



# ST. JOHN

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MAEYSTOWN, ILLINOIS

***The Visitor***  
**March 2023**

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## *Pastor's Reflection*

### **Continued Deepening Our Faith Together**

Deepening our Faith Together is the focus for our Wednesday night Lenten Services. One of the renowned theologians from Germany got us started this past Wednesday.

“Friedrich Schleiermacher, in full Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, (born November 21, 1768, Breslau, Silesia—died February 12, 1834, Berlin), German theologian, preacher, and classical philologist, generally recognized as the **founder of modern Protestant theology**. Schleiermacher says that feeling of absolute dependence on God is the highest grade of immediate self-consciousness, and is also an essential element of human nature (26).”

I can remember studying Schleiermacher in seminary. He was one of my favorites. The focus of the first Lenten service was our absolute dependence on God. I would add also our absolute dependence on one another, specifically as the body of Christ.

In our world today idealized notions of self-reliance has taken root to the detriment of society and individuals. We have been fed a steady diet of strong independent hero types going back to the 1950's. The lone cowboy image, the stand-out soldier. No one better captured the image than John Wayne in the countless cowboy and war movies. Today's hero figures are both men and women and their hyped-up abilities go far beyond anything John Wayne could have dreamed. They are always the strong silent type. They go it alone. Outside the box office you have legendary music stars like Frank Sinatra singing “I Did It My Way”. Again, romanticizing the notion that we should be independent from one another and able to do it our way.

In a perfect one-two punch the next attack was on organizations. The government becomes the Man! Religion becomes “the opiate of the masses”. Organization that came into existence with the purpose to make a difference in the world, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Rotary, Masons, Shriners, VFW... the list goes on and on, are all grossly under supported because we are not a society of joiners. We have become a society that politely declines the offer to make a difference by joining an organization. Number one reason given is that we just do not have time. The real reason is we are just not into organizations. This is a far cry from Friedrich Schleiermacher's fundamental understanding of our absolute dependence on God. If one gets real about God what is soon to follow is getting real with our dependence on one another.

This past Wednesday at the first of the Lenten Services we broke down this false narrative that ultimately cuts us off from God and one another. This fundamentally flawed premise is the cause of our children, youth and adults having such high anxiety. We send messages to our children that they should be like the super heroes portrayed on the big screen, on the sports fields, the cool kids at school, and that is simply not possible. The flip side of unrealistic independence is not needy kids but generous and strong kids, grounded in the truth that we all matter, we are all needed and none of us have all the answers. In the focus of building a stronger and deeper faith together this becomes critical. The lie of independence removes us from the need for God and one another. It is in our absolute dependence on God that our faith grows. I am looking forward to the rest of our Lenten Season and being with all of you! Thank you all for your generous spirit and your dedication to your faith!

Pastor



# St. John's News and Notes

## Announcements:

Adult Bible Study will not meet during Lent, as there will be a meal served before our Lenten services.

Sunday School Parents - You are invited to join Pastor in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings, after your drop off the kids for Sunday School, for coffee, juice, fruit, Danish and conversation. This will continue every Sunday through the end of the school year.

## Upcoming Events:

- Mid-Week Lenten Services will begin on March 1 with a meal at 6:00 p.m., followed by a service at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Meals and services will be held at St. John's on March 1, March 8, March 15, and March 22. The meal and service on March 29 will be held at Zion UCC, St. Joe.
- Good Friday is April 7; Easter is Sunday, April 9.
- The annual Hike, Bike, and Run will be held on Saturday, May 13. More information will be coming out soon.
- Women's Fellowship March Meeting is Thursday March 2 at 12:00 p.m. The April Meeting is Thursday, April 6 at 12:00 p.m.
- Pew Sisters will meet on Monday, March 20 at 6:30 p.m. Watch Facebook and the Sunday bulletin for meeting location.

