Co-Chairs

Outreach Ministry has been told School supplies will continue to be a much-needed item for the students whether school is in session or doing 'home school' via media. Always paper, pencils, erasers, colored pencils and spiral theme notebooks (wide lines) are needed. Lincoln Junior High School special needs are ear buds, water bottles, Kleenex, hand sanitizer, disinfectant (i.e. Clorox 2) for sanitizing (have to sanitize every hour).

Updates in the bulletin will be noted as we are contacted by Lincoln Junior High School or Central Elementary.



Someone needing to find 'something to do' is welcome to contact Toni Reifsteck in regard to helping deliver Meals on Wheels once a month (or more) either with a set route or substitute when emergencies come. Call 855-1645 if you and/or a friend are interested. Takes about 1 or 1½ hours for 17-22 people on a set route. THANKS.

**Sometimes we need someone to
simply be there. Not to fix anything,
or to do anything in particular,
but just to let us feel that we are
cared for and supported.**

- Unknown



Thank you!

THANK YOU to all who have sent cards, made a phone call, visited in grocery etc. – with me or to any member of my family in the death of my sister Ann’s husband Rich Swearingen. Married to my ‘little sister’ 1 day shy of 63 years I can’t remember life before ‘Rich and Ann’ – more a brother to Wallace and me and because of that your messages, notes etc. brought more comfort than you can ever imagine. So often we think ‘it’s only a card or a quick phone call’ – believe me it is also a ‘hug’, a little voice in a lonely moment.

BLESS YOU FOR CARING!

Toni, Doug, Elaine, David and Bret
and all our families!

The following is a note from the Rev. Dr. Charlotte Nold, Pastor of our sister Church, St. John UCC in Chicago:

Dear members of St. John United Church of Christ,



What a blessing you are to us here at St. John Church. Thank you for your most generous donation to our mission work.

You truly are a blessing to us.

PRAYER LIST

Jane Agnew
Steve Aue
Ron Brandy
Esther Burge
Jean Cummings
Dana Wilmert Damm and family
Jerry Gehlbach
Ruth Gordon
Marianne Ingram
Emily Jewsbury
Emma Knauer
Chad Martin
Mary Francis (aka Franny)
Christian Reynolds
Marcia Schrader
Kathy Staten
Bette Steffens
Karen Sutton
Larry Westerfield
Bob Wilmert
Fred Wiseman
Jerry Woodard

All those from our “Church Family”, Community, State and Nation working in the Medical Field Illinois Conference/Western Association

MILITARY

Wyatt Conrady

FACILITIES AND HOMEBOUND

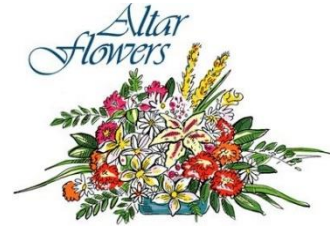
David Armbrust, Dorothy Conklin,
Leola Dowling, Evelyn Fulkerson,
Esther Johnson, Marcella Lenhardt,
Marita Schneider, Carol Turner, Susan Webb,
John Wilmert

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Jason Netzley, Bob Sanders
- 3 Thomas Lockenvitz, Lukas Morgan
- 6 Terri Shanle
- 9 Jake Curry, Jeff Curry, David Schneider
- 10 Emily Paulus, Amy Tabor
- 11 Toni Reifsteck
- 16 Samuel Birnbaum, Katherine Spellman
- 21 Eddie White
- 22 Owen Joseph, Dennis Kurtz
- 23 Leanne Pech
- 25 Kara Costello
- 28 Rochelle Joseph, Maureen White

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR SEPTEMBER...



- September 6th: Laura Lee
- September 13th: Tonita Reifsteck
- September 20th: Alice Paulus
- September 27th: Jack and Nancy Leich



Our Church's walking group, known as The Jubilant Feet are once again meeting on Monday mornings at 8:00 a.m. at Kickapoo Creek Park. Everyone is welcome! One request is that you contact either Verdeen Ingram or Lynn Spellman and let them know you are joining them

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



- 1 Bret and Samantha Paulus
- 3 David and Jennifer Schneider
- 7 Cody and Bailey Conrady
- 8 Gary and Judy Atteberry
- 10 Glen and Amy Birnbaum
- 15 Dennis and Brenda Kurtz
Robert and Cathy Sanders, Jr.
- 26 David and Cari Wilmert
- 29 Matt and Sarah Goetsch
- 30 Jack and Nancy Leich

Every day
is a new beginning.
Take a deep breath,
smile and start
again.



Staff of St. John United Church of Christ

Members and Friends of St. John UCC

Rev. Laurie Hill
Darlene Begolka
Cathy Sanders
Steve Spaulding
Laura Lee
Darlene Begolka
Zac Clemens

Ministers

Pastor
Office Manager
Custodian
Maintenance Person
Organist
Chime Choir Director
Chancel Choir/Bell Choir Director

Church Council for 2020



Warren Goetsch (Elder), President
Keith Birnbaum, Vice President
Laura Lee, Secretary
Carolyn Pech, Current Fund Treasurer
Troy Meinershagen, Special Funds Treasurer
Randy Pech (Elder), Financial Secretary
Jack Leich
Edna Mara
Tricia Pineda (Elder)

Contact us:

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204 Seventh Street
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Pastor Laurie's cell phone number: 217- 521-7747
Pastor Laurie's email address: pastorlauriehill@gmail.com

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