



# JANUARY CHURCHLETTER



## From the Pastor

Hello Church [*Galatians 1.3-5*],

*Nothing that is worthwhile is ever easy. Remember that.* Nicholas Sparks

One of the themes of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is one of complacency. Every time the Hebrew people are rescued by the hand of God they drew close to their Savior. They discovered/rediscovered that life was good again. However, over time they became less attentive to God at work in their lives. They also became complacent in following the mandates of the Covenant; and, the cycle of repentance leading to divine intervention bringing them back into a meaningful relationship with God to a life of complacency repeated itself – over and over and over again.

The lesson the good people of Israel failed to grasp is that complacency slows, perhaps even eliminates, any possibility of progress. Each time their relationship with God was restored, they were obedient to the nth degree. As time passed they became increasingly distracted by all the world had to offer, they adopted a “good enough standard” when it came to religious and spiritual practices. Eventually, even “good enough” was more effort than they wanted to expend and their backsliding ways once again totally distanced them from God.

In the early 1520's Ulrich Zwingli ministered in Zurich as the plague cast a blanket of death over the city. Zwingli chose to stay and minister to the sick and outcast. He himself became gravely ill but recovered. While battling death with every breath, he wrote *“The Song of the Plague.”* His vibrant faith is revealed as he trusts fully in God's grace.

*“Help me, O Lord, my strength and rock; lo at the door I hear death's knock.”*

*“Uplift Thine arm once pierced for me; that conquered death and set me free.”*

*“Yet if Thy voice in life's midday, Recalls my soul, then I obey.”*

*“In faith and hope earth I resign, secure of Heaven, for I am Thine.”*

*“My pains increase; haste to console; for fear and woe seize body and soul.”*

*“Death is at hand, my senses fail, my tongue is dumb; Now, Christ, prevail.”*

*“Lo! Satan strains to snatch his prey; I feel his grasp; must I give way?”*

*“He harms me not, I feel no loss, for here I lie beneath Thy cross.”*

*“My God! My Lord! Here by Thy hand, upon the earth once more I stand.”*

*“Let sin no more rule over me; my mouth shall sing alone to Thee.”*

Well, as someone once observed, *the more things change, the more they stay the same.* We too are battling a plague, a pandemic of worldwide proportions. We too have the choice to praise God and trust fully in him or to turn away from God and enter into another downward spiritual spiral that isolates us from God's presence. The truth be told, history reveals to us what happens when individuals and people with a national identity become complacent in their faith and lax in their trust in God. How do we re-energize our faith in the midst of our chaotic lives. Perhaps something as simple as a daily prayer will keep us or get us on the path God has laid out for us.

One New Year's tradition finds many of us making resolutions to change our behavior, our habits, our focus as we enter into the new year. Others of us

don't make resolutions as we want to avoid the outcomes described in Proverbs 20.25.

Perhaps as we enter into the year of the Lord 2022, we might take the advice of John Wesley, founder of Methodism, and devout believer in starting out the year right...every year. The version included here has been rewritten using contemporary language and phrasing, but the intent is not diminished in the least from the original version.

*I am no longer my own, but yours.  
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,  
Praised for you or criticized for you.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service.  
And now, O wonderful and holy God,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
you are mine, and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.*

I invite you to clip this out, affix it to your bathroom mirror, and pray this prayer every morning as you get ready to greet the day. Do this every morning for the month of January. You know in your heart that if you do this your attitude, your outlook and your life will change.

Pastor Jef  
*Romans 15.7*

The office phone number is (507) 330-0025. You can also reach the churches by email at: [st.johnsuccwhealing@gmail.com](mailto:st.johnsuccwhealing@gmail.com) or [NerstrandUMC@gmail.com](mailto:NerstrandUMC@gmail.com). Thank you for your patience and understanding during this transition time.

Please send bulletin (deadline-9am Thurs) and newsletter (deadline-20<sup>th</sup> of month) information to: [lynnhirschey@gmail.com](mailto:lynnhirschey@gmail.com). Phone number 507-330-1831. Notes in the mail are also welcome if you prefer.

### Loving Thoughts and Prayers Surround:



#### **New Perspective**

Joan Schwake  
Pleasant View Estates  
Shirley Bauer  
Faribault Senior Living  
Mildred Tatge  
Milestone  
Marjean Smith  
At Home  
Jean Pederson  
Donovan Mueller  
Doris Hildebrandt  
Arlene Shaske  
Arlene Bultman  
Kaye Spike  
Richard Hanson



### Joys and Concerns

Pancake Breakfast  
Confirmation Students will serve a pancake breakfast after worship on January 9th following the service.

Free donations accepted will go to Aneliese Scriven family (daughter of Jenny Wille) to

offset cost of food, lodging, and travel associated with her upcoming heart surgery.

Thank you  
Sarah Becher

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of Kenneth Shaske. Kenneth, age 91, passed away Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>. Funeral services were held Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> at the Nerstrand United Methodist church. Burial was in the Evangelical Cemetery.

