ST. JOHN'S CHIMES

Published monthly in the interest of



St. John United Church of Christ 204 Seventh Street Lincoln, Illinois 62656

April 2021 Newsletter

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

204 Seventh Street ~ Lincoln, Illinois 62656

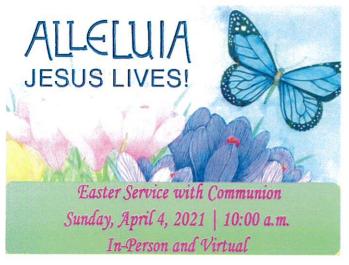
217-732-6957

E-mail address: stjohnucclincoln@yahoo.com | Website: stjohnucclincolnillinois.com "Letting God's love shine through us to the Community we Serve"

Rev. Laurie Hill Pastor Darlene Begolka Office Manager Volume 52, No. 4 April 2021











FROM OUR PASTOR...

Dear Friends,

"Here comes Peter Cottontail, hopping down the bunny trail. Hippity hoppity, Easter's on its way!" For some reason that is the song that I sing in my head when I know Easter is coming. I am a child of God at heart, after all! And so are we all. Those of us who like to become "like a child", (as opposed to "childish" which really may mean self-ish), enjoy the small things in life. We enjoy the crocuses that are blooming, the promise of tulips, daffodils, and other early flowers. We even enjoy dandelions and clover, both beautiful and delicious (if you're a bunny). April is a month that says "Promise" and "Hope" and this year, "Relief"! Little by little, with more and more vaccinated, we can see signs that soon, just maybe, Covid will be less and less and normalcy will be more and more. What a wonderful celebration of life conquering death and destruction!

Jesus's life, day by day, sermon by sermon, conversation by conversation and story by story are all about rising above the hate and evils of the world to embrace compassion and kindness. I'm writing this Easter letter to you just two days after the shootings in Boulder, Colorado. Turning on the news, there are so many reports of hate. And some voices on tv and social media invite us to hate right along with them. But Easter is about letting go of hate and destruction. Nothing would bring more hate than if someone took us, nailed our hands and feet to a cross and hung us up to die. The words of Jesus, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do" is simply amazing! Most of us have reptilian responses of guttural anger and hatred to those who hurt us and would not be able to respond with such grace. But Jesus, both in life and in death taught us that it is possible to rise above these child-ish responses to be children of God in the hippity hoppity blessed Easter ways. That sounds flippant and superficial, but it is meant to convey: we are Easter people and Easter people forgive; Easter people do not allow evil to rule; Easter people love unconditionally, even when it's

really difficult; Easter people do not judge others; Easter people are kind and generous. Easter people are humble and enjoy the beauty of all life around them.

"Up from the grave He arose!" is a hymn I remember singing as a child, bending down and then as I sang that line, rising and even jumping up with my arms in the air. I don't recommend that now for most of us, but our hearts can be lifted up with joy, grace, peace, love and kindness every time we find it, even in the midst of a broken society filled with hardened hearts, angry responses, and hurt souls. As Easter people, we are now called to be the light of God to our community. Enjoy and be blessed this Easter and this April!

Pastor Laurie



ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST UNAPPROVED CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES Monday, March 15, 2021 I 7:00 p.m.

Present: Warren Goetsch, Edna Mara,

Carolyn Pech, Jack Leich,

Troy Meinershagen, Bill Gosda, Kent Paulus, Jan Hahn, Tricia Pineda, Darlene Begolka (Office Manager) and

Pastor Laurie Hill

Absent: None

President Goetsch called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, March 15, 2021 and Pastor Laurie Hill gave the invocation.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

President Goetsch inquired if there were any items up for removal or discussion as it related to the Consent Agenda items-no issues were raised. It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as is. All voting aye, the motion passed.

PASTORS REPORT

Pastor Laurie indicated she had attended an active shooter safety seminar and sent the information to the Safety Committee. The committee will be meeting Tuesday, March 16, 2021 and at the meeting discussions will be had to refresh on how to implement the safety plan for various issues such as an active shooter and storms, etc.

At 7:15 p.m. the Council meeting went into an Executive Session.

