

THE HERALD



Pastor's Corner



If you heard the crumpling of paper about a week ago, that was me tossing away my other newsletter article that I previously wrote. I was moved to write on something totally different than my original theme. So, here goes...

Over the last year, my priorities has been to assess our readiness to receive a new pastor.

That has included education, a walk down memory lane at the good times and the not-so-good times. What has worked and what has not worked. And I think I have accomplished that pretty well. We have discussed and examined ways to grow our congregation, looking toward our future. The conversations have been Spirit-filled. But there's one area where I have fallen short. The area of congregation retention – or helping to make sure that our current members are well cared for and attended to. And for that, I am very, very sorry. As I write this, I am drawn to the story of the Prodigal Son. This story is in Luke 15:11-32. I'm confident that most of us know and understand the story; however, I do want to replay a few of the last verses...

"Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ And he called one of the servants and

asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹ but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' ³¹ And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

I confess that I have put a lot of time and effort into preparing our congregation for the potential of new members / new growth. And in some cases, I have failed to pay loving attention to the current family. Again, I am very and humbly sorry. Allow me to here and now recommit my time and attention to those who are home-bound, in care facilities, and absent from worship. I am also asking for your help, to reach out to the **church office** when you, your family, or a fellow church-family member is known to be in need. I've asked Mary to help me with this priority. I am also asking, you the congregational members for one more thing. If you believe that I have failed you or your family in care and comfort, please reach out to me directly and personally. I want to hear from you, I too can grow in both my own Spiritual Journey and in my pastoral leadership journey.

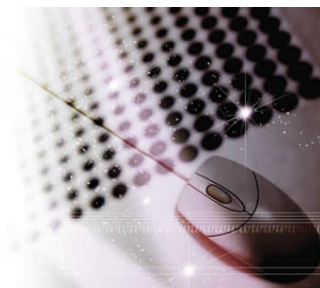
Looking forward to seeing you in church soon!

Security Ministry

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

We are seeing all the many ways in which artificial intelligence (AI) affects our lives, impacting our computers, cell phones and social media. While many advances in AI technology have been incredibly positive, scammers are now using it to extract money from unsuspecting individuals.

Scammers are recording individuals voices from various sources and using AI-cloned audio, putting together complete conversations using



the persons voice patterns. The conversation sounds so realistic that a person receiving a phone call cannot tell it is not the person they know. Now add an urgent plea for help or the person is in jail or injured and the person called goes into panic mode, agreeing to the instructions providing the caller money to resolve the situation.

A woman in Florida lost over \$15,000.00 because of scammers using AI to mimic her daughters voice saying she was in a fake vehicle accident. Her daughter was at work the entire time. Scammers can provide telephone numbers that are similar to or are an actual number you may be familiar with. For your safety, provide a code word that only your family will know to prevent you from being taken advantage of.

GO FUND ME

Recent reports indicate that scammers are hijacking various funds from the fund-raising site GoFundMe. The site has experienced this in the past. Be sure any charity you are donating to will actually deliver the funds to the intended recipients.

Stay safe and remember if you see something, say something!

Jim Sommers
Director – Security Ministry

Planning for the 2026 Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars!

Next year's Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference will be held **April 9-11** at the Green Lake Conference Center.

This is an earlier time in the year than usual to accommodate for busy summer schedules and will be the norm going forward.



If, perhaps, you are interested in helping to plan the Annual Meeting, please contact meeting coordinator Jaime Craig at jcraig@wcucc.org by **August 15th**. Participants will “collaborate to develop the meeting’s theme, identify workshop topics, create worship opportunities, and address logistical challenges.” The time commitment involves virtual, one-hour monthly meetings from August to January.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AIDES NEEDED

We are looking to provide additional support for our Sunday school superintendents. We are required to have two adults on site during any youth activity. This is a fantastic opportunity to become involved in our youth programs and share in the excitement our students bring to church. Anyone eighteen years or older may be part of this program, a background check is required. If we can obtain enough volunteers, you may only be needed one Sunday per month. Please consider sharing your talents while supporting our outstanding Sunday school programs. If you require more information, please contact Michelle Krause, jmkrause2012@gmail.com or Jenna Bratz, jenna.bratz2@gmail.com. A sign-up sheet will be provided in the Foyer.

