



St. John's

United Church of Christ

Digital Newsletter

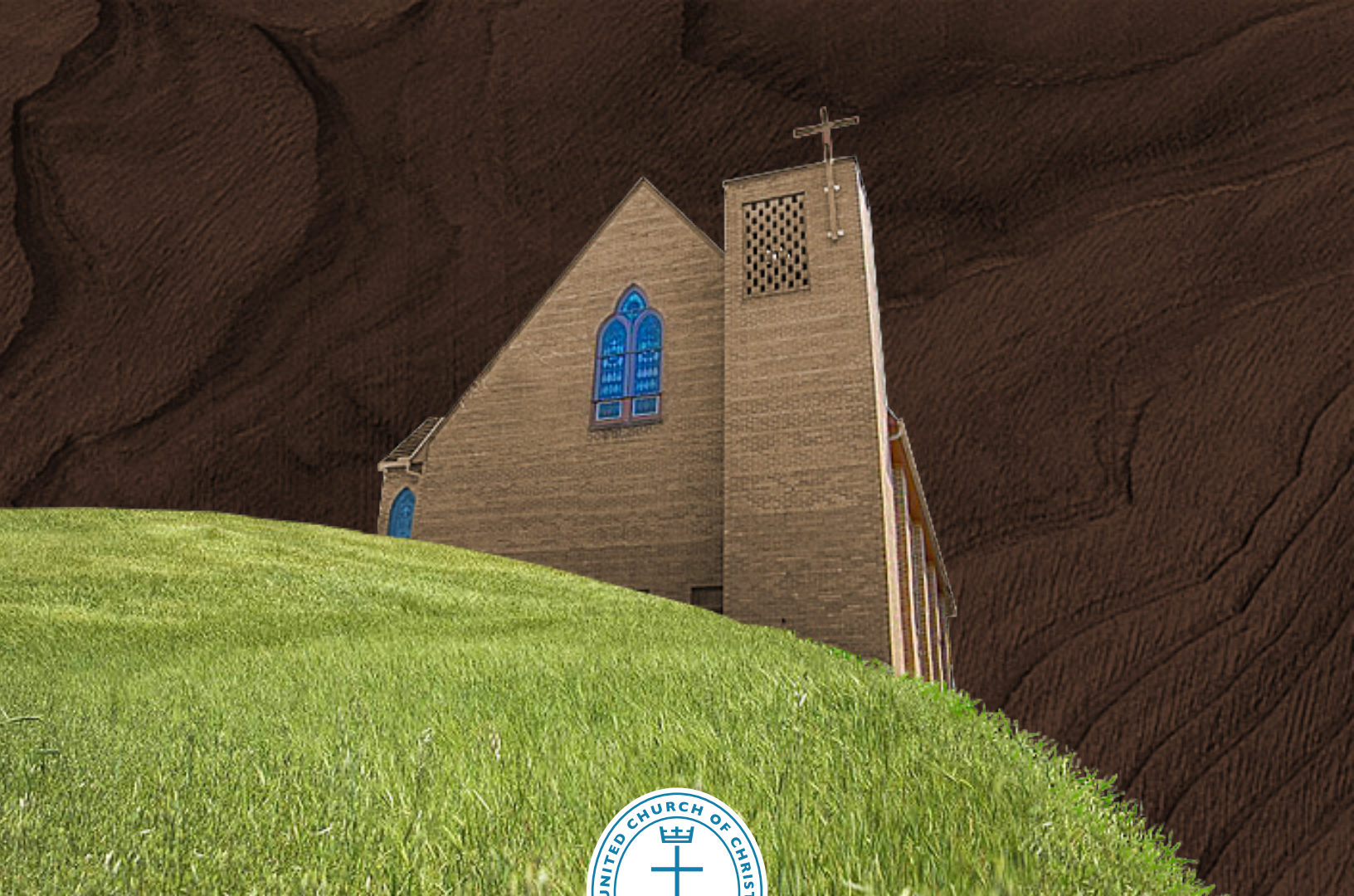
SJC Issue 0525 - May 2025



stjohnsfcwi.org

St. John's Church | PO Box 130 | 303 S Hill Street | Fountain City, WI

608.687.3277



Sunday Worship @ 8:30am

We offer two options for worship on Sundays: in person or online. Whether you prefer to worship from the safety of your home or with others, we at St. John's want to make sure you get the spiritual encouragement you need. Join us in person each Sunday at 8:30am or watch a video recording of the online service. The service is not recorded live but is uploaded after the service has ended. We look forward to worshipping with you!