Executive Session adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Pastor Laurie also indicated as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Commission of Lincoln City Council she attended an Open Meeting Act training.

OLD BUSINESS

No new updated information was provided on the security system issue.

No new update on the "donation button" issue as the task force has not met yet regarding the issue.

NEW BUSINESS

Pastor Laurie provided Council a copy of the new CDC protocol and guidelines. She indicated that there was interest expressed by certain church committee's that if all participants are fully vaccinated per the CDC guidelines if they can meet without masks. This would apply to all parties being church members or outside groups. Discussion took place and President Goetsch asked if there were any objections to allow this new amendment to protocol and none were raised. It was moved and seconded to allow groups to be able to meet without masks if all guidelines per the CDC have been met based on the new March 9, 2021 guidelines. All voting aye, motion passed.

President Goetsch indicated there has been progress on the Committee assignments and chairpersons. He further stated that Kent Paulus, Pastor Laurie, Darlene and himself had taken the time and talent sheet responses and information from last year's annual meeting and put together a list. Members are being called currently to confirm participation and status. President Goetsch said he was appreciative of the members willingness to participate on the various committees and reiterated progress is being made.

Carolyn Pech raised the issue of a dormant Sunday School account at Regions Bank and voiced concern of transferring the funds into another fund or account. After discussion including input from Troy Meinershagen verifying the church has a Special Funds-Youth Account with Edward Jones it was decided the account funding should be relocated. It was moved and seconded to move the funds to the Special Funds - Youth Account at Edward Jones. All voting aye, motion passed.

CORRESPONDENCE AND E-MAILS

President Goetsch indicated the church received a card from the Boy Scouts. He read the thank you message and circulated the card for each Council

member to read. He also indicated the Boy Scouts had provided four tickets to their Spring BBQ. He inquired as to what the Council would like to do with the tickets. Tricia Pineda recommended giving them to Selma Wilham and her family to enjoy. All members were in approval.

President Goetsch thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT AND BENEDICTION

With no further business to discuss a motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting. Meeting concluded at 8:01 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Tricia Pineda Church Council Secretary



MEET OUR NEW CUSTODIAN

We have welcomed a new Custodial Caretaker! Her name is Dana Denny. She has mostly lived and worked in the Champaign area, including Gibson City. When Covid hit, she moved back to Lincoln, where she and her life partner, Anthony, could be near family.

She has worked as a custodian/cleaner and gradually became a crew leader and trainer of other cleaning crews. She has a 7-year-old son who often comes to work with her, named Riley. Riley makes us smile when he's around because of his delightful personality. Dana is keeping us sanitized and cleaned up so very well! Dana is camera shy but if you see a young woman pushing a vacuum or with a rag in her hand, please welcome Dana and Riley to the St. John UCC family.

RINGERS NEEDED...

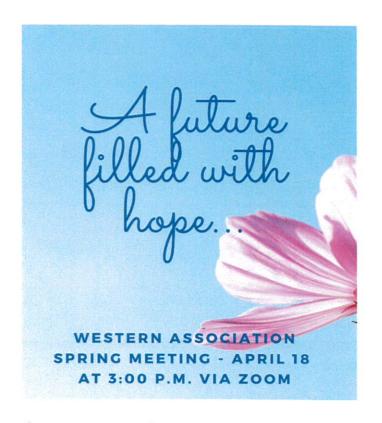


We are seeking ringers for our Hand Bell Choir. The more hands we have in the choir the more bells that can ring praises to our Lord!

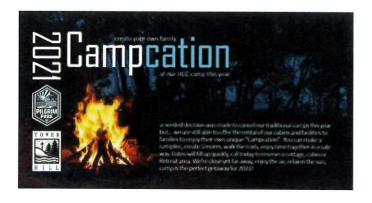
Experience with music is preferred, but training on how to ring bells is available to all who would like to be a part of this group.

Contact our director, Calob Pluhm, at cpluhm@gmail.com if you are interested.





If you are interested in Zooming, please contact the Church Office for more information.



Our camps are working in creative ways for the *children of coming generations* to continue having a camp experience bringing them "out of the ordinary and into the future".

