

Joy of ST. JOHN'S

Nation Outside

ANTONIESE GANT PRESENTS FEB 6

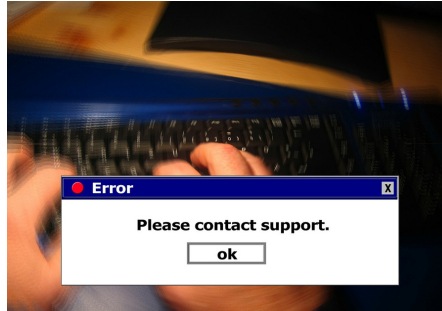
Tony Gant of Nation Outside will join us for worship on Sunday, February 6! Tony is the policy analyst and regional coordinator for Nation Outside, an organization that gives voice to formerly incarcerated persons and advocates for real reform in the criminal justice system. Nation Outside addresses the root causes of incarceration and promotes healing for the whole community. St. John's UCC has partnered in this work through giving from the Timothy Fund. Let's give our guest a warm St. John's welcome this Sunday!

March 2: Ash Wednesday Service 7 PM

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC JACKSON

Pastors Kerry and Judy will hold a joint Ash Wednesday service on March 2 at First Congregational. This worship service will mark the beginning of the Christian Lenten season of prayer and repentance. We will meet together in-person and on Zoom at 7 PM.

We will also offer "Drive Thru Ashes" at St. John's UCC at noon on March 2.



Master your Machine

UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMPUTER

Back by popular demand, Evelyn is launching a new series in February to help you get more familiar with technology.

Computers are everywhere, even in your pocket, but as computers become more powerful, users become more baffled! Together, let's Master Your Machine!

Notice our NEW DATES due to inclement weather:

February 9— Computer Basics 11am in person & on Zoom

February 16 — Smartphone Basics 11am in person & on Zoom

February 23 — Passwords and Security 11am in person & on Zoom



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From the Pastor's Screen

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL

During these cold, gloomy February days I am reminded of the dark night of the soul. It's a great and terrible season -- a time when God seems far away, when prayers bounce off the ceiling and return unanswered, when we question everything we thought we knew *for sure*. God's silence is nearly unbearable.

I experienced the dark night a few years ago. I had resigned from a church position, fully expecting to be called by a new, loving, growing family of faith. It was going to be a fresh start, filled with excitement and promise ... until it wasn't. The calls came, but I knew in my heart that I couldn't say yes. The Spirit of God was confounding all my plans. In my darkest moment, with loud sobs and many tears, I buried my pastoral dreams in a fresh grave in a cemetery.

The darkness lasted several months. Without my church family to fall back on, I reached for my faith -- but it failed me. God did not speak. I had walked away from my dream to be a minister, but a new vision had not yet arisen. I was lost.

I began to question everything I believed, and a great shift began to take place in me. I released beliefs that no longer served me, and I explored spirituality with curiosity.

St. John of the Cross wrote:

"O dark night, kindled in love with yearnings--oh happy chance!
The endurance of this darkness is preparation for great light."

The darkness has a job: it invites us to change. It *demand*s that we change! The longer we resist, the longer it persists.

Are you in that place where nothing seems right? Where there is no way forward? Where there is no light for your path, and you feel forgotten?

Oh happy chance! God has planted seeds in you that are beginning to stir and grow. Yes, it's painful. It's uncertain -- but transformation is at the door!

With Love, Pastor Judy

Transforming Hearts class

FEBRUARY ZOOM CLASS

St. John's UCC has been invited to attend an Extravagant Welcome Zoom Class beginning February 10 -- and three have signed up! The class is led and hosted by Pastor Dan Miyake of Liberty Universalist Unitarian Church in Clarklake. We will meet each Thursday via Zoom 7-9 PM.

The class curriculum was developed by the Transforming Hearts Collective, which resources faith communities and other groups for the work of radical inclusion for LGBTQ+ persons.

We plan to share this information with our congregation later this year, so we can learn how to be truly welcoming to all.



