

WHAT'S UP

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1: 1-3

I was in a meeting the other day and the Bible study came up, and someone said, "I wish more people were

attending."

We talked about some reasons for why that might be, and it occurred to me that I could talk about this here in our newsletter. Why would people not attend a Bible study?

*Timing – 9:00 is too early in the morning – *(I think it's pretty early, too. If you would like to attend but 9:00 is too early, please let me know. If enough people are interested, I am happy to change the day and time.)*

*The Bible is boring – *(Some parts are, that's true. But not all. There's plenty of conflict, war, love, sex, shipwrecks, adventure and more. We won't be reading the boring stuff.)*

*The Bible is too confusing – *(It's true. It is confusing. Just look at the above passage. What/who is the Word? How could the Word be with God and be God?)*

*The Bible makes me angry and frustrated – *(I'm right there with you.)*

*I'm afraid if I don't start at the beginning and attend every week, I'll be lost. – *(That's understandable. But don't be afraid. Just come. There's not much of a "plot" to follow, really. Many of the stories you've already heard. You don't have to attend every week. There are no quizzes or homework. Just come.)*

*I heard that people are encouraged to ask questions and voice opinions. But what if I don't want to talk? *(That's okay. You don't have to.)*

So why bother with Bible study? Well, if we're going to be following Christ, it would help if we actually knew what Jesus said and did, at least according to our gospel authors, which is the best we have. If any of the above points resonate with you at all, please know that I have felt all of them right along with you. But what I have found is that, when you are in a group and have a facilitator who has done research and is learned in the subject to guide the class, that the Bible doesn't have to be this boring, frustrating, confusing book, but a fascinating guide in how to be like Jesus, and how to be closer to God, and to each other. Each time we look at scripture, different things stand out for us, and rather than trying to find the "right" answers, the Bible is forever interpretable.

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- Charlotte Fiedler

Officers:
Tom Mogel, Financial Sec.
Margie Schweitzer, Historian
Nancy Ewing, Treasurer

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CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Beth's message continued...

In our class, we have been exploring in depth certain terms and stories that are familiar – but do we really know what they mean? Things like baptism, the Holy Spirit, who is John the Baptist, was Jesus a sinner? The conversations have been lively and fascinating. We are having fun, we laugh and enjoy ourselves. And eat cookies and drink coffee. What? You mean Bible study can be...fun? People laugh? Yeah, I was surprised, too. Come and see...

With love in Christ,

Pastor Beth



DECEMBER

Birthday

- 2...Mary Ann Lopardo
- 4...Benjamin Hendricks
- 7...Emily Focht
- 9...Beth Eustis
- 9...Amy Friemann
- 10...Mae Mogel
- 15...Lisa Hendricks
- 21...Gregory Borneman
- 22...Ruth Borneman
- 29...Aaron Smith
- 30...Ian Gelwicks

Anniversary

- 17...Ralph & Linda Bevan

Congratulations and best wishes from your church family!

NOVEMBER CONSISTORY MINUTES

Heating in Sanctuary-They are still waiting for the part. Estimated cost is \$2300-2800.

Recording weekly giving-Weekly donations were being tracked in Servant Keeper until Covid. We will have Sandy C enter the weekly offerings in Servant Keeper for 2022 and moving forward.

Christmas Day worship service-The consensus is that attendance would be very low and poorly attended. Christmas Eve service will be held at 3:30 pm.

Endowment Motion to meet missions-There is a recommendation from the Missions Committee to request a motion at the Congregational Meeting that if the budget is not met, that the Missions line items in the budget be fulfilled through requests to the Endowment Fund.

Filling positions for the new year-Sandy Koenig and Nancy Ewing are nominated for the Endowment Committee. Laura Walters and James Friemann are going off of Consistory and need to be back-filled. One deacon and one elder need to be back-filled. Jay has expressed interest in returning to Consistory. The treasurer position is also being vacated.

Cemetery plots – 150 plots at Limerick Garden of Memories were donated in 2024. Rich and Charlotte are going to investigate further.

