

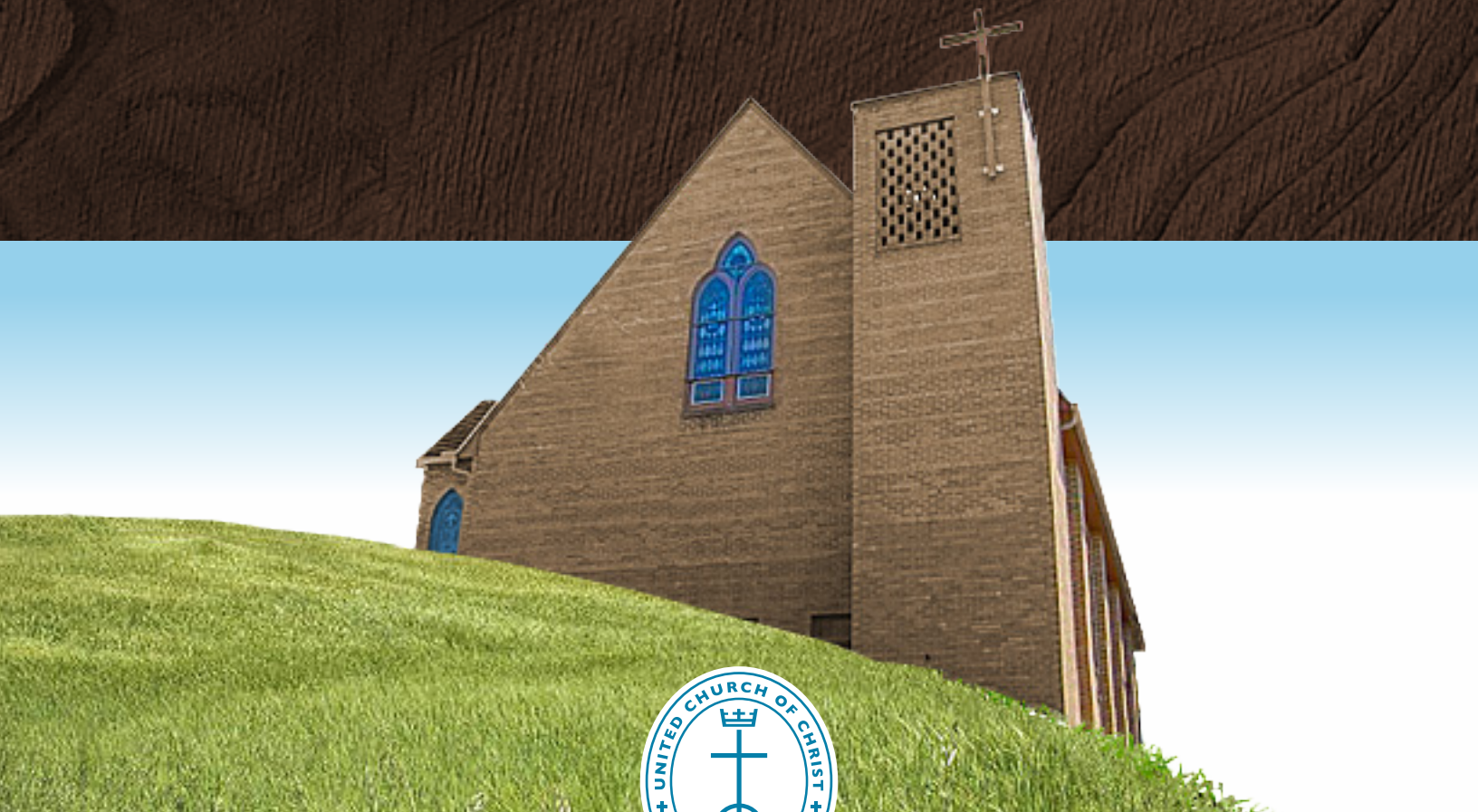


St. John's

United Church of Christ

Digital Newsletter

SJC Issue 0923 - September 2023



stjohnsfcwi.org

St. John's Church | PO Box 130 | 303 S Hill Street | Fountain City, WI

608.687.3277



Sunday Worship @ 10:30am

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 10:30am 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

September 2023

As I write this the temperature is comfortably in the 70s outside. Yet last week it was over 90 degrees, with a heat index of 100 degrees or more – no gradual shift. Just one day it feels as if the heat hits you in the face when you open the door leaving one wanting to retreat back inside. Then the next, it's pleasure to get outside and enjoy the day.

