

Volume 23, Issue 1

January 2022

WORDS FROM OUR PASTOR

Beloved,

In Ephesians 3:4-6, Paul makes a big deal about the solving of a mystery and a new revelation from God. What does he say that this is. That God accepts Gentiles, too. Whew! Good news for all we Gentile sorts. God loves us, too.

Maybe we thought we knew this. But it wasn't always clear. There is always a question of how far God's grace extends—of how far God's love goes. In Paul's day, it was whether God's grace extended beyond Israel to the nations (even those who oppressed Israel). Since Paul's day, there is a litany of exceptions that people push forward limiting who God can love and putting boundaries around how God can save.

In his sermon on the "Means of Grace," John Wesley reminds us that the Grace of God is, well, duh, the Grace of God. This grace belongs to God. And like the universe it is constantly expanding. This is tough news for us when we think we have a bead on who God can love or not love. We are constantly be schooled by God in the new and greater ways he can be gracious to us.

Join me, this new year 2022, in opening ourselves to be schooled by God, just like Paul was schooled not only to accept people he had not accepted before, but even becoming their chief advocates.

Peace in 2022

Pastor John

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

Make a New Year's Resolution

It is commonplace to begin January with a New Year's Resolution. God has blessed us with a wonderful privilege and opportunity to be his stewards. Perhaps these thoughts may help you strengthen your resolve to be a faithful giver in 2022:

Through faithful giving I acknowledge God is the source of all things – "But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth." (Deuteronomy 8:18)

I will grow in the grace of giving beyond monetary offerings – "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices...But you have neglected more important matters of the law...justice, mercy, and faithfulness..." (Matthew 23:23)

I will develop a spiritual discipline of giving to further God's work here on earth – "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income." (1 Corinthians 16:2)

By my giving I will help support the needy and give glory to God – "This (giving) that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." (2 Corinthians 9:12)

May your stewardship journey in 2022 increase your faith so your heart will grow in grace, peace, joy, and generosity. You may securely give online at <u>www.sycamoreumc.org/giving</u>, text **Sycamore to 844-950-3370** (message and data rates may apply), or mail a check to the church at 160 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, IL 60178.

<u>Staff</u>

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Our SUMC Mission

"We will reach out to make disciples of Jesus Christ."



Securely give online at www.sycamoreumc.org/giving or Text Sycamore to 844-950-3370 to

give by text messaging. It's an easy way for anyone to give immediate donations. Message & data rates may apply.

Frequency may vary. Checks may be mailed to the church at: 160 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, IL 60178.

January 2022 Worship Schedule



ALL SERVICES WILL BE IN-PERSON AND LIVE-STREAM SERVICES ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE ONLY Saturdays at 5:00pm; Sundays at 8:30 & 10:00am

www.facebook.com/SUMCIllinois/ or www.youtube.com/results?searchquery=sycamore+umc or www.sycamoreumc.org/videos

Once the video is posted you may watch the service at any time that is convenient for you.

January 1 - Saturday Celebration January 2 - Epiphany Sunday Pastor Dan Swinson Scripture: Ephesians 3:1-12 Message: "Drawing a Bigger "O""" Holy Communion at all services.

January 8 - Saturday Celebration January 9 - Baptism of the Lord Pastor Dan Swinson Scripture: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 Message: "What God Does to Expectations"

January 15 - Saturday Celebration January 16 - 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany Pastor Joe Munro Scripture: Psalm 22:1-8 Message: "WHY?"

January 22 - Saturday Celebration January 23 - 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany Pastor Dan Swinson Scripture: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Message: ""The Joy of Finding Out You're Wrong"

January 29 - Saturday Celebration January 30 - 4th Sunday after the Epiphany Pastor Dan Swinson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Message: "The Real Love Machine."