JANUARY

Birthday

- 4...Linda Alexander
- 6...Ralph Bevan
- 9...Barbara Brightbill
- 9...Dottie Cossaboon
- 16...Kyleigh Gelwicks
- 21...Leisel Sarfert
- 27...Carter Hendricks

Anniversary

- 3...C. Wendel & Sandra Koenig



PRAYER CONCERNS

For our friends Betty Himes, Heather Yates, Melissa Moore, Sang Hi Crater, Joan Rosen, Millie Alderfer, Evelyn Phelen *and others who are in long term care or unable to leave their homes. We pray for comfort, peace, healing, and companionship for each of them.*

For our friends Van S, Michelle, Ken, Betsy R, Sue J, Charlotte F, Bobbie T, Paul M, Chet M, Dottie, Bonnie, BJ, Diane, Ric F, Sharon R, Linda S, John K, Jessica, Jay P, Tabby, Karen, George N, Marianne K, Joy W, Karen, Carl H, Phil, Nancy B, Ken G, Ginny, Patricia S, Dodie S, Ralph B, Carol T *and all cancer survivors, we pray for treatment where it is possible and release from suffering where it is needed.*

For our friends Fred R, Joan R, Nancy B, Dottie L, Rick P, Beth E, Carol T, Rod, Ken, Lori, Marilyn S *and others with ongoing health concerns and challenging life of God's presence through the support of our congregation.*

Prayers for all veterans that are still suffering from PTSD and all other side effects from their service in the military.

Lord, we come giving you praise and thanksgiving for all the blessings you give us. We thank you for the prayers you have answered and continue to pray for those that continue to struggle with illness and other health issues. We pray for comfort and peace for those that have lost loved ones as they struggle through this difficult time. We pray for peace for our world and pray that the gun violence ends that are taking so many lives. We pray for health and wholeness of mind, body and spirit upon all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please note that we will remove names on the prayer list after one month, except for homebound and hospitalized members. Let us know if you would like to add or renew a request by office phone or email.




PRAYING FOR ST. JAMES MEMBERS

Initiated by St. James Prayer Team, each Sunday two church families are being included in the Sunday worship prayer time. You are invited to include these members and their families in your prayers throughout that week.

December	January
<p>4 <i>Richard and Charlotte Fiedler Kristen Focht</i></p> <p>11 <i>James, Amy, Celeste and Amanda Friemann Arthur, Melissa, Katelyn, Kyleigh and Ian Gelwicks</i></p> <p>18 <i>Charles Grisdale Donald Grisdale</i></p> <p>25 <i>Ben, Lisa, Carter, Anna and Emily Hendricks Charles and Marion Hentz</i></p>	<p>1 <i>Craig Hillegass Betty Himes</i></p> <p>8 <i>Charles and Sandra Koenig Linda and Eric Kramer</i></p> <p>15 <i>Sharon (Sherry) Kulp Phil and Joanne Levering</i></p> <p>22 <i>Mary Ann Lopardo Paul and Betty Meyers</i></p> <p>29 <i>Beth Miller Carl and Mae Mogel</i></p>

CALENDAR

December 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3 Men's Breakfast 8am
4 Bible Study 9am Worship service 10:15am	5 Boy Scout 7pm	6 Missions 7pm	7 Midweek Study 1pm	8	9	10 Fellowship Dinner 5pm
11 NO Bible Study 9am Worship service 10:15am	12 Boy Scout 7pm	13 Consistory 7pm	14 Midweek Study 1pm Coventry Chorus Rehearsal 7pm	15	16 Coventry Chorus Concert 7:30pm	17
18 Bible Study 9am Worship service 10:15am Eagle Scout 4-8	19 Boy Scout 7pm	20	21 Midweek Study 1pm	22	23	24 Christmas Service 3:30pm
25 NO Christmas day service 	26 Boy Scout 7pm	27 AA District Meeting 7pm	28 Midweek Study 1pm Blood Drive 1-7pm	29	30	31
Pastor Beth is on vacation Dec 25th to Jan 2nd.						

CALENDAR

January 2023

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St. James United Church of Christ
321 South Limerick Road
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December/January 2023 2022 NEWSLETTER

Notes & Reminders

Materials for the February Newsletter are due on January 19th, 2023.

A STORY BY PENNEY PEIRCE

It was the Christmas holiday season, and I was waiting in an airline's lounge area for a delayed flight that would take me to visit my family. It had been a trying autumn, with many emotional ups and downs and losses of friends, all of which had left me drained and slightly depressed. I was hoping a little Christmas spirit would cheer me up and help me find renewed meaning in life. While I waited, I heard a hearty "Ho, ho, ho!" and a "Merry Christmas, everybody!"

"Who here has a Christmas wish?" he continued merrily. I looked up from the book I was reading and, following Santa's line of sight, turned my head to look back over my left shoulder. The timing was perfect. Just at that moment I saw a tiny boy turn toward the booming voice. I watched the expression on his face shift from surprise and caution to a realization of who had just entered his world. His eyes lit up like sparkler; he raised his chubby little arms straight up in the air and, without a moment's pause, broke into a full-tilt gallop down the length of the waiting area and leaped directly up into Santa's warm embrace.

The power of his instantaneous joy just about knocked me over. Here was a role model for me if there ever was one. This is the way I should run to God! Turn my head, notice who's present in my world, and seamlessly, without debate or comment, raise my arms and start running!