As I reflected on the weather, I realized that the last few years have been like that- and not just with weather. Pandemic, political divisiveness spilling over into communities, friendships, and families. Too often it feels like when we poke our heads out the door we instantly want to retreat back inside. And just when we get used to going back out – another heat wave rolls in. There is just so much going on (wildfires, natural disasters, shootings and other violence, war etc.) that the list can seem endless. Add in the challenges closer to home, and staying inside both physically and emotionally can seem like the best choice.

Yet Jesus shows us a different way. One of community, of connection, of support from God and with others. I truly believe that churches can offer a way of being and relating that is counter to the forces that face us, a community of love and care that can make an impact and offering traveling companions along the way. One where all people (but not necessarily all behavior) are welcome joyously and celebrated for who they are, even if we still wonder “how can they be/think/believe that” or “I don't get it”. We do this because we recognize that God welcomes us joyously in the same way, even when we are not sure if we deserve it ourselves. The Spirit joins us together to give each other hope, and then share that hope and light with others in multiple ways.

I bring this up because as the Presidential Election Cycle heats up, I fear its going to be bumpy ride. To mix metaphors, I feel the next 14 months will add fuel to the fire already raging in so many places and in so many people.

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Letter From The Pastor

September 2023

There will be plenty of opportunities to dig into “our” side (whichever one we may be on), blame “them” for all the problems, as well as act in ways that further divide us from each other both as individual and communities.

Yet we have a haven in God’s presence and in our congregations. A haven is a place where boats go when the storms get too strong, where ships are repaired, and crews refreshed. Tugboats, freighters, cruise ships, fishing boats - all are welcome to come into these havens when needed. It’s also where they can come on a regular basis to refuel, rest, and prepare to go out again.

So know that you have a haven here, as well as in God’s love. Know that in that haven we are refreshed by each other’s presence, buoyed by their faith and support, and are reminded that God’s is even now working through us and around us to bring about the day when all Creation lives together an abundant, flourishing, and joyful life.

God’s grace and peace.

Pastor Deb Kunkel

Cell: 239.994.2528

pastorstjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

See All Letters & Messages Online Under The Worship Tab

stjohnsfcwi.org

Prayer Requests

Prayer Requests For Inclusion In The Bulletin

There have been many requests for prayers requests to once again be placed in the bulletin. And so in September we will start to do so. There will be prayer request slips left out by the bulletins each Sunday that can be put in the offering plate or on Pastor Deb's desk. Please note that these will only be for those requests you wish to have put in the bulletin.

Because of HIPPA and confidentiality concerns, for inclusion in the bulletin, prayer requests must be from an immediate family member, and/ or indicate that the person the request concerns has indicated it is okay that it can be shared in the bulletin. They should also have the name of the person requesting the prayer so that there is someone to check with, if needed, if after a period of time the request is still needed. Of course, if the request is for you personally, simply let Pastor Deb know it can be included in the bulletin.

Please note that we will continue to accept all prayer requests for inclusion in the pastoral prayer during the service, and that you can also lift the request up at the time. However, Pastor Deb will need the written slip to verify spelling etc., especially if the person is not part of the congregation. If you have any questions or concerns, please see Pastor Deb.

God's grace and peace.

Pastor Deb Kunkel

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Consistory President Message

September 2023

I just wanted to update you with what the Consistory is working on. It has been a relatively quiet summer. The church seems to be running smooth at this point. We need to thank Hope United Church for inviting us to their Summer Social and worship. We also had the annual meeting of the Friends of the Eagle Valley Church with a great turnout from St. John's Church and Hope United Church. September starts the new Sunday School year and on Sunday, September 24, 2023 we have the "Blessing of the Animals" at the park in Cochrane hosted by Hope United Church this year.

The biggest item I need everyone to start considering is at the end of this year my term will be up. I cannot hold another term as your President. We need to be looking for someone to take over the reins of the church. We will also be looking for someone to take over as Treasurer of the church. Judy's term was up last year and she graciously agreed to serve one more year. She wants to enjoy retirement and step back a little from some of the responsibilities of church. These are the two pieces of leadership that need to be covered. There will also be a Deacon position and an Investment position that need to be filled.

