

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.
Forgive often. **Reject Racism.**
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.



Saint John's Journal

December 8, 2024

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!



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@StJohnsUCCGR



<http://alturl.9-16com/etrte>



We Celebrate You!

As a chosen family—we share many joys: birthdays, anniversaries, promotions, graduations, retirements, engagements and etc.

Today and the second Sunday of each month thereafter, we will have a special cake in Fellowship Hall to honor these events. Join us today for coffee hour!



Church Chat Notes:

The pastoral search committee has been formed: Stacy Bare, Becky Tiedt, Dona Proulx, Teresa Markoski, Jenna Grooms, Dan Busman, Mike Tooley and Marcus Little.

The first meeting is on 12/10 with a representative from the UCC. (This meeting has been moved to 12/17)

On 12/15, the service will be held in the fellowship hall so the children can rehearse for the pageant upstairs.

Caroling will also be on this date after church at Medilodge and Covenant Living.

On 12/22, the pageant will be held.

Christmas Eve Service will be held at 7:00 p.m.

Worship Team Volunteers Needed

The Worship Team is in need of volunteers to set up communion and clean up afterwards during the coming year. Setting up takes about 10-15 minutes and should be done about a half hour before the service. Clean up takes another 10 minutes and should be done right after the close of the service. Most months we celebrate communion on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. During Advent (December) and Lent (March into April) we celebrate communion every Sunday.

If you would be willing to serve in this way, please contact Becky Tiedt at (worship@stjohnsuccgr.org) to volunteer.

Pastoral Emergency Contact

In the event of a pastoral emergency, feel free to reach out to Pat Partridge at 616-915-7171.

Upcoming Events

Caroling: Next Sunday after coffee hour.

Children's Christmas Pageant is scheduled for **December 22** during our worship service at 10:00 a.m.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, December 24 at 7:00 p.m.

**Lectionary
Reading for Next Week
December 15, 2024**

Zeph 3:14-20
Isa 12:2-6
Phil 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18



Tuesday 8:00—1:00 p.m.
Wednesday 8:00—2:00 p.m.
Thursday 8:00—2:00 p.m..
Friday 8:00—2:00 p.m.
You may email Sally at:
office@stjohnsuccgr.org
or call 453-2497.

Bell Choir Thursday
from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir 7:30—8:30 p.m.

Mission

Outreach Touches

This Month:
663
Year to Date:
51,782
Since Inception
362,661



Prayers of thanks for Brian’s successful surgery.
Prayers for Alicia’s bother-in-law, Nicholas, who was deported and is in the process of returning.
Prayers of thanksgiving for the Brinks family inviting Diana and Marilyn to the Thanksgiving dinner.

Prayers for Ellen’s sister, Eve, who is struggling with alcohol.

Prayers for Heidi and her family after the passing of her mother.

Prayers for Laura’s friend whose son is dealing with mental health issues.

Northwest Pantry

If you or your family are looking for a holiday giving project, Northwest Pantry is looking for volunteers, donations, or sponsors for their Thanksgiving and/or Christmas food baskets. If you are interested in any of the opportunities to help them out, please contact them at 616-300-5079. They are located at 1224 Davis N.W.
Because of our partnership and commitment to UCOM we are not sponsoring this project this year. But doing projects in support of UCOM such as the Spice Drive going on now, and collecting canned goods in December. If you have any questions, please talk to a membership team member.

Little Free Library Donations Needed!

Our church’s Little Free Library could use more books! If you have any gently used adult or children’s books you’d like to donate, please drop them off in the box located in the narthex. Teresa will use your generous donations to stock our library. Thank you for helping us keep our library full and vibrant for those in need!



“Girlfriends”

We will be reading “Kitchen Table Wisdom” by Rachel Naomi Reman. It’s a beautiful collection of stories that heal by a Jewish MD. A reviewer says, the book is about the human tradition of shared experiences that show us life in all its power and mystery and reminds us that the things we cannot measure maybe the things that ultimately sustain and enrich our lives.” We will meet by zoom on Tuesday, at 6:30 p.m. If you have any questions, give me a call or text at 616-438-1336.

Meetings.....

Membership Meeting:
tomorrow at 6:30 p.m.
Council Meeting, December 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Advent

Advent is here, and there’s no better time to come together as a community. This season reminds us of the beauty in sharing hope, love, and connection—not just with the world, but with one another.

We hope you’ll join us in making this Advent season truly special. Whether it’s through worship, fellowship, lending a hand, or asking for support, let’s lean on each other and lean into the love that

makes St. John’s home.

Here’s what’s coming up:

- **Dec 1 & 8:** 10am Advent Services + Food & Fellowship
- **Dec 15:** 10am Advent Service down in **fellowship hall** + Food & Fellowship + Caroling to shut-ins
- **Dec 22:** 10am Service with the Kids’ Christmas Pageant + Food & Fellowship
- **Dec 24:** 7pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – A celebration sure to fill your heart with the Christmas spirit!

