

The Messenger



Volume 15 No. 12

December 2015

The Newsletter of The United Church of Sandwich

*"Passionately united to feed all people — body, mind and spirit —
To the glory of God!"*

From the Pastor ...

WHY ADVENT?

Do we really need Advent? Why can't we just jump right into Christmas like the stores and the radio stations?

Here's why: Unlike the culture around us, Christians don't push "the Christmas season" into Thanksgiving. We *prepare* for Christ's birth by keeping Advent (from a Latin word meaning "coming" or "arrival").

The stores may be all Jingle Bells and ho-ho-ho, but we celebrate Advent as a way of reflecting on the deeper meaning of the coming of Christ. We won't sing very many Christmas carols during Advent — not because I want to be a Grinch and spoil the fun, but because Advent has special meanings of its own that need to be emphasized:

Expectation: In a violent and corrupt world, we are called to repent as we await the coming of the Prince of Peace, who does not condemn us in our sins but leads us to healing and restoration.

Hope: We long for the peace and joy that God has promised us, and so we do not despair. We refuse to give up hope, even in the face of terrorism and the barbaric acts of those who use unrestrained violence to further their ends.

Fulfillment: The world that we know is an unfinished place, so we look for the time when our Lord will return to gather all the faithful to himself.

As far back as the fifth century AD, Christians in Europe had developed a season of preparation for Christmas. Originally Advent was a period of six weeks, probably modeled on Lent. It gradually evolved into a four week observance, and it is not as somber and penitential as Lent. Properly celebrated, Advent should be a peaceful, quiet time of reflection, but observed with great joy and anticipation. *Joy to the world! ... Let every heart prepare him room!*

There will be two opportunities to worship on Christmas Eve:

At **5:00 pm** we'll have a service of carol singing and Scripture readings. Our readers will help us remember the promises of God that are fulfilled in Jesus. We'll sing carols to proclaim his birth. We'll light candles at the conclusion of worship to declare that he is the Light of the World.

At **10:00 pm** we will celebrate Holy Communion, remembering that Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh, sent to share our humanity. Our choir will sing at the 10:00 pm service, and we'll join them with our own carols of praise. This service also concludes with candle lighting.

Expect our Lord to reveal great things to you — hope for his grace and power to make you your best self — be fulfilled as the partial and incomplete is made whole and strong through his coming. A blessed and joyful Christmas to all!

Steve Mindrup

Advent should be a peaceful time of reflection, but observed with great joy and anticipation. *Joy to the world! ... Let every heart prepare him room!*

Scriptures and Themes: December 2015

December 6: The Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4 *The religion of Israel must be purified and renewed by the intervention of God.*

Luke 1:68-79 *Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, sings a hymn in praise of God.*

Philippians 1:3-11 *Paul prays for an abundance of love to overflow the church.*

Luke 3:1-6 *John the Baptizer is the forerunner of the Messiah that the prophets foretold.*

Theme: "Like a Refiner's Fire"

December 13: The Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20 *God's mercy continues to be extended to his people.*

Isaiah 12:2-6 *"Surely God is my salvation."*

Philippians 4:4-7 *God gives us grace to rejoice in all circumstances.*

Luke 3:7-18 *John the Baptizer preaches repentance in radical and specific language.*

Theme: "Who Needs to Repent?"

December 20: The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5 *Bethlehem will be significant for the coming of the Messiah.*

Luke 1:46b-55 *The mother of Jesus sings her song of praise for God's grace and favor.*

Hebrews 10:5-10 *God became incarnate in his Son to sanctify all who live in him.*

Luke 1:39-45 *Mary visits Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptizer. Elizabeth blesses her.*

Theme: "When God Shows Up"

December 24, 5:00 p.m.: Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19 *God declares to sinful Adam and Eve that they have lost paradise.*

Genesis 22:15-18 *God promises to bless all the earth through the descendants of Abraham.*

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 *The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.*

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9 *A king is coming who will bring a reign of justice and peace.*

Luke 1:26-35, 38 *The virgin Mary hears that she will give birth to God's promised Son.*

Luke 2:1-7 *Against a backdrop of politics and taxation, Jesus is born.*

Luke 2:8-16 *The shepherds find the Savior of the world lying in a manger.*

John 1:1-14 *John proclaims the great mystery of the Incarnation: "The Word became flesh."*

December 24, 10:00 p.m.: Christmas Eve Holy Communion

Isaiah 9:2-7 *The prophet tells of a Messianic King who will bring God's peace and justice.*

Psalms 96 *O sing to the Lord a new song!"*

Titus 2:11-14 *God's grace appearing in Christ saves us and brings us to holiness of life.*

Luke 2:1-20 *In a world indifferent to his presence, the Christ is born.*

Theme: "For the Salvation of All"

December 27: The First Sunday after Christmas

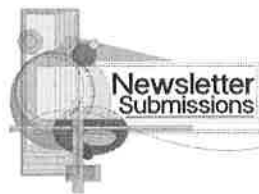
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 *Samuel is dedicated to God's service while still a child.*

Psalms 148 *"Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name is exalted."*

Colossians 3:12-17 *The apostle outlines the virtues of those who have been set apart by Christ.*

Luke 2:41-52 *Like Samuel, Jesus is identified with the Temple as a young boy.*

Theme: "Set Apart: With Christ and For Christ"



January newsletter deadline is 10:00 am Monday, December 14th.