This year we are offering **Camp**cation! This option of renting our cabins and facilities to families *for short term getaways* gives you an unique way to enjoy time together in a safe environment. Plus... this is a great opportunity to help our camps with the potential rental income.

If you wish to escape this year on a Campcation or need details call Tower Hill at 269-426-3881 and Pilgrim Park at 815-447-2390.

Dates may fill up quickly, as we are close, yet far away, so enjoy the air, relax in the sun, camp is the getaway for 2021!





A FEW NOTES...

The Church Office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday.

- All must wear a mask.
- All must either wash their hands or sanitize upon arrival.
- All must stay 6' away from each other.
- All visits to the Church must be made by appointment only. You can call the church office, 732-6957, to make an appointment (we need to know when and who is in the building).
- Don't Forget: Although more and more are vaccinated, we (who are vaccinated) can still transmit the Covid virus to others who may be more vulnerable. Even though we are vaccinated, we ourselves can still become ill from a variant not covered in the vaccine.
 So, we still need to be loving our neighbor by wearing our masks, sanitizing our hands, and staying physically distant when possible.

One baby step toward normalcy: The CDC says that now, if everyone in a small group is vaccinated and the two weeks has passed, then you can gather without masks.

Caution: Not everyone CAN get the vaccination and not everyone has been. So, please love your neighbor by following social protocol unless you are ALL vaccinated.

Let us all be kind and loving!

 NOTE: If you need to talk or have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Pastor Laurie!
 217-521-7747!





WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO...

Norma Kramer at the death of her uncle, Bert Burge.

Tonita Reifsteck and family at the death of her cousin Doug "Dutch" Mann.

Dana Denny and family at the death of her cousin.

Maureen White and familiy at the death of her husband, Ed White.







FEBRUARY FINANCIALS

Beginning Balance \$58,605.41

Income \$ 7,166.36 Expenses \$20,649.71

Ending Balance \$45,122.06

ATTENDANCE

February 28th

30 In-Person, 75 on Facebook, 23 services mailed and website = 128+

March 7th

28 In-Person, 90 on Facebook, 23 services mailed and website = 141+

March 14th

26 In-Person, 71 on Facebook, 23 services mailed and website = 120+

March 21st

25 In-Person, 86 on Facebook, 23 services mailed and website = 134+



Articles for the **May 2021** newsletter should be in the Church Office by **April 19**th.

LET'S REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND...

ST. CLARA'S REHAB and SENIOR CARE

1450 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656
Dave Armbrust
Evelyn Fulkerson
Susan Webb
John Wilmert

VONDERLIETH LIVING CENTER

1120 N. Topper Drive, Mt. Pulaski, IL 62548 Dorothy Conklin

CASTLE MANOR

1550 Castle Manor Drive, Lincoln, IL 62656 Carol Turner

CHRISTIAN VILLAGE

1507 Seventh Street, Lincoln, IL 62656 Donna Kessinger Sandy Meinershagen

CONGREGATE BUILDING AT CHRISTIAN VILLAGE

1500 Seventh Street, Lincoln, IL 62656 Leola Dowling

AT HOME

Jean Cummings 1114 Pekin Street, Lincoln, IL 62656

Marita Schneider 1361 – 2050th Street, Lincoln, IL 62656

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR APRIL

April 4th:
April 11th:
April 18th:

April 25th: Pastor Laurie

CHARITY GUILD TO MEET Tuesday, April 13, 2021 2:00 p.m.

Meet on the grassy area west of main parking lot. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held in Wilmert Lounge

We need input and suggestions regarding the below topics:

Charity Guild: Continuation of our service projects such as funeral dinners?

Formation of new group "Celebrate Life"

Do we want to meet once a month for birthday or other celebrations/concerns at local restaurants?

It would be easier to meet at a certain day of the month and time each month with possible change of location?

Special recognitions of birthdays, etc. can also be made by sending a greeting card, phone call, text message, etc. for those unable to attend in person?

All ladies of the church are encouraged to join this new group. You are welcome to be a member of this group, even if unable to attend any of the physical meetings.

