

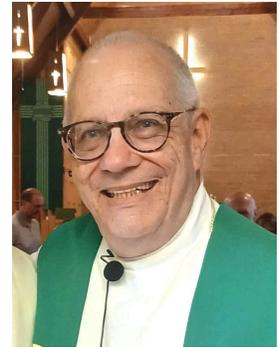
The Herald

MARCH 2026



Pastor's (Large) Corner

There are days in which I would just love to read something else, that someone else wrote, as they say it much better than I ever could. This is the case with the following text from Pope Leo XIV. He's inviting all people into a Holy Lent. What I like about this is that he's building off of things I have already spoken about. Things like: "listening" and "working together". Lent has always been intended to be a time of a spiritual journey. Leo talks about renewing our faith, in spite of trying times. He reaches back into the Old Testament, highlighting the relationship of Moses with the Creator God. Leo also highlights one of our spiritual practices, which is fasting. But Leo gets creative here, including a type of fasting not directly tied to food consumption. And wraps up his presentation with some thoughts from Nehemiah and the importance of communal relationships. I did not include the entire text that Leo wrote, but I believe I maintained the integrity of his thoughts.



Excerpts

Lent is a time in which the Church, guided by a sense of maternal care, invites us to place the mystery of God back in the center of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life.

Every path towards conversion begins by allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit. There is a relationship between the word, our acceptance of it, and the transformation it brings about. For this reason, the Lenten journey is a welcome opportunity to heed the voice of the Lord and renew our commitment to following Christ, accompanying him on the road to Jerusalem, where the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection will be fulfilled.

Listening

This year, I would first like to consider the importance of making room for the word through *listening*. The willingness to listen is the first way we demonstrate our desire to enter into relationship with someone.

In revealing himself to Moses in the burning bush, God himself teaches us that listening is one of his defining characteristics: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry” (*Exodus 3:7*). Hearing the cry of the oppressed is the beginning of a story of liberation in which the Lord calls Moses, sending him to open a path of salvation for his children who have been reduced to slavery.

Our God is one who seeks to involve us. Even today he shares with us what is in his heart. Because of this, listening to the word in the liturgy teaches us to listen to the truth of reality. In the midst of the many voices present in our personal lives and in society, Sacred Scripture helps us to recognize and respond to the cry of those who are anguished and suffering. In order to foster this inner openness to listening, we must allow God to teach us how to listen *as he does*. We must recognize that “the condition of the poor is a cry that, throughout human history, constantly challenges our lives, societies, political and economic systems, and, not least, the Church.”

Fasting

If Lent is a time for listening, *fasting* is a concrete way to prepare ourselves to receive the word of God. Abstaining from food is an ancient ascetic practice that is essential on the path of conversion. Precisely because it involves the body, fasting makes it easier to recognize what we “hunger” for and what we deem necessary for our sustenance. Moreover, it helps us to identify and order our “appetites,” keeping our hunger and thirst for justice alive and freeing us from complacency. Thus, it teaches us to pray and act responsibly towards our neighbor.

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. .

[...in order to practice fasting in accordance with its evangelical character and avoid the temptation that leads to pride, it must be lived in faith and humility. It must be grounded in communion with the Lord, because “those who are unable to nourish themselves with the word of God do not fast properly.” *Benedict XVI*].

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. .

I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.

Together

Finally, Lent emphasizes the communal aspect of listening to the word and fasting. The Bible itself underlines this dimension in multiple ways. For example, the Book of Nehemiah recounts how the people gathered to listen to the public reading of the Law, preparing to profess their faith and worship through fasting, so as to renew the covenant with God (cf. 9:1-3).

Likewise, our parishes, families, ecclesial groups and religious communities are called to undertake a shared journey during Lent, in which listening to the word of God, as well as to the cry of the poor and of the earth, becomes part of our community life, and fasting is a foundation for sincere repentance. In this context, conversion refers not only to one's conscience, but also to the quality of our relationships and dialogue. It means allowing ourselves to be challenged by reality and recognizing what truly guides our desires — both within our ecclesial communities and as regards to humanity's thirst for justice and reconciliation. *Leo XIV*

May your Lenten Journey be one of faith and renewed discovery. See you in Church!

Dave

SECURITY MINISTRY

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS
MARCH 8, 2026**

As we set our clocks ahead this month, this is a good time to check our smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states that approximately three out of five deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms or homes without working smoke alarms. Test each device, monthly tests are recommended to ensure proper operation. If you did not replace batteries last fall this should be done now. Carbon monoxide detectors need to be replaced every five years or according to the manufacturer's instructions.



All homes and duplexes in Wisconsin are required to have carbon monoxide detectors installed on every level including the basement. Detectors are not required in attics or storage areas.