Our Christian Sympathy to the family of George Nelson. George, age 90, was the father of Jennifer Bailey. He passed away Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>. A funeral service and burial were held on Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> in North Augusta, S. Carolina.

From the St. John's COVID committee: Due to the continuing high rate of COVID cases in the community, facemasks will be available at the church.

The annual meeting of the St. John's UCC church will be held Sunday January 16th at 12:30. A box lunch will be available with a free will donation. Items to be discussed include the endowment fund, the status of the parsonage and an update on the search for a settled minister. (Snow date will be the following Sunday.)



**Prayer Chain:**

**Notice:** Please direct all prayer chain requests to Becky Tatge for the time being. My phone number is (507) 210-1214.

**Notice:** Due to an upsurge in Covid 19 numbers, the St. John's Choir will not be providing special music for the rest of their normal season. Thank you for those who volunteered to sing during November and December.

**Christmas memorials:**

Poinsettias given in memory of Luverne Hafemeyer by his family.



Two white poinsettias are in memory of :

Delbert & Delores Bultman

Nancy Wesely

Agnes & Melvin deike

Jim & Gladys Deike

Robert Deike

Wayne Deike

Donald E. Bauer

Leonard & Florence bultman

Wilfred Bultman

Given by Mary & Chris Bultman

In memory of:

Elmer & Lorna Budde

Butch st. Martin

Gladys Anderson

Paul budde

Phyllis Budde

From: Budde Family

In Loving memory of:

Harold & Lois homeier

Gord, Wayne, & Terry Homeier

LeRoy & Shirley Foss

Paul, Ted, & Eric Foss

From Their families

Poinsettia in memory of:

Earl & Gertrude Meese

Marlow & Ruth Kindseth

By Mark & Mary Kindseth

**Notes from St. John's UCC:**

Please put Sunday Jan. 16th on your calendar for the St. John's annual meeting. Items to be discussed include the endowment fund, the status of the parsonage and an update on the search for a settled minister. (Snow date will be the following Sunday.)



**Winter Ladies Bible Study Group**

"Make Your Move Finding Unshakable Confidence Despite Your Fears and Failures" by Lynn Cowell This study will be a 6 week study on Wednesday evenings starting Wednesday, January 12, 6:30 PM at Nerstrand United Methodist Church. Open to ladies from the community.

Cost for the study book will be approximately \$15. Please email Renea at serendipity.r76@gmail.com or text 507-421-4964 by December 22 if you would like to participate or have questions.

**ADULT EDUCATION at St. John's UCC**

What is "OCWM"? What is "5 for 5"? Find out the answers to these questions and more at an adult educational workshop scheduled to begin at noon following worship on Sunday, January 9, 2022. We will discuss how St John's, a recognized "5 for 5" congregation, supports the Minnesota Conference UCC and the national UCC through our donations to OCWM and the other 5 for 5 designated offerings. We hope many of you are able to attend the workshop.

**Wednesday Wear at Nerstrand UMC**

**Hours: Wed. 1-5 pm Sat. 9-noon**

We are now in need of ladies clothes, especially the larger sizes. Also, we are looking for older clothes-1970's or older, especially Denim jackets, Bandana hankies, dresses, military uniforms. These items do not need to be in good shape. Call 789-5376 for more information.

Wed. Wear will be closed on the following Saturday: Jan. 1

**Sunday school**

Children Pre-K (age 4) through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to attend Sunday School at St. John's, from 9:30-10:20am, in person, at church. Contact Carrie Hess with questions or if you would like to assist as a substitute teacher; ([littlehesshouse@gmail.com](mailto:littlehesshouse@gmail.com) or 651-775-5594). There will be no Sunday School Jan 2; classes will resume Sunday, January 9, 2022.



**St. John's UCC Cleaning Committee**

The St. John's UCC will have cleaning committees every other month.

# CHURCH COUNCIL

## St John's UCC council

December 14, 2021

The St. John's United Church of Christ December meeting was called to order by Moderator Gayle Bauer at 6:30 pm.

Opening statement by Pastor Jef: Despite technology and the many ways to keep in touch with people, we all have that one person who our only contact is at Christmas time with a card. This is a good time to connect more frequently with family and friends.

No new information from SPRC

The secretary's report was read and approved.

The treasurer's report was read and approved.

Trustee's report: Christmas decorations are up and looking good. A drain in the men's bathroom has been fixed. Contract for 2022 lawn mowing has been accepted. Reviewed changes in the church insurance policy for 2022. Routine furnace inspection and maintenance were done.

Covid committee: Masks recommended.

Old business: Church membership was reviewed. Discussed council replacement for the new year. Reviewed items needed to be discussed at the annual meeting.

New Business: Discussed copier contract and other options.

Annual meeting will be Sunday January 16th at 12:30. A box lunch will be offered after church, prior to the meeting, with a free will donation. In case of snow, the meeting will be January 23.