This summer has seen relatively low attendance. This is a normal trend but it seems to be even lower than our normal. This makes me a little uneasy. We have to remember that in order to remain viable we need member participation. If we do not have members attending services and being involved then we do not have a church. Please attend when you can, get involved and encourage others to come. Our church and our church community are very special and we want to keep it going for future generations.

Lastly, remember to pray for all the people that are ill or have lost loved ones whether it be in our community or around the world.

God's grace and peace.

Dale Schmidtknecht

Sunday Penny Collection

First Sunday of the Month

The Church School Students will be collecting pennies the first Sunday of every month. We haven't done this in a long time and are anxious to start again. This money enables us to do donations to people or needy projects in our area or throughout the world.

Sunday, August 6, 2023



Online Calendar

Visit Us Online 24/7

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



Hope 4 U

Suicide Awareness Walk

Join us and help us to end the STIGMA associated with Suicide & Mental Health. We will be walking in memory of those we have lost, in honor of those who have survived, and to help those who still suffer. There will be a place to hang pictures of loved ones, so feel free to bring a photo or note to hang, if you are unable to attend send out your pictures and stories. There will be music, raffles, and speakers. The walk will be kid and pet friendly. Food vendors will be on site. Evan's book "Into the Wind: Fighting Suicide One Step at a Time" will be available to purchase at our walk. We hope to see you there! Check us out on Facebook or go to hope4ubc.com

Saturday, September 9, 2023

- ✓ 5th Annual Walk
- ✓ 10:30am - 2:00pm
- ✓ Speakers @ 11:00am
- ✓ Walk @ Noon
- ✓ Kids Activities
- ✓ 50/50 & Raffles
- ✓ Fountain City Park
- ✓ Fountain City, WI



Stewardship

Stewardship Moment from the Deacons

Neighbors in Need (NIN)

There will be a special UCC offering in early October with the theme BEHOLD.

Genesis 1:31

“God saw everything God made and behold, it was very good”

~ Deacon John Stettler



Sunday School Kickoff

School Education

The St. John’s Church Sunday School Kickoff Event will be on Sunday, September 10, 2023 at 10:30am in Fountain City, Wisconsin. The Christian Education Board will be serving coffee after service. For more information, contact Karen Knospe.

Sunday, September 10, 2023

- ✓ Sundays @ 10:30am
- ✓ Pre-K to 2nd Grade
- ✓ 3rd to 6th Grade
- ✓ Join Today

School Backpack Program

Restarted as “Feeding C-FC Families”

St. John’s Church school “Backpack Program” is being restarted under a new name and format. Now called “Feeding C-FC families”, this program started by Kalane Engel helped families facing food security feed their families on weekends and holidays. It was temporarily suspended during the pandemic. Changes to logistical availability as well as confidentiality concerns that e students received their backpacks at school have led to a new format.

Feed My People will deliver food to the Milton Town Hall on the third Wednesday of each month. Volunteers are needed to help unload the food, then sort and pack it into boxes for families who have signed up for the program. Families will then come by either Wednesday afternoon or Thursday to pick up their boxes.

Hope United Church members and friends are also invited to join St. John’s Church volunteers, as well as the wider community. Volunteers are currently needed for:

- ✓ **Wednesday, September 20, 2023**
- ✓ **Wednesday, October 18, 2023**
- ✓ **Wednesday, November 15, 2023**
- ✓ **Wednesday, December 22, 2023**

If you would like to volunteer for these or future dates, please contact Pastor Deb.

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C-FC Area Food Shelf

Report For August 2023

Can you give a couple hours a month and volunteer at the C-FC Area Food Shelf located at St. John's Church in Fountain City, WI? 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!

Donations Most Needed:

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

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



- ✓ 670 Pounds Of Food Distributed
- ✓ Averages 27 Pounds Of Food Per Person
- ✓ 25 Total People Helped
- ✓ 04 Children
- ✓ 14 Adults
- ✓ 07 Seniors
- ✓ 13 Households (1 Came Twice)

Blessing Of The Animals

Joint Service Invitation

Join us as St. John's Church and Hope United Church comes together for the Annual Pet Blessing Service at Goose Lake Park, next to Hope United Church in Cochrane at 10:30am. Bring pet as we give thanks for all God's creatures. The service will be followed by a potluck.

