

The Country Church Herald

...Proclaiming the Word of God

NEWSLETTER | JANUARY, 2021

ON THE WEB www.stmstjucc.org FIND US ON FACEBOOK & YOU TUBE!

As 2020 ends and 2021 begins, we do so in hope of a better year. I hesitate to say, 'How could it be worse?' because as bad as 2020 has been there have been much worse in our history. We can do one of two things at the beginning of the new year.



We can look backward and lament or we can look forward with an intentional decision of making 2021 the best year we have ever had. I propose we look forward, but we do so with the 2020 experience as a valuable lesson for all. One of our lessons, as a church, has been we learned how to do ministry virtually.

By transitioning to virtual worship (while at times right alongside in-person worship) we have reached many more people than we have with only in-person. Reaching more people with the Good News ~ inviting more people into a relationship with Jesus ~ having an impact on those we would not have otherwise is at the heart of the Church. It is, in part, who we are called to be as the Body of Christ.

For example, our Christmas service posted 4-days ago (Dec 24th) has **871 views**. That is an incredible number of people reached! Families have spent more time together in meaningful conversation and activities. Friendship has become more important...

As our new year begins, I want to thank all who are transitioning off the Consistories. You have done an amazing job! And welcome our newest Consistory members who will serve. Thank you for your gift of leadership, time and talents.

I want to thank Kathryn Jaehnig who retired Dec. 31st from playing the organ at St. Mark's. She has been playing since she was 15 or 16 years old, beginning while her dad ~ Rev. Karl G. Schmahl was pastor at St. Mark's. He served from 1934-1959.

Lastly, and very importantly, I want to thank all who sent me, and my family, Christmas cards, Christmas gifts, and the generous gift (s) from St. James and St. Mark's church leadership.

You all are awesome! 2021 here we come!!!

Pastor Patrick



ST. JAMES UCC
13312 Pioneer Road
Newton, WI 53063
920.693.8100

ST. MARK'S UCC
W1307 Orchard Road
Cleveland, WI 53015
920.693.8361

PASTOR:

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

**All Church Events are
Virtual Until Further Notice.**

**Sunday bulletins and a link to
the messages are posted
under the "messages" link on
our church website:
www.stmstjucc.org**

**Messages are uploaded to
YouTube:**

St. Mark's & St. James UCC

**You can also find us on
Facebook**

December 29, 2020

Dear Congregation Members,

As we enter into our new year together, we all hope the need for virtual worship *only* will be a thing of the past. While we will not discontinue our virtual worship even when we have in-person worship, (that form of worship is here to stay!) we do hope to be seeing one another in our sanctuaries sooner rather than later.

We know that during the difficult times of 2020 we have never closed the church. We have held worship services virtually, via drive-in, and in-person. We have continued as much of our worship as possible in all these venues including prayer, offertory blessings, music, Communion, liturgical prayers – Lord's Prayer, Apostles Creed, UCC Statement of Faith, and Baptisms. Sunday School and Confirmation for our children has continued.

Our decisions to have virtual or in-person worship have been made with input from the Conference, from other UCC churches in our relative areas, from area clergy, from Wisconsin health departments, and in conversation with many of our church members. As of the end of December, there are at least eleven (11) UCC churches in Sheboygan and Manitowoc county that are only hosting services virtually and not in-person. Our two churches would make thirteen (13).

We have had numerous members from both churches testing positive and/or being hospitalized because of Covid-19. We share this with you so that you know the Consistories decisions are not made arbitrarily, capriciously or in a vacuum. Rather the decisions have been made after much discussion, prayer, and seeking of wisdom.

Our current decision to remain virtual is still in place. Although, we are closely watching the numbers of positives, deaths, and hospitalization and the Consistories will continue to update both of our churches.

May God's peace be with you.

ST. JAMES CONSISTORY MEETING

December 14, 2020 – 6:30

President Clarence Belitz called the meeting to order. Members present were: David Lorfeld-Vice-President, Wendy Henschel-Treasurer, Deb La Duke-Secretary, Michelle Mauk, Jason Riesterer, Tom Kleinhans, and Pastor Patrick Schultz. Additions to the agenda were approved and Pastor led the group in prayer.

