

St. James United Church of Christ

9008 Meisner Road, Casco, MI 48064 / www.ourstjameschurch.org/

News from Pastor Ken

Newsletter
January 2018
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Happy New Year!

For many the New Year means a time of new beginnings and hope.

The New Year can give us a sense of optimism, opportunity and excitement for what the days ahead. It is as if turning to the first page of the calendar allows us to set aside the challenges, disappointments and hurts of the past year and look forward to a fresh beginning.

That is exactly what this past month of Advent and Christmas are all about. Maybe that is why the church calendar always begins approximately a month before our standard secular calendar year. It gives us a little extra time to plan and prepare for this new beginning. It was good this past Advent spending time of active prayer and meditation discerning what God has called me (and us) to do and who God has called me (and us) to be.

As we look toward our New Year I encourage each of us to consider our individual and personal gifts and opportunities and to actively participate in the growth and sustainability of ourselves and our community of faith. This may include planning and/or growing a ministry, reaching out to those in need, inviting friends and family to attend worship, reaching out to former members or your unchurched neighbors to visit us, encouraging generous giving, and sharing your story of faith in the community.

The reality is that this family of faith needs and more importantly calls you to be an active part in its vital role in the community and it cannot do it without you. Just as Christ could not carry on his ministry without his disciples, we cannot carry on without your active participation in spreading the good news. This approach to ministry more closely

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ January 7 - Communion Sunday, Discretionary Fund
- ◆ January 9 - Council Meeting
- ◆ January 14 - Annual Reports due to Secretary
- ◆ January 20 - Euchre
- ◆ January 21 - Communion Sunday
- ◆ January 28 - Congregational Annual Meeting after Service

The Discretionary Fund January 7, 2018

Did you know this fund is utilized to aid with rent, utilities, medical supplies, food and transportation to doctors, etc.?

This is generated from the loose change collected the first Sunday of each month. Please empty your pockets and change purses that day to meet the needs of our church and community.

reflects the way Christ's own ministry was carried out. It creates wonderful opportunities for all to participate each according to our individual gifts of time, energy, talent, treasure and other resources as we are able in various and appropriate ministries.

As we speak of gifts, January 6th is Epiphany, a time when the wise men brought gifts to the baby Jesus. I so much enjoy the whole idea of Epiphany and all the symbolism that goes with it. First, there was the arrival of the wise men on Epiphany. They traveled across what was then the entire world on faith, following a star to a place where, when they arrived, they were struck by a vision of hope and love so simple and yet so profound that it changed their lives. During this season of Epiphany, we too are invited to come to that place where our lives may be changed forever.

We also in the first week of Epiphany celebrate the baptism of Jesus Christ. It is in that very same baptism that we too are baptized and called to be disciples each of us according to our gifts and abilities.

This is for me an exciting time. A time when the world so desperately needs to see hope, so desperately needs to see the love of Jesus. We are called to be the face of Christ, to be that light for the world to see. I think to myself "what an overwhelming task" but I realize that we do not go alone nor are we expected to do it all. We go knowing that God stands before us and behind us, that God will give us the words to speak and the strength to do God's will each according to our gifts and abilities. We are called to reach out to change the life of one person, who will change the life of one person, who will change the world. I always remember this wonderful quote "We are not called to do everything but we are called to do something."

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are surrounded by God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. There is a place for you here.

May this Epiphany season fill you and us with hope, recognizing and acting on our call to be disciples.

Happy New Year!! Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Prayers for....



Karen Marie
Sue
Scott
Mimi
Dan
Rich
Maraleen
Dale
Irene
Clark Russell
Tony

George
David
Deborah
Lynn
Johnnie
Paul
Peggy
Marion
Roslynn
Joanne
Deb O.

Outreach Ministry

Kids in Distress

Current needs are as follows:

Diapers Size 5, Bath Towels, Twin Sheets
Pots Pans/ Dishes/ Silverware, Fabric
Softener Sheets, HE Laundry Soap

St. Augustine Richmond Food Pantry

In need of... assorted jams and jellies,
boxed potatoes, Manwich, jello,
macaroni and cheese, and any of type
of condiments like mustard, ketchup,
pickles, salad dressing, etc.

Blue Water Area Rescue Mission - B-WARM

B-WARM NEEDS

Cleaning supplies: Toilet bowl cleaner, bleach,
laundry soap, dish washing detergent,
bathroom cleansers.

