

The Tidings

January 2016

Ministerial Moments

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It's a New Year. Of course, the church's new year started on Nov. 29 with the first Sunday of Advent, but for the Calendar year, Jan. 1st is New Year. The Pope has already named this the Year of Mercy. Chinese New Year will not be until February 8 this year. I understand it will be "Year of the Monkey", probably appropriate for an election year. Oh, well.....

A New Year, a time to wipe the slate clean and start over. I wish Annual meeting was also over. It's a little too close to Christmas for me, especially since I have to get reports out, not only for our church but for the conference and denomination as well.

2016 will mark our 125th Anniversary. While I know of some churches which are older, it is still quite a milestone. Many of you still remember the 100th. We have not been able to find the exact date of the founding of the church, but are pretty sure it was organized in January. We decided to have the festival in June because the weather will be better and it will allow more time to prepare. We are scheduled for the Sunday after the Coal Fest, so maybe some folks will stay around for both. Our new conference minister is scheduled to arrive in March so I am hoping we can have her as the special speaker on that day. Since she started out ministering in Southern Illinois, so some of you may have met her in the past.

The designated minister's name is Rev. Shana Johnson. She grew up in East Peoria and has always been part of the UCC. Her first ministry setting was serving six small-yoked congregations in Southern Illinois. From there she did pulpit work, internships such as working as chaplain at the St. Louis City Jail and student pastoring, including serving as a student pastor at St. Paul's UCC in Lebanon. She received her degree in pastoral ministries from Greenville College in Illinois in 1993. From there she went to

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2016 Annual Meeting Sunday, January 17th

Annual Meeting is Sunday January 17th.

We will enjoy a potluck dinner after church service and then begin our meeting.

All organizations should have all reports to Lori by January 5. No reports will be accepted after this date. You can email them to loriselman@gmail.com.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Poinsettias - In Memory and Honor List

In Memory of	Clyde Fauth	from Janet Fauth
In Memory of	Dean Robert	from Kathleen Robert and Family
In Memory of	Vogel Loved Ones Karsten Loved Ons	from Leroy & Marlene Vogel Karsten
In Memory of	Kenneth Lehman Bob Lehman Janice Schmidt	from Lorrie Lehman
In Memory of In Honor of	Shannon Cathcart Ryan, Crystal, Nolan & Ashlyn Catchart	from Gary & Susie Stewart
In Memory of	Albert Waeltz Edythe Waeltz Wane Mueth	from Duane Waeltz
In Memory of	Eugene Barbee, Mickie & Art Cromer Gordon & Mary Walker Jim Ringler, Helen Alderdice	from Dave & Nancy Barbee
In Memory of	Albert and Edna Pflasterer Kevin Tod Campbell	from Tim Campbell
In Memory of	Mr. & Mrs. Albert Pflasterer Kevin Tod Campbell	from Mike & Peggy Dierks
In Memory of	Donald L. & Eleanor C. Eichenberger John G. & Bernice A Geisel	from Ronald W. and Pastor Gail Geisel
In Memory of	John Mercer Robert Mercer	from Carol Mercer
In Memory of	Harry Sr. & Selma Holcomb Harry Holcomb Jr. Loren Holcomb	from David & Pete Dressel

Comments from the Church Mouse



During a recent sermon by Pastor Gail and a meditation by Carol Mercer they mentioned the camels and the Wise Men who came to Bethlehem to pay homage to the newborn king, the Christ Child. They both had information right, but didn't have the whole story.

You see, my family is a very old one and has plenty of its own folk stories and legends, and one of them tells of a very distant relative who was with one of the caravans of the Wise Men. Before the Magi joined up on the long journey from the East, my many, many greats-grandfather Jacob traveled in the saddle bags of one of Gasper's camels. For such a long trip each of the Magi had pack animals and servants with them.

Gasper's camel who "housed" Jacob was young and strong and could carry a heavy load of supplies and presents for the baby king. One of the presents was a small box or casket of gold coins and jewelry. Jacob said that he did not travel with that pack because it was too hard and uncomfortable, but he had stowed away in the one that had grain and dried meats. He revealed that he was almost discovered a few times when someone thought one of the grain sacks' seams had broken. That was a scare.

He told of their travel from oasis to oasis and from the big dessert travel lodges to small towns. As experienced astrologers, the Wise Men charted their course on an unusually bright new star. It was later called by writers "the star of David".

Jacob expressed that it was an arduous journey, made in haste and at a steady pace. When finally they stopped at the palaces of King Herod, he thought the long trek might be over, but that was not so. Herod and his scholars sent the Wise Men further on to Bethlehem.

When the Wise Men followed the star to Bethlehem, they found a toddler and his mother and father in a small house of their relatives. There the Wise Men gave baby Jesus their gifts and honored him as the new born king, the messiah. Jacob was so impressed with the family that he divulged the little known fact, that he left the safety of Gasper's camel and stayed with Mary, Joseph and Jesus.

Family history tells of his stay with them and their escaping from Herod's men, who were searching for them after the visit of the Wise Men. Taking just a few supplies and a donkey, they had quickly left on a long trip to Egypt. Jacob rode in the limited space of the donkey's pack.

That part of the story can be told another day.

Don't forget that there will be a blood drive on January 11, 2016. That is one way anyone who is able to donate blood can make a difference.

A lot of the church family made a difference when they gathered after a meal the first Sunday of Advent and decorated the church. It looked so nice and festive. I do hide when Duane climbs that tall ladder to put on the big wreath. It looked wonderful, but oh, how scary to watch the process of getting it in place.

Now I'm waiting for the next Evangelical Daughters meeting and some tidbits from the good desserts they have and for the pot lucks. I missed them in December when they had their Christmas gathering at Marissa Antique Station. Well, really I missed any crumbs for me.

