

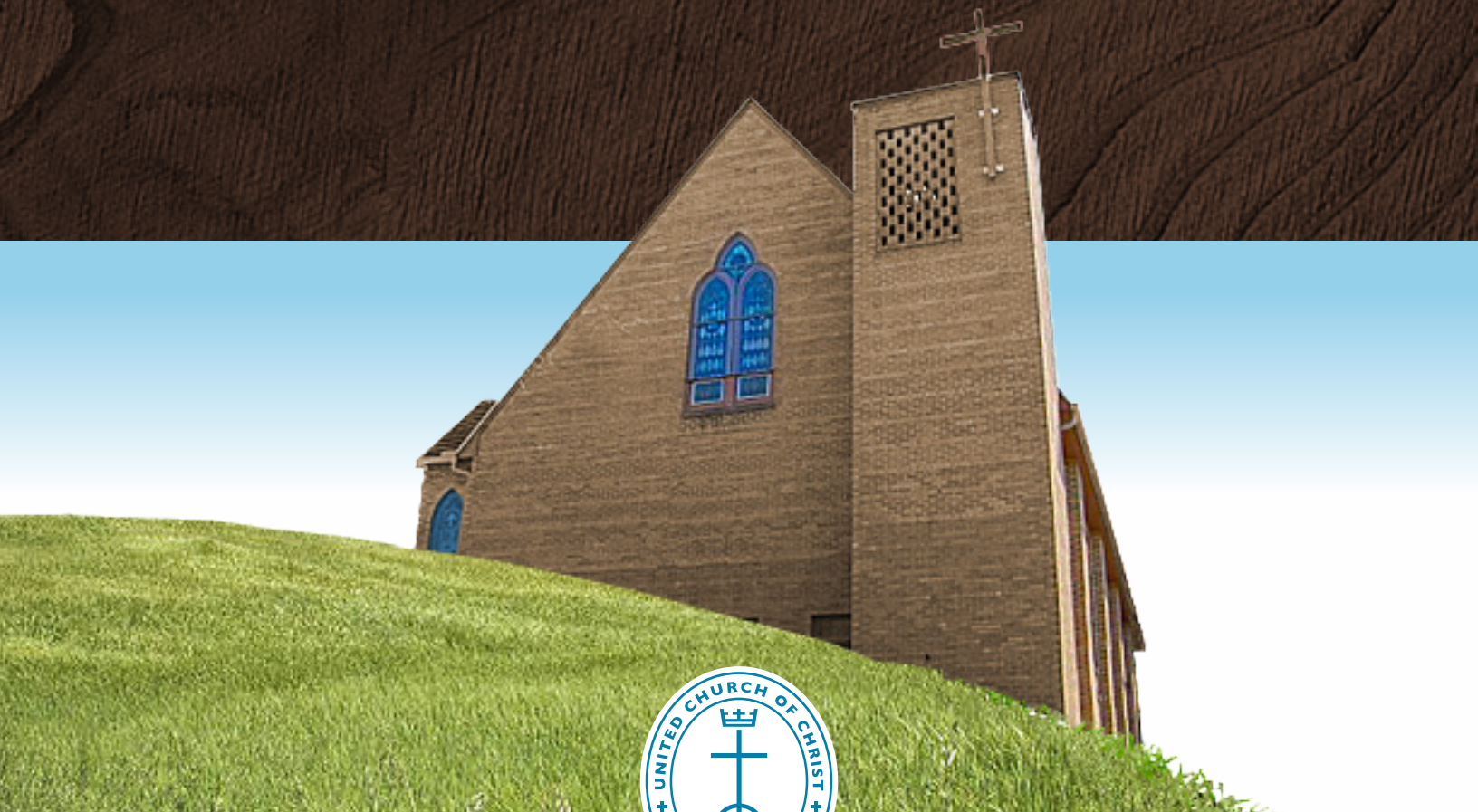


St. John's

United Church of Christ

Digital Newsletter

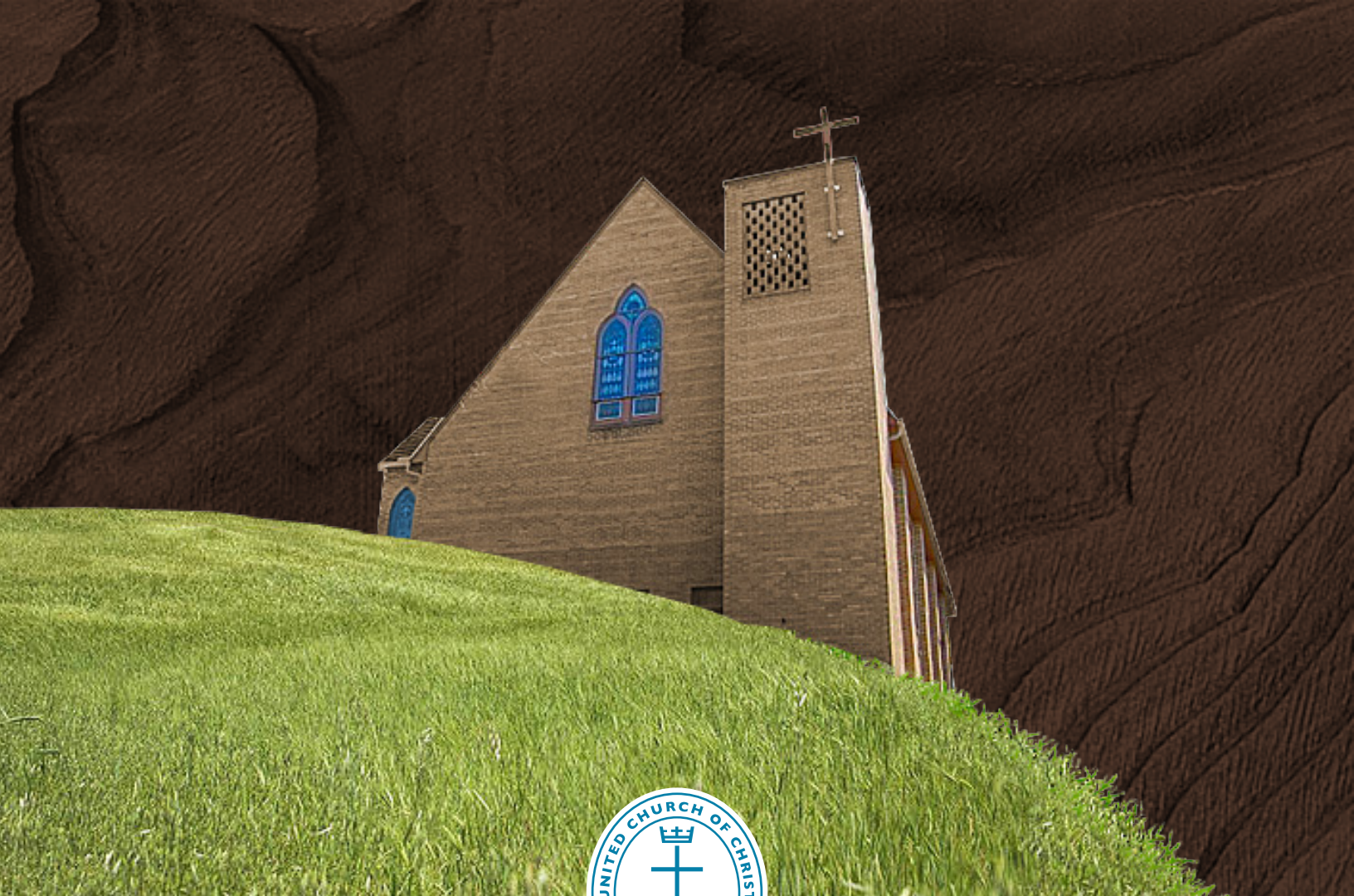
SJC Issue 0822 - August 2022



stjohnsfzwi.org

St. John's Church | United Church of Christ | 303 S Hill Street | Fountain City, WI

608.687.3277



Sunday Worship @ 8:30am

We offer two options for worship on Sundays: in person or online. Whether you prefer to worship from the safety of your home or with others, we at St. John's want to make sure you get the spiritual encouragement you need. Join us in person each Sunday at 8:30am or watch a video recording of the online service. The service is not recorded live but is uploaded after the service has ended. We look forward to worshipping with you!