August Anniversaries



HAPPY
Anniversary

Peter & Molly Mayr
8/03

Roger & Bonnie Kind
8/04

Candyce Mueller
8/13

Tina Meier
8/29

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8/4 Henry Hawk
8/5 Michelle Krause
8/6 Sandra Freund
8/6 Barbara Valleskey
8/7 Roger Kind
8/13 Carolyn Morris
8/14 Mason Krause
8/15 Kailey Kind
8/18 Jenna Bratz
8/25 Jill Sippel
8/27 Ruth Larsen
8/29 Grace Mueller
8/31 John Hawk

Youth Birthdays

8/22 Owen Beyer
8/27 Matthew Reese



LOCAL AUGUST EVENTS

Steam & Gas Engine Show

August 9-10, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Check out antique farm machinery at this show, featuring John Deere this year. Also, a model steam engine display, toy show, flea market, & a tractor pull on Saturday at 2:00 pm. At the Calumet County Fairgrounds.





Voices of Peace - Gospel Music Fest

August 15, 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

August 16, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Bring your lawn chairs to Hilbert Civic Park and listen to 15 bands from all over the country. Free-will offering, non-denominational, food available.

Calumet County Fair *(August 29 - September 1)*

Billed as the "Biggest Little Fair in Wisconsin", the Calumet County Fair is a fun family event with live music, food, kids' stage, carnival rides, animals and more. Starts at noon on Friday and runs until Monday afternoon. Friday, free admission; Saturday & Sunday, \$10; Season pass, \$15. Children 10 & under, free.



June Council Meeting Minutes

St. John United Church of Christ

Minutes of Council Meeting –

June 17, 2025 / 4:00 PM

Opening:

The regular monthly meeting of the council was called to order on June 17, 2025 at 4:00 PM by Jim Sommers, President. Pastor Kohls led us in the opening prayer.

Attendees List:

Derek Beyer, Penny Geiger, Jim Sommers, Garry Preder, Lynn Kind and Pastor Kohls.

Secretary Report:

Garry Preder made a motion to approve the May 13, 2025 Secretary's Report, Penny Geiger seconded the motion, motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

Beginning balance May 1, 2025 - \$5008.78 - Ending balance May 30, 2025 - \$2965.91. Profit from May brat fry was \$1377.63. Lynn Kind made a motion to approve the Treasurers report, Penny Geiger seconded the motion, motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Pastor's Report: Report was reviewed and discussed with Council.

Buildings and Grounds: Derek replaced the switch and circuit breakers for the outdoor automatic entrance.

Derek Beyer made a motion to accept the committee reports as submitted,

Garry Preder seconded the motion, motion carried.

Old Business:

- Congregational meeting feedback – no comments from congregation
- Liaison committee updates – Jim Sommers contacted several individuals to join the Outreach Committee
- Sign upgrade status - Derek Beyer will contact Kelly Sippel and Mike Kovach regarding replacement of the sign. He will also get measurements and contact several sign companies for options and pricing.

Garry Preder made a motion to utilize conference resources to help us assess time, talents and other resources available to the Church from congregation, Penny Geiger seconded, motion carried.

New Business:

- Review Sunday worship service start time – Proposing starting at 10:30 to show goodwill to Ebenezer and help them have some time with Pastor Kohl's after service. Will need to be discussed with the congregation.
- Security update, monitoring, proactive planning – Jim Sommers proposed pricing out cameras to be located in various areas of the church as well as installing keyless entry to all exterior doors and rekeying the main entry door. Garry Preder made a motion for Jim Sommers to install keyless entry on all exterior doors, rekey main door and get pricing on cameras for security, Derek Beyer seconded, motion carried.
- Review and discuss audio/visual proposal offered by Scott Wink – Scott Wink is offering to lead a project to update our audio and cameras as well as add some large screen tv's. Lynn made a motion for Jim Sommers to further discuss and investigate this project with Scott Wink, Garry Preder seconded, motion carried.
- Set date and time for council to meet with Search committee – Jim Sommers to contact Jill Sippel to set up the meeting for July 15, 2025 at 5:00pm. Derek Beyer made a motion for Jim Sommers to contact Rev. Jane Anderson regarding our position on the church profile, Garry Preder seconded, motion carried.
- Derek Beyer received a call from a Council member of St. Paul Church in Malone regarding the Iverson scholarship. Council would like to reanalyze the scholarships and speak with the family regarding 4-year college vs. tech school eligibility.
- Pastor Kohls was excused from the meeting to allow the council to review and discuss the Designated Term Ministry Covenant agreement between Pastor Kohls and St. John United Church of Christ. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to honor the direction given by the congregation and enter into the covenant with Pastor Kohls. The agreement has been signed and is binding for the period July 1, 2025 through the end of calendar year 2025.