Anyway, have a good and healthy New Year and remember that little mice need attention, too.

Greeters and Ushers for January and February

JANUARY

Jan. 3 & 10: Leroy & Marlene Karsten, Sandy Smith

Jan. 17 & 24: Eloise Fauth, John & Janet Fauth

Jan. 31: John Barrett, Tim Campbell

FEBRUARY

Feb. 7: Gary & Susie Stewart, Ron Geisel

Feb. 14: Gary & Susie Stewart, Mandy Schmierbach and Family

Feb. 21: Mandi Schmierbach & Family

Feb. 28: Kay Trotter, Mike Trotter, Carol Mayfield

Birthdays

Gary Stewart	3
Robert Schmidt	5
Terry Jenkins	10
Lindsay Lehman	10
David B. Schneidewind	11
Duane Waeltz	11
Marilyn Wine	12
Judy Heil	14
Evelyn Schneidewind	15
Eloise Fauth	19
Dale Sinn	21
Dennis Sinn	28
Matthew Lewis	30
Charles Schmidt	30

January Birthdays and Anniversaries



Anniversaries

Gary & Susie Stewart	1
Ken & Joyce Fitch	14

Ministerial Moments Continued from Page 4

Eden Seminary, from which she graduated in 1997. She served several churches in Southern Illinois, Central Illinois, Missouri, and Northern Illinois. She currently serves Peace Memorial Church UCC in Palos Park, Illinois and is on the board of directors at Peace Village and Peace Residences (the church's not-for-profit senior living community and the church's not-for-profit lower income housing for seniors.) Her husband is also a minister. His name is Rev. Todd Bean and is currently the pastor at St. John's UCC in Weldon Springs, MO.

Years ago, I thought was getting to the end of my book series and began looking for a new one. I bought The Yada Yada Prayer Group. It has sat on my bookshelf for some time. Last October or November, Lorrie Lehman gave me a book to read called The Yada Yada Prayer Group Roles On. She said it was really good and since I recognized it as part of the series decided it was time to read book one. Two days after Lorrie passed on to me her book, Carol Mercer showed me The Yada Yada Prayer Group and also said how good it was. Since I already had that book, I suggested she pass it on to someone else which she did. On the other hand, to have two people tell me within a short period of time that a certain series is good, is a sign I had better get down to reading the books. They were right! I have just started the first book which I promised to Lorrie when I finish it, and it is very good, funny, and touching as a group of diverse and very different women find themselves thrown together in a prayer group at a Chicago conference and become friends. It's not often a book has me in the first few chapters but this one has and while it is not a Christmas book, it is a joyous book. I hope the two books of the series we have will float among the community for some time bringing joy.

Speaking of books, Monday Dec. 14 was our last meeting of the Book Club until after school starts in January. Robin Gerald, our librarian, decided we would do something different that day and in the process I learned a new synonym for the word chaos – scavenger hunt! We had seven different groups of children grouped by reading level who had to find clues all over the library. Fortunately, I had an assistant as I was always bringing up the rear and could not keep track of my group. We had children everywhere! There were a couple of words that had to be defined: “futon” and “sandwich board” come to mind, but for the most part my group found their clues without much help. There were also times when a clue was found which did not belong to the group finding it. It then had to go back where it belonged for the proper group to find it. We had at least one time when a clue was found out of order. Same thing. If you find the clues out of order, you may not get all your clues before the end. Everything was so chaotic that I think we may have even picked up a couple of children that weren't in our group to start with. Never mind. Everyone got a chance to read one or more clues and we found them all with 15 minutes to spare. The reward was to send them home with a bag of candy and a book at their reading level. The children all had a great deal of fun. Me? I slept most of the evening.

As you probably already know, I will be out of the office from Dec. 28 – Jan. 5. Carol Mercer will be giving the message on Jan. 3 which I believe will be on Epiphany (the three kings), This will probably be the last week the Christmas Carol books will be out so I hope you will all turn out to support Carol and also to get those three kings/wisemen to the stable.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Blessings,
Pastor Gail

January 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 5th Sunday— loose change goes to Schol- arship Fund	Up Coming Dates: Feb. 6: Pre-Lenten Breakfast ; Feb. 10: Ash Wednesday ; Feb. 14: Wedding of John Barrett and Lea Scruggs- Parker after church					2 New Years Day
3 Guest Speaker Carol Mercer	4 Evangelical Daughters Mtg. 6:00 pm	5 Reports due for Annual Mtg. Pastor Gail back	6 Choir 7:00 pm Epiphany	7	8	9
10 Annual Reports Handed out Communion	11	12 Council Mtg 7:00 pm	13 Choir 7:00 pm	14	15	16
17 Annual Meeting After Worship, potluck	18 MLK Jr. Day Week of prayer for Christian Unity	19	20 Choir 7:00 pm	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Choir 7:00 pm	28	29	30

Winter Word Search

F S N O W M A N Y P V W R U E
X I U E I L I G O F I A R H T
U C R C T U O L D N G K L I A
C S E E G I A Z T S O R F B R
C N O N P R H E O M H O C E G
H M E P B L R W C Y P K M R I
I P O E E K A L F W O N S N M
L O A G T O Q C I Z U C P A U
L R Z A K O C P E I J J D T Z
Y T H O T C H O C O L A T E J




chilly
fireplace
frost
hibernate
hot chocolate
migrate

penguin
polar bear
snowflake
snowman
white
winter

2016-2017 Usher and Greeter List

The Spiritual Council will be getting together in January to make the 2016-2017 Usher and Greeter list. If you would like off the list or certain Sunday, please let Pastor Gail or a Spiritual Council Member know.



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