Motion to approve the Secretary's Report as printed was made by David and seconded by Michelle. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as printed was made by Deb and seconded by Jason. Motion carried. Discussion on how to pay out the two Treasurers this year and a motion to pay Val \$1,000.00 and Wendy \$500.00 was made by Jason and seconded by Tom. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Visitations and calls continue to members. Free socks from Wigwam were donated to SCIO. He continues to prepare for our online Christmas holiday services.

Building and Grounds: AED pads have been replaced. Johnson Controls replaced a bad battery during their alarm inspection. Clarence is receiving estimates to replace the rotted wood on a stained glass sill and David has been making updates to control boxes.

Old Business: Motion to approve the recommendations from the Vision of Hope was made by Deb and seconded by Tom. Motion carried. They have a new application form and will meet again on April 5, 2021. We are in need of adding another member to the Stewardship Committee. Please let Clarence know if interested. Christian Board of Education did not meet. The Family Christmas giving tree was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who donated and helped with this important event!

Pastor has prepared a summary and what to expect page for our "Mission and Vision" committee forming in 2021. If interested, please let a Consistory member or Pastor know.

New Business: Installation of Wendy Henschel as Treasurer was completed. We received affirmation commitment from two members to join us on the Consistory beginning 2021. Great group to have intelligent conversations with! Motion to mail out Christmas gifts this year to our church support team was made by Michelle and seconded by Tom. Motion carried.

We reviewed and updated documents for the Annual Report and will be forwarding them to our Church secretary, Karen Mansker. Wendy will be contacting Judy Steinbeck for the shared expenses report for the 2021 budget.

Karen has offered to prepare an "Event Book" for our church. It will list birthdays, anniversaries, monthly calendars, and ushering lists. Thank you Karen!

Next Meeting Date: January 4, 2021 – 6:30

Adjournment: Motion made by Wendy and seconded by Tom. Motion approved. 9:00

Respectfully submitted,

Deb La Duke - Secretary

St. James Consistory would like to announce our nominees for our Consistory to replace members whose terms are up.

They are Tammy Serketich and Jamey Binversie. Nominations can still be taken from the floor which will then go to a vote. The vote will take place at our Annual Meeting on January 17, 2021

ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING

December 3, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 pm. Members present: Bruce Mansker, Tara Vandoske, Dave Call, Jacob Grunwald, Louise Jetzer, and Lori Roelse. Lori led the group in prayer.

The Secretary's and Financial Secretary's reports were reviewed and accepted.

Buildings and Grounds

- The elevator inspection is complete.
- Bruce will check in again with Spectrum about burying the cable.
- Parking lot markers will need to be placed before snowfall.

Old Business

- The secretary's computer is now operational.

New Business

- Locking of the secretary's office was discussed. Perhaps a locked cabinet would suffice.
- Planning for the virtual Christmas services was discussed.
- A notification of our need for an organist was in the newsletter.

Next Consistory Meetings

5:30, Thursday, January 7 at St. Mark's. Take down Christmas decorations, followed by the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Roelse, Consistory Secretary



Sheboygan County Interfaith
<https://www.sheboygancountyinterfaith.org>
January, 2021

- ◇ Starting in January, the SCIO Farmers Market will be offering product pick-up in the First Congregational Church UCC parking lot the first and third Saturdays of the month from 10-11. Go to our website for more information on how to contact our vendors and place your orders for pick-up! Vendors can still accept DYB fresh produce vouchers, wooden EBT coins, and gift certificates.
- ◇ Bridgeway could use the following items: Olive oil, shredded cheese, and baking powder
- ◇ Family Pathways supervised visitation program is accepting new clients! Please share our email with families that may be experiencing temporary challenges with visiting their children,
familypathways@sheboygancountyinterfaith.org
- ◇ Have some graphic design skills? We would love to talk to you! We are looking for a volunteer to help us with logo development. Contact executive director Lisa Stephan at
lisa@sheboygancountyinterfaith.org



ST. JAMES CONSISTORY would like to recognize Val Spindler for her service to our church as a member of the St. James Consistory and our treasurer. We enjoyed working with her as she shared her time and bookkeeping talents. Thank you, Val!

