



## Ministerial Moments

### Let Every Ending be a New Beginning

Such is the slogan on the church sign for November on the calendar Janice gave me last Christmas. It is a special saying for this time of year in more ways than one.

We will be adjusting to the loss of Janice who was such a vibrant part of this church and gave so much to us.

It is December, the end of the year.

It is Advent, the beginning of the church year.

For the most part, our church calendar is about Easter. The core of Christianity is in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As most of you know, we do not know the exact date of Jesus' birth.

Christmas, however, commemorates Jesus' birth. Because of Christmas, the Incarnation of Christ can be fulfilled at Easter. Because of Christmas, we can recognize the full humanity of Jesus.

Advent is a time of watching, waiting, and preparation, even as the people of Judea waited for a Messiah at the time of Jesus' birth; even as Mary and Joseph attempted to prepare for Jesus' birth.

How many of you remember waiting for Christmas, trying to figure out what those boxes were under the tree? How many of you remember having to deal with your own children as they continually counted the days left till Christmas and tried to figure out where you hid the presents? Many of us are now going through the same sense of impatient waiting with our grandchildren and great-grandchildren

My mom's family all met at her mother's house for an early dinner ever Christmas Eve.



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## 2015 Annual Meeting Sunday, January 18th

We will enjoy a potluck dinner after church service and then begin our meeting. All organizations are asked to please have their yearly reports turned into the church secretary by **January 7th**. It is important we receive the reports early so our secretary has time to type them and compose an informational packet the week prior to the meeting. Thank you very much. You can email them to [loriselman@gmail.com](mailto:loriselman@gmail.com). If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

### DECEMBER Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### Birthdays

Mabel Schickedanz	1
David G Schneidewind	3
Jay Lehman	9
Leroy Karsten	10
Brian Duffie	19
Allen Waeltz	22
Ron Geisel	27
Justin Dressel	27

#### Anniversaries

David & Mindy Schneidewind	4
Andrew & Elizabeth Stuart	6

#### Advent Wreath Lighters

I have the first two weeks of Advent covered for wreath lighters. I will be calling on families for the remaining 3 times (2 Sundays and Christmas Eve). I am pretty sure there will be at least one opportunity open so if you are interested let me know.

Pastor Gail





## **PANCAKES AND SAUSAGE ! ! ! !**

The Funds & Fellowship committee will be serving up hot pancakes and sausage after church on December 7th. .

## **CHRISTMAS FUND**

The theme for this year's Christmas fund is the Light is Drawing Near. Some of you may better remember the Christmas Fund referred to as Veterans of the Cross or the Emergency Fund. It has been in existence for 112 years as an annual offering collected to help those who have served Christ through the UCC or one of its predecessor denominations and who now find themselves in financial crises. The offering will be collected on Sunday Dec. 21 and Christmas Eve.

### **Greeters and Ushers for December**

- Dec. 7: Gene & Betty Bollmeier, Linda Jones
- Dec. 14: Jay & Leslie Lehman, Lorrie Lehman, Neal Galle
- Dec. 21: Dave & Pete Dressel, Dorothy Dressel
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve - Council Members
- Dec. 28: Ruby Lehman, Larry & Kathy Matzenbacher

### **Greeters and Ushers for January**

- Jan. 4: Leroy & Marlene Karsten, Sandy Smith
- Jan. 11: Leroy & Marlene Karsten, Sandy Smith
- Jan. 18: Eloise Fauth, John & Janet Fauth
- Jan. 25: Eloise Fauth, John & Janet Fauth

# December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Evangelical Daughters Mtg 6:30 pm	2 11:45 am New Athens Luncheon, bring unwrapped toy, RSVP	3 Choir 7:00 pm	4	5	6
7 Pancake & Sausage Brunch after church Christmas Carol walk at 1st Baptist	8	9 Church Council Mtg 6:00 pm Quilters 1 pm	10 Choir 7:00 pm	11	12	13 Jazz Nativity @ St. Paul Belleville 3 pm
14 Items Due for January Tidings Christmas Carol sing with Art 3:30	15	16 Quilters 1 pm	17 Choir 7:00 pm	18	19	20
21 Service of scripture and carols	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:30 pm	25	26	27
28 No Choir	29	30	31	January 5 we will celebrate Epiphany. January 19 Church Annual Meeting		



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Grandma Mertz's house was essentially a shotgun style house built as temporary housing for the 1904 World's Fair. (It still stands). After dinner the children would help the women clean and put away the dishes while the men got the living room ready with all the presents under the tree. If you looked out Grandma's backdoor window, you could see a blinking red light which one year I was told was Rudolf's red nose and meant Santa was coming. A little while later we were called to the living room to exchange the presents. It wasn't until I stayed at Grandma and Grandpa's one summer evening that I realized that blinking light was still there and was attached to a TV tower.

Our memories of our earliest Christmas's stay with us over the years, but our sense of the meaning often changes. By the time I was in high school, I wanted to leave my other grandmother's house a little early so we could get to the candlelight service. Those Christmas Eve services took on great meaning for me then and as we moved to different parts of the country and could not always get home for Christmas the services meant more.

Our children will not always be children. We will not always live near our children. At some point in life, the gifts we receive becomes less important than the joy we see on a child's face from the gift we've given, and yet God is always near. God is in the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and Omega. God is in our past, our present and in our future. Let us give Praise to God.

Blessings,  
Pastor Gail



### Friedens United Church of Christ

*"Through the Spirit we are  
a Church on the Move:  
Welcoming, Caring, Sharing."*

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**Order Form for Christmas Poinsettias DUE BY DECEMBER 7th.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person ordering

Reason for giving poinsettia:  In Honor of       In Memory of

Name of person for whom poinsettia is ordered for:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Number of poinsettias ordered \_\_\_\_\_ X \$6.00 each or 2 for \$10.00  
= Total Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Money or check may be attached to this form and dropped in the offering plate. Orders MUST be in by December 7th. The poinsettias will be placed in the chancel and should be picked up after the December 24th Candle Light Service.



*Friedens United Church of Christ*  
820 North Main  
Marissa, IL 62257

***Merry Christmas!***  
***and***  
***Happy New Year !!***