Those for whom we pray:

Eric Gabriel George Melissa Steve Aue Dan Butler Diana Grace Karen & Albert Blaser Tammy Judkins **Corey Coots** Carlyin Jeschke Easton Archer Oliver Chuck Brown Barbara Braley Steve Carrier Dawn Sisler Andrew Larson Cameren

Mitch Kirk Reed Norma Clarner Dick Graham Marylynn Tony and Bev Heal Christine Wilkinson Phyllis Bowman Sarah Orkowski Holly Rudolph Carly Elder Nathaniel Bisco Ann Elder Lois Cullison Steven and Family The Langsdorf Family

We extend our sympathies to the families of:

Diane Carter (Gary Scott's sister) Jim Cochrane Ken Casper

The Service Personnel and Their Families

Cpt. Mark Browning, *SGT Ben Bushno SGT Shaune Clark SGT Matthew Einhorn PFC Timothy Einhorn ME2 Frank Incapreo SSG Christopher Isabel *Lt. Col. Garrett Slack SSG Neil Smith SFC Matthew "Scott" Stewart MMN1 Frank Huftalin LT Matthew Herbaugh CPT Elliot Callighan PVT Trevor Bassett PO3 Samuel V. Bell CPT Ed Richter SGT Brock Grimaldi E4PVT Alexis Jones E3PFC Max Keller A1C Brock Larson *SPC Nadia McCormick *SPC Haley McCormick *Maj Steve Haack PV2 Caden Grimaldi PV2 Rachel McMillion *indicates deployed personnel



GIVING TREE 2021

Thank you doesn't even cover it for the generosity extended to our Giving Tree families this Christmas season. We asked for your help and God moved the people of this congregation to make life a little easier for those in need. We were able to put gifts under the tree for 6 families this year. Additionally, your donations supplied each family with gift cards to make Christmas dinner a reality, fill their pantries and gas tanks through the holiday season. Your kindness has unburdened these families; allowing them to breathe easier and enjoy the blessings God has provided. You answered the call for God to move through you, causing the hope, joy, peace, and love of Christ to refresh the hearts and homes of others.

Proverbs 11:25 (NIV): A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Tech Team: Help Wanted!!!

We are looking for people interested in helping with our sound and video team Please contact Peter Hansen, Music Director, or Jim or Debbie in the church office for more detail or to volunteer! No experience necessary, just a desire to Serve...and....We will train you!!

Help Wanted: Sr. Choir!!!

Do you like to sing? Love the hymns and praise music? If you're looking for a singing group to sing with and enjoy singing, then come sing with the Sr. Choir at SUMC! We rehearse on Wednesday nights at 7-8:30 and sing most Sunday's, typically at the 10 o'clock worship p service. All levels of singers from novice to very experienced are welcome! We are in need of every part. If you can carry a tune, or carry a tune in a bucket, we'll teach you the rest!! (we'll even provide the bucket if you don't have one! :)

Children's Choirs Returning!

We are hopeful and ready to get our children's choirs back and singing again in 2022! Our Children's Choir Directors are hard at work beginning to prepare and plan for our children's choirs to return to rehearsal and singing at Sunday Morning Worship Services. Our hope and plan is to begin rehearsals the first Wednesday in February (2/2/2222) from 6:15-6:45 p.m.. We have developed protocols for a safe rehearsal and singing environment. Stay tuned for more details! For more information contact Peter Hansen or any of the children's choir directors.

MISSIONS AND MINISTRIES

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS THIS MONTH

Our Food Pantry is continuing to serve its clients each Monday.

Present needs are: canned pasta, canned fruit, cereal and toilet paper. Monetary donations are always welcome.

Let's remember that there are those who don't know where their next supper will come from.

At this time donations to the Food Pantry can be made at the church on Mondays 10-4 and Tues.-Fri. 9-3.