"Create in me
a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and
right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away
from your presence,
and do not take your
holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy
of your salvation,
and sustain in me a
willing spirit"

Psalm 51:10-12



Words for our walls?

What does the Lord require of you?
to do justice,
and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly
with your God.

Micah 6:8

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February Birthdays

TIME TO CELEBRATE!

- 3 - Philip Houser
- 5 - Spencer Parker Bush
- 7 - Clifford Schuler
- 7 - Jenny Vowler
- 8 - Ron Middlebrook
- 10 - Norm Richmond Jr.
- 12 - Barbara Parks
- 15 - Earnie Ramadan
- 21 - Nick Schroeder
- 22 - Craig Brush
- 27 - Christine Schroeder



Our St. John's History

PRESERVING THE PAST

Have you seen the original entrance to our sanctuary? Carl has done an amazing remodeling job! The ceiling has been raised and the walls painted.

This beautiful entrance is the perfect place to display our history. We are looking for a team of people to sort through pictures, books and documents and decide how best to showcase the history of St. John's.

If you like history, and if you have an eye for display, this is the job for you! Please let Pastor Judy know if you would like to participate. The deadline for this project is **Easter Sunday, April 17.**



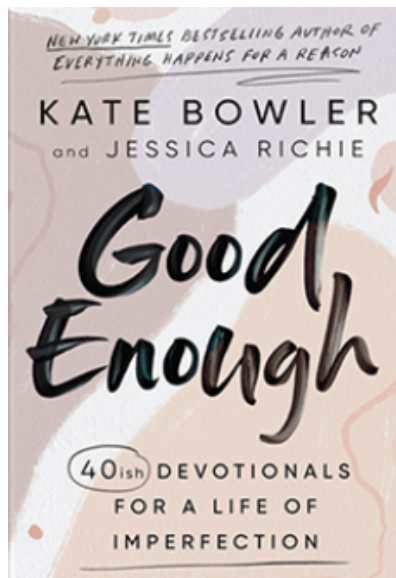
Lent Book Study

GOOD ENOUGH

During the season of Lent, we're all invited to enjoy the book "Good Enough" by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Filled with gentle humor, Good Enough explains that there are some things you can fix—and some things you can't. And it's okay that life isn't always better. In these 40+ devotions, Bowler and Richie offer imagination for how meaning can be discovered amid the chaos of life. We are invited to rest, knowing that the life in front of us can be beautiful. Or at least, good enough!

We have a discussion guide available and plan to talk about these devotions each Sunday during coffee hour, in-person and on Zoom.

Books are \$15 and we will be ordering by February 15. If you would like a book, please contact Evelyn in the church office.



February Calendar

FEBRUARY 6 - WORSHIP
GUEST TONY GANT OF
NATION OUTSIDE

FEBRUARY 9 - BABY
SHOWER MEETING 11 AM
ON ZOOM

FEBRUARY 9- MASTER
YOUR MACHINE 11 AM

FEBRUARY 9- UNITED
CENTER MEETING 12 PM
IN-PERSON/ZOOM

FEBRUARY 9 - COUNCIL
MEETING 3 PM (PLEASE
NOTE THE NEW TIME!)

FEBRUARY 10 -
TRANSFORMING HEARTS
ONLINE CLASS 7 PM

FEBRUARY 15 - BOOK
ORDERS DUE!

FEBRUARY 16 - MASTER
YOUR MACHINE 11 AM
IN-PERSON AND ZOOM

FEBRUARY 18 - FOOD
PANTRY 10 AM-12 PM

FEBRUARY 20 AND 27 -
REV. DR. BONITA
ZOBECK PREACHING

FEBRUARY 23 - MASTER
YOUR MACHINE 11 AM
IN-PERSON AND ZOOM



Samaritan Fund

BECOMING GOOD SAMARITANS

St. John's is working to help our neighbors! We continue to receive calls for help with rent, electricity and water bills, and food.