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Letter From The Pastor

August 2022

From the Pastor's Desk

It's hard to believe that the dog days of August are here already. Which means fall is coming shortly and activity picks up as September roles around. So here are just a few things that I have coming up as we look ahead.

Sunday, August 21 is the annual Sunday Service at Eagle Valley Church, followed by a lunch provided by the Friends of Eagle Valley Church. There will NOT be worship held at St. John's or Hope on that Sunday.

Sunday, August 28 Hope UCC has invited St. John's to join them at their annual Social and service at 10:30am.

Confirmation Exploration Orientation for Confirmation Exploration Classes will be Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 6:30pm at Hope Church. This is for both students and parents.

Confirmation Exploration Classes will start on Wednesday, September 28 at 4:00pm at St. John's. Classes will last until 5:30pm

Creation Preaching Series - Over four Sundays starting September 18, I will be doing a series of sermons using a four-week cycle of suggested readings and reflect on what God's desires are for our relationship with our environment as individuals and as a church.

Sunday, October 30 will be Confirmation Sunday for those students for whom the Summer Intensive of Confirmation Exploration Classes is their second year and choose to be confirmed. This isn't everything of course. Check this newsletter, the bulletin, and online for other happenings at the church.

Continued on next page...

Letter From The Pastor

August 2022

And as always, I am open to suggestions (maybe a blessing of the animals on or near October 4?) If there are traditions that I am missing, please let me know. If I am not doing them most likely it's because I don't know about them. What else might we be doing together? Let's see where the Spirit leads us next.

God's grace and peace.

Pastor Deb Kunkel

P.S. Have you had a chance to explore our updated website? While still a work in progress the new design makes it easier to find information and do things (did you know you can give online?) Thank you to John Stettler and Cindy Ziegler for the time they have put in working with Corey Scholl as he redesigns and manage our website.

Stewardship

Stewardship Moment from the Deacons

Summer is an important time to make sure our offerings & donations to St. John's cover the times when we may be away visiting or on vacation. Look for specific updates from the Deacons in the fall about Stewardship. Our Mission seeks to establish and maintain within the local community, a Christian congregation to promote a life for worship, to advance the Kingdom of God by all means.



Music Focus Group

Tuesday, September 6, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Do you like music? Accompanists Faye, LuAnn, and Ruth, invite you to join them on Tuesday, September 06 at 6:00pm to share your ideas for the music in our church. Are there things that you would like to see the congregation do again such as choir? Do you have ideas of things we could try? Come share your thoughts and be part of the brainstorming for new ideas for musical offerings from our congregation.



Archiving

Volunteers: Historians & Photographers

We are looking for a volunteer (or two) who would enjoy being the historian for the church. This would mean going through the old files and documents of the church, deciding what has value to keep. This can be done at your pace. This isn't an "official" position, so your term would be as long or brief as you decide.



Pastor Deb is also hoping that there might be some photographers who be willing to be contacted to see if they would be available to take pictures at special services or events that could be used either in the church newsletter, website, or press releases. This also isn't an "official" position, so is based on your availability, and how often or long you choose to do this. If you are interested in either of these, please let Dale Schmdtknecht or Pastor Deb know.

Food Shelf

Report For July 2022

Can you give a couple hours a month and volunteer at the St. John's Food Shelf? Put a note in the offering plate this Sunday or reach out to Pastor Deb or Linda Clark at 715.495.5282. Thank you to our current volunteers! We are trying to help as many people possible!

Donations Most Needed:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| ✓ Toilet Paper | ✓ Crackers (Saltines) | ✓ Canned Chili |
| ✓ Canned /Ham/Salmon | ✓ Rice/Pasta Pouches | ✓ Canned Stew |
| ✓ Cake/Brownie | ✓ Vegetable Spray | ✓ Spices |
| ✓ Muffin Mixes | ✓ Brown Rice | ✓ Applesauce |
| ✓ Canned Frosting | ✓ Juice Boxes | ✓ Salad Dressing |
| ✓ Instant Oatmeal | ✓ V8/Tomato Juice | ✓ Ketchup |
| ✓ Cereal (Healthier) | ✓ Boost/Ensure | ✓ BBQ Sauce |

