

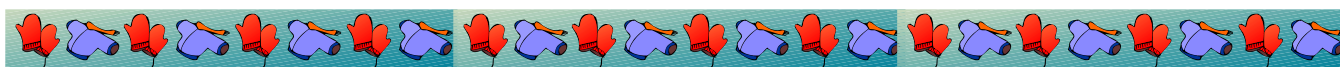


THE MESSENGER

**St. John
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**
Wood River, Illinois

JANUARY 2012

No matter who you are...
or where you are on life's journey,
YOU are welcome here.



It is time to put the Christmas decorations away, to loop the lights so they are easily untangled next year, to carefully wrap the fragile ornaments and stow them all gently in a box until we start thinking about decking the halls for 2012.

I wonder about the folks who leave their Christmas lights up past Epiphany—and start to worry about the folks who leave them up through Easter. I know someone who lost his wife just before Christmas and it was years before he could bring himself to take down the lights, as if it was his final admission she was actually gone.

Or are they so busy that they simply don't have the time to take them down? And if they are that busy is it with work and details or is someone in the family ill, in the hospital, and do they simply not have the energy or the will to go out and bundle up the lights? Or did they fall putting them up and the cast won't be off until Valentine's Day?

Sometimes I think we leave the lights up to try to keep Jesus a baby. For all the complaining we do about how long Advent is and how the stores get their decorations out way too early—Christmas goes by rather quickly in the church. Birth, naming, visit from the Magi (in the middle of the week most years) and then Jesus' Baptism the first Sunday after January 6 and he's calling disciples and preaching already.

There are people to heal, the despairing to comfort, storms to calm and the high and mighty to take down a notch. And if we say we really do worship that baby born in a manger then this rather hurried adult preacher and prophet has a pretty big claim on our lives as we try to keep up with him as he changes the world. There is a time for awe and candy and a time for learning, work and loaves and fishes.

Putting away the decorations then becomes a sort of packing for a journey. Jesus has people to see and places to go and we need to travel lightly if we are to answer his call and follow him. We cannot keep him safe and secure in the manger, we cannot keep him from setting his face toward Jerusalem. That steadfastness of the adult is the reason we knelt at the manger in the first place. Jesus is off and running and our spiritual adventure begins anew once again.

Happy Epiphany!
Pastor Mike

What's Inside

- Prayer list
- Thank you
- Activity Sheet
- Birthdays
- Getting to Know You





YOU'VE **REALLY** GOT IT IN FOR ME, HAVEN'T YOU?

For more Dave Nelson comics go to www.findingelim.com



Who's got a birthday?

January

- 2 - Dustene Shoemaker
- 3 - Evelyn Hendricks, Nathan Reppenhagen
- 4 - John Rhodes
- 5 - Terri Thorp
- 7 - Jessica Phelan, Danielle

Cox

- 9 - Nancy Hart
- 10 - Jean Vassier
- 13 - Jonathan Hinkle
- 15 - Caleb Roberts
- 17 - Laurel Gholson-Heitzman
- 18 - John Helmkamp III, Eleanor Kohlmiller
- 19 - George Koprivica
- 22 - Janay Niehaus
- 24 - Charles Hinkle
- 25 - Janet Shewmake
- 26 - Brad Bailey, Ashton Noble
- 29 - Ali Counton
- 30 - Elizabeth Gebelein, Nick Sutton, Madison Crockett
- 31 - Pat Blanton, Mark Hughes



St. John UCC
Prayer Concerns

Hospitalized/Health Concerns since the last Messenger:

Tim Coates, Cathi Austin, Paul Harris, Joyce Gholson, Bob Hall, Louise McDill, Kirsten & Ava McDill,

Staying Close to Home

Eleanor Kohlmiller Pat Westerhold
Margaret Rowden Betty Wiegand
Chuck Ursprung, Lucille Aubin

In Nursing Homes

Henrietta Hughes, VIP Manor
Ruth Jones, The Gardens, Springfield
John Niehaus, Jerseyville Manor
Marie Pearson, Rosewood (Alton)
Mary Jo Ringering, Willow Rose, Jersey
Hugh & Shirley Thatcher, VIP Manor

Serving in the Military

Alex Frazar, Tyler O'dell, Dan Roberts, Blake Sabolo, Brandon Sabolo and Brandon Southcombe



The family and friends of Remember in Prayer Mary Tickner who died Dec. 23. Services were at Elias, Kallal and Schaaf Funeral Home in Godfrey on Dec. 28 with Rev. Southcombe officiating.



Sunday School News

As we continue Luke's Christmas Story in Sunday School we still have the following units and teachers scheduled:

- Jan. 8** Fun and Games, Bob Hall
- Jan. 15** Time Out, Rene and Tracy Butler
- Jan. 22** Show and Tell, Julie Thien
- Jan. 29** Hands On, Jerry Hall
- Feb. 5** Food & People, Betty Maendele & Evalena O'dell
- Feb. 12** Community Life, Dustene Shoemaker
- Feb. 19** Brain Teasers, Keleigh & Andrew Rider

Called to Gift

LECTIONARY READING: Luke 2:22-40

INSTRUCTIONS: Fill in the blanks.

A _____ of revelation to the
And the _____ of your people _____

Which of the followings words would fill in the proper blanks.

1. Israel
2. Light
3. Glory
4. Jews



God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Created by Gloria J. Otis, October 2011

After enjoying the lectionary-based activities, please go to www.SPIRITSEASONS.COM for more lessons.