Elders: Gayle Bauer, Gloria Karl, Todd Lien  
Deacons: Gordie Wiegrefe, Sarah Becher, Brian Homier  
Trustees: Jay Kindseth, Matt Schwake, Paul Meyer  
Cemetery Board: Keith Keller, Brian Bauer, Al Meyer

## Nerstrand UMC council

Next meeting will be on Jan. 5 at 5:00pm  
Chairman-Duane Bailey  
Secretary -Debbie Kerr

The NUMC Audit Committee will meet after morning worship on Jan. 16

The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the Methodist Memorial Knoll Cemetery Association will be held Wed., January 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the Nerstrand United Methodist Church.

## Second Saturday Quilters

On Saturday January 8<sup>th</sup> we will meet at St. John's from 9:00 - Noon. We will be making a pinwheel block. Bring your sewing machine, cutting mat and general sewing supplies. You will need a background fabric and several assorted fabrics for the pinwheel in the same color family.

For more information contact Deb Wille. 507-323-4813 or 83159deb@gmail.com  
SSQ is open to people of all churches and their friends.



## Special notices. Save the dates. Surround in Prayer:

Jan. 5 NUMC council 5:00 pm

Jan. 9 Pancake Breakfast by Confirmation Students in support of Aneliese Scriven (heart surgery)

Jan. 16 St. John's annual meeting after service

Jan. 16 The NUMC Audit Committee will meet after morning worship

Jan. 19 54<sup>th</sup> annual Meeting of the Methodist Memorial Knoll Cemetery Association 1:00-NUMC

Jan. 23 and Jan. 30 Pastor Gordon Orde will be officiating the services

## Service Schedule for 2022: Sundays

(Communion on first Sunday of month)

**9:00 AM WORSHIP AT NERSTRAND UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH**

12 Maple Street, Nerstrand, MN 55053

E-mail: [stjohnsuocw@peelinc@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsuocw@peelinc@gmail.com)

Website: <https://nerstrandumc.org>

Phone: 507.332.4089



## **10:30 AM WORSHIP AT ST JOHN'S**

## **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

19086 Jacobs Ave, Faribault, MN 55021

E-mail: [stjohnsuocw@peelinc@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsuocw@peelinc@gmail.com)

Website: <https://stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info>

Phone: (507) 330-0025



All the People, Ministers  
Interim Pastor- Jef Olson

## We are in ministry together!

The Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ is your partner in bringing ministry to people across the state with programs and services that helps your congregation be a faithful witness to the Still Speaking God. Through your support of the Per Capita Annual Dues, Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), and other Special Offerings, we make a difference - together!

### Per Capita Annual Dues

Each year, congregations are asked to pay \$10 per person in their church to support the covenantal ministries of the Minnesota Conference. 100% of these funds are used for:

- Congregational support during times of leadership transition
- Assistance with interim ministry
- Help in the pastoral search and call process
- Supporting pastors as they navigate their ministry in your church

### Our Church's Wider Mission

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the denominational connection between the national setting of the United Church of Christ and the Minnesota Conference. 65.25% of your church's gifts to OCWM stay in Minnesota as general support of the work of your Conference. The other 34.75% of your OCWM gift is shared with our UCC national setting and global ministries. Examples include:

- Denominational identity
- Clergy continuing education
- Keeping and maintaining profiles of ministers and congregations seeking new leadership
- Global disaster and emergency relief
- Justice-related projects
- Expanding and growing UCC churches
- Supporting retired clergy and church workers, and clergy families in need

### United Church of Christ Special Offerings

In addition to OCWM, the national setting of the United Church of Christ has four special offerings throughout the year.

- Neighbors in Need supports UCC churches who are developing justice projects.
- One Great Hour of Sharing offering provides emergency disaster relief, refugee ministries, and human development at home and across the globe
- Strengthen the Church provides funding for the expansion of ministry and growth of the UCC by providing resources to develop new and existing churches, train church leaders, and support faith formation. 50% of your contributions to Strengthen the Church offering are put to work in the Minnesota Conference.
- The Christmas Fund provides financial assistance for clergy families and provides supplements to low income, retired church workers.

Together, OCWM and the UCC four Special Offerings make up your church's "5 for 5" annual support.

# Church Word Search Puzzle

P Y K S U B N T F A K R T P N  
O R B L K B M A E N M P E W S  
H T T L Q V F B E H K Z P E C  
S S T E P L E Q W E Y E T W  
I E A B Y A L R E T S I N I M  
B V U U L I S N N O M R E S M  
K Y X I N I Z A S O I X R V U  
L X T G Y V S C Y A R P E J S  
T I J L S P Y L Z W W R A O I  
B F H E I R D E K N T M D L C  
R I Y P N I X O R G A N I S T  
I C M S G E E L B I B A N D K  
O U N O I S R O B E S J G W C  
H R S G N T L H K M O S Z H  
C C C W G S C R O S S A Y H M

BELLS

BIBLE

BISHOP

CHOIR

CROSS

CRUCIFIX

GOSPEL

HYMNS

KNEELING

MINISTER

MUSIC

ORGANIST

PEWS

PRAY

PRIEST

READINGS

ROBES

SERMON

SINGING

STEEPLE

TABERNACLE

VESTRY