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

Jim Sommers
Director – Security Ministry

New Council Members

St. John UCC's 2026 Church Council was installed on Family Worship Sunday, February 1st. From left: **Jason Giordano, Member-at-Large; Lynn Kind, Secretary; Jim Sommers, President; Brian Kolb, Treasurer; & Garry Preder, Vice-President.** Thank you for your service in leading St. John!



MARCH NOTES



St. John UCC's **Drive-Thru Chili Sale** will be on Sunday, March 8 from 11:00



The next **Noisy Change Offering** will be on Sunday, March 15 in support of Full



The **Worship Committee** for St. John will be re-forming and meeting soon.

a.m. to 1:00 p.m. A sign-up sheet for chili makers is in the narthex.

Circle Community Closet, a New Holstein non-profit helping kids thrive.

Stay tuned for more information!



St. John is looking for someone to fill the position of **Choir Director**. We are beginning our search among members of the congregation. If you are interested in filling this position, please reach out to Pastor or Jim Sommers.



Midweek Worship returns to St. John! Join us on Wednesdays for a meal at 5:00 p.m. and Interactive and Contemporary Worship at 6:30 p.m.



We are looking for a **Social Media Coordinator**; if you are interested, please get in touch with Pastor Dave.



We have a home-bound member who is looking for a little **computer assistance**. If you can help, please let the office or Pastor know.

In Memory of Janine Maloney



The Freund family honored a mother, a grandmother, a great grandmother, and a great-great grandmother Janine on her birthday, Sunday, February 22 by hosting a coffee time and by Cindy's singing of How Great Thou Art. The effects of COVID still are apparent, as Janine passed on March 12, 2021 and the opportunity to honor her in church was not available.

Janine worked as a nurse's aide at Calumet Memorial Hospital in Chilton and at the Calumet Homestead in New Holstein. She was very active at St. John United Church of Christ in New Holstein; serving on the Women's Fellowship, singing in the choir, greeting visitors, and volunteering wherever needed. She was also a volunteer at the Homestead Care Center till covid. She was someone that was always there when needed.

On behalf of the St. John UCC Congregation, we thank the family for this time of remembrance.



If you would like to donate an Easter lily in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone you'd like acknowledged, please fill out a slip located on the table in the Narthex and place it in the Secretary's Inbox located on the wall by the bulletin board.

Please bring the plant(s) during regular office or service hours. You may also order your lilies from Lilybee's in New Holstein and they will deliver the plants for you to the church. Please pre-order to get your delivery here on time! If you would prefer, you may also make a donation toward lilies that St. John has pre-ordered. Thank you!

One Great Hour of Sharing



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.

The offering began on Easter Sunday in 1949, as a response to the aftermath of WWII. Ever since then, OGHS has continued raising funds to support worldwide charitable initiatives.

Offering envelopes will be available in bulletins and on the table in the narthex on Sunday, March 15. Thank you for your support!

Pastoral Installation



Rev. David Kohls was installed as Pastor of St. John United Church of Christ on Sunday, February 15 at 3:00 p.m. Service.



Pastor Dave was presented a scriptural artwork by Council President Jim Sommers, on behalf of the congregation. The art commemorates Pastor's installation with a verse from Isaiah: "I heard the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send who will go for me?' and I answered, 'Here am I, send me!'" (Chapter 6, Verse 8). The art was created by Michael Podesta Graphic Design.





Devotionals

March - May copies of "Our Daily Bread" are available on the book rack and table in the narthex.



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Darlene Draheim 3/02
Tammy Riesterer 3/04
Darlene Bender 3/10
Katherine Thede 3/10
Jadeyn Kind 3/15
Eric Jens 3/16
Geraldine Kuester 3/19
Scott Wink 3/22
Jacob Conrad 3/24
Sara Feider 3/24

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

Youth

Madelyn Scherr 3/09
Nora Feider 3/30

Kelly Sippel 3/25

Lauren Danes 3/30



Philip & Tammy Paulson

3/21

Jarrold & Lynn Kind

3/27

Congratulations to Bode & the Ghost Tigers!

Ghost Tigers had another great Saturday, this time at the Battle of Brookfield! They finished the qualification rounds in 3rd place and were captain of one of the top alliance teams. They battled through the playoffs and finished as runner's up overall. They also brought home the Design award for best overall robot design. Next up for the Ghost Tigers is the State Championships on March 13-14.



St. John UCC
**DRIVE-THRU
CHILI SALE**

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**SUNDAY  
MARCH 8, 2026  
11:00 am - 1:00 pm**  
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**2111 CHURCH STREET
(Park Ave. Entrance)
NEW HOLSTEIN, WI 53061**

January Council Meeting Minutes

St. John United Church of Christ

Minutes of Council Meeting – Submitted by Derek Beyer

January 13th, 2026 / 4:30 PM

Opening:

The regular monthly meeting of the council was called to order on January 13th, 2026, at 4:30 PM by Jim Sommers, President. Pastor Kohls led us in the opening prayer.