NEW BEGINNINGS

LECTIONARY READING: Mark 1:4-11

INSTRUCTIONS: Draw a line and circle your response to each question. Each question should match the answer:

1. Who did God use to prepare the way?
2. Proclaiming baptism of _____ (word found in picture).
3. Those who believed the message would receive _____ of sins (word found in picture).
4. Find two items that closely identify with the clothing John the Baptist wore?
5. What two types of food did John the Baptist eat?
6. Can you find the item that John wore around his waist?
7. Can you find the river John baptized the people in?



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30a Coffee Fellowship Communion 10:30a Worship	2 No WR Rotary No Boy Scouts	3 9:30a Stewardship No Cub Scouts	4 5-6:30p SR Practice 8p NA	5 8:30a Fellowship Breakfast @ Red Apple	6	7 12p-4p Birthday party in Fellowship Hall 5:30p AA
8 9:30a Worship 10:30a Coffee	9 12p WR Rotary 6:30p Finance Tm 7p Quilters 7p Boy Scouts	10 6:30p Pinochle 7p Cub Scouts	11 4:30p Outreach 8p NA	12	13	14 12-4p Baby Shower in Fellowship Hall 5:30p AA
15 9:30a Worship Baptism Anniv. 10:30 3rd Sunday Pot Luck Lunch	16 12p WR Rotary No Boy Scouts	17 7p Cub Scouts	18 5-6:30p SR Practice 8p NA	19 4:30p WMT	20	21 5:30p AA
22 9:30a 10:30a Coffee	23 12p WR Rotary Messenger Deadline 7p Boy Scouts	24 6:30p Pinochle 7p Cub Scouts	25 8p NA	26 6p Ad Team	27	28 5:30p AA
29 9:30a Worship Installation of new Church Ministry Team members 10:30a Coffee	30 12p WR Rotary 7p Boy Scouts	31 9a Quilters 7p Cub Scouts				



Thank you to everyone who helps make St. John UCC a welcoming, functioning, spiritually enlivening place to worship and fellowship. This month we especially thank:

Janet Blair, Jerry Hall, Joe Hanfelder, Marlene

O'dell and Samantha Rhodes for their service on the Administrative Team.

Donita Crockett for her leadership and all the members of the Bell Choir, the Children's Christmas Program and the Christmas Choir for the wonderful additions to our Advent and Christmas worship services.

Gladys Abernathy for learning our office payroll system and helping with filing our taxes.

Everyone who is joining a Ministry Team.

Bob Hall for cutting and sanding the wood for the "2x4 Nativity Scenes" for our 2nd Sunday of Advent workshop.

Everybody who helped at the Chicken & Noodle dinner.

The WMT members who helped decorate for Advent and Christmas.

Getting to Know You



My name is Jerry Hall. My wife is Kathleen and our children are Emily and Allison. Both our children are now married. Emily is married to

Chris May and Allison to Kevin Frank. God has blessed us with two great daughters and now two wonderful sons-in-law.

I was born on December 7, 1955 to Bob and Mickey Hall. A day that will "live in infamy," according to President Roosevelt. Some of you may remember my brother Mike.

He went to be with the Lord at seventeen years of age. Although his time here on earth was cut short, he was well accomplished. He was an Eagle Scout, a choir member and mainly just a great guy.

When I was 15 years old I met Kathleen. We were both attending Roxana High school and she was unable to shake me! I can say I married my high school sweetheart. After four years of college/apprenticeship, I became a journeyman carpenter. Kathleen and I married on August 12, 1978.

The first 20 years I worked as a carpenter for various contractors. Then in 1993, with huge support from Kathleen, we started our own contracting company. Hall Construction Company, Inc. is based in Bethalto and mainly focuses on custom home building. I thank the Lord every day that I am able to follow my passion and love what I do.

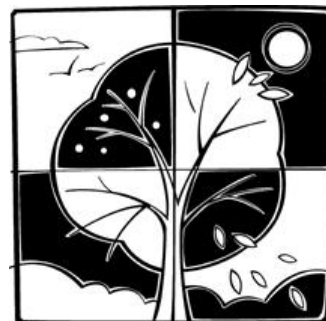
Growing up at St. John UCC has allowed me to experience a community of Christians giving back and serving the Lord. I have been blessed to have been a part of this church from Sunday School to Confirmation and then a member. I have served on multiple boards/committees/teams, teaching Sunday School and, yes, being the unofficial "Bell Ringer" each Sunday morning as the service begins.

I enjoy working in the yard in the summer or just day dreaming as I mow grass. I do like to travel when we can get away. My favorite places are Estes Park, Colorado and Navarre Beach on the Emerald Coast of Florida. Kathleen and I are currently composing our "bucket list" for retirement. I guess it's never too early to start!

If you don't know me, please introduce yourself, I'd like to meet you!

Your Friend in Christ,

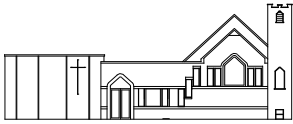
Jerry Hall



Mission Statement for St. John UCC

St. John United Church of Christ, Wood River, Illinois
is a Christian Community:

- ♣ Worshiping the Triune God
- ♣ Claiming the historic faith of the church
- ♣ Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ
- ♣ Nurturing for Christian discipleship
- ♣ Ministering to one another through fellowship and caring
- ♣ Serving our community and the world
- ♣ Connecting with other Christians for witness and service



The Messenger is a monthly publication of St. John United Church of Christ, 228 N. Sixth St., Wood River, IL 62095; phone 618 254-6682. E-mail [@sjucc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sjucc@sbcglobal.net)
Access our home page at www.stjohnucc.net. Worship is at 9:30 a.m.
Our Pastor is Rev. Mike Southcombe, cell phone (618) 558-5014
The Messenger editorial staff includes, Evalena O'dell and Marlene O'dell.
All guests are welcome.

“always caring, always sharing”

St. John United Church of Christ

228 N. Sixth St.
Wood River, IL 62095

Return Service Requested