

# The Epistle

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**St. John UCC, 409 Park Avenue, PO Box 156, Bolivar, Ohio 44612**

**FRIENDSHIP•MISSION•SPIRITUALITY    January 2023**

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Happy New Year Friends,

Celebrating Christmas Eve in January was certainly a new experience for me and those who were present on January 1st. We sang many of the traditional carols, celebrated communion, and had a candle lighting ceremony in our Sunday morning service. Christmas is not the same without each of these three events taking place together. That candle lighting ceremony was special because it only happens at Christmas. From the Christ candle, the light is passed throughout the church until there is a warm glow when people hold their candles high. Despite the daylight which made for a different experience it was still a wonderful event. The gentle glow of a candle's light signifies not only God's light in the world but also a warm welcome to all. Sometimes we include candles for special events which include birthdays, candlelight dinners, and table centerpieces at social events or a wedding reception. Candles certainly have the ability to give us a special feeling that something special is happening. The church lights two candles each Sunday for worship symbolizing Jesus humanity and divinity. We light candles during Advent for four Sundays before Christmas. The glow of candles always has the potential to communicate love, hospitality and a sense of well-being.

When someone attends worship at St. John for the first time they notice things that we so often take for granted. The people of St. John go out of their way to welcome others to our church. The bulletin boards are always wonderfully decorated and most Sundays we have a fellowship time with refreshments immediately following our worship service. This further gives us the opportunity to welcome visitors to get to know them better.

If 2023 is anything like last year we know there will be challenges for us as individuals and as a church. I hope and pray that we will continue to work together under the guidance of Consistory to continue to make a difference in each other's lives as well as in the community of Bolivar. St. John will also be having our annual Congregational meeting following worship on Sunday, January 15th. Please make a note and be sure to attend worship that day.

Pastor Jeff

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January 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> New Year's Day Communion 10:30am	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Epiphany	<b>7</b>  <i>Lindsey Goudy</i>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Clothes Closet 9:00am-12:00pm	<b>10</b> Year End Reports Due	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Consistory Meeting 6:30pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 2022 Annual Meeting 11:45am  <i>Beth Carpenter</i>	<b>16</b>  <i>Virginia Regula</i>	<b>17</b>  <i>Don Baad</i>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Community Meal @ St. Paul Lutheran 11:30am-1:00pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Clothes Closet 9:00am-12:00pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Epistle Items Due	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  <i>Ann Scott</i>	<b>31</b>	Birthdays are listed on calendar			

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## PRAYER LIST/CARD MINISTRY



Every week, our prayer list is updated to the best of our ability. Please notify the office if you have any additions, deletions or suggestions! Please remember those on the prayer list. "Thinking of you" cards, a note, or a telephone call means so much. Contact the church office if you need addresses or phone numbers.

### Please remember the following in your prayers:

**Continued Prayers:** Bob and Joyclin Ely, Missy Jones, The Brayden Wrana Family  
**Cancer:** Missy Horn, Holly Myers

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 15, 2023. We will meet after worship service for this meeting to go over the annual report.



## CLOTHES CLOSET



We were open on two days in December. On Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> we had 29 customers, most of them coming to the Closet after visiting the Affordable Christmas project at Bolivar Intermediate School. They started arriving at 8:30 a.m. even though we didn't open till nine, something to remember for next year! Jean G, Becky W., Lynn, and Cathy were there to help our visitors. We had over

\$200 in receipts. We sold a lot of children's clothing and many very nice adult winter coats. The amount of clothing sold becomes evident when you consider that outerwear coats are the most expensive item at one dollar and all other clothing is fifty cents or less. Several people gave us an additional donation or told us to "keep the change."

On December 12<sup>th</sup>, our regular Monday open date, Cathy, Chris, Jane H., and Jean G. were the workers and we had 13 customers. Our receipts totaled 13 dollars.

We had snacks and coffee to offer on both days. Chatting and visiting with our customers (and each other) is part of the fun in working at the Clothes Closet. Stop by for coffee and a cookie and join in the conversation even if you're not there to shop. Our next open dates will be January

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9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. If Tusky Valley Schools are closed because of road conditions then the Closet will also be closed.

## **AMAZON SMILE**

It was suggested by a member of the congregation to start an Amazon Smile account. Below is more information on this program. If you have any additional questions, please call the church office.

### **What is the AmazonSmile Foundation?**

The AmazonSmile Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private foundation created by Amazon to administer the AmazonSmile program. All donation amounts generated by the AmazonSmile program are remitted to the AmazonSmile Foundation. In turn, the AmazonSmile Foundation donates those amounts to the charitable organizations selected by our customers. Amazon pays all expenses of the AmazonSmile Foundation; they are not deducted from the donation amounts generated by purchases on AmazonSmile.

### **How does AmazonSmile work?**

When first visiting AmazonSmile, customers are prompted to select a charitable organization from over one million eligible organizations. In order to browse or shop at AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organization. For eligible purchases at AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the customer's selected charitable organization.

### **How does my organization receive the donations?**

Each quarter, the AmazonSmile Foundation makes donations to eligible charitable organizations by electronic funds transfer. Donations will be transferred approximately 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter. To account for Product returns, a portion of the quarterly donations will be withheld until the next donation cycle, subject to any reduction due to returns from prior quarters.

**To choose St. John United Church of Christ as your preferred charitable organization, please visit this site to set your account to automatically donate.**

**<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1559832>**

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## FINANCIAL REPORT – November 2022

<u>November Income</u>				<u>Year-to-Date</u>
11/06/22	\$ 1,522.00	Income	\$ 5,118.00	\$ 67,193.13
11/13/22	\$ 1,255.00	Expenses	<u>\$(7,378.73)</u>	<u>\$(78,841.01)</u>
11/20/22	\$ 1,126.00			
11/27/22	\$ 815.00			
<u>11/29/22</u>	<u>\$ 400.00</u>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,118.00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ (2,260.73)</b>	<b>\$ (11,647.88)</b>

If you would like further details, please feel free to contact the church office.

## CHURCH INFORMATION

**Help us keep our church roster updated. Contact the office with any address or phone changes. Thank you!**

### WORSHIP HOURS

**Sunday School** (Sept-May)  
9:30am – Adults and Children

**Worship** 10:45am

### PASTOR

Pastor Jeff Shultz  
330-844-1377

### LET'S COMMUNICATE

OFFICE – 330-874-2822

EMAIL – [stjohnsect@aol.com](mailto:stjohnsect@aol.com)

WEBSITE – [www.stjohnbolivar.org](http://www.stjohnbolivar.org)

### OFFICE HOURS

**Kaley Hamilton, Secretary** (Tues-Thurs)

9:00am-12:00pm