We would like to welcome Wendy Henschel to the St. James Consistory. Wendy has volunteered to finish Val Spindler's term as our treasurer. Wendy has been our treasurer in the past and started her new position in November. Welcome, Wendy, we look forward to working with you as you share your time & experience.



"Application for Funding" forms are available in the narthex, from **VISION OF HOPE** Committee members, or under "More" on our website. We welcome specific requests as well as your suggestions for using our semiannual gifts from the Wagner Foundation.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A PRIVACY SECTION HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE FORM. Effective Jan. 1, 2021, old forms without a completed "privacy choice" section will not be accepted.

The next Vision of Hope Committee meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 5, at St. James.

THANK YOU!!



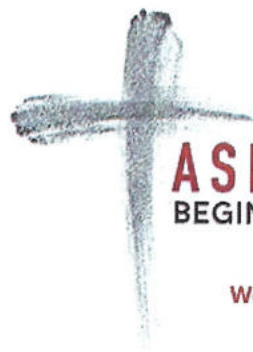
Our heartfelt thank you to ALL of the generous angels and elves who were able to help with the "Christmas Families project" this year. Your donations of time, talents, funds, wrapping, and coordinating are much appreciated. Please know that your generosity provided a most wonderful Christmas time for two needy families!

~The Consistory of St. James~

*Poinsettias were also purchased ..
at St. James by:
The Krause Family in memory of Dolores Krause
and at St. Mark's by:
Glenn Spindler in memory of Karen Spindler*



Our sympathies to Judy & Al Wippermann. Judy's mother, Dorothy Schad, passed away on November 21, 2020.



ASH WEDNESDAY BEGINS THE SEASON OF LENT

Wednesday, February 17th, 2021

Lent will not be here for a while – not until February 17th with Ash Wednesday. But it will surely be here sooner than we expect! I have been working on (by praying, reading scripture, and writing) a Lenten Devotion for 2021. I will have it ready for all who would like to follow it the week of February 14th.

I plan on printing it for those who would like a hardcopy and emailing it to those who would like an electronic copy. If you would like a copy made available to you email me, or our church office, with your name and how you want it delivered (hard copy or e-copy). For your example, February 17 (Ash Wednesday) devotion is below.

Thank you!
Pastor Patrick

February 17, 2021
First day of Lent includes Ash Wednesday
Read Matthew 4:1-11

There is not a day that goes by when I don't feel some kind of temptation to disobey, turn away, or elevate myself to new heights at the expense of keeping God #1. These temptations can happen at any time, but they most often occur in moments of weakness or high stress. And that makes sense, right? I am at my most vulnerable when I'm overwhelmed or when I feel unable to cope.

Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John. From there he was led into the wilderness by the Spirit. This was a time of fasting for Jesus. Forty days and forty nights of fasting. Satan, believing he would be susceptible to influencing offers Jesus these temptations:

"If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." (4:3) In other words, Jesus you are to great of a person to go hungry when you have plenty of food to eat. Come on! Make yourself some bread.

Satan takes Jesus to the holy city:

"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" (4:5-6) Hey Jesus! Show us how great you really are. Take yourself to the highest point of this holy place and throw yourself off the tower. Surely, God will take care of you. Let's test God a little bit. Is he really going to prop you up?

From the top of a very high mountain overlooking all the kingdoms of the world Satan tells Jesus: *"All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."* (4:8-9) It certainly is presumptuous for Satan to lay claim over all the kingdoms; he doesn't have the authority to give them away. And, it's interesting to note that Satan, like most of the people in the time of Jesus, was focused on worldly kingdoms, earthly foods, and mountain high or holy city towers elevations.

Jesus came to us, for *none* of those things. He came to give us spiritual nourishment (I am the living water; I am the bread of life). He came to us to teach us about the heavenly kingdom that awaits all of us (My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?) And to remind us that nothing precedes God. God is #1 always! (I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods before me.)

Prayer: Lord, God Almighty, when I am in my weakest moments, I dearly need you to strengthen my resolve to never give in to temptation. Guide me; help me to make good choices. Protect me from the pressures and tendencies that guide me to making bad choices. In your loving care, *Amen*.