## Special Birthdays:

- We kick off March by celebrating Joan Esker will be 80 years young on March 1.
- George Green turns 71 on March 2.
- Jeff Roy celebrates his 61st birthday on March 6.
- Charlie Eckerty turns the big 5-0 on March 9.
- Catherine Hoffmann turns a lovely 84 years young on March 10.
- Jeanette McClellan (76) and Sheryl Prange (70) both celebrate birthdays on March 11.
- Mark Hoffmann celebrates his 61st birthday on March 14.
- Allyn Rohlfing turns 69 on March 15.
- Robert Schmidt turns 77 on March 17.
- **Our very own Pastor Poole turns the big 6-0 on March 17.** 🎵 😊 🎵
- Melba Asselmeier turns 94 years young on March 18.
- Karen Prange celebrates her 65th birthday on March 25.
- Chris Voelker joins the 50 club on March 29.
- Becky Schaefer turns 65 on March 30.
- Glenn Woodcock turns 82 on April 3.
- John Hoeffft celebrates his 75th birthday on April 8.

- Janet Trost celebrates her 71st birthday on April 10.
- Dorothy Matzenbacher turns 86 on April 12.
- Dee Trost turns 78 on April 15.

## Special Anniversaries:

- Rodney & Debbie Eckart will celebrate 42 years of marriage on March 21.
- Jerry and Peg Johner will celebrate 60 years of marriage on March 25.
- Bob & Judy Edler will celebrate 44 years of marriage on March 31.
- Allyn & Trudi Rohlfing will celebrate 47 years of marriage on April 10.

## Acolyte Schedule:

*March:*

- 5 - Rowan Schilling & Caden Huddleston
- 12 - Maddie Huddleston & Chloe Carron
- 19 - Evan Hill & Tanner Rosenkranz
- 26 - Lucas Blackwell & Cody Schmitz

*April:*

- 2 - (Palm Sunday) Derek Knoll & Jake Coats
- 9 - (Easter) Kaylee Muertz & Andrew Stafford
- 16 - Hudson Brandt & Landon Johnson
- 23 - Ashley Crouch & Owen Carron

## Please keep the following in your prayers

- *Kaylee's grafting has begun and she is home!!!! Pray for continued healing.*
- *Debbie Barns has heart concerns.*
- *Virginia Borcharding is recovering at home after complications.*
- *Twyla Hoffmann is recovering from a few complications and is at Whispering Pines.*
- *Jan Reitz as she faces cardiac issues & has influenza. She is currently in the hospital.*
- *Roger Wild in your prayers as undergoes chemo for lymphoma.*
- *7<sup>th</sup> grader Elsa Wiemerslage is receiving treatment for cancer at Children's.*
- *Mike Fausz as he undergoes treatment for Leukemia.*
- *Bob Sales, Sr is on hospice. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.*
- *Lynn Ahrens as she recovers from a terrible fall and surgery.*
- *Allison Ford has a non-cancerous brain tumor with great complications.*
- *Tim Branson in his battle with cancer.*

Prayers continued.....

- *Scott Stoeckel, as he battles cancer.*
- *Renesmae Brown, she is 3 yrs. old, has autism and now seizures.*
- *Aileen Neeley in your prayers as she battles cancer.*
- *Mary Kay Richards as she recovers from lung surgery.*
- *Sarah Schmitz's sister, Cheryl Steiner, she has been diagnosed with kidney disease.*

NOTE: We are putting together a book to capture the life of our church as we found ways to navigate being a faith community through COVID. Pastor would like a write-up from each church group (and utmost importance, photos if you have them) about activities of each group during the covid period. Examples: Zoom meetings, live social distancing meetings, hiking, any activities the group did during that period or perhaps how you kept in touch.

Joyce will gather that info, organize it according to group, and publish it in a photo-type book. Please email a write-up and photos or hand a writeup and photos to Pastor and/or Nichole. (the photos will be duplicated and returned to you) The info will be passed on to Joyce.

# Save the date!



**Maeystown  
VBS will be  
May 30 - June 2  
from 9AM to  
NOON.**

**More information coming soon!**

## *Kaylee's Korner*

♥ We have so many people to thank and we apologize if we leave anyone out.

We'd like to thank the Choir, Marcia and Susan for the beautiful music. "Here I am Lord", not only is Kaylee's favorite song but mine(Faye's) so it was so wonderful to hear it.

To Bob Edler for the beautiful box you made to put the candles in. We were in awe of how it looked when all those candles were burning.