Pet Blessing services began as a way to honor Francis of Assisi, who was known for his love of all God's Creation, from animals to plants to the stars themselves. Stories tell of Francis preaching to attentive ravens, as well as convincing a wolf not to eat the citizens of a village. He is also known for the "Canticle of the Creatures", his work with the poor and lepers, and the founding of the Franciscan Order.

Pastor Deb will bless any animal. They must be in a crate/cage/similar closed container or on a leash/lead. This is for the safety of all the animals as well as people attending. Please also bring with you supplies to clean up any "offerings" your animal might make, though we will have few available.

If you don't feel comfortable bringing your pet or animal, or they are too large to transport for the service, you are invited to bring something that represents them for blessing in their stead. This may be a collar, saddle, lead, blanket, or other item that you associate with your pet or animal. Pastor Deb will also bless any stuffed "animals" that a child might have if desired. There will be dog and cat treats available, as well as a potluck after. This will be the only service for this day for Hope United Church and St. John's Church.

Sunday, September 24, 2023

- ✓ Starts @ 10:30am
- ✓ Goose Lake Park
- ✓ Cochrane, WI

Pet Blessing Service

Blessing Of The Animals

Below is a photos from last year. Please join us for this special service celebrating the love our pets have for us, as well as all the creatures of Creation.



Confirmation

Confirmation Exploration Orientation

On Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 6:30pm, parent(s)/guardian(s), and their child from both St. John's Church and Hope United Church are invited to join me (Pastor Deb) at St. John's Church to learn more about the Confirmation Exploration Program, and if desired, to register. You do not have to be a member of either congregation for your child to attend these classes.

This two-year program is open to all entering seventh grade or above. Each year runs from October through April. Classes are held most Wednesdays that C-FC is in session, from 3:30pm - 5:00pm at St. John's Church. Students can miss up to four classes each year without needing to make-up the work. At the conclusion of two years in the program and meeting the other requirements a student can choose to be Confirmed.

During the classes I lead students in exploring their faith, asking questions, and reflecting on what it means for them to be a Christian disciple of Jesus. I use games, videos, discussions, art, and other creative expressions as well as traditional lectures. In addition we'll engage in-class service projects, worship participation, and a retreat. Students will also meet with a mentor from their home church once a month when class is in session to further explore their faith. These and other requirements will be reviewed in more detail at orientation. If you would like a list of the full requirements prior to that, please contact me and I will gladly provide them.

If you are considering sending your child to these classes but are unsure, please come to Orientation to ask questions and learn more. If you are unable to make that meeting, or have questions you would like to ask directly, please contact me or the Church.

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

- ✓ Starts @ 6:30pm
- ✓ Fountain City, WI

Volunteers: September

Ushers

David Schaffner, Amy Hammer & John Schmidtknecht

Greeters

09.03.23 Cara Lee Wiersgalla
09.10.23 Karen Knospe
09.17.23 Quint & Denise Yapp
09.24.23 Derrick & Amy Hammer
10.01.23 Karen Knospe & Mary Schmitt

Counters

John & Mary Stettler

Communion & Flowers

Greg & Jessica Osborn

Financial Report

For detailed information regarding the financial standing of St. John's Church, contact the office to review financial documents.

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Birthdays

Karla Miller
Kimberly Aus
Ashley Jandro
Sam Davis-Sweazey
Taylor Baures
Marjorie Kammuller
Jean Evans
Dylan Hohmann
Ethan Korb
Amy Hammer
Emily Conners
Karden Cheney
Brianna Engelmann
Brian Wolfe
Richard Ruben
Bobbie Sue Wooden
Brooke Engel
Sue Schaffner
Jennifer Conners
Hiromi Semling
Abigail Schaffner
Karen Knospe
Shannon Ely
Crystal Dienger

Anniversaries

Adam & Jenny Krause
John & Mary Stettler
Ted Wilson & Karen Stettler
Randy & Judy Boehm
Dale & Jenny Schaffner
Quint & Denise Yapp
Joe & Hiromi Semling
Randy & Lori Maier
Greg & Jessica Osborn
Tom & Lee Carpenter
Norman & Betsy Semling
Robert & Bobbi Sue Wooden

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.



