



ST. JOHN

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MAEYSTOWN, ILLINOIS

The Visitor

May 2024

It's a Wonderful Life

It's a Wonderful Life is one of my favorite movies! Of course, George only realizes that truth after some powerful out-of-body experiences, as a miss-fit angel takes him through a series of eye-opening experiences. You and I, like George, can easily lose sight of how wonderful life truly is. George had Clarence, the inept angel. We have something better than Clarence, the Gospels. We learn the lessons Jesus taught us. In the movie, George loses sight of the privilege life is and the gift it is to share in the struggles and joys of living in a loving community. The scripture this past Sunday was one of those course-altering gospel messages if you take it to heart.

John 15:1-8

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower.² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

At first glance, it may not be clear how closely this scripture relates to George's life crises. George's crises were derived from his circumstances and inability to see a way out. Life has a way of doing that in small and large ways. George was abiding in his crises and not in the divine. In other words, he was lost in the circumstances and not seeing the big picture of his life and God's hand in it. His goodness and the goodness of others were lost to him; he no longer had hope and was swallowed up, in a very dark place. In this movie, George is a great guy, someone you would never think would get so down. Which makes him so relevant in real life. If George could lose his way, so can we. However, like George, who wakes up to how rich and wonderful his life is, we too have that truth to wake up to.

The truth is always there if we seek it out. In other words, abide in, submit to, surrender to, and live for being one with Christ! Christ breathed the spirit into the disciples. That spirit is the breath of God that washed over our life, like the love of grandmother holding a precious child, neighbor helping neighbor, a community coming to the aid of a family in need. We live in this wonderful life and wonderful spirit as we abide by the divine truth that God has written in our hearts.

Let me put this another way: It would appear we should and need to manage our lives from a resource-given approach. We have only so much time, money, energy, etc. That is the management of your life and not the being of your life. We often put the management before the being in our life. The being of our life is the abiding part where we put our heart, love, and commitment. We never want to lose sight of the being in our life for the doing of our life. The good news, the most amazing news, is that when we are in the being of our life, the doing has a strange way of working itself out, and we are so much richer for it. It is the difference between *I have to* _____ (fill in the blanks) and *I want to* _____ because it is true to my being in the abiding love in my heart.

Love, then go and do, repeat a million times over. Love then do. Be in the abiding love of Christ, and then go and bring that love to life in your actions. It truly is a wonderful life, and I thank God for each and every one of you!

Pastor

Church Council Minutes – March 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Drew Watts. Pastor Poole opened the meeting with a prayer. Those in attendance were Drew Watts, Susan Koesterer, Fay Ross, Mark Rey, Cheri Langsdorf, Pam Muertz and Ron Richeson. Absent were Amy Rohlfing and Debbie Eckart.

Review/Approval of Minutes from February 12, 2024 Meeting

The minutes from the February meeting were reviewed. There being no changes or corrections a motion was made by Susan Koesterer and seconded by Cheri Langsdorf to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

Review/Approval of Treasurer's Report/Bills/Timecard/Pastor's Expenses

The treasurer's report/bills/timecard and Pastor's expenses were presented and reviewed. There being no changes or corrections, motion by Cheri Langsdorf, seconded by Fay Ross to accept reports as presented. Motion carried.

Council Members Reports

The council discussed two dead trees on the property. Drew will contact tree trimmers for estimate to remove the trees. The council discussed the need to select a recipient of the April 5th Sunday offering. Cheri will provide additional information regarding a potential recipient.

Solar Power Update

Pastor reported the loan application process should be wrapping up soon. Pastor also shared the need to select a project manager for the solar project. The council discussed potential church members who would be appropriate to lead the project. Pastor will reach out to see if they are willing to serve.

Fire Department Report

The Fire Department inspected all church building and provided a list of all deficiencies. Fay Ross will review the list of inadequacies and ensure actions are taken to remediate.

AED

The council discussed the difficulty to secure supplies for our existing AED machine. Additional research will occur to identify if another supplier is available for our current AED. A new AED would cost approximately \$1,500.

Student Pastor

Pastor reviewed a proposal to make Tim Burns a Student Pastor at St. John and Zion UCC. Pastor reviewed the student pastor responsibilities. Tim is currently in an online pastoral certificate program and active in the church ministry. The annual cost of the student pastor position is estimated at \$11,700 annually with St. John responsible for 2/3 of the cost and Zion responsible for 1/3. St. John has \$5,000 in the 2024 budget funded by donor to support the Student Pastor position.