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Letter From The Pastor

May 2025

I just returned from visiting a friend in Western Nebraska. The weather wasn't the greatest, but we did get some sightseeing in, especially among the bluffs in the area.

I was struck by how different those bluffs are from the ones around here. Most were made by wind and stream deposits of sand and mud, wind deposits of volcanic ash, formed over centuries. They are sharply distinct from each other, with large spaces between them. They are covered mostly by grass and bushes that can survive in the shallow nutrient topsoil. I spent time in the information centers at these bluffs learning more about these "strange" (i.e. unfamiliar/ previously unencountered by me) geological formations.



The ones here (such as Eagle Bluff) were carved out by waters of the Mississippi and other flowing water. Trees and other vegetation, as well as the wildlife that lives within them, are vibrant and active during most of the year. Yet these too are called bluffs.

How are two things that are the same 'thing' so different? Different origins, different looks, even different ways of being formed. Still, I have yet to hear anyone saying that Eagle Bluff isn't a real bluff because it was carved out, or that Scotts Bluff is not really a bluff because it was made from deposits over time. Both are part of the wonders of God's creation, even with these differences. Or perhaps because of these differences. And both are part of this country.

So why doesn't that same attitude carry over to how we view other human beings? Rather than extolling the wonder of God's diverse creation of people, formed by different events, genetics and experiences, I'm hearing more people bemoaning differences. Somehow the message of Jesus that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves has become disconnected from what many understand Christianity to be about today. Instead of celebrating differences among people more barriers are being set up in God's name.

Letter From The Pastor

May 2025

The sense that only certain people are worthy of respect, of compassion, even of basic rights is being intentionally and methodically nurtured to grow, often disguised in language with religious overtones.

When Jesus is asked “who is my neighbor” he tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. Except no one listening to Jesus tell the parable would have called any Samaritan “good”. Just the opposite The one who stopped and took care of the injured traveler on the side of the road, was of an ethnic and religious background Jesus’ audience had been told were a hated enemy who caused real harm to them. That, Jesus says, is our neighbor. Not the closest people to you- but the one you’d really rather cross the street if you see coming the other way. The one who has hurt you, whether that hurt is real or imagined. The one you’ve been told all your life is an enemy, worst of the worse, a threat to all you hold dear and believe. Who would Jesus tell us today is our neighbor, the one we are to care about and for, to go out of our way to care for their needs even when it costs us?

I invite you to reflect with other church members, friends, and family on this question: Who are the “awful” or “dangerous” or “hateful” or “threats” or “depraved” that Jesus is trying to tell you are really your neighbors? The one you are to love with acts of service and care, to see as another beloved child of God even if you don’t approve of the way that they are acting. It isn’t loving our neighbor to accept bad, hurtful and unjust behavior no matter what. Or to be the continuing subject of abuse. That is the opposite of loving, for it allows our neighbor to continue to separate themselves from God and others. (Psychologically this is referred to as enabling.)

It IS allowing God to use us in ways that carve paths through centuries of hate, pride and fear even if the final effects won’t be evident until long after we are gone. Loving our neighbor is trusting God enough to love and be loved, so that in our following of Christ layer after layer of compassion and mercy builds up and forms communities that welcome the stranger, reach out to those others scorn and ostracize through their actions and words, and declare the Good News that no one deserves to be treated as anything other than human, other than a beloved child of God. Including ourselves. To do so we will need to spend time and make the effort to learn about the differences we have with people, especially those that seem strange, or weird to us.

Letter From The Pastor

May 2025

As Jesus did with all whom he met, we will need to listen to stories, to see people for who they are, and not what others have declared them to be. For sometimes a bluff is formed over time by wind depositing layers of various soils and rocks. Other times its formed by water carving its way through rock over time. But both are bluffs. And both are part of the wider Creation of God, beautiful in their own ways. As are we. Each and every one of us.

God's grace and peace.

Pastor Deb Kunkel

Constitution Update

Constitution and Bylaws

We want to give you an update on where we stand on updating the Constitution and By-laws. The Task Force is finishing up their first draft to present to the Consistory. Once that is done, and if there aren't any major changes, we will make it available to the congregation for their review and comments. When the draft is ready, we will notify the congregation's members by email (and postal letter for those who don't have an email) that it is available, and can be requested to be sent to them. We will also have copies available at the church for people to pick up. We will also be scheduling two sessions for members to ask questions, make comments, and suggest any changes. Please watch the bulletin, email and web page for those dates. If there aren't major changes requested at that point, we will schedule a Special Congregational meeting for approval of the minutes. In the meantime, please contact any member of the Task Force with questions or concerns.