If you are interested; please leave your contact information – text number or phone number (if unable to text). Contact: Sandy Wilmert, Karen Birnbaum, or Toni Reifsteck.

The decisions on the workings of the above two groups will be a "work in progress", with needed changes made along the way.

We hope to share decisions made from the above meeting in the May edition of *The Chimes*.

MEET OUR NEW BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR



Calob Pluhm, our new Bell Choir Director at St. John UCC, is a trombonist and director of bands and choirs in Mt. Pulaski schools. He was born and grew up in Sycamore, Illinois, to Frank and Lisa Pluhm. His sister Jessica is just 10 months younger. He quotes his mother as saying she didn't want to deal with diapers any longer than she had to. Sadly, she passed away about five years ago.

Calob started playing trombone in 5th grade, and the trombone remains his primary instrument, though as a band director he has to be able to play everything. In high school he was in all the bands symphonic band, jazz band, marching band - and sang in the jazz and madrigal choirs. One influential person during his school years was his band director Ken Goodman, who "believed in me" and chose him for section leader and, in his senior year, drum major. The marching band show that year was called "Copland and Cowboys." Musical selections for the show included Aaron Copland's Rodeo and Fanfare for the Common Man. Being drum major gave Calob a taste of directing and helped lead toward his decision to make music his career.

Another very important influence was his private trombone teacher Kirk Lundbeck, who played professionally with the Chicago Symphony and has recorded on movie soundtracks, including The Incredibles. Mr. Lundbeck directed music at Calob's church, St. John Lutheran, so of course he sang tenor/baritone in the church choir, played in the bell choir, and did instrumentals.

At Illinois Wesleyan Calob majored in Music Education. He continued to perform in various bands and a handbell choir, but he never directed bells until he came to St. John UCC. After graduating he taught for three years at Hartsburg, directing band and choir as well as a musical that included members of the community in the orchestra. He is now in his third year in the Mt. Pulaski School District, where he teaches band for grades 5-12 and directs the band, pep band and choir. He and Rob Siebert are currently co-directing the musical Little Shop of Horrors.

Our new bell director lives in Normal. Besides performing and listening to music, he enjoys cards and has found an app that allows him to play during the pandemic. Calob enjoys playing pinochle and euchre with his grandparents and sister. He thanks the St. John congregation for having him as Bell Choir Director and appreciates how welcoming everyone has been. We're glad to have you with us, Calob!





MISSION COMMITTEE...

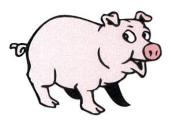
By: Verdeen Ingram, Co-Chair

SPECIAL OFFERING SUNDAYS... The Mission Committee has designated the following Sundays:

- Second Sunday of each month a special offering will be taken following church for the new Children of Lincoln project.
- Fourth Sunday of each month a special offering will be taken following church for the Diaper Project for Head Start at Community Action.



Pork Project



We have several hunters in our family, so we eat a lot of venison. We really enjoy eating the chops and roasts. When it comes to making sausage,

though, we always like to add some pork. The pork adds fat so the sausage doesn't dry out, and the flavor of the pork really enhances the venison.

Of course, I would never turn down pork sausage or ground pork. It is great meat to eat plain, on a burger or added to a favorite dish. That is what the Pork Project provides for the people coming to the food pantries - great meat for a variety of dishes.

April is Pork Project month at St. John. We will be collecting to pay the processing fees for pigs

donated by local producers. Please drop your donation in the plate in the back of the sanctuary, send it to the church or drop it in the church mailbox anytime during the month. Please write Pork Project on the memo line of your check.

This is a great farm-to-table project that benefits the community through our two food pantries. Thank you for continuing to support local families!



April 22nd is Earth Day! Let's celebrate! We can celebrate all of the recycling that we have done at St. John during this past year. And we can reexamine our efforts as well. How many of these recycling projects have you supported?

- Plastic caps and lids
- Pop tabs
- Rechargeable batteries
- Aluminum cans
- Greeting cards
- Stamps
- Athletic shoes
- Ink cartridges
- Cell phones
- Eyeglasses
- Various items for Christian Child Care

Please celebrate Earth Day every day by continuing to gather these items and dropping them off under the Giving Tree. We appreciate your help as we support others through our recycling efforts. Thanks to all!

