



Church News

Open House at Rev. Sprite's Home – 14 December

You are invited to come to our house (409 Lake Ave. NE; Massillon – look for the small camper at the top of the drive) on Saturday, 14 Dec. any time from 3 – 7 pm. You can park across the street in the PNC Bank parking lot (their sign is directly across from our driveway) or, if you are concerned about crossing Lake Ave. or walking that far, park in our driveway. I seem to have found myself collecting nativities, so one of the activities will be for anyone brave enough to try to count them and see how many you can find. We will have lots of food – good for you and just plain good. Both the St. John's and Grace congregations are invited, so some for fellowship, food, and a chance to get ready for Christmas with friends new and old.

Blessings
Sprite



Community Meal

The December Community Meal will be held on Tuesday the 17th. Doors open at 5pm. We will also have the Food Pantry and Heart Ministry.

Christmas Eve Service

Join us for Christmas Eve Service at 6:00pm on Tuesday December 24th. We look forward to seeing you and celebration this joyous occasion together!

Luminescent Moon Theatre Company

The Luminescent Moon Theatre Company will be performing A Christmas Carol at 7pm on Dec 12th. The show will be held at the Lincoln Theatre. Tickets are \$12 at the door and \$10 online.



Candlelight Walk

The **Candlelight Walk** will be on Sunday, 8 Dec.

Besides the music Holly provides and coordinates, we will need goodies to share with our guests. It would also be hospitable if we have several people simply present to greet those who come through our doors (possibly also keeping track of the food items in case some need to be refreshed). If you can do any of these thoughtful things, please let the office know and we will pass the word along to the appropriate person.

Secret Prayer Partners

If you would like to be a **Secret Prayer Partner**, let the office know (330-833-5322). We will officially begin this opportunity on the last Sunday of the year - 29 December - by drawing names out of a hat. When you have a name (not your own, of course), you may check with the church office to find out birthdays, etc. if you don't know them. Remember, this is supposed to be a secret, other than everyone will know that someone is praying for them. That can make a huge difference in how we respond to challenges in our lives. You may send notes, cards, etc. anonymously, if you like, but the most important thing is to pray for your partner. Pay attention to what is going on in their life and lift them up if there is some issue or concern. Toward the end of 2020, we will have a gathering during which all will be revealed.

I hope everyone in the congregation will decide to participate - to be and to receive a **Secret Prayer Partner**.



In November, we held a special session of GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays. We had a group comprised of people at different stages of grieving. This made it very easy for discussion and to find help and support for each other. We want to thank those that attended. If you would like to find out more about GriefShare or to access some of the free resources visit their website. www.griefshare.org

Here For You CDC

Here For You teachers and students would like to wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving and blessed Christmas. We are all very thankful for St. Johns and the amazing friends we have here. Our teachers are thankful to be able to make a positive impact on the Massillon families and community. We have been talking about giving thanks in the classrooms. Some of the kids are thankful for ---- "Snow", "My Mommy", "My Dog", "Ninjas and how they get the bad guy", "my teacher", "The refrigerator and the good food Mommy makes for me", "My teeth".

I am thankful for a moment every now and then that I can fully appreciate how a child thinks. Truly, I believe those moments are sent from God.

See you all soon!

Mary & Willa

Life Line Screening

"Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, will offer their affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings at St John's United Church of Christ on 1/7/2020. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. **In order to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call 1-888-653-6441 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle or text the word circle to 797979"**

Celebration Sunday

We will have Celebration Sunday on Dec. 15th after church. I encourage everyone to wear their favorite Christmas sweater. This will be for anyone that has not made it this year, along with November and December celebrations. Cake and ice cream will be served!

Email Newsletters

In an effort to save on postage, we will be emailing as many newsletters as possible. Please be sure that the office has your current email address on file. Don't have email? No worries! We will have some paper copies at the church that you can pick up. Newsletters will still be sent out to shut-ins and those that are unable to attend.

Vacation Bible School

VBS will be December 23, 26 & 27th from 9-11:30 each day. We will be journeying through the "Life of Jesus". Our journey will begin with a Birthday Party and end with a Hunt to learn about Easter. We will be posting a sign-up sheet for volunteers and donations soon.

PRAYER LIST/ MINISTRY NEEDS

Please keep the following people in your prayers. If you have an addition to the list, please call the Office. If anyone can be taken off this Prayer List, please call the Office. Thank you.

- Candy Veins
- Mary Harper
- Frances Layton
- Beatrice Krutel
- Tim Fetzer
- Bob McClelland
- Kim Fetzer- Recuperating from back surgery
- Tim Norman- Health Problems
- Sheryl Wible
- Robert Headland- Medical Issues
- John- McAllister- request from Susan Gessner
- Betty Lou Williams Everhart- Susan Gessner's Sister-in-law
- John Hipps, Norma Reinert's friend
- Chris Brown- Needs Kidney Transplant
- Patricia Grizzard- Health Issues
- Jayden White, Sue Simmon's friend's child- prayers for brain cancer
- Charlotte Murdock- Norma Reinert's great-granddaughter
- Linda Wacker- Norma Reinert's friend
- Steve Fox- Norma Reinert's son-in-law- health problems
- Lori Ann Geis- ankle and back surgery
- Joseph Haris- Missy's son-in-law- brain cancer



If you have a pastoral care request or concern, please see Rev. Sprite or let Dawn in the office know and she will get it to Rev. Sprite. You can call the church at 330-833-5322 or call Rev. Sprite at 330-880-7710. Please leave a message if there is no answer.