Erick Hoffmaster, Karen Knopse, Karen Pehler, John Stettler, Linda Clark, Cheryl Kuhn, Dave Schaffner, Dale Schmidtknecht, LuAnn Schmidtknecht and Pastor Deb Kunkel

The Cake Auction Is Back!

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Bring your checkbooks and your appetites with you for the Annual Cake Auction which will be held in Fellowship Hall after the worship service. Tasty cakes, pies, and other goodies will be available for purchase. We look forward to your participation in baking and bidding. This is one of our favorite events & proceeds go to our Sunday School Program. A light lunch will be served by your Christian Education Committee.



Sunday Penny Collection

First Sunday of the Month

The Church School Students will be collecting pennies the first Sunday of every month. We haven't done this in a long time and are anxious to start again. This money enables us to do donations to people or needy projects in our area or throughout the world.

Sunday, May 4, 2025



Online Calendar

Visit Us Online 24/7

Please go online and visit our NEW easy to use website for current up-to-date, detailed event information. Our calendar is updated daily. Email us with any questions or comments.

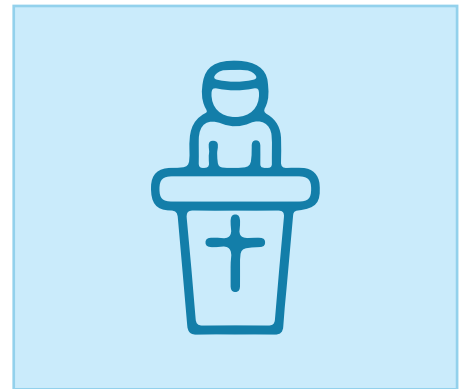
stjohnsfzwi.org



Liturgists & Others Wanted

Do you like to read during the service?

Then you will be happy to know that Pastor Deb is seeking liturgists to start the first week in November. Liturgists will lead the Call to Worship and read the first Scripture Reading. If you would like to be included in the pool of liturgists or readers, please let Pastor Deb know or look for the sign-up sheet. Or do you like the spotlight or have a little bit of “ham” in you? Pastor Deb would love to have you join her in skits or dramatic monologues used on occasion during the service. Please let her know (all ages welcome.)



Stewardship

Stewardship Moment from the Deacons

Stewardship is as important in today as it is in December.

From the Stewardship Theme last year we are reminded that stewardship is all year long.

“Because of You our Church changes lives”.

~ St John’s Church



Food Shelf

Businesses Of The Month: Hope United Church & Hope Kids

Cochrane-Fountain City Area Food Shelf

Hope United Church & Hope Kids

Thank you very much!



C-FC Area Food Shelf

Report For April 2025

As part of our Stewardship as a church please consider a monetary donation or food donation for our Food Shelf here at Church. See list below of our most needed items. This summer and fall we have been much busier than usual providing food to people in need in our community. If we want to continue this service we do need your assistance to continue. Please put your donation of food in the bin at church by coat rack or your monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to church with checks made out to C-FC Area Food Shelf - St John's Church, PO Box 130, Fountain City WI, 54629.

Donations Most Needed:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| ✓ Toilet Paper | ✓ Crackers (Saltines) | ✓ Canned Chili |
| ✓ Canned /Ham/Salmon | ✓ Rice/Pasta Pouches | ✓ Canned Stew |
| ✓ Cake/Brownie | ✓ Vegetable Spray | ✓ Spices |
| ✓ Muffin Mixes | ✓ Brown Rice | ✓ Applesauce |
| ✓ Canned Frosting | ✓ Juice Boxes | ✓ Salad Dressing |
| ✓ Instant Oatmeal | ✓ V8/Tomato Juice | ✓ Ketchup |
| ✓ Cereal (Healthier) | ✓ Boost/Ensure | ✓ BBQ Sauce |

1st & 3rd Monday: 4:30pm - 6:30pm
2nd & 4th Wednesday: 3:00pm - 5:00pm



- ✓ 571 Pounds Of Food Distributed
- ✓ Averages 20 Pounds Of Food Per Person
- ✓ 28 Total People Helped
- ✓ 01 Children
- ✓ 12 Adults
- ✓ 15 Seniors
- ✓ 15 Households (3 Came Twice)



Most Needed Donation Items For May 2025

- ✓ Protein Items
- ✓ Chili

- ✓ Beans
- ✓ Stew

- ✓ Chicken
- ✓ Sardines

Please put your donation of food in the green bin at church located in the Food Shelf room across from Pastor Deb's office or your monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to church with checks made out to C-FC Area Food Shelf - St John's Church, PO Box 130, Fountain City WI, 54629.