Attendees List:

Derek Beyer, Garry Preder, Jim Sommers, Penny Gieger and Pastor Kohls.

Approval of Agenda:

Garry Preder made a motion to approve the agenda, Penny Gieger seconded the motion, motion carried.

Secretary Report:

Derek Beyer made a motion to approve December 9, 2025, Secretary's Report as submitted, Garry Preder seconded the motion, motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

Beginning balance December 1, 2025 - \$129.72 - Ending balance December 31, 2025 - \$559.08.

Garry Preder made a motion to approve the December 2025 Financial Statement as submitted, Penny Gieger seconded the motion, motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

- The Sunday school program, Blue Christmas and Christmas Eve service were well received.
- Pastor is requesting vacation on Monday January 26th through Friday January 30th.
- Pastors' Installation service will be held on Sunday February 15th at 3:00 pm. Reverend Lorri Steward of Ebenezer Sheboygan will be the guest Preacher, and Reverend Randy Koppenhaver will be the guest Liturgist.
- Ash Wednesday is February 18th. Services will be at 10:00am and 6:00pm.
- Mid-week worship will continue each Wednesday after that, beginning at 6:30pm, with a 5:00pm-6:15pm light mealtime.
- Pastor will put up a sign-up sheet for a Drive Through Chilli Lunch. Looking at March 1st or March 8th.
- Pastor is requesting the Buildings and Grounds Committee try to improve outdoor lighting for evening services.
- Pastor is requesting that a council member or volunteer be present to greet guests or visitors when they arrive at services.
- Pastor would like to move forward with the Simply Giving program.
- Pastor would like to get the Sunday School children involved with a Noisy Change Offering to support the Good Samaritan Fund.

Committee Reports:**Security:**

Jim Sommers is working to get a quote from a second insurance provider for our Workman's Compensation and Commercial Coverage.

Buildings and Ground:

Waiting to get Congregational approval before completing boiler repairs.

Our Future is Now:

Met for the first time on Monday January 12th. Working on short- and long-term goals for the church.

Garry Preder made a motion to accept the committee reports as submitted, Derek Beyer seconded the motion, motion carried.

Old Business:

- We are still looking to get second candidate for church council.
- Insurance coverage on track for renewal on Feb. 1, 2026.
- 2026 Choir director. Review at next meeting after budget approval at annual meeting.

New Business:

- Garry Preder made a motion to approve Chuck and Jeanne Meves return to our congregation, Derek Beyer seconded the motion, motion carried.
- Women's Fellowship has been contacted regarding refreshments after Pastor Kohls Installation service.
- Derek Beyer made a motion to approve Pastor Kohls January 26th – 30th and Mary Keran's April 9th vacation request, Penny Gieger seconded the motion, motion carried.
- Looking to get two delegates to attend the Annual Conference meeting on April 10th and 11th at the Green Lake Conference Center.

Next Meeting

Our next council meeting will be Tuesday February 10th, 2026, at 4:30 pm.

Garry Preder made a motion to adjourn, Penny Gieger seconded the motion, motion carried, meeting adjourned. Pastor Kohls led us in a closing prayer.

March Calendar of Events

March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Family Worship Service @ 10:15 am w/ Communion Bible Study @ EUCC 5:30 p.m.	2	3	4 Women's Fellowship @1:30pm Lenten Service @6:30 p.m. (Supper at 5:00 p.m.)	5	6	7
<i>Daylight Saving Time</i> 8 Worship Service @ 10:15 am Sunday School Chili Sale (11:00 am-1:00 pm) Bible Study @ EUCC 5:30 p.m.	9	10 Council Meeting 4:30 p.m.	11 Lenten Service @6:30 p.m. (Supper at 5:00 p.m.)	12	13	14
15 Worship Service @ 10:15 am Sunday School	16	17	18 Lenten Service @6:30 p.m. (Supper at 5:00 p.m.)	19	20 Herald Articles Due	21
22 Worship Service @ 10:15 am Sunday School Bible Study @ EUCC 5:30 p.m.	23	24	25 Lenten Service @6:30 p.m. (Supper at 5:00 p.m.)	26	27	28
29 Worship Service @ 10:15 am Sunday School Bible Study @ EUCC 5:30 p.m.	30	31				

**Click calendar to view larger image*

CONTACT THE CHURCH

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

2026 Council Members

Pastor Dave

rev_david_kohls@yahoo.com

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Jim Sommers – Council President

(2-year term starting 2025)

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Home: 920-894-2350

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)

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Brian Kolb – Treasurer

(2-year term starting 2026)

Email: *bkblue66@hotmail.com*

Cell: 920-470-5748

Home: 920-898-5807

Jason Giordano –

Member-at-Large

(2-year term starting 2026)

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Other Contacts

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sjucc.desk@outlook.com

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Tuesdays & Thursdays

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Director- Security Ministry:

Jim Sommers (920) 894-2350

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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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