WINTER PREPAREDNESS



Church Cancellation Policy

Unless it is dangerous for the staff and pastor to get to the church, we will have a Worship service. We will notify you quickly and using the Membercaller phone system. It will also be posted on Facebook, the website and the outdoor sign.

Membercaller System

St. John's has an automated system that will call you if church is cancelled. Please make sure that if there is inclement weather, you check your phone. Also, if your telephone information changes at any time, please make sure that the office knows in case of a church closure.



St. John's in action!



**GO
TIGERS!**

Faithful volunteers Donna Gamary and Susan Gessner showing their tiger pride!

Massillon Tigers Sideliner's Football Banquet



*Above and left:
Player awards
after a delicious
meal.*



December

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Advent Starts Communion Catherine Kittinger</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Alateen 8pm</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Community Candlelight Walk 5pm</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Alateen 8pm</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Luminescent Moon Theatre Company 7pm A Christmas Carol Lion's Lincoln Theatre</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Reverend Sprite Johnson Open House 3pm-7pm</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Celebration Sunday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Community Meal 5pm</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Brenda Knight Ernest Jekubik</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Steve Miller</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve Service 6:00pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day! Office Closed</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Office Closed!</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p> <p>New <u>years</u> Day Office Closed Rev Sprite out January</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>

FROM THE DESK OF REVEREND SPRITE

Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. – Luke 2:10-11

The Bible sometimes makes me laugh. For example, read the beginning of the Christmas story. We are told that there were a group of shepherds “keeping watch over their flocks by night.” All of a sudden, an angel appeared to them and scared them half to death. Then, only after they were good and terrified, the angel finally got around to saying, “Don’t be afraid!” By then it was too late. I’m surprised the shepherds recovered enough to hear the rest of the message: “For unto you this day, in the city of David, a Saviour will be born, who is Christ, the Lord.” It may not tickle your funny bone, but the humor of the story shouldn’t be lost on any of us. “Don’t be afraid,” indeed!

At the same time that the story is humorous, it is also deadly serious. Don’t be afraid: a Savior has been born. That wasn’t just true for the shepherds; it remains true for us. Those shepherds lived in dangerous times. There were lots of reasons for them to be afraid – and not just because of angels. The people who first heard these stories from the gospel of Luke probably had lots of reasons to be afraid. The Romans had already begun persecuting Christians. Here and there, neighbours were turning in neighbours and the Christians never knew when they might be next. Still, the word came to them: Don’t be afraid.

We also live in dangerous times. Terrorism, drug addiction, petty crimes, political tensions, all make for scary times. And the word still comes to us: Don’t be afraid: a Saviour has been born.

As we celebrate the birth of that Savior, we should face the world with good humor. Those who would make us afraid don’t know what we know. A Saviour has been born. We don’t need to be afraid. We don’t need to fear the terrorists or the politicians. We don’t need to be afraid in our homes. We don’t need to fear the future. A Saviour has been born who can conquer all fears. Laugh in delight with the story because it *is* Good News. A Saviour has been born, so we have no need to be afraid. Give praise to the Holy One, and have a Merry Christmas.

Blessings!

Rev. Sprite



Letter from the Consistory President

St. John's Friends and Family,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the love and support that you have shown over the last year. By the grace of God, we are rising above all the challenges that have been thrown our way. During this time of thanksgiving, I want to express my gratitude to you for all you have done for our church. I am thankful not only for the church and how you support your Consistory and help us grow but also how you have helped me grow personally. The position of Consistory President has taught me so much and I am grateful that I get to continue to serve as your president.

Our annual meeting was held on Sunday November 24th after church. Your voices were heard. We discussed the 2020 proposed budget and also an amendment was made to postpone the stained-glass windows project. The meeting minutes are included in this newsletter. If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to me or any member of Consistory and we would be glad to assist you.

Consistory officer elections will be held on December 10th at the annual staff and Consistory Christmas party. Results will be announced in the January Newsletter.

Reverend Sprite will be taking a well-deserved vacation during the month of January. We will have guest ministers for the month. Pastor Steve Miller and Rev. Sandra Hutchinson will be two of them!

