

St. James United Church of Christ

9008 Meisner Road, Casco, MI 48064 / www.ourstjameschurch.org/

Newsletter
January 2024
Volume 10, Issue 1

News from Pastor Ken



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Greetings. I am hoping you can help me out. I am still trying to figure out where 2022 and 2023 went. I love the excitement and opportunity of New Years, but WOW!

The New Year often gives us a sense of optimism, opportunity and excitement for the days ahead. It is as if turning to the first page of the new calendar allows us to set aside the challenges, disappointments and hurts of the past year and look forward to a fresh beginning with hope.

That is exactly what this past month of Advent and Christmas are all about. Maybe that is why the church calendar always begins approximately a month before our standard secular calendar year. It gives us a little extra time to plan and prepare for this new beginning. It was good this past Advent spending time in active prayer and meditation discerning what God has called me (and us) to do and who God has called me (and us) to be.

As we look toward our New Year, I encourage us to consider our individual and personal gifts and opportunities and to actively participate in our own growth and sustainability as well as our community of faith. This may include planning and/or growing a ministry, reaching out to those in need, inviting friends and family to attend worship, reaching out to former members or your unchurched neighbors to visit us, encouraging generous giving, and sharing your story of faith in the community.

The reality is that this family of faith needs and more importantly calls you to be an active part in its vital role in the community and it cannot do it without you. Just as Christ could not carry on his ministry without his disciples, we cannot carry on without your active participation in spreading the good news.

Pastor Ken Newsletter Continued

This approach to ministry more closely reflects the way Christ's own ministry was carried out. It creates wonderful opportunities for all to participate, each according to our individual gifts of time, energy, talent, treasure and other resources as we are able in various and appropriate ministries.

As we speak of gifts, January 6th is Epiphany, a time when the wise men brought gifts to the baby Jesus. I so much enjoy the whole idea of Epiphany and all the symbolism that goes with it. First, there was the arrival of the wise men on Epiphany. They traveled across what was then the entire world on faith, following a star to a place where, when they arrived, they were struck by a vision of hope and love so simple and yet so profound that it changed their lives. During this season of Epiphany, we too are invited to come to that place where our lives may be changed forever.

In the first week of Epiphany we also celebrate the baptism of Jesus Christ. It is in that very same baptism that we too are baptized and called to be disciples each of us according to our gifts and abilities.

This is for me an exciting time. A time when the world so desperately needs to see hope, so desperately needs to see the love of Jesus. We are called to be the face of Christ, to be that light for the world to see. I think to myself "what an overwhelming task" but I realize that we do not go alone nor are we expected to do it all. We go knowing that God stands before us and behind us, that God will give us the words to speak and the strength to do God's will each according to our gifts and abilities. We are called to reach out to change the life of one person, who will change the life of one person, who will change the world. I always remember this wonderful quote "We are not called to do everything but we are called to do something.'

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are surrounded by God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. There is a place for you here.

May this Epiphany season fill you with the light of Christ, recognizing and acting on our call to be disciples.

Happy New Year!! Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Prayer List

Prayers for Wayne, Judy, Chris, Frank, Gary, James & Family, Gina, Michael, Trudy, Ken, Kathy, Nancy, Melanie, Don, Families of St. John & St. James



Outreach Ministry

Helping Hands

Current Needs: Crackers, cereal, canned fruit and veggies, boxed foods like Hamburger Helper, Rice-A-Roni, Mac and Cheese

Not accepting books and furniture currently.

No expired or opened boxes of food accepted.

Kids in Distress

Current needs are as follows:

Socks and underwear – all sizes for girls and boys, hygiene items for both boys and girls and adults, adult gloves, coats for girls and boys all sizes, boys pants size 3 and up.

B-WARM

Continued prayers for the future of the mission. They are currently looking at the possibility of having some new people in place at the beginning of the New Year. Pray that all goes well!!!

Birthdays in January

1/2 Mark Pittman
1/6 Bill LaDuke
1/8 Elizabeth Kulman
1/14 Bill Osterland
1/16 Andrew Kargula
1/20 Jim Maedel
1/26 Tommy Bandlow
1/28 Jessie Teltow
1/30 Cindy Pittman

Earthly Gifts

Our monthly goal for January contributions is \$5,877.25. If you are new to our church or have lost or misplaced your envelopes, please leave a message on the church phone 586-727-1623 or e-mail ourstjameschurch.org. Envelopes for 2024 are available in the pew by the front door. If you have not found your envelopes contact Ralph or Roberta before or after the service and you will receive the packet before you leave.

Spiritual Ministry

Please feel free to bring your children to church and partake in the bi-weekly Sunday School classes (2nd and 4th Sunday). Please contact Sue Tews if you are interested in helping with Sunday school.

