

The St. John's Messenger

Volume 16 Issue 12

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December 2016



THOSE IN DARKNESS WILL SEE A GREAT LIGHT!

Light is such a powerful and beautiful energy this time of year. We notice how it is getting dark earlier and the hours of light are less and less. The contrast of light in the darkness is a very comforting sight.

While out driving around town at night during the middle of November, Sarah and I have already noticed a few homes with Christmas lights lit. It is a nice surprise to see a cheery display of colorful lights against the darkness.

Soon enough Washington Park will showcase a wonderful light display for the community. It is always a treat to drive through the park to appreciate those decorations.

Another great display of light is the super moon we are enjoying this time of year. Tuesday, December 13th, is the next super moon so make an effort to look for it and think about the light that has come to earth in Jesus.

Isaiah 9:2 & 6

² The people who walk in darkness shall see a great Light—a Light that will shine on all those who live in the land of the shadow of death. . .

⁶ For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. These will be his royal titles:

"Wonderful," "Counselor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," "The Prince of Peace."

You and I are bearers of light because we have received Christ as Lord and Savior. His light is His life that has conquered the darkness of sin and death.

In Christ our sin is removed and replaced by the light of His love. So we share His light by sharing His love. As you share Christ's love through acts of kindness remember to give credit to Jesus.

For Advent I will deliver a sermon series entitled, "Experience the Miracle of Christmas." Video clips from the classic movie "Miracle on 34th Street" will be used to illustrate the miracle of Jesus in the moment, message, method, and manger of Christ.

Christmas Eve worship will be at 6 o'clock p.m. and 8 o'clock p.m. The early service is family-focused worship with youth presenting a Christmas play entitled "A Christmas to Believe In." The later service is a traditional service with a message, carols, and Dr. John Rimmel playing organ.

*May the Joy of Christ,
the Light of the World, be yours,
Pastor Bill*



UPCOMING COMMUNIONS and SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Sunday, December 4th, Communion:

Meals On Wheels (1st Sunday in Advent)

Sunday, December 18th, Special Envelope:

Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross)

Sunday, December 25th, Christmas:

St. John's General Fund



ANNUAL REPORTS NOW DUE

Just a reminder to all committee chairpersons, the Annual Reports are due at the December Consistory meeting, Thursday, Dec. 8th. Please email your report to the office before that date.

Thank you very much!

BEREAVEMENT, ILLNESS, GRIEF SUPPORT

All families and/or caregivers of those experiencing challenges are also most welcome to attend. This group meets every other Thursday at 11:00 a.m. in the Adobe Room and is open to all! Upcoming meetings will be December 1st, 15th, and 29th.



FOOD BANK FOR DECEMBER

Suggestions for the Food Bank of Salvation Army for December are: juices, coffee, tea, hash, stew, and soups. As always, thank you for your generosity!



BURGSTAHLER FAMILY MINISTRY

The Burgstahler family relocated to Cape Town, South Africa in late 2014. They have been mentored by a South African pastor and his family since 1988. Although they first had their sights on Durban and the Zulu people in the eastern part of the country, they sensed God leading them to settle in the Cape Town area on the southwest coast. There, they have been learning the Afrikaans language, and becoming more familiar with the unique cultures found especially in the Western Cape Province.

South Africa has been marked for hundreds of years by systematic oppression of “non-white” people-groups. The skin-color-based Apartheid, or “apartness” government system was brought to an end only in 1994. While some think it is high-time to “get over” the past, it is unfortunately clearly evident that the structures and mindsets of racial and cultural divisiveness, and the consequent damage, still *dramatically* influence daily life and relationships today. The long 20+ years prove to be very short with respect to progress in this arena.

The Burgstahlers are positioned where they are of the minority both racially and culturally. Here, they find abundant opportunities to reach past these boundaries which still divide people, to invest themselves in intentional discipleship of followers of Jesus Christ, and to practice being “instruments of peace” to help facilitate “racial reconciliation” through Christ.