1st & 3rd Monday: 4:30pm - 6:30pm
2nd & 4th Wednesday: 3:00pm - 5:00pm



- ✓ 405 Pounds Of Food Distributed
- ✓ Averages 18 Pounds Of Food Per Person
- ✓ 22 Total People Helped
- ✓ 0 Children
- ✓ 14 Adults
- ✓ 8 Seniors
- ✓ 7 Households (1 Came Twice)

Volunteers: August

Ushers

Donna Beck, Karen Knospe & Mary Schmitt

Greeters

07.31.22 [Open](#)

08.07.22 Faye Conners

08.14.22 Mike & Heather Schmidtknecht

08.21.22 Paul & Ruth Ehmcke

08.28.22 Eagle Valley Services

Counters

Dale Schaffner

Communion & Flowers

Carol Colbenson

Contact us if you are interested in filling any of the **“OPEN”** volunteers positions.

Financial Report

Overview as of 07.29.22

Income \$9,145

Expenses \$4,951

* Please contact the St. John's Financial department if you have any detailed comments or questions.

Birthdays

Robin Ruble

Barbara Juszczak

Donald Beck

Reed Wiersgalla

Kim Keilholtz

Christian Repinski

Curt Fetting

Taylor Ely

Marion Heichel

Carol Risley

Xavier Wooden

Paul Juszczak

Lisa Wolfe

Aubrey Ratz

Ally Ryan

Jordan Wachowiak

Bryan Madsen

Anniversaries

Kevin & Heidi Wachowiak

Brian & Carina Semling

Fred & Cindy Ziegler

Rick & Susan Fons

Tom & Carol Risley

Larry & Joanne Muench

Gabe & Karen Pehler

Bob & Sherry Guenther

Jared & Carly Schaffner

Confirmation

Confirmation Exploration Class

We offer Confirmation class for middle or high schoolers. This process which includes class meetings, service opportunities, leading worship, and other activities created to fit the needs and interests of each particular class. Our youth will be enriched by these conversations and planning so that we can welcome them into the journey of our life together.



Confirmation Exploration Class

9:00am - Noon
St. John's Church
Education



Confirmation Exploration Class

9:00am - Noon
St. John's Church
Education



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9:00am - Noon
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Other Special Events

St. John's Church

Along with our Sunday Worship Service schedule, Pastor Deb's Office Hours, Consistory Meetings, Food Shelf Schedule and other recurring events. Below is a list of SPECIAL EVENTS located at St. John's Church and or the local area. Please contact us with any questions. Thanks again for all the support from volunteer and the community.



Elders Meeting St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 6:00pm



Memorial Committee St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 6:00pm



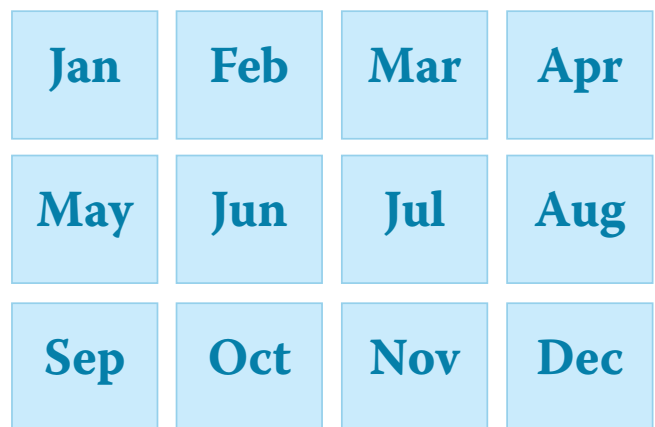
Eagle Valley Church Vesper Service

S2664 Co Rd G
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 10:00am



Sunday Social Hope United Cochrane

210 Michaels Street
Cochrane, WI
Starts @ 10:30am



Online Calendar

Please go online and visit our NEW easy to use website for current up-to-date, detailed event information. Our calendar is updated daily. Email us with any questions or comments.

stjohnsfcwi.org
info@stjohnsfcwi.org

Prayer Requests

St. John's Church - Pastor Deb Kunkel

Congregation members and non-members are encouraged to request prayers for times of need, comfort, healing, celebration and joy. If you would like a visit from Pastor Deb, please call her to set up a time today!