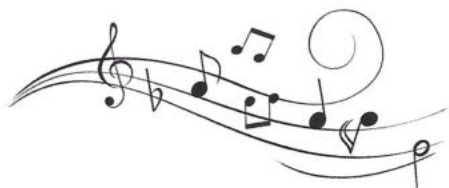
ST JAMES JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Karen Krause
- 7 Jim Becker
- 17 Andrew Nye
- 20 Dawn Marcoe
- 21 Scott Henschel
Williem Langenhahn
- 24 Henry Langenhahn, Jr.
- 25 Gavin Marcoe
- 27 Maureen Athorp
- 29 Allyson Wasmer

ANNIVERSARIES

None



Both churches are in need of muscians....organist and/or pianist. If you know someone who may be interested in sharing their musical talents, please talk with a Consistory Member.
*This is a paid position.



To Our Friends at St. Mark's,

I'd like to thank everyone who remembered us with cards and prayers during my recent mishap and therapy. When I came home after 8 days of therapy, there was a stack of get well cards waiting for me. To thumb through them and see all of the return addresses from members of St. Mark's was awesome and humbling. It certainly showed me how much it meant that someone thought of me and took the time to send a card.

I am doing really well. Everyday I do more than I did the day before. Now it is just a matter of time to wait until the breaks in the bone heal. Once they heal, my therapy can be advanced and I can bear weight on my left leg and eventually walk again.

Thank you all so much for your love and concern.

Louise Jetzer

ST MARK'S JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Terri Grunwald
- 7 Corey Vandoske
- 9 Scott Siekman
- 11 Azalea Heling
- 12 Margene Reyer
- 14 Brenda Miota
Tim Schueler
- 16 Andy Schnelle
Warren Vandoske
- 18 Hailey Hermann
Dorothy Schnell
- 23 Ray Brickner
Jason Bramstedt
- 29 Nancy Sixel

ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Kevin & Betty Kellner
- 14 Gary & Sheri Kaestner

"FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,"
DECLARES THE LORD,
"PLANS TO PROSPER YOU
AND NOT TO HARM YOU,
PLANS TO GIVE YOU
HOPE AND
A FUTURE."

JEREMIAH 29:11

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/WYBIBLEVER

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!**

*In the new year,
may you be blessed
with all the good
things God has to give.*

No ushers or candlelighters are needed while church is held Virtually. If there is a change in the status, Consistory members will fill in for those duties.

Pastor Patrick has designated Tuesdays & Fridays as his day of Sabbath and his day out of the office. During those two days each week, you may contact him in case of an emergency only at 608-352-9544.

CONFIDENTIALITY LAWS

There have been some changes to the confidentiality laws. These changes make it difficult for pastors to obtain information about anyone in the hospital.

If you or a loved one will be in the hospital, please call the church office 920-693-8361 or contact Pastor Patrick at 920-693-2858.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The United Church of Christ (UCC) is a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church to join faith and action. With over 5,000 churches and nearly one million members across the U.S., the UCC serves God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world. The UCC is a church of firsts, a church of extravagant welcome, and a church where "...they may all be one"

(John 17:21).

United Church of Christ:
<https://www.ucc.org>

St. James UCC/St. Mark's UCC:
www.stmstjucc.org

PASTORAL CARE

If you or a family member are in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Patrick at 920-693-2858 or leave a message on the church's answering

DATES TO REMEMBER!

- ⇒ Virtual Confirmation Classes
Wednesdays 6-7:30pm
- ⇒ Consistory Meetings...
St. James: Mon., Jan. 4, 6:30pm
St. Mark's: Thurs., Jan. 7, 5:30pm
- ⇒ Annual Reports due to Karen by Monday, Jan. 4th
- ⇒ Feb. Newsletter Articles due to Karen Tues., Jan. 26th

Please be aware that all items will be added to the Annual Report AS RECEIVED. They are not edited or altered, so make sure that your reports are accurate and how you want them to appear in print.

Karen in the church office has a new email address:

stmstjoffice@gmail.com



Be sure to notify her of any address/phone/email changes so that you may continue to receive all church communication.

Additionally, be sure to let Karen know of any family news to add to our newsletterBirths, Graduations, Weddings, Deathsso that we may celebrate with you as well as well as support you in your sorrow.

Romans 12:15-16

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another....