OUTREACH and PUBLICITY HIGHLIGHTS...

Jim and Leslie Wilmert and Tonita Reifsteck, Co-Chairs

Outreach and Publicity met on March 4, 2021 with Jim and Leslie Wilmert, Jack and Nancy Leich, Lee Westerfield, Sandy Wilmert, Tonita Reifsteck and Pastor Laurie.

Welcomed new ministry member Sandy Wilmert.

Reported: Delivery of 2000 masks to Lincoln Junior High School and Central School. Supplies to Christian Child Care and Animal Shelter.

Christian Child Care_still need yarn, fabric, tubes, cereal boxes, craft items.

Logan County Animal Shelter can use prescription and over the counter medicine bottles (WITH CAPS) and newspapers

Lincoln Junior High School and Central School has needs for school supplies. Lincoln Junior High School needs ear buds and newspapers. Verdeen will continue to watch for ear buds -

NEW BUSINESS

- Devotional materials for shut-ins and/or others wanting such noted in March Chimes for those interested to respond to the questionnaire. (7 signed up thus far)
- Conversation regarding possibility of a Potato Bar was tabled by Council for monthly consideration, although they voiced positive comments for it happening,
- Card signed for Sandy Meinershagen.
- Popcorn to visitors applauded to be reinstated when it is 'safe'.
- Voted to sponsor a 'Rec Team' (chose team with one of our children if possible)
- Voted to continue with WIC program in conversation with them on needs and when they will be doing 'in person' work.

- Monthly Red Cross Blood Drive will be publicized as info is received on channel 5 and other media. Next date is Friday, April 9.
- Sandy Wilmert put forth a 'revised' community birthday program to a 'Celebrate Life' program that will be offered to anyone wanting to join in 'lawn celebrations' 'Drive-by celebrations and any other version as deemed possible and suggested. Sandy will organize and put program in action.

Sign up for Devotionals still open - Any questions see Pastor Laurie or Toni.

POST MEETING: Certificate of Appreciation and gift to Sandy Meinershagen was delivered to Bob – due to no access to Sandy's room, along with a card from St. John.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED/WELCOME



Meals on Wheels - one day a month for 1½ - 2 hours in a designated area (NW area of Lincoln). Deliver to clients (none requiring entering the home) from 19-22 persons.

ROUTE is only Monday, Wednesday and Friday (NO holidays). Route is the same each time (barring illness or death) and approximately 9 miles. Sign up as a couple, 2 friends. Give me a call and we can make it fit your schedule. THANKS FOR CARING!!! Contact Tonita Reifsteck at 217-855-1645 or email reifstourbug@comcast.net



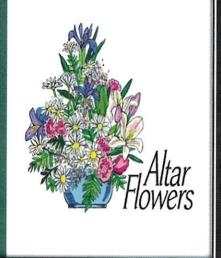
- 9 Esther Denney
- 13 Brady Curry
- 16 Emmett Nowack
- 17 Heather Goetsch
- 20 Karen Birnbaum
- 25 Mary Fuller Laura Lee
- 27 Robert E. Lenhardt Wayne Mara Betsy Pech
- 29 Becky Ingram



ANNIVERSARIES

- 12 Randy and Betsy Pech
- 13 Steve and Elaine Aue
- 20 Rich and Rochelle Joseph

The Flower Chart is on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. You are encouraged to sign up for flowers in memory of loved ones or for a special occasion.



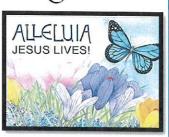
2021 EASTER OFFERING

CHICAGO UNITED EDEN

CUE SEMINARIES of the



Our Chicago, United, Eden Theological Seminaries Easter Special Offering helps our seminaries to educate and train perspective pastors who will fill the pulpits in



our churches. Seminary educated training makes a difference! Through clinical training, the seminary student learns how to handle crisis and help others makes sense out of suffering. Through Biblical study, seminary students are helped to read and understand scripture with 'theological eyes'. Through Practical theology, seminarians are shown how they can help congregational folk to live out their spiritual story and reflect critically on their own faith and life experiences. (Please make checks payable to St. John UCC; in the memo line write CUE.)