HOPE HAVEN MEAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED FOR JANUARY 17 AND 24

Prepare or buy just 1 course or the entire meal to feed 50 people! Deliver your contribution to Hope Haven in DeKalb or drop it off at the church by 3:30 on Monday. Please call the church (815-895-9113) to let us know which delivery option you will be using. Sign-up by calling the church office at815-895-9113.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Hope Haven

United Methodist Women participate in the Fellowship of the Least Coin. This is a global ecumenical prayer movement for justice, peace, and reconciliation led by women and girls of all nationalities, ages, educational backgrounds, and social statuses. At circle meetings we collect coins and our treasurer forwards these funds to the International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin located in Canada. This money funds grants for post-secondary education and training for women; grassroots projects that empower women and girls, advocates for their rights, and works to end gender-based violence and poverty. It provides relief in times of natural and human-made disasters. This simple act of our giving is small enough to include everyone and collectively impacts so many in positive ways.

Winter Mission u 2022 might be a perfect fit for you! Women can attend this hybrid (Zoom and in-person) event presented by Northern IL Conference United Methodist Women. It will be held January 21-22 at Christ UMC, 4509 Highcrest Rd. Rockford, IL. Titled "There's Far More Here Than Meets the Eye" offers two classes. Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church's Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship is one and the other is an Intergenerational Study- Pushout / Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence. It fits because there are options of attending in person or on Zoom with the latter costing only \$15. It's a worth-while use of your time on a typically chilly January day. For registration contact https://winter-mission-u-2022.cheddarup.com and be aware the deadline is January 16.

"REFUGEE GOOD NEIGHBOR TEAM" NEWS

Yes, we have changed our name to make it clear that our mission is to be good neighbors to the refugee families we are assigned to by World Relief and other refugees....

.... In December we were made aware of a refugee family that bought a home in Sycamore after living in Wheaton for 5 years and being resettled by World Relief. I have met them and am helping them with their transition to Sycamore. Applying for GED classes at KCC, clarifying the meaning of business mailings about their hew home, learning about job opportunities here are some of the things I have been helping them with. After the holidays, former members of our team who cannot drive to Aurora to visit families may take over helping this lovely family (also originally from Africa).

On Wed., Jan. 6, our team will have a zoom meeting with Marlina, our new World Relief Volunteer Coordinator. Team member, Jeanne Isabel, and I met Marlina over the holiday and look forward to partnering with her. We anticipate receiving our family assignments then!

Over the holiday team members met with our prior families to gift them with fruit baskets. They shared food with us and caught us up on their lives. . . . which included a new baby, a wedding and baby on the way, and a new job!

Thank you for your continued prayers!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Happy New Year, SUMC Family!

I pray your holiday was blessed and filled with abundant love. I found myself embracing a simple Christmas with Tim and my two dogs, Kahli and Goober. We sheltered at home in an abundance of caution after a close contact. I have heard from so many who had a similar holiday season. That isolation continues as the number of cases rise and ripples through our church and our community.

Considering those factors and out of an abundance of caution, we only will offer virtual programming this month. That said, I am pleased that Children's Ministry continues to grow. I invite you to join in on any of the following programs at any time:

- Sunday School will meet via Zoom! Sundays at 9:00-9:30am, Virtual Sunday School will enjoy games, crafts, and fun through scripture based learning. Use this link to join us: <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82334288965?pwd=MmJ4UXhIL3grc29TVjR0dG1hdmxpQT09</u> Meeting ID: 823 3428 8965 Password: 031815
- Confirmation is on break this month, but classes will resume February 2nd.
- Bedtime Story with Miss Becca is returning! Pre-K & Early Elementary children are invited to jammie up and join the fun. We will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month via Zoom from 7:30-7:45pm starting January 11th through Lent. Kids will hear a story and explore faith-based connections to sacred and secular children's books. Use this link to join us:



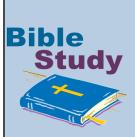
- <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84531496652?pwd=STF1WVRIbTNaS0RuT282dXIEbkZ4QT09</u> Meeting ID: 845 3149 6652 Passcode: 155965
- Our Winter Book Study Returns! we will investigate the scripture and sacred connections to the classic children's book, "A Wrinkle In Time". Our study will take place via Zoom starting Monday, January 24th. We meet virtually every other Monday from 6:30-7:15pm and discuss the assigned chapters, along with some fun activities. PLEASE CONTACT BECCA IF YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE.
- SLEDDING EVENT WINTER FAMILY FUN IS SOON TO COME! Join us for a family fun day on January 30th from 11:30-12:30pm at the Airport Rd. Sledding Hill. Bundle up and bring your sled to have some fun and fellowship time. Hot Cocoa & snacks will be provided. (SUBJECT TO CHANGE FROM WEATHER OR COVID)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! *February* **12**th *will be game night at SUMC*, brought to you by the Families in Faith Committee. We will have games and prizes that the whole family can enjoy!