Thanks be to God for all of our individual blessings and those as a church. I wish you a very happy and safe holiday season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Jerry Martin

Annual Meeting Minutes

November 24, 2019

- Jerry Martin called the meeting to order at 11:24am
- Tim Fetzer passed out the proposed budget for 2020
- Projects for 2020 were looked at.
 - A door for the Pastor's office with a window was discussed and added to the budget at a cost of around \$1000
 - This is a fire door and must be metal.
- An amendment was made, seconded and passed to postpone the stained-glass windows project for 2020
- Troy proposed an amendment postponing the Heart Ministry Hallway Project.
 - Dawn Smith expressed that it is necessary for the women's privacy in the restroom.
 - Jerry suggested lowering the price of the project to \$3000.
 - An amendment was made, seconded and passed
 - Motion passed by a show of hands vote
- Jerry asked if there were any further questions or comments by the members and there were none.
- Budget with amendments was put to a vote and passed.
- Consistory Elections were brought to the table.
 - There were three spots up for vote.
 - Jerry Martin and Claudia Baxter will continue.
 - There were other nominations from the floor for the available position.
 - Consistory will work together to fill that empty position.
- An affirmation vote was taken and Rev. Sprite installed the 2020 Consistory.
- Jerry Martin adjourned the meeting at 12:12pm

Submitted by Dawn Rohrer

December Schedules

December Acolyte

Dec 1: Steph Julian
Dec 8: Dawn Smith
Dec 15: Brenda Knight
Dec 22: Jerry Martin
Dec 24: Kids (Christmas Eve)
Dec 29: Samantha Rohrer

December Liturgist

Dec 1: Steve Miller
Dec 8: Jerry Martin
Dec 15: Steph Julian
Dec 22: Kim Fetzer
Dec 24: Steve Miller
Dec 29: Jerry Martin



Refreshments

Dec 1: Dawn Smith
Dec 8: Brenda Johnson
Dec 15: Kim Fetzer
Dec 22: Brenda Knight
Dec 29: Vonda Sprunger



December Usher

Dec 1: Dawn Smith/ Vonda Sprunger
Dec 8: Susan Gessner/ Brenda Johnson
Dec 15: Tim Fetzer/ Troy Julian
Dec 22: Brenda Knight/ Gary Knight
Dec 24: TBA
Dec 29: TBA

St. John's United Church of Christ Consistory
Agenda – 12 November 2019

Present: Sue Simmons, Jerry Martin, Dawn Smith, Tim Fetzer, Dave Fetzer, Steve Miller, Rev. Sprite Johnson

Opening Prayer/Devotions – Rev. Sprite

Financial Report – Brenda; received pending audit

Annual meeting date – 24 Nov.

- Budget
- Nominations/elections

2020 Budget

- Review – all good

Business

- Parsonage
 - May need to do something to protect the pipes in the back bathroom
 - May need to check with Brenda about whether or not they paid a deposit which will need to be returned
 - UCC Church Building & Loan – may be able to help us make decisions about future use
 - Rev. Sprite will follow up with Patrick Duggen
- Community meal – Sue will oversee – will coordinate with resources of SAM Center
 - Turkey wraps with dressing, green beans, mashed potatoes, gravy, desserts, & beverages – YUM!
 - Heart ministry will begin this month; Diane, Troy, Sue will coordinate this month
 - Use some of the mittens/gloves from the mitten tree
- Consistory/staff Christmas party – 10 December; 6:30 pm
 - White elephant gift exchange
 - Kozmos with buffet
 - Each person can invite one friend
- Hanging the Greens – Sat., 23 Nov.; 8:30 am – noon
 - Coffee, juice, donuts
- Holiday Parade – Sat., 23 Nov.; 4:00 pm
- Vision, Values, & Mission – review & brainstorm at retreat on Sat., 8 Feb., 9 am – 2 pm; @ Chapel Hill Private Dining room in main building
 - Rev. Sprite will invite the staff
- Emailing newsletters – to consistory
 - If not an email, pick up a paper copy at church
 - Still send to home-bound and others who can't come to church or have email

Pastor's Report

- Round table for church office
- Cleaning the membership rolls – Feb. meeting
- Pastor's Open House – 14 Dec. – 3-7 pm

Building and Grounds

- drain clogged up by baby wipes; CDC will pay the bill
- est. for carpet in end of Fellowship Hall – a bit more than \$2200

Consistory President's Report

- met with Mary from CDC to work out details with contract

Need to follow up about Vacation Bible School and CDC

Received \$80 tip for the football banquet

- they were very respectful and appreciative

Adjourned at 8:10 pm

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Spiritual Fellowship

Massillon Tigers Sideliner's Banquet

On October 23rd and 24th we once again got ready to host the team with a lasagna and brownie sundae meal. 140 young men and ladies attended this event. Dawn Smith would like to thank all of you that helped with anything from decorating to cooking and serving the team. We charged the team \$420.00 and were given a check for \$500.00. Make sure that you check out the pictured from this fun event!

Building and Grounds

Holderbaum Drain Service was called to unclog the sewage line inside the church. They found the line was clogged by baby wipes. Here For You Childcare said they will pay the bill.

The HDMI cable for the south sanctuary projector was damaged while vacuuming. A new cable was purchased for \$40.00 and has been installed.

The sanctuary front door lock has been repaired.

The battery for the sanctuary rear balcony safety light has been replaced.

Dan's Carpet measured for the carpet installation. They will call with the final price for the Fellowship Hall.
Estimate \$2200.00

No other Committee Reports were submitted.



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2019

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*“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
which is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped
in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”*

Luke 2:11-12