Adjournment

- Derek Beyer made a motion to adjourn, Penny Geiger seconded the motion, motion carried, meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM. Jim Sommers led us in the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting

- Our next council meeting will be Tuesday July 15, 2025 at 4:00pm followed by a meeting with the Search Committee at 5:00 pm

August Calendar of Events

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Family Worship Service @ 10:15 am w/ Communion	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Worship Service @ 10:15 am • Special Congregational Meeting	11	12	13	14	15	16
(Pastor on vacation)						
17 Worship Service @ 10:15 am	18	19 Council Meeting 4:30 p.m.	20	21	22 Herald Articles Due	23
24 Worship Service @ 10:15 am	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Worship Service @ 10:15 am						



2025 Council Members

Pastor Dave

rev_david_kohls@yahoo.com

Cell: 920- 522-2565

Jim Sommers – Council President

(2-year term starting 2025)

Email: *jimsommers2350@gmail.com*

Home: 920-894-2350

Other Contacts

Administrative Assistant:

Mary Keran (920) 898-4259

sjucc.desk@outlook.com

Office Hours: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm,
Tuesdays & Thursdays

Financial Secretary & Treasurer:

Jill Sippel (920) 418-1534

Derek Beyer – Congregational President & Treasurer

(2nd 2-year term starting 2024)

Email: derekbeyer89@gmail.com

derekjennieb@gmail.com

Cell: 920-979-2017

Home: 920-898-1777

Garry Preder – Vice-President

(2-year term starting 2025)

Email: gkpreder@frontier.com

Home: 920-838-0714

Lynn Kind – Secretary

(2nd 2-year term starting 2025)

Email: ljkind4@gmail.com

Cell: 920-378-2173

Penny Geiger – Trustee

(2nd 2-year term starting 2024)

Email: pennygeiger@gmail.com

Cell: 920-266-6324

Home: 920-827-2087

Director- Security Ministry:

Jim Sommers (920) 894-2350

(920) 215-2520 (cell)

Indoor Custodian:

Mike Kovach (920) 483-0406

Outdoor Custodian:

Kelly Sippel (920) 418-2534

Organist:

Gary Bieck

garybieck@gmail.com

Sunday School Superintendents:

Michelle Krause (920) 418-4899

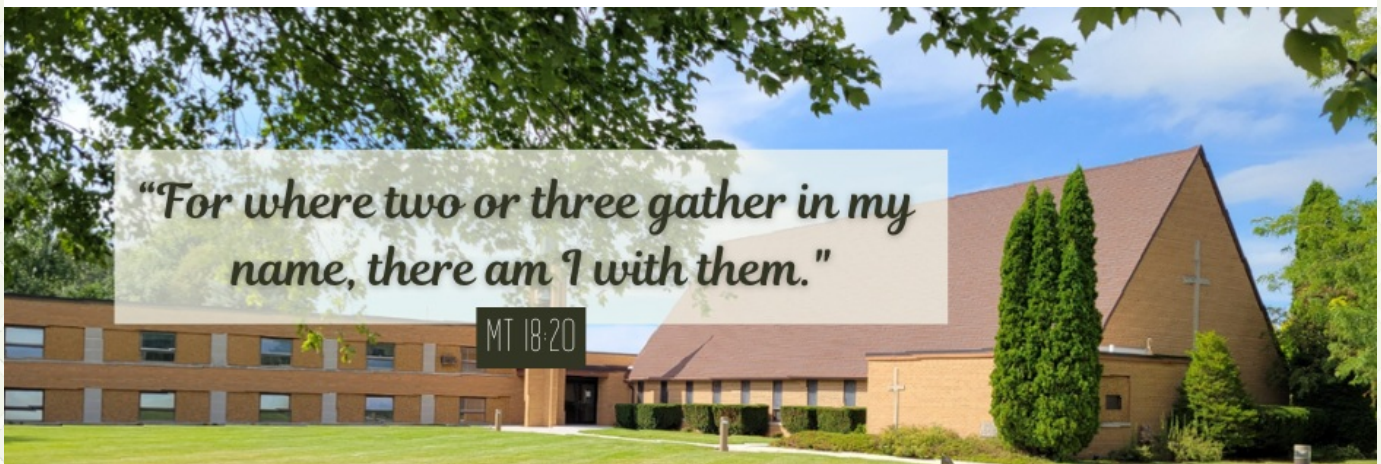
Jenna Bratz (920) 418-2049

Women's Fellowship President:

Carol Balz (920) 418-5259

Prayer Chain:

Donna Schneider (920) 898-5657



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