The Discretionary Fund January 7, 2023

Did you know this fund is utilized to aid with rent, utilities, medical supplies, food, and transportation to doctors, etc.?

This is generated from the loose change collected the first Sunday of each month. Please empty your pockets and change purses that day to meet the needs of our church and community.

New Year's Blessings!

Toasts for the New Year

God bless the master of this house,
Likewise the mistress, too,
And all the little children
To whom the day is new.

Welcome be ye that are here,
Welcome all and make good cheer,
Welcome all another year.

Under mistletoe and holly
A party gay and jolly
In games will pass the hours away
Of this our festive New Year's Day.

Ring out the old, ring in the new;
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

May every joy attend you,
And Heaven daily send you,
Blessings in heart and home.

A resolution let us make,
On this bright New Year's Day,
Throughout the year we'll wear a smile,
And fret dull care away.

Come, let's join the merry throng!
Upon the coach of life we'll ride,
Speeding the coming year along
Happy we'll be, whate'er betide.

Christmas Tote Bags for Local Community Charities

Christmas Tote Bags

A new updated list is available downstairs in the church of what is needed for this year. The tote bags are for both boys and girls between the ages of 2 and 14. The items accepted anytime: hygiene items such as: toothbrush holders, toothbrushes, toothpaste, washcloths, dental floss, comb/brushes, hair accessories such as head bands, ponyes a, clips, bows, and barrettes and school supplies such as: notebooks, crayons, colored pencils, colored markers, pencil sharpeners, scissors (for youngsters and older children) , rulers, large erasers. Pens, pencils and socks, hats, scarves and gloves/mittens and toys.

Please donate travel size items, we only have so much space to store the items in for the year and we need to get all items to fit in the bags.

Bottle / Can Collection

We are continuing to collect all bottle and cans at church. They can be placed in the back-room downstairs at church.

All donations should be empty and clean bottles and cans. The money will be used towards St. James Painting Project.

If you need someone to pick them up please contact Don or Betty Robertson at robertson3265@comcast.net.



Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your love one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to Roberta Fisher to be placed on the list.

Ian Riley - Marines

Kid's Page

Happy New Year



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Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘

Party Hat



Fireworks



Party



Horn



Calendar



Balloons



Midnight



Hourglass



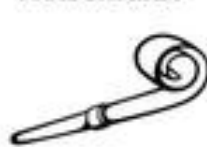
Music



Confetti



Noisemaker



Sparkler



January Activities

Saturday, January 6 – Euchre – 6:30pm.

Sunday, January 7 – Sunday Service with Holy Communion - Discretionary Fund Collection – 9am

Tuesday, January 9 – Council Meeting – 6:30pm

Saturday, January 20 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm

Sunday, December 17 – Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am

Sunday, January 21 – Sunday Service at St. James – 9am

Sunday, January 28 – Sunday Service – 9am
Annual Meeting following Coffee Hour – 10am

Painting Fund

St. James has started a Painting fund to cover the future costs of paint, painting and scaffolding to repaint the inside of the church. If you would like to donate to this fund, place an envelope in the collection plate earmarked “Paint Project” or mail your donation to church at 9008 Meiner Road, Casco, MI 48064

Refrigerator Needed

St. James is in need of a refrigerator since one of our has broken down. If you or someone you know would like to donate an old refrigerator you may have please advise someone on council or call Art Wagner at 586-855-2953 to arrange pick-up or delivery.

Thank you Box

For all the things that get done in the background of church that no one receives a thank you for. A box with paper has been set up in the front vestibule for you to leave a “Word of Thanks” for anyone for whatever reason. This box will allow members to voice a thank you for that exact reason. The box will be checked for any Thank Yous and will be read in church along with the announcements each week.

Council Members

St. James is looking for members to become Church Council Members for the new year 2024. If you are interested in serving on the board for 1 to 3 years, please notify a current member of council or Pastor Ken.

Scripture Readings for January

Sunday, January 7

The Baptism of Christ

Gen 1: 1-5

Ps 29

Acts 19: 1-7

Mark 1: 4-11

Defining Moments

Sunday, January 21

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

Ps 62: 5-12

1 Cor 7: 29-31

Mark 1: 14-20

Follow Me

Sunday, January 14

Second Sunday after Epiphany

1 Sam 3: 1-10, (11-20)

Ps 139: 1-6, 13-18

1 Cor 6: 12-20

John 1:43-51

Known and Loved

Sunday, January 28

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Deut18:15-20

PS 111

1 Cor 8: 1-13

Mark 1: 21-28

Power to Do



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JANUARY NEWSLETTER