To Cathy Asselmeier for the most beautiful quilt we have ever seen. We talked about how much time and love you put into it.

To the Church board for all the help they gave to make it run so smoothly.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all of our friends, family, Church family and community that came and prayed with us for Kaylee's recovery. We know in our hearts that she will be fine and back to this wonderful Church someday.

Thanks also to all those at home that couldn't be there, but prayed at home.

God Bless You All!

Charlie & Faye

♥ I would like to thank Pastor & the church council for the beautiful prayer vigil for Kaylee. Thank you to everyone who came and to everyone who has been praying for our family.

Thank you to Bob Edler for making the beautiful candle holder and to Kathy Asselmeier for the beautiful quilt.

Thank you to the choir for singing Kaylee's favorite hymn. It is truly amazing to see all the love and support from our church family. Thank you to everyone who has reached out or sent cards. We are truly blessed to be part of such a wonderful church!

Chris, Christy, Kaylee & Julia

♥ Thank you to all that participated in Kaylee's Welcome Home Parade. It was such a great turn out. I know how busy everyone is and it was not a pretty night, quite cold.

I'd like to thank my daughter-in-law Julie Birk for organizing the whole thing and with lots of great ideas to make it such a success. Thanks to Nathan Birk for helping get the Fire Truck arranged. Thanks to Lyndie Prange who made endless calls to get someone to drive and to Brian Coats for taking time out of his busy schedule and drive.

Thanks to Pastor for getting the word out. I hope I haven't left anyone out, but if I did please forgive me.

Again most of all, thanks for ALL the cars and trucks that put that unbelievable Smile on Kaylee's Face as you saw when you drove by!!!!!!

Faye Birk



**General Fund:**

Beginning balance 01/01/23	\$23,237.74
Income	\$17,362.37
Expenses	\$15,463.49
Ending balance 01/31/23	\$25,136.60

**The Visitor Financial Report:**

Beginning Balance -	\$300.44
Income -	\$0.00
Expenses -	\$49.09
Ending Balance -	\$251.35

Faye Birk, Treasurer

**Sunday School - Checking Account**

Beginning Balance -	\$1326.77
Income -	
Offering -	\$26.00
Expenses -	
Michelle Vogt -	\$239.29
Reimbursement of Sunday	
School Lesson Material	
Ending Balance -	\$1113.48

**Sunday School - Savings Account**

Beginning Balance	\$6730.64
Income -	\$744.00
Expenses -	\$.00
Ending Balance -	\$7474.64

Faye Birk, Treasurer

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY 🎵 🎵 🎵**

Joan Esker	Mar. 1
George Green	Mar. 2
Susan Koesterer	Mar. 3
Adam Prange	Mar. 3
Emily Rusteberg	Mar. 3
Brooke Dawsyn Knobloch	Mar. 3
Elisa Marie Horn	Mar. 4
Mabel Louise Jensen	Mar. 5
Jeff Edward Roy	Mar. 6
Gracie Allen	Mar. 6
Marlee Rose Melching	Mar. 7
Charles Ray Eckerty	Mar. 9
Emily Michele Kruse	Mar. 9
Charles Richeson	Mar. 10
Catherine Hoffmann	Mar. 10
Jeanette McClellan	Mar. 11
Sheryl Prange	Mar. 11
Carrie Grueninger	Mar. 11
Mark Hoffmann	Mar. 14
Caleb Buchanan	Mar. 14
Andrew (AJ) Shipp	Mar. 14
Rita Richeson	Mar. 15
Allyn Rohlfing	Mar. 15
Dan Gilbert	Mar. 15
Robert Schmidt	Mar. 17
Pastor Patrick Poole	Mar. 17
Melba Asselmeier	Mar. 18
Josie Ann Rusteberg	Mar. 18
Kamryn Barnes	Mar. 19
Juanita Roland	Mar. 20
Stephanie Tyberendt	Mar. 20
Lisa Carron	Mar. 21
Bradley Philip Horn	Mar. 21
Owen Steven Prange	Mar. 21
Katie Morwick	Mar. 22
Megan Morwick	Mar. 22
Joe Floyd Niebruegge	Mar. 22
Matthew Rippelmeyer	Mar. 22
Eva Jean Floarke	Mar. 23
Morgan Schmitz	Mar. 23
Cole Juelfs	Mar. 24
Karen Prange	Mar. 25
Susan Richeson	Mar. 25
Mary Headrick	Mar. 26
Larry Henson	Mar. 27
Aaron Prange	Mar. 27
Everett Charles Kruse	Mar. 27
Kelly Hoefft	Mar. 28
Rodney Morwick	Mar. 29
Chris Voelker	Mar. 29