Pastor Deb's Office Hours:

Monday's Noon to 2:00pm
Wednesday's 10:00am to Noon
239.994.2528
pastorstjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

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United Church of Christ
303 S Hill Street, PO Box 130
Fountain City, WI 54629-0130

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stjohnsfcwi.org
info@stjohnsfcwi.org

From the Pastor's Desk

August 2022

As I write this, we are in the middle of a second contentious week in our nation. (Or perhaps I should say even more contentious.) Emotions are running high over recent Supreme Court decisions, and the ongoing Congressional hearings. Protest and celebrations are filling public spaces, as well as social media and the airwaves. It doesn't look like this will end soon. It is only another factor in the very divisive state that this country has been experiencing over the past few years. It is contributing to the ending of friendships and even some family relationships as has many of the issues of the last few years. As a result many are feeling hurt, attacked, betrayed, or enraged.*

So what does this have to do with the church? First, on these and all issues, I hope our faith informs our decisions and opinions both personally and how we believe it applies to others, and especially how we act in living that out.

However, even when it does, that doesn't mean we will always come to the same conclusions or decisions. And it is here that I think our faith has three words that if lived out would help heal the divisiveness if not the actual differences. They would enable more discussions instead of diatribes lobbed at each other that get us nowhere. The three words are: beloved, grace, and humility.

First beloved. You are a beloved child of God who desires only good and abundance for you. So is your neighbor across the street. As is that pundit on the news (take your pick from any of these listed in alphabetical order: CNN, FOX, MNSBC, Newsmax, etc.) that makes your blood pressure raise 100 points whenever you hear their voice, as well as the shouting angry voice in the crowd they are discussing. If we keep that in the forefront of our minds and spirits, it takes the edge of animosity off our thoughts and interactions.

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Second, grace. God offers us all the grace that we are imperfect, will be wrong at times, and yet are still beloved. Grace from us recognizes that we don't know anyone else fully or why they believe or feel a certain way. Grace remembers all the times we have been coming from either good motives or fear, certain that the things we thought were right so must be continued, or wrong so must be stopped. So if we have been, we can accept that others may be coming from similar places even if we are certain that they are wrong in what they do or say.

Finally, humility. The humility to admit that we aren't always right. The humility to know that we are not God. While hopefully we are striving to live our lives in ways that God desires for all of God's family, we are still not God. So no matter if "our side" is on the "winning" or "losing" side of an issue or decision, we remember that God is still at work bringing about good and grace for all God's beloved children, no matter who they are, what they believe, which side that they are on.

Does this mean all actions are equally good? No. Does this mean that we should not advocate for what we believe to be right, and stop resisting what we believe to be wrong? Again, I don't think it does. But we are called to love God with all our heart AND soul AND spirit AND mind, AND to love our neighbor as ourselves. Even when we disagree. Especially when we are resisting evil and wrong, or advocating for love and good.

Ours or other's actions and words are not always beloved by God. They may even grieve God, or break God's heart. But that doesn't change that we are still seen as beloved by God, who desires good and grace to all.

I know when I can see that, if even only for moment before going back to it being hidden behind my own hurt, anger, or fears, well, then I am loving God and neighbor. And then my thoughts, my decisions, my actions at least for that moment, especially when it comes to those affecting others, will be one be informed and filled with God's Holy Spirit, as Jesus' was every day of his earthly life.

It is said that during the Civil War that one of President Lincoln's advisors said that he was glad that God was on the Union's side. The response attributed to Lincoln includes the humility and grace that we need so desperately right now.

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“Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God’s side, for God is always right.” We don’t need to wonder if God is for us or against us, for we are always God’s beloved, who God is for. But so is the person on “the opposite side.” If we strive to discern what is God’s side (hint: it probably is one of that is based on love and justice that sees all as worthy even in our differences) then even when we fall short, we are headed in the right direction.

May God bless us, and keep us, until then.

God’s grace and peace.

Pastor Deb Kunkel

*If you are feeling any or all of these and need to talk, please let me know. We can set up a time for you to come in, share what you need, and we can look together at where God is present for you and for others in the midst this. No matter what, we are never alone.





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