For January 2022 we had 7 requests for help with Consumer's shut offs; 5 checks were requested. There were 5 requests for help with rent/eviction; 2 checks were requested. There were 7 water shutoff requests with 5 completed. 4 requests were for emergency food. We continue to receive calls from people who are behind on their rent. Total funds applied for was \$800.

Please remember the Samaritan Fund in your giving!

"We live far happier lives when we are generous in as many ways as possible." — Cathy Burnham Martin

Baby "Sprinkles"

EXPANDED BABY SHOWER NEEDS

Each month our Baby Shower team is participating in the Food Pantry, offering baby items, clothing, diapers and more to moms in need. The goal is to journey with the moms and babies who participated in the annual Baby Shower. Last month 22 families received items!

We are currently in need of **diapers** of all sizes. Please contact Donna Benedict at the church office to find out how you can join in this unique ministry!



Hats, Mittens and Socks

COLD WEATHER IS HERE!

We will be providing the community with hats, mittens, gloves, and warm socks during the winter months. Please bring your donations to the church office and Carl will hang them outside for those in need. Thank you for your generosity!



Food Pantry

COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Our Community Food Pantry was held on January 21 and continues to serve families in need. We provided 3,600 pounds of food and served 105 individuals, representing 224 family members. Many thanks to our faithful team of volunteers! The next Food Pantry will be Friday, February 18, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

All Hands on Deck!

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Want to help?
Here's what you can do!

- Sign up for our Lenten book study "Good Enough"!
- Join the History Team and decorate the original entrance.
- Pray for St. John's congregation every day: pray for wisdom as we move forward, compassion for one another, and success for our outreach and missions.
- Assist with the Food Pantry on the third Friday of each month.
- Donate time or money to the Samaritan Fund.
- Bring diapers for the Baby Shower.
- Volunteer to be an Usher.
- Offer your musical gifts.
- Notice who's missing from worship ... and reach out with love.
- Call a friend to say hello and let them know you care about them!



Rev. Judy Goodrow
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kjgoodrow3kids@gmail.com

