

The Messenger

A Newsletter for Members and Friends

**Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

305 S. Gage St., Somonauk, IL 60552
Phone: 815 498-2277

Email: unioncongregchurch@aol.com
Website: somonaukucc.org

January 2017

Interim Pastor: Rev. Chuck Maney

Sunday: Worship 10:00 a.m.

Our Church office is staffed the following days:

Pastor: 9-3 Tuesday and Wednesday
3-5 Thursday

Secretary:

Monday 9-3

Tuesday 9-3


Wednesday 9-3

Friday 9-3

January Calendar of Events

- 1 10 a.m. Worship with Lord's Supper
- 4 6 p.m. EPIC meets here
- 8 8 a.m. Trustees meet
Deacons meet
10 a.m. Worship, Sunday School
- 9 7 p.m. Sunshine Band meets
- 10 6:30 p.m. Church Council
- 11 6 p.m. EPIC meets here
- 15 10 a.m. Worship, Sunday School
- 18 6 p.m. EPIC meets here
- 22 10 a.m. Worship, Sunday School
- 24 4:30-6 p.m. 4th Tuesday Dinner at St. Paul's in Sandwich
- 25 6 p.m. EPIC meets here
- 29 10 a.m. Worship, Sunday School
11 a.m. Annual Meeting; Annual Dinner to follow



 **Moving?** notify the church with your new address/phone # .

Adult Sunday school will NOT meet in January. It will resume February 5.

-Turn Down the heat/ air conditioning If you're last to leave the building & also please make sure that all doors are locked.

-Reminder to officers & boards: be sure to check & empty your office mailbox regularly

-Coffee Hour Hosts: Sunshine Band hosts in January and February

-Miss a Sunday? You can read Pastor Chuck's sermon online. Go to <http://humsandwords.blogspot.com>

Church Website: our new website is up and running at somonaukucc.org to check it out.

Attention Church Officers or Committee Chairs: Year End Annual Reports will be needed by January 20th at the latest. Our annual meeting will be January 29th.



From our Pastor:

Dear Friends,

Let me thank you all for your generous cash gift at Christmas. You have been so thoughtful and kind to Martha and I. We love to sing your praises to the wider church. I am excited for what comes next in your life and ministry.

We are living through a winter that will already be remembered for its stretches of days below freezing and extra snowfall. While that is hardly unusual for Illinois, some years the weather seems to persist in getting and holding our attention. Worse yet, it limits our willingness to make plans to do things, even the things we love to do.

Let me be clear, do not feel guilty about missing church if the cold and sloppy conditions are an extreme test to your health. That guilt trip stuff is not good for the soul anyway. Use your telephone and internet to keep up with communications. If you have the internet, you can also read the sermons. ([humsand words.blogspot.com](http://humsandwords.blogspot.com)).

I pray that you were able to spend quality time with friends and family during the Christmas season. These major holidays help us to keep those connections a priority, and that is one way that the culture does work in our favor. Keeping in touch with our extended families is a great blessing to our emotional and spiritual health.

Looking ahead, I will be away from you for almost 2 weeks in January. I am taking a trip to Israel to visit the sights of the Bible stories, and also to learn firsthand about the challenges of the conflicts between the state of Israel and the Palestinians. I am prepared to have my worldview dramatically expanded. You can look forward to me returning with way too many things to say, and pictures to share, and likely make you crazy. I apologize in advance.

As I prepare to write the Pastor's Report for your Annual Meeting there are a couple of things I want to include here, where we have a wider audience. While it is true that the health of a faith community cannot be measured by numbers, the sighs of failing health can be seen in numbers.

It is important for you as a congregation to make Sunday attendance a priority for the coming year. When the church is gathered together, blessings flow and good things happen. Being involved at the time of a pastoral transition, will add to the church's ability to have a good start. The tough winter will hold the average attendance down in the winter months, but try not to take your church community for granted.

The other thing is that as a group we need to communicate about coming events early and often. In order to have church events take priority on the family calendars, we need to get the word out early. Typical announcements need to be out a month in advance. Big events, like the Ham Dinner, need announcements and tickets ready at least 6 weeks in advance. All announcements need to be on the webpage, the Facebook page, the newsletter, bulletins and the doors.

I have been kind of harping on communication of late. This responsibility is on the group coordinating the event, not mindlessly left for the secretary. It really does matter. While it is easy to take the church calendar for granted, it does us no favors. Even folks who attend on Sunday regularly, miss more weeks than they used to. Once people get out of the habit of coming every week, it is easy to miss more often than they intended.

So we have to promote, in house as well as in public. Remind people that the Annual Meeting includes a nice meal with fellowship time together afterwards. Remind the women of the church that Sunshine Band does not require hazing or extraordinary promises and secret handshakes. Communicate what is coming up and ask folks to help, to be present, to share in the times we spend together.