A Bowl of Thanks

†Thank you to my newsletter volunteers for helping with the newsletter assembly last month.
Heidi Eaton

UMW's Hope Circle

UMW's Hope Circle will be making Prayer Lap Blankets. They will be 2 layers of fleece tied together. Do you know someone grieving or in ill health? Would they be comforted by a Prayer Blanket? If so, please give us the name and we will deliver a blanket to them. Contact: Vivian McMaster (815)797-1063. If you would like to help make the blankets, please join us on the 1st Thursday of the month @ 1:00 pm in the Chapel. We would be happy to have you with us.



Our Sharing Pantry

Hunger doesn't take a holiday. Help us provide holiday meals to our hungry neighbors this holiday season! Through our partnership with Northern Illinois Food Bank, our pantry can obtain a 12-14 pound turkey and all the trimmings - potatoes, stuffing, gravy, canned vegetables and fruits, dessert, coffee -- for a fraction of the retail cost. Your \$16 donation will provide this entire meal box, enough to feed a family of eight! This year, our goal is to provide 260 Holiday Meal Boxes to hungry families in our community. Please make your donation today, and help us bring joy to more hungry neighbors this holiday season! To donate, please designate your donation (for holiday meals) thru the church offering or mail it to: **Our Sharing Pantry PO Box 912 Somonauk, IL 60552**

THANKS
GIVING

November 1	\$3566.00
November 8	\$2241.00
November 15	\$1876.00
November 22	<u>\$1224.00</u>
Total November	\$8907.00

Our generous gifts glorify God!

WEDNESDAY MORNING FRIENDS

A monthly forum for believers from area churches and friends to learn about a topic of mutual interest.

- † **When:** 1st Wednesday of each month, 9:00-10:00 am
- † **Where:** Federated Church, Sandwich, IL
403 N. Main St., 815-786-8595
www.sandwichfederatedchurch.org
- † **Does it cost?** No. All programs are free.
- † **Do you have to sign up?** No. Come when the topic interests you.
- † **What:** Here are programs for upcoming months:

Wed Dec 2: Christmas Fun
Contact: Rev. William Weidenbach

Wed Jan 6: Israel, Our Home
Contact: Rev. Joe McDonald

Wed Feb 3: Hospice: Quality of Care at Life's End
Contact: Rev. Terry Jensen

Wed Mar 2: Lenten Community Breakfast & Devotion

Wed Apr 6: Disaster Preparedness: Who Does What?

Wed May 4: Serving the World's Needy Children
Contact: Rev. Kirk Scott

Sponsored by Sandwich/Somonauk Ministerium. If you have an idea for a program, tell your pastor!

December Worship Assistants

Greeters

12/06/15	Reid & Deb Heinekamp
12/13/15	Ione Martin
12/20/15	Carol Erickson
12/24/15 5:00 pm	Al & Phyllis Whitehead
12/24/15 10:00 pm	Josh & Mindy Chrestman
12/27/15	Lynn Reeder

Ushers

12/06/15	Bernice Nicholas & Bev Lowe
12/13/15	Jim & Bonnie Bernhardt
12/20/15	Bill & Christine McMahon
12/24/15 5:00 pm	Ed & Jane Heyer
12/24/15 10:00 pm	Ron & Kim Henrich
12/27/15	Jim & Lori Updike

Liturgists

12/06/15	Carole Wampler
12/13/15	Rick Hill
12/20/15	Les Banks
12/24/15 5:00 pm	Lori Davis
12/24/15 10:00 pm	Bonnie Miller
12/27/15	Jennifer Bauer

Flowers

12/06/15	
12/13/15	Dave Hunt
12/20/15	Poinsettias
12/24/15 5:00 pm	Poinsettias
12/24/15 10:00 pm	Poinsettias
12/27/15	

Communion Bread

12/06/15	Jim & Connie Mitchell
12/20/15	Jim & Connie Mitchell
12/24/15 10:00 pm	Carole Strock

Acolytes

12/06/15	
12/13/15	
12/20/15	
12/24/15 5:00 pm	
12/24/15 10:00 pm	
12/27/15	

December Communion Ministers

Jim Bernhardt, Mary Ann Olson, Phyllis Davis



12/01	Briggs Mager
	Harper Mager
12/2	Jennifer Hallaron
12/3	Hannah Schlapp
	Amanda Reimer
12/5	Barbara French
12/8	Taylor Anderson
	Deb Heinekamp
12/9	Diane Salisbury
12/10	Barb Diemer
12/11	Ruth King
12/13	Mary Ann Olson
12/14	David Schlapp
12/15	Gary French
	Jacob Johns
	Chloe Heiman
12/18	Jeanne McNish
12/19	Todd Hallaron
	Michael Buckingham
	Greg Nehring
12/21	Bonnie Young
12/22	Brandon Pence
12/23	Erin Anthenat
12/25	Carol Erickson
12/26	Connie Mitchell
12/27	Tami Wig
	Lindsay Young
	Nicholas Schlapp
12/28	Conway Mitchell
	Aaron Hargrave
12/29	James Merkel
	Jevin Reynolds
12/30	Thomas Merkel
	Sue Olson
	Jill Severson