Current & Recent Activities

De Novo – Rehabilitation ministry

Marriage Retreat/ministry

Bible preaching

Bible teaching (Word School)

Music Ministry – Praise Team – Guitar lessons

Photography club – to get more exposure (pun intended) to “white” people – Ministry

(Evangelism/discipleship)/Hobby – Bio in Tygerberg Photographic Society newsletter

Hosted World Partners African Staff Conference in March 2016

Pastoral responsibilities in our local church (His Kingdom Christian Church)

Discipling Christian leaders, church members, as well as outside of the church context

Assisting two young men financially to obtain tertiary education – their father died at a young age, their grandfather lives in their home, and their mother is in poor health but working

WORSHIP SERVICES

9:30 am: Fellowship Hall

11:00 am: Sanctuary

12:00 pm: Chapel



CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES

Thank you to all those who helped so tirelessly to pack our Christmas Child boxes last weekend! Through your generosity, we had a total of 68 boxes to send! Won't the children be surprised! Thank you so much for all your help in making this effort such a great success.

If you wish to still contribute to the mailing of the boxes, the cost is \$7.00 per box. Also, after the children receive their boxes, they are all invited to a 12-week Bible class where they learn about Jesus. The cost is \$6.00 per child for the book for this class if you would like to donate to that effort. Please make your check out to "St. John's UCC" with "Missions" in the memo line.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!

BLOODMOBILE

The next Bloodmobile at St. John's will be on Tuesday, December 6th, from 12 - 6:00 p.m. Please call 1-800-Red Cross to schedule your donation.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, December 3rd: Christmas Tea
Thursday, December 1, 8, & 15: Peanut Brittle

NURSING HOME DONATIONS



Please consider donating to nursing home residents gifts of tissues, hand cream, Chapstick, decks of cards and calendars. We will carol in December and take your donations to them at that time. Please place your donations in the library. *Thank you!*

PRAYER LIST UPDATE



Please help us keep our prayer list on the back of the Sunday bulletins current. Call the office if you know of anyone not listed needing to be uplifted in prayer. Also, as circumstances change and the person no longer needs to be listed, please call the office and let either Joyce or Nicole know that they may be removed from the listing. *Thanks!*

WOMEN PARTNERING WITH CHRIST

The ladies' group Women Partnering With Christ will be examining Kenneth Osbeck's "Amazing Grace," a study in hymnology. The group meets Wednesdays at 4:10 p.m. All ladies of the congregation are most welcome!

ST. LUKE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH 12TH ANNUAL COOKIE WALK and BAZAAR

2000 E. Coolspring Ave., Mich. City
Saturday, December 10th
9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

**Cookies and crafts of all varieties,
shapes, and sizes!**
Cookies are \$8.00 per pound

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER SUPPORT

This group meets the 2nd Thursday of every month, 6:30 p.m., here at St. John's. The next meetings are Thursday, December 1st, 15th, and 29th. For more information, please call 1-800-272-3900.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

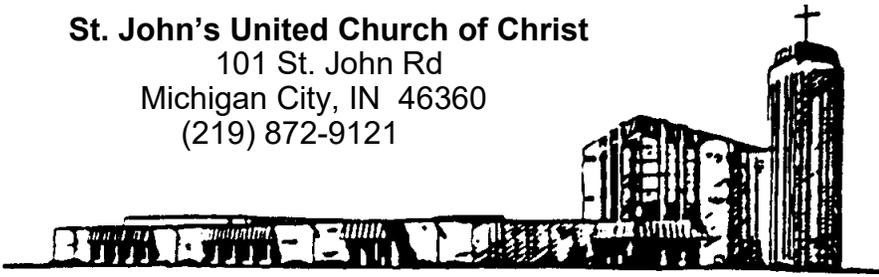
Please remember to notify St. John's office of *any* address change in order for our records to be kept up-to-date and for you to receive the Messenger or other correspondence in a timely manner. Thank you very much!

DISCOVERY DINNERS

Join us for our Discovery Dinner which takes place each Wednesday evening at 5:30 p.m.. A variety of nutritious meals are planned and free-will offerings are taken to help pay for the ingredients. Everyone is welcome! Questions? Call Beth Ann (872-5292) or the office (872-9121).



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IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!!

PEANUT BRITTLE!

Time to order your peanut brittle!!

The kitchen crew has begun this year's peanut brittle project! Order yours in the church office for \$8.50 per pound. Our upcoming work dates are December 1, 8, and 15. As in past years, the Women's Guild designates all profits to benefit Michigan City charities as well as St. John's projects. Thank you for your support of this project.