Things may have changed rapidly in the new year, but I am filled with hope. May the hope that is Christ fill your hearts and homes in the new year. And to quote my grandmother (who added this whenever we sang Happy Birthday);

May God bless and keep you the whole new year through!

Blessings, Becca Rome



Title of Bible Study: Being the Best for Christ: The Book of I Corinthians **Date, Time, & Location of Study:** This is a 14-week study covering the New Testament book of I Corinthians. Class meets every Monday night from 6:00pm – 7:00pm starting January 3rd and concluding April 11th. Location will be in the Church Lounge (if Church is open and not closed due to COVID) and via ZOOM (for those who cannot attend in person).

Materials: Have your Bible with you! There is also a study book and a study guide. Books will be distributed at the January 3rd session. If you need a book delivered to you, just let me know. The study guide will also be distributed to you at the January 3rd ses-

MISSIONS AND MINISTRIES

SENIOR THOUGHTS FOR JANUARY

We thought, we hoped, we prayed, that by now, we would be done with this Covid virus thing We are not! Singing Christmas Carols with a mask on, is a bummer. As a preacher, trying to read people's reaction to some of my off the cuff remarks, is a downer. I do not know they got my attempt at humor, or even if they are awake. I find myself constantly asking, "Now just



who is that masked man (or woman)?". And, for those of us who already have issues with hearing, getting what people are saying, continues to take an effort. God bless those who gracefully repeat things, so I get it! Surely, I tell myself, we will be done with all this before 2022 rolls too far down the line. The only comfort I get from my discomfort with 2021 is that I can look forward to boreing my grandkids by telling them just how bad it really was.

2021 did have some bright spots. In those times when the Church was shut down for in-person worship, some of us found that doing church in front of our computer, wearing our PJs, and holding a coffee cup in hand, wasn't all that bad. Of course, we missed being in our pew and seeing others around us. Indeed it was a joyous occasion when the doors were open again and some of us ventured to come back to in-person gatherings.

Certainly, a bright spot for me in 2021 was being invited to join the staff at SUMC as Director of Senior Ministries. Over the past several months, my life has been enriched with new friendships, new opportunities to serve God, and being a part of the worship experiences here. There have also been challenges as I have tried to keep up with the oft changing virus restrictions put in place by the different long-term care facilities we deal with. As we venture into 2022, I look forward to continuing to be a part of the staff and congregation in the year ahead.

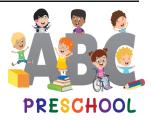
A final word as I look ahead to 2022. One of the areas I would like to explore is to create one or more support groups for families who are dealing with loved ones with dementia or increasing physical limitations. I believe it is helpful for people who are walking down those hard roads, to know that they are not alone. By being able to get together with others who are experiencing the struggles you are experiencing, hearing their stories, and supporting them even as they are supporting you can be a big help. Please watch for additional information and if you are interested, please contact the Church office or me.

Pastor Glen

ABC PRESCHOOL MINISTRY NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The kids were very excited to be back in class to begin the year. We jumped right into our winter discussion themes and then will have a great time with our annual Teddy Bear Week!



Registration for the fall begins next month. There will be more information coming soon.

ABC recycles! Give us your trash for us to make into treasures! This month we are collecting plastic! Plastic bottles, plastic tubes, plastic tubs and other things that we can reuse in our grocery themed areas, yet also are able to sanitize. Please feel free to drop these off to the Preschool office anytime.

We thank Sycamore United Methodist Church for all your support of ABC Preschool. We look forward to working together on many projects during the year.