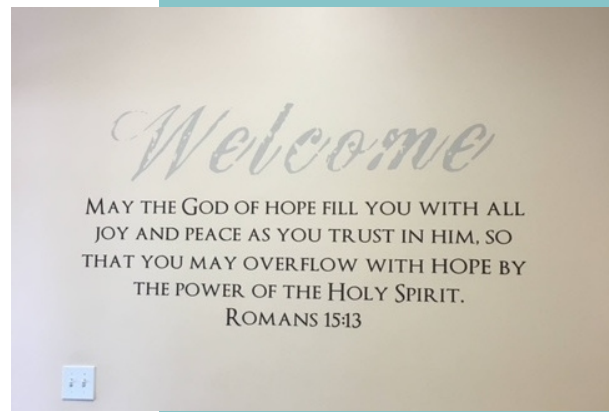
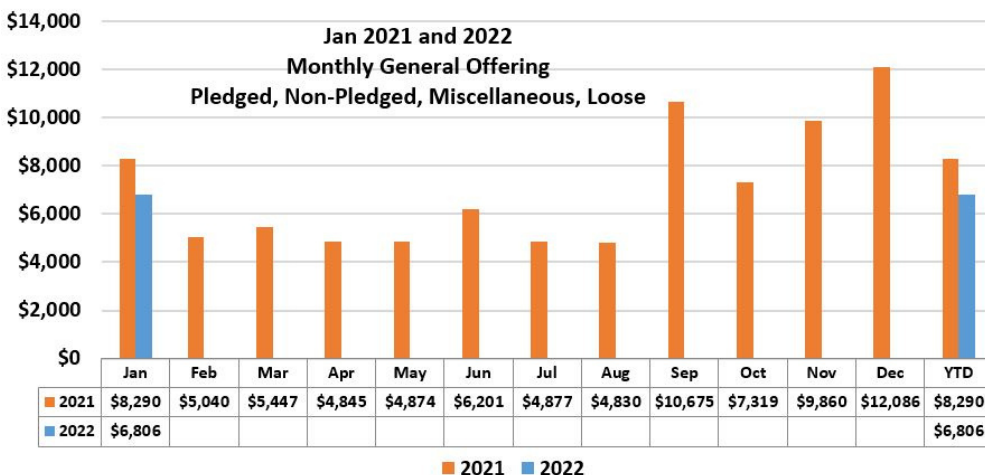
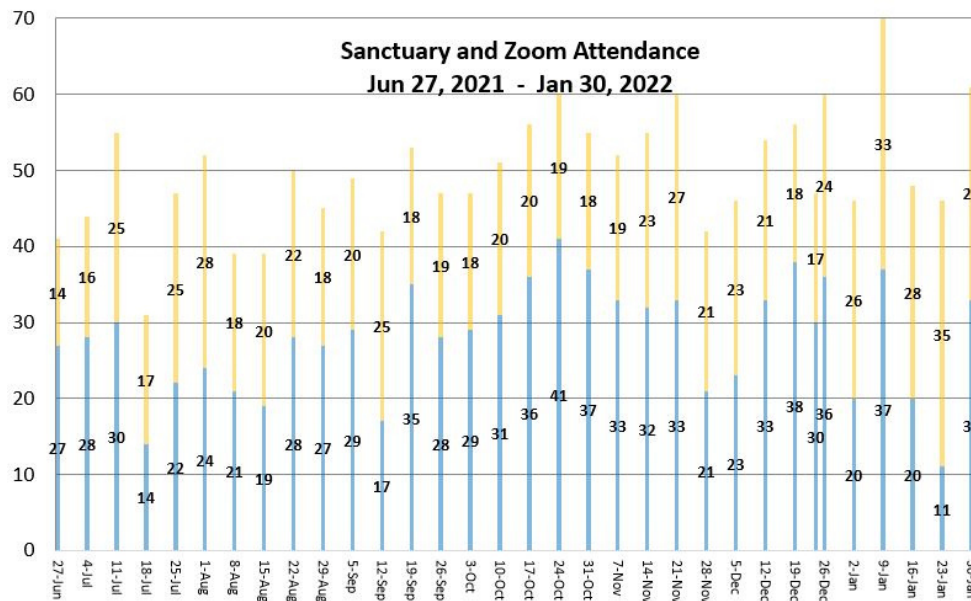
Healthy Congregations

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

In January our Healthy Congregations group discussed marketing slogans and wall art, summarized by a "Branding Brainstorming" presentation created by Bert Steck (thanks, Bert!). We explored different ways to use "Reach up, reach in, reach out," as well as several other phrases that might describe St. John's. We also discussed the words which describe our church and hope to have words (decals) on our walls so that every time we enter our beautiful building, we know why we gather ... and every time a visitor enters our building, they will know what we're passionate about. (See the example in the sidebar at right featuring Romans 15:13.)

Everyone is encouraged to participate in our Healthy Congregations group. Bring your hopes, dreams and words! We'll continue our conversation on March 16. If you can't meet with us, call me and share your "words for the walls"!

—Pastor Judy



Council Update

The Church Council met on January 12 and the following business was discussed:

- The new position(s) of Music Tech requires congregational vote at the Annual Meeting;
- Sound technicians equalized the sound in the sanctuary, and the speakers will be moved;
- Office passwords are stored at bitwarden.com and three individuals will have access;
- A secure offering collection box will be installed in the Fellowship Room;
- Zoom audio subscription will be purchased with grant funds when they are received;
- Pastor Judy's office hours have changed to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday, with flexibility when needed;
- Pastor Judy will coordinate Evelyn's work assignments;
- Lights in the Social Hall need to be replaced. Costs will be presented in February;
- Lou Cubille may be interested in painting a section of wall in Social Hall;
- Vendors/bill payments were discussed.

Full minutes are available in the church office. The next Council meeting will be February 9 at 3 PM in person and via Zoom.

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*Reach up,
Reach in,
Reach out!*



Affix Address
Label Here

*Whoever you are, and wherever
you are on life's journey ...*

*There's a place
for you here!*

St. John's

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

reach up, reach in, reach out

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