Congratulations to
Michelle Paulus and Charles Mayfield
who were married at
St. John United Church of Christ
on Saturday, March 20, 2021.

APRIL CALENDAR

Maundy Thursday, April 1st

Cub Scouts at 5:30 p.m.

In-Persona and Virtual Maundy Thursday Service with Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 2nd

In-Person and Virtual Good Friday Service at 12:00 noon

Easter Sunday, April 4th

In-Person and Live-stream Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Communion

Monday, April 5th

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 6th

Creative Delights at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 7th

Rotary at 12:00 noon

Chime Choir Practice at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 8th

Cub Scouts at 5:30 p.m.

Friday, April 9th

Blood Drive from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 11th

In-Person and Live-stream Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Bell Choir Practice following church

Monday, April 12th

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 13th

Charity Guild meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 14th

Rotary at 12:00 noon

Chime Choir Practice at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 15th

Cub Scouts at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 18th

In-Person and Live-stream Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Bell Choir Practice following church

Monday, April 19th

Church Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20th

Creative Delights at 3:00 p.m. Safety Team Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 21st

Rotary at 12:00 noon

Chime Choir Practice at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 22nd

Cub Scouts at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 25th

In-Person and Live-stream Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

Bell Choir Practice following church

Monday, April 26th

Boy Scouts at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 28th

Rotary at 12:00 noon

Chime Choir Practice at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 29th

Cub Scouts at 5:30 p.m.





PRAYER LIST

Jane Agnew

Steve Aue

Harold Boyer

Ron Brandy

Marsha Fernandez

Bobbi Frost

Alta Gehrke

Ruth Gordon

Dave Harding

Marianne Ingram

Orry Ingram

Emily Jewsbury

Brian LeBoeuf

Yolonda Wilmert Martin

Mary Francis (aka Franny)

Elizabeth Cabit-Miller

Michael Paige

Michelle Ramlow

Alicia Reed

Mercedize Reyes

Nate Rohlfs

Chris Sprague

Kathy Staten

Karen Sutton

Kent Tangman

Emma Welp and family

Selma Wilham

George Wilmert

Fred Wiseman

Jason Yates

Caryn

Kenneth

Jo

Joyce

Kyle

Marilyn

Nathan

Elizabeth

Gunner and family

- The Residents at the Christian Village and St. Clara's Rehab and Senior Care
- All those from our "Church Family",
 Community, State and Nation working in the
 Medical Field
- Illinois Conference/Wester Association

MILITARY

Wyatt Conrady

FACILITIES AND HOMEBOUND

David Armbrust, Dorothy Conklin, Jean Cummings, Leola Dowling, Evelyn Fulkerson, Donna Kessinger, Sandy Meinershagen, Marita Schneider, Carol Turner, Susan Webb, John Wilmert



Staff of St. John United Church of Christ

Members and Friends of St. John UCC Ministers
Rev. Laurie Hill Pastor

Darlene Begolka Office Manager
Carolyn Pech Financial Manager

Dana Denny Custodian

Steve Spaulding Maintenance Person

Laura Lee Organist

Darlene Begolka Chime Choir Director
Calob Pluhm Bell Choir Director

Church Council for 2021-2022



Warren Goetsch (Elder), President Kent Paulus (Elder), Vice President Tricia Pineda (Elder), Secretary Jan Hahn, Current Fund Treasurer Troy Meinershagen, Special Funds Treasurer Bill Gosda, Jr., Financial Secretary Jack Leich Edna Mara Carolyn Pech

Contact us:

Email: stjohnucclincoln@yahoo.com

Website: stjohnucclincolnillinois.com

St. John United Church of Christ 204 Seventh Street Lincoln, Illinois 62656 217-732-6957

Pastor Laurie's cell phone number: 217-521-7747
Pastor Laurie's email address: pastorlauriehill@gmail.com

"Letting God's love shine through us to the Community we serve"