May God provide you with many blessings for this new year. There will be a number of changes taking place this year. The more involved you are, the easier it will be to influence the changes, and roll with them. You will call a new pastor. You will have another class of youngsters become confirmed and become full members of the church. The energy and enthusiasm of the church family will be what you choose to make it.

Thank you again for your gift and even more for permitting Martha and I to share in this wonderful faith community.

Pastor Chuck

Cell: 815 252 2792 email: chmj24@yahoo.com

Keep Us Informed: If you or a family member is ill or hospitalized, we're not always aware of it. Please let the church know. by calling the church office at 815 498 2277 or call Pastor Chuck directly at 815-433-3732. or 815-252-2792



Annual Meeting & Dinner: Our Annual meeting will begin right after worship on Sunday, January 29th.

All are encouraged to stay for this meeting as we will vote to approve the 2017 budget and also a change in the bylaws. Following the meeting there will be our Annual Dinner. This will be a potluck. ; Last name A-H please bring a meat dish or main dish casserole, I-P please bring a dessert, Q-Z please bring a fruit, vegetable or potato dish. You can bring your own table service or use the church's.

Remember in Prayer

Gail's grandson Llewyn Burke	Duane Lackey	
Ron Hawkins	Laureen Hash	Don Miller
Brad Kraus	Pam Morton	Sara Taylor
Nancy Nixon	Jim & Helen Wood	Tom Egan
Rev. Dave Bateman		

*the family and friends of Lou Emma Mannery who passed away December 19th. Emma attended worship with the Open Door group for many years.

*For soldiers serving our country overseas or away from families: Peter Boecker, Kimberly Cole Jacob Fisher, Troy Garlock, Jack Hinterlong, Brian Johnson, Gary Klemm, Noah Loveless, Eric Muelhausen, Katie Reiss, Shaun Walters

Newsletter Mailing: It is not too late to get on the list to have yours emailed to you. If you're willing to receive it email and have not provided your email address please do so. The church email address is unioncongregation@aol.com.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Congratulations:

-We are thankful for the beautiful new Christmas banner in the sanctuary, which was made by Chris Tuttle

-We are also thankful to everyone from the congregation who donated items for our Advent boxes, and items for the food boxes that Sunshine Band provided to 6 Somonauk families who needed a helping hand this holiday season. We have a very generous congregation.

Sunshine Band meets Monday, January 9 at 7 p.m. Devotions will be given by Cindy Lackey. Hostesses are Linda Zimmerlein and Donna Reiss.

January 2nd Lions Club: Kitchen-Cindy Lackey, Rae Halford

Dining Room: Marge Hash, Laura Stinson

Musings of the Moderator

Greetings folks. I hope all of you have been enjoying a wonderful Christmas season. By now I'm really your past Moderator and we're hopeful that we can fill the spot soon. I've enjoyed communicating with you through these musings. You can still find me in the pews on Sunday morning if not in this newsletter. Best wishes to all of you for 2017 and beyond!

Pete Dell

Cooperative Youth Ministry(EPIC) In January they will meet here at Union Congregational each Wednesday night at 6 p.m. for a meal, games, and Bible Study.

4th Tuesday Fellowship Feast will be Tuesday, January 24 at St. Paul's Catholic in Sandwich. Our church is to provide Vegetable dishes. There will be a sign up sheet to provide a dish for this meal. Everyone is invited to the free dinner from 4:30-6 p.m.

Financial Report for November

General Fund \$4976.50

Benevolence \$ 550.00

Money needed each month to meet our budget: \$8561.00

Union Congregational Church

Non-Profit Organization

P.O. Box 275

Somonauk, IL 60552

U.S. Postage Paid

Permit No. 16

Somonauk, IL 60552

Return Service Requested



1 Tyler Bark; 2 Ashlyn McKenna Bussett; 3 Abby Anderson, Mitchell Morel; 5 Matt Coultrip;
8 Georgia Lynn Smith; 10 Bill Coultrip, Ginger Hash Sharp; 12 Caryl Tillis; 14 Ken Stinson;
15 Jenna Wilson; 18 Christopher Werner; 20 Bryan Budvitis; 21 Nan Darby, Lauren Grube;
22 Helen Wood, Jessica Johnson; 25 Alicia Matthews; 26 Mark Nixon; 28 Reed Anderson

Anniversaries: We are not aware of any January anniversaries.

If you would like to be included in our birthday or anniversary lists, please give the information to the church office.

Ongoing Missions here at Union Congregational Church

*Alcoholics Anonymous meets here every Monday evening downstairs in the large Sunday School room.

*Bring your empty aluminum cans here for recycling. All proceeds from recycling goes into our Angel Fund

*You can also bring used printer cartridges for recycling . There's a bin in the church office. They are donated to Habitat for Humanity in DeKalb to help them raise funds.

*Sunshine Band provides Fair Trade Coffee for Sale. We don't make any money on this, it's just to make this coffee available

New Address for Katie Reiss: She is still stationed at the same base but is now living off base.

Kaitie Reiss

5855 Valley Dr Unit 1078

North Las Vegas, NV 89031