Blessings, The ABC Preschool Staff

JANUARY 2022 EVENTS CALENDAR

The deadline for the February issue of The Messenger is January 19th

ALL WORSHIP SERVICES ARE IN-PERSON, LIVE ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE OR POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 8:30 & 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:00 AM Children's Virtual Sunday School 11:00 AM Families in Faith	3 11:30 AM Coat Ministry 12:30 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study - Book of 1 Corinthians	4 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 3 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 6 6:30 PM Kids Book Study	5 7:00 PM Adult Choir	6 7:45 AM B.A.D. (Breakfast and Devotion) for High School Students 4:30 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Young Adults	7 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 7	8 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
NOTE: All in-person events other than worship services, the Food Pantry and preschool have been cancelled for this week due to the increase in COVID cases.						
9 8:30 & 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:00 AM Children's Virtual Sunday School 2:00 PM Girl Scouts 4:30 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Senior High Youth Group	10 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry 11:30 AM Coat Ministry 12:30 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Finance Comm. 6:00 PM Bible Study - Book of 1 Corinthians 6:30 PM Boy Scouts Trp 2 7:00 PM Church Council	11 9:30 AM Mary Circle 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 4 6:30 PM Staff Parish Committee 7:30 PM Bedtime Story with Miss Becca	12 9:30 AM Esther Circle 7:00 PM Adult Choir	13 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:30 PM TOPS 6:30 PM Young Adults Dinner & Bible Study 7:00 PM Adult Handbell Choir 7:00 PM Potowattomi Round Table	14 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 7 7:15 PM Pack 141 Pinewood Derby Set-up	15 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 9:00 AM Pack 141 Pinewood Derby 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
16 8:30 & 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 10:00 AM Children's Sunday School 2:00 PM Girl Scouts	17 11:30 AM Coat Ministry 12:30 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study - Book of 1 Corinthians 6:30 PM Boy Scouts Trp 2	18 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 3 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 6 7:00 PM Leading Ladies	19 10:00 AM Caring Ministry Team 3:45 PM Christian Kids (TBD) 7:00 PM Adult Choir	20 7:45 AM B.A.D. (Breakfast and Devotion) for High School Students 4:30 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Young Adults Dinner & Bible Study 7:00 PM Adult Handbell Choir 7:00 PM Crew 360 7:00 PM Trustees	21 9:00 AM ABC Preschool Staff Meeting	22 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
23 8:30 & 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:00 AM Children's Virtual Sunday School 2:00 PM Girl Scouts 4:30 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Senior High Youth Group	24 9:30 AM Ruth Circle 11:30 AM Coat Ministry 12:30 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study - Book of 1 Corinthians 6:30 PM Children's Winter Book Study	25 1:00 PM UMW Missions Team 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 4 6:30 PM Worship Comm. 7:30 PM Bedtime Story with Miss Becca	26 3:45 PM Christian Kids (TBD) 6:00 PM Stewardship Committee 7:00 PM Adult Choir	27 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 4:30 PM TOPS 6:30 PM Young Adults Dinner & Bible Study 7:00 PM Adult Handbell Choir	28 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 7	29 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
30 8:30 & 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:00 AM Children's Virtual Sunday School 11:30 AM Sledding Event (see pg. 5 for details) 2:00 PM Girl Scouts	31 11:30 AM Coat Ministry 12:30 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study - Book of 1 Corinthians	February 1 9:30 AM Craft Group 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 3 5:45 PM Pack 141 Den 6 6:30 PM Kids Book Study	2 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation (by appt) 3:45 PM Christian Kids 6:00 PM Children's Theater Rehearsal 6:30 PM Confirmation Classes of "22 & "23 7:00 PM Adult Choir	3 7:45 AM B.A.D. (Breakfast and Devotion) for High School Students 4:30 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Young Adults Dinner & Bible Study 7:00 PM Adult Handbell Choir 7:00 PM Crew 360	4 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 7 6:00 PM Children's Theater Rehearsal	5 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 9:00 PM LIFE Missions Pizza Making