St. John's Church Penny Collection

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 10:30am



St. John's Church Sunday School Kickoff

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 10:30am



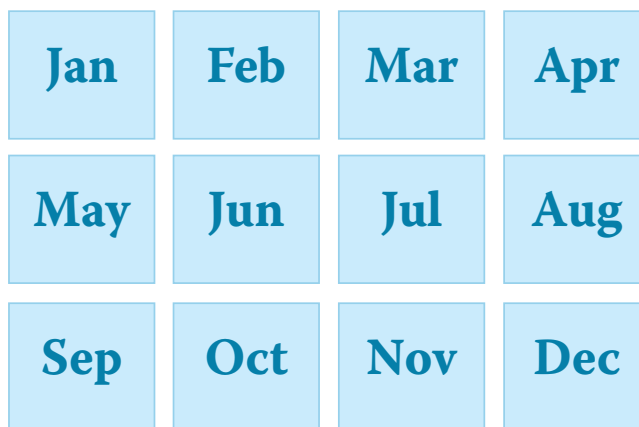
Blessing Of The Animals Joint Service Invitation

Goose Lake Park
Cochrane, WI
Starts @ 10:30am



Confirmation Exploration Orientation

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 6:30pm



Online Calendar

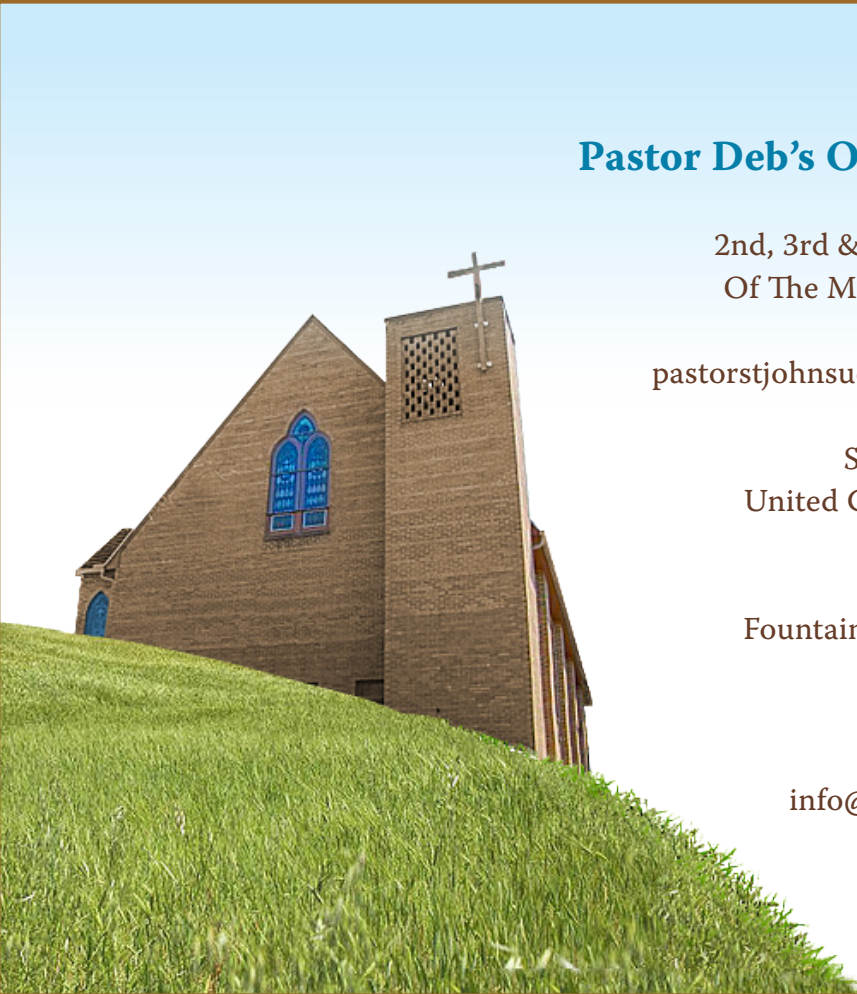
Please go online and visit our NEW easy to use website for current up-to-date, detailed event information. Our calendar is updated daily. Email us with any questions or comments.

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:

2nd, 3rd & 4th Wednesday
Of The Month @ 10:00am
239.994.2528
pastorstjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

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St. John's

United Church of Christ

Church Office:

stjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

Newsletter:

stjohnsfcnewsletter@gmail.com

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