Men's clothing: sweatshirts, coats, and
jackets.

Paper supplies: paper towels, napkins, toilet
tissue, kleenex.

Miscellaneous: deodorants, shaving cream,
shampoo, disposable razors.

B-WARM still has a need for volunteers to
cook part time, make phone calls, and do
some sewing. They are also looking for
someone who specializes in writing grants. If
anyone is especially generous and has a van
they don't drive anymore, they could use one
of those too.

Happy Birthdays in January

- 2 – Mark Pittman
- 6 – Bill LaDuke
- 8 – Elizabeth Kulman
- 14 – Bill Osterland
- 16 – Andrew Kargula
- 20 – Jim Maedel
- 26 – Tommy Bandlow
- 28 – Jessie Teltow
- 30 – Cindy Pittman

Worship Ministry

Volunteers Needed Please sign-up

Please consider signing up for the ministries of Usher/Greeter, Liturgists and Altar Care. Sign-up sheets for each are provided in the basement.



Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your loved one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to Roberta Fisher to be placed on the list.

Spiritual Growth Ministry

We need volunteers to assist with Sunday School, please let Sue Tews know if you can assist.

Earthly Gifts Ministry

Financial Goal Report November Financial Goal Report

The December financial goal is \$5,750.00. Total donations through Sunday the 17 was \$4,594.00 so far with only a few more days left to make our goal and also include your donations in your giving statement for 2017 tax filing.

Council Members Needed!!!!

St. James will need five members of the church to volunteer by January 1st for three years to be a member of the church council. Please notify Pastor Ken or one of the council members if you are interested in the rewarding service.



My New Year Wishes for You...

Happiness deep down within.
Serenity with each sunrise.
Success in each facet of your life.
Family beside you.
Close and caring friends.
Health, inside you.
Love that never ends.
Special memories of all the yesterdays.
A bright today with much to be thankful for.
A path that leads to beautiful tomorrows.
Dreams that do their best to come true.
Appreciation of all the wonderful things about you.

Have a great Year.
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Christmas Shoeboxes

We collect the below items for boys and girls from the age of 2 to 14 years old. Our goal is to fill 100 boxes by November 2018 without running out of items. January 2018 collection is for hats, gloves or mittens (all sizes), socks (all sizes). Items accepted anytime are: toys, school supplies (pens, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, small note books, glue, crayons), hygiene items (soap, washcloths, combs, toothbrushes, floss), headbands, barrettes and bows.

We can no longer provide toothpaste, toy guns or army men, paint sets and glue bottles.

If you are not a shopper, you can still donate to this worthy cause by providing a cash donation or monies to cover the **\$9.00 mailing costs.**

Roof Collection



The total donated for the church roof is now at \$6,995.05 thanks to a Euchre Party and the donation from the Women's Fellowship Party. Please keep supporting St. James Roof Fund by placing your donation in your regular envelope and marking how much goes to the roof or use the small pew envelope marking it with your name or envelope number.

Kid's Page



Altar Care

January - Open

Communion Servers

Preparer: Roberta Fisher
Communion Servers: Roberta Fisher & Sherrie Ingles

Ushers & Greeters

January 7 - Open
January 14 - Open
January 21 - Open
January 24 - Open

Liturgists

January 7 - Open
January 1 - Open
January 21 - Open
January 28 - Open

Scripture Readings for January

**Sunday, January 7
The Baptism of Christ**

Gen 1:1-5

Ps 29

Acts 19: 1-7

Mk 1: 4-11

Defining Moments

**Sunday, January 21
Third Sunday after Epiphany**

Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

Ps 62: 5-12

1 Cor 7: 29-31

Mk 1: 14-20

Follow Me

**Sunday, January 14
Second Sunday of Epiphany**

1 Sam 3: 1-10, (11-20)

Ps `39: 1-6, 13-18

1 Cor 6: 12-20

Jn 1: 43-51

Known and Loved

**Sunday, January 28
Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**

Deut 18: 15-20

Ps 111

1 Cor 8: 1-3

Mk 1: 21-28

Power to Do



St. James United Church of Christ
9008 Meisner Road
Casco, MI 48064

Phone:
(586) 727--1623

Fax:
(586) 27-0833

E-mail:
kgadd@ourstjameschurch.org

We're on the Web!
Ourstjameschurch.org



JANUARY NEWSLETTER