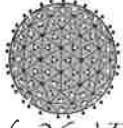


12/2	Al & Myrtie Warren
12/18	Douglas & Tina Oldeen
12/26	Les & Jean Banks



December 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 1:00 pm Bible Study	2 6:00 pm Prayer Group 6:30 Chimes practice 7:30 Choir practice	3 1:00 pm Hope Circle 6:30 pm Bible Study	4	5
6 7:30 am United Methodist Men's Breakfast 8:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion	7 10:00 am Church Conference Forms Due to Heidi 7:00 pm Uniter's	8 1:00 pm Bible Study	9 6:30 Chimes Practice 7:30 Choir Practice	10 12:00 pm UMW Potluck 6:30 pm Bible Study	11	12
13 8:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:30 Staff Pastor Parish 12:00 pm Church Conference	14 10:00 am Newsletter DEADLINE Angel Tree gifts due to UCS	15	16 6:00 pm Prayer Group 6:30 Chimes practice 7:30 Choir practice	17 1:30 pm Grief Support Group	18	19
20 8:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion	21	22 NO 4TH TUESDAY FEAST	23 Packing cookie baskets for the Franklin Mall project	24 Office Closed  Christmas Eve Worship 5:00 pm Candlelight Worship 10:00 pm Candlelight Worship	25  Christmas Day	26
27 8:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion	28 90:00 am Newsletter Assembly	29 2 & 2:30 pm Nursing Home Worship	30	31 Office Closed  New Year's Eve		

Sandwich/Somonauk
Ministerial Alliance
4TH TUESDAY COMMUNITY
FREE FELLOWSHIP FEAST

No Feast in December
Thank you for all of your hard
work throughout the year!



UMW Christmas Potluck

All women are warmly invited to come to the UMW Christmas Potluck on Thursday, December 10. It begins promptly at 12 noon. We ask that you bring a large dish to pass and your own table service. Drinks will be furnished. Seasonal music will be provided by the Sandwich High School Madrigal Choir; they will also be eating with us. We will also have other guests. Please write this date on your calendar and come to enjoy the delicious food and good fellowship around the tables in the Chapel. You are welcome to invite a friend to come along. The next meeting will be Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 10:00 am.

Grief support group to begin Dec. 17

All of us must deal with the pain of loss. Grief is a universal process. Especially with holiday times approaching, grieving can be particularly painful. Sharing our experience of grieving with others can help with healing and resolution.

In response to several requests, UCS is launching "Healing with Hope", a monthly grief support group. Our leader will be Erin Mitchell, a bereavement counselor from KishHealth System Hospice.

Our first session will be on **Thursday, December 17, at 1:30 pm.** At this first session, Erin will discuss dealing with loneliness and depression during holidays, and give participants a chance to share their experiences.

Further monthly sessions will be on the second Thursday of the month at 1:30 pm. Future direction of the group will be determined by the needs of our participants. Everyone is welcome to attend; if you know of someone who might benefit from a group like this, let them know. You need not be a member of UCS to participate.



CROP Walk Totals Announced

CROP walk totals have reached \$14,148.35. One quarter of these funds go to the Somonauk and Hinckley food pantries. Three quarters will go to fight hunger and poverty around the world.

Submitted by Ed Heyer



The United Church of Sandwich
 512 East Lions Road
 Sandwich, IL 60548-2147

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

December 2015



The United Church of Sandwich

512 East Lions Road, Sandwich, IL 60548-2417

Church: (815) 786-9243

New Email: ucssandwich@frontier.com

website: www.unitedchurchsandwich.org

Worship Services

Sunday 10:00 am

Adult Sunday School 9:00 am

Church Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

The Rev. Steven Mindrup

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
 or by appointment

Email: pastormindrup@gmail.com

Mobile: 815.988.4992

Kelley Mindrup's mobile: 815-988-7075

Church Staff

Ministers	All Members
Church Secretary	Heidi Eaton
Choir & Chimes Director	Kevin Duy
Organist/Pianist	Carol Larson
E.P.I.C. Youth Director	Sean Williams



**We are passionately united to feed all people –
 body, mind and spirit – to the glory of God!**

Church Administrative Council

Church Council Chair	Reid Heinekamp
Treasurer	Pam Nehring
Financial Secretary	Pat Hallaron
Finance/Stewardship Chair	David Hunt
Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Chair	Deb Heinekamp
Lay Leader	Sarah Stevens
Trustees Chair	Matt Olson
Annual Conf Delegate	Bonnie Miller

Ministry Areas

Missions/Evangelism Chair	Ed & Jane Heyer
Memorial/Endowment Chair	Phyllis Whitehead
United Methodist Women	Myrtie Warren
United Methodist Men	