Volunteers: May

Ushers

Greg Osborn, Neal Schaffner

Greeters

05.04.25 Karen Pehler

05.11.25 John & Naomi Schmidtknecht

05.18.25 Erick & Liz Hoffmaster

05.25.25 Dave & Sue Schaffner

06.01.25 Dale & LuAnn Schmidtknecht

Counters

Sandy & Tom Ruben

Communion & Flowers

Sherry Guenther

Financial Report

For detailed information regarding the financial standing of St. John's Church, contact the office to review financial documents.

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Birthdays

Faye Conners
Riley Ratz
Bert Schaffner
Ivy Mohlke
Beverly Engel
Michelle Holliman
Don Stettler
John Stettler
Paul Ehmcke
Jan Schaffner
Kashes Franz
Jo Muench
Sandy Ruben
Byron Hoch
Kathy Bowman
Angeli Engel
Luke Schaffner
Tyson Ely
Blake Maier
Chelsea Clark
Deanna Wiersgalla
Loren Ziegler
Mike Schmidtknecht
Tina Schowalter
Jacob Jandro
Gunner Eckelberg
Jeanne Fugina
Ken Engel
Carl Brommerich

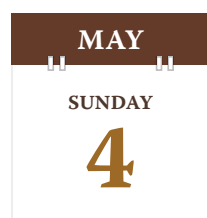
Anniversaries

Paul & Ruth Ehmcke
Marvin & Carol Colbenson
Mark & Tiffany Schaffner
Brian & Lisa Wolfe
Neal & Diane Schaffner

Other Special Events

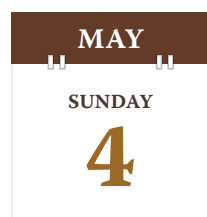
St. John's Church

Along with our Sunday Worship Service schedule, Pastor Deb's Office Hours, Consistory Meetings, Food Shelf Schedule and other recurring events. Below is a list of SPECIAL EVENTS located at St. John's Church and or the local area. Please contact us with any questions. Thanks again for all the support from volunteer and the community.



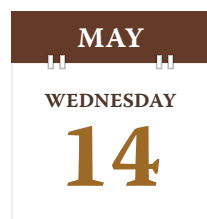
Penny Collection St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 8:30am



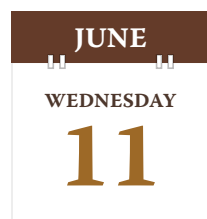
Cake Auction St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
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After Worship



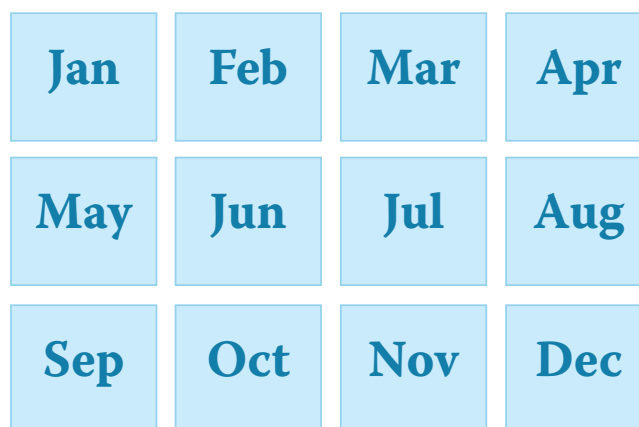
Consistory Meeting St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 6:00pm



Consistory Meeting St. John's Church

303 S Hill Street
Fountain City, WI
Starts @ 6:00pm



Online Calendar

Please go online and visit our NEW easy to use website for current up-to-date, detailed event information. Our calendar is updated daily. Email us with any questions or comments.

stjohnsfcwi.org
info@stjohnsfcwi.org

Prayer Requests

St. John's Church - Pastor Deb Kunkel

Congregation members and non-members are encouraged to request prayers for times of need, comfort, healing, celebration and joy. If you would like a visit from Pastor Deb, please call her to set up a time today!



Pastor Deb's Office Hours:

Monday's Noon to 2:00pm
Wednesday's 10:00am to Noon
239.994.2528
pastorstjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

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United Church of Christ
303 S Hill Street, PO Box 130
Fountain City, WI 54629-0130

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St. John's

United Church of Christ

Church Office:

stjohnsuccfc@gmail.com

Newsletter:

stjohnsfcnewsletter@gmail.com

Pastor Deb's Office Hours:

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