This season, we invite you to:

- Show up for yourself and your community.
- Invite a friend to experience the joy of St. John’s.
- Celebrate all the ways we lift each other up.

Advent is a time to be present for each other. Whether you’re feeling strong or need a little extra support, know that you’re not alone. Let’s walk through this season together - we can’t wait to celebrate with you!

Reunion at the Stable

The First Congregational Church of Rockford,UCC presents “Reunion at the Stable.

This is both a light-hearted and deeply moving Christmas Play that brings a unique reimaging of the familiar nativity story through the memories of the characters who were

there. The drama takes place about twenty years after the first Christmas, when the same shepherds, Magi, and even the original innkeeper get reunited with a twenty-something Jesus, for a unexpectedly dramatic encounter. Come and experience the timeless message of peace, and joy to the world in this unique Christmas presentation.

Tickets are \$5.00 and available at <https://bit.ly/Reunion> At The Stable

performances are on Saturday Dec.14@ 7:00p and Sunday, Dec.15 @4:00p

First Congregational Church is Located at 192 E. Bridge St. Rockford, MI

Gift Bags

Again we will be creating gift bags for some of our senior (mostly home/house bound) members. We will be creating 8 bags to be given out while the church goes caroling to them next Sunday. We are looking for help with items for the bags:

- Suggested items—and please feel free to add other items to this list are:
- Games/puzzle books
- small puzzles
- fruit (orange-easy peel ones—bananas, grapes (in baggies ready for each bags for the grapes or other small fruit)
- Cookies/brownies (in individual baggies or wrapped for each bag)

- Flavored water drops or packets
- Small projects they can work on (those wooden ornaments, etc. to be painted at the dollar store)
- Candy/fudge (in individual baggies or wrapped for each bag)
- Small home/Christmas decoration
- Small game (cards/dice)
- Color books for adults and crayons or colored pencils
- Homemade card/picture from your child
- Pocket Calendar
- Small loaf of bread or muffin (individual wrapped, please for each bag)
- Anything to keep their minds/fingers active
- What can you think of

- that’s new or different?
- A small box has been placed on the table by the furnace room for gift bag donations. It has a message on it Gift bag items and a small list of suggested items.
- Please have your donation to church by Dec. 12th. We are planning on assembling bags on Dec. 13/14 (depending on if we have to shop for items.)
- If you are interested in helping assemble the bags/ or delivering one, please let a member of the caregiving or membership team know. We are always thankful for any extra hands. (this is a easy project that kiddos are welcome to help out with.)

Serving on Sundays

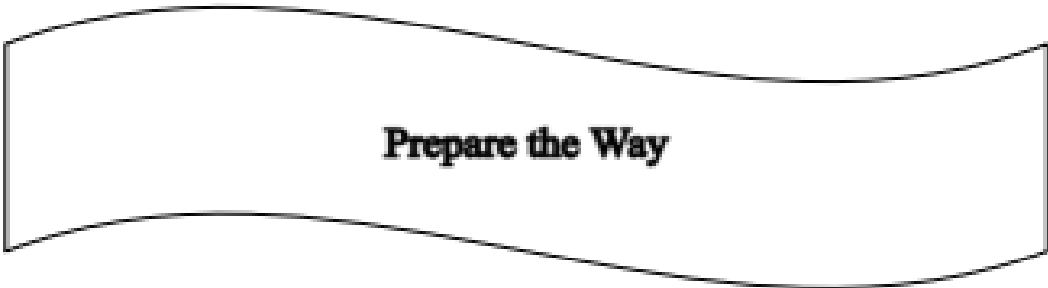
Date	Ushers	Liturgists	Coffee Hour
Dec. 8	Pat Partridge	Sue Bradford	We Celebrate You!
Dec. 15	Judy Merrills	Spencer Hoffmann	Sally Oracz
Dec.22	Open	Jen Berg	Fellowship
Dec. 24	Diana DeKorte	Becky Tiedt	To be announced
Dec 29	Open	Peter Huschilt	Open

2024-2025 Education Schedule

Date	Nursery	WC1 WC1 Floater	WC2	Bridge	Floater
Dec. 8	Pam	Lisa	Susan	Becky	Teresa
		Jenna	Tarah		
Dec. 15	Shelby	Lisa	Susan	Becky	Ashley
		Chloe	Tarah		
Dec. 22	Betsy	Lisa	Tarah	Becky	Jen
		Chloe	Susan	Makenzie	
Dec. 24	??	No Worship Center	No Worship Center	No Worship Cener	No Worship Center
Dec. 29	??	No Worship Center	No Worship Center	No Worship Center	No Worship Center

Pulpit Schedule

December 8	Marcus Little
December 15	Barb Huitema
December 22	Jeffrey Dick
December 24	Jeffrey Dick
December 29	Barb Huitema



Luke 3:1-6

Word Search Puzzle

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

CALLING VOICE CROOKED	STRAIGHT VALLEY ROUGH	DESERT PREPARE SMOOTH	REPENT FORGIVE PREACHING
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No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

**Jesus didn't reject people.
Neither do we.**

ucc.org