**Happy Spring!**



Becky Schaefer	Mar. 30
Jackie Hoffmann	Mar. 30
Reagan Landen Johnson	Mar. 31
Heather Elaine Wild	Apr. 2
Glenn Woodcock	Apr. 3
Kaitlyn Andres	Apr. 3
Nikki Asselmeier	Apr. 4
Matthew Schellhardt	Apr. 4
Ashlyn Crouch	Apr. 5
Aven Emily Kennedy	Apr. 5
Andrew Schaefer	Apr. 6
Abriale Lee Smith	Apr. 6
Otis Wayne Hines	Apr. 6
Carla Feldmeier	Apr. 7
John Hoefft	Apr. 8
Courtney Hoffmann	Apr. 9
Karrin Larson	Apr. 9
Morgan Daniel Hoffmann	Apr. 9
Charles (Chuck) Schaefer	Apr. 10
Janet Trost	Apr. 10
Ashley Melvin	Apr. 10
Logan Matthew Albat	Apr. 10
Rilynn Grace Heidenreich	Apr. 11
Amelia Louise Hoffmann	Apr. 11
Dorothy Matzenbacher	Apr. 12
Kelly Ann Mathews	Apr. 12
Henry Alexander Knoll	Apr. 12
Stacy Brigance	Apr. 13
Sharon Bergheger	Apr. 14
DeeAnn Trost	Apr. 15



**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY** ♥ ♥ ♥

Lenny & Karen Schwarze	Mar. 11
Jim & Lisa Maurer	Mar. 14
Rodney & Debbie Eckart	Mar. 21
Scott & Julie Upchurch	Mar. 23
Keith & Sarah Schmitz	Mar. 24
Jerry & Peg Johner	Mar. 25
Ryan & Megan Kempf	Mar. 25
Bob & Judy Edler	Mar. 31
Josh & Emily Reinhardt	Apr. 2
Randy & Brandy Hicks	Apr. 5
Garrett & Elise Rohlfiing	Apr.
Jason & Sheri Dilley	Apr. 9
Luke & Alyssa Andres	Apr. 9
Allyn & Trudi Rohlfiing	Apr. 10
Tom & Stacy Schilling	Apr. 10
Ron & Susan Richeson	Apr. 11
Mark & Susan Hoffmann	Apr. 14

**FASTNACHT 2023**

The Women's Fellowship would like to thank everyone that donated to the Country Store and Raffle or helped in any way! They were both very successful.

Cathy Hoffmann, Chairman

**Raffle Winners:**

- Bob & Judy Edler – 4 Cardinal tickets
- Linda Schmidt – wreath
- Susan Koester – Wooden Cross
- Don Monroe – Baby quilt
- Mary Huch – Pet/animal basket
- Sheryl Prange – Afghan
- Keith Voelker – Wine basket
- Karen Osterhage - Afghan
- Monica Wessel – Mexican basket
- Lois Gyore – Fredrico's gift card
- Rose Whelan – Norwex
- Annette DeBourge – Afghan

**Earnings:**

Country Store	377.00
Raffle	<u>481.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>858.00</b>



**St. John United Church of Christ**  
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Non-Profit Organization  
U. S. Postage Paid  
Permit #1  
Maestown, IL 62256

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Send email updates, photos & group descriptions to [maestownucc@gmail.com](mailto:maestownucc@gmail.com)

Church: 618-458-6940

Pastor's Cell Phone: 618-340-2372

Website: [www.maestownucc.org](http://www.maestownucc.org)

[pastorpoole123@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpoole123@gmail.com)

“Like” us on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/maestownucc>

***Thought for the day:***

Let your hands be so busy catching blessings that there's no room for grudges.