A motion was made by Fay Ross to approve the proposal to add Tim Burns as a Student Pastor and seconded by Mark Rey. All in favor. Motion carried.

The council will hold an information meeting after church on April 28th to discuss the Student Pastor proposal. The congregational ballot vote to approve the Student Pastor will occur on May 19th.

More information regarding the Student Pastor responsibilities will be included in the Visitor.

Pastor's Report

Pastor reported that church attendance continues to be strong. Pastor also shared that beginning in April we will have music before church outside the church hall.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Cheri Langsdorf and seconded by Fay Ross to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned. Pastor Poole closed the meeting by leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Susan Koesterer, Secretary

Women's Fellowship

The March 7th meeting of the Women's Fellowship was called to order by Faye Birk with 15 members and Pastor present. Pastor opened with a prayer.

The treasurer's report was read and the February 29th balance of \$6351.10 was reported. A motion to accept was made by Yvonne and Anna. Motion carried.

The secretaries' report was read and approved by Nancy and Barb. Motion carried.

We will have a guest speaker at our May meeting. Chris Fulton coordinator from Age Smart will come to talk about available options to help us grow old comfortably.

Old Business

Fastnacht was discussed. Lisa did a great job of organizing workers and getting new members involved. It was decided that we need to have more options for kids and also a way to pay with credit card at the Country store. The younger people do not carry cash. A basket raffle was discussed and more items for a bake sale are also needed. It was decided that a sign for sausage sales needs to be on display at the Country store.

The Quilt raffle was a success and we raised 2367.00 from the raffle. An additional 526.50 from the Country store gave us a total of 2893.50. Connie and Sue made the motion to send a total of 3000.00 dollars to Hoyleton's Homes for Healing project. Motion carried. A big thank you went out to the volunteers who took the quilt to ST Joe, Valmeyer, New Hanover, Waterloo, and Floraville churches. The winner of the quilt was Sara Kendall Gottmann who is music director at New Hanover. Thanks to all who bought tickets and to all who helped make the raffle a success. Thank you notes will be sent out to the churches who helped to support this raffle.

The Hoyleton Gala was a big success. Between St Joe and Maeystown we had a total of 8 tables of 8. Maeystown and St Joe were recognized for supporting Hoyleton with the Hike and Bike for many years.

Barb and Faye volunteered to be at church early on Easter Sunday for breakfast setup.

Pastor mentioned again how important it is for all of us to be strong and remember "God will provide".

Pastor's birthday was the only birthday present, but it was discussed that Melba was celebrating her 95th birthday on March 18th and we should send cards to her.

Anna and Barb made the motion to adjourn. Motion carried. Pastor closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Ellen Edler Secretary



News and Notes

Announcements:

- The annual Hike & Bike to benefit the youth of Hoyleton is Saturday, May 11. The format is back to the old format and route. Registration is open.
- Congratulations to this year's graduates! If you would like your son or daughter to be recognized at our Graduation Recognition Service, please email Nicole at maeystownucc@gmail.com with your child's name and where they are graduating from. Feel free to include a sentence or two about their future plans.

Upcoming Events:

VBS will be May 28-31. Registration is open and volunteers are needed.

Special Birthdays:

- Shirley Stafford celebrates her 73rd birthday May 1.
- Dave Hesterberg turns 71 on May 7.
- Terry Roberson turns 72 on May 10.
- Eva Novakov celebrates her 79th birthday May 13.
- Judith Tomlinson turns 81 years young on May 19.
- Debbie Walster and Dwight Asselmeier will turn 69 and 68 respectively on May 23.
- Marietta Schneider will celebrate her diamond jubilee birthday on May 24.
- Manlee Knobloch will turn 82 on May 28.
- Jackie Hoffmann celebrates her 71st birthday on May 30.
- Pat Harris turns a lovely 80 on May 31!
- Curtis Rusteberg turns 78 on June 6.

Special Anniversaries:

- Morris & Pat Brandt will celebrate 48 years of marriage on May 15.
- Larry & Marlene Wild will celebrate 51 years of marriage on May 19.
- George & Linda Green will be married 49 years on May 24.
- Randy & Michelle Coats will celebrate 46 years on June 3, while Mark & Brenda Rey will celebrate 41 years that same day.
- Paul & Jackie Hoffmann will be married 52 years on June 10.
- Lynden & Karen Prange will celebrate 44 years on June 14.

Acolyte Schedule:

May

- 5 - Chloe Carron & Drake Coats
- 12 - Lilly Carron & Jake Coats
- 19 - Owen Carron & Ashlyn Crouch
- 26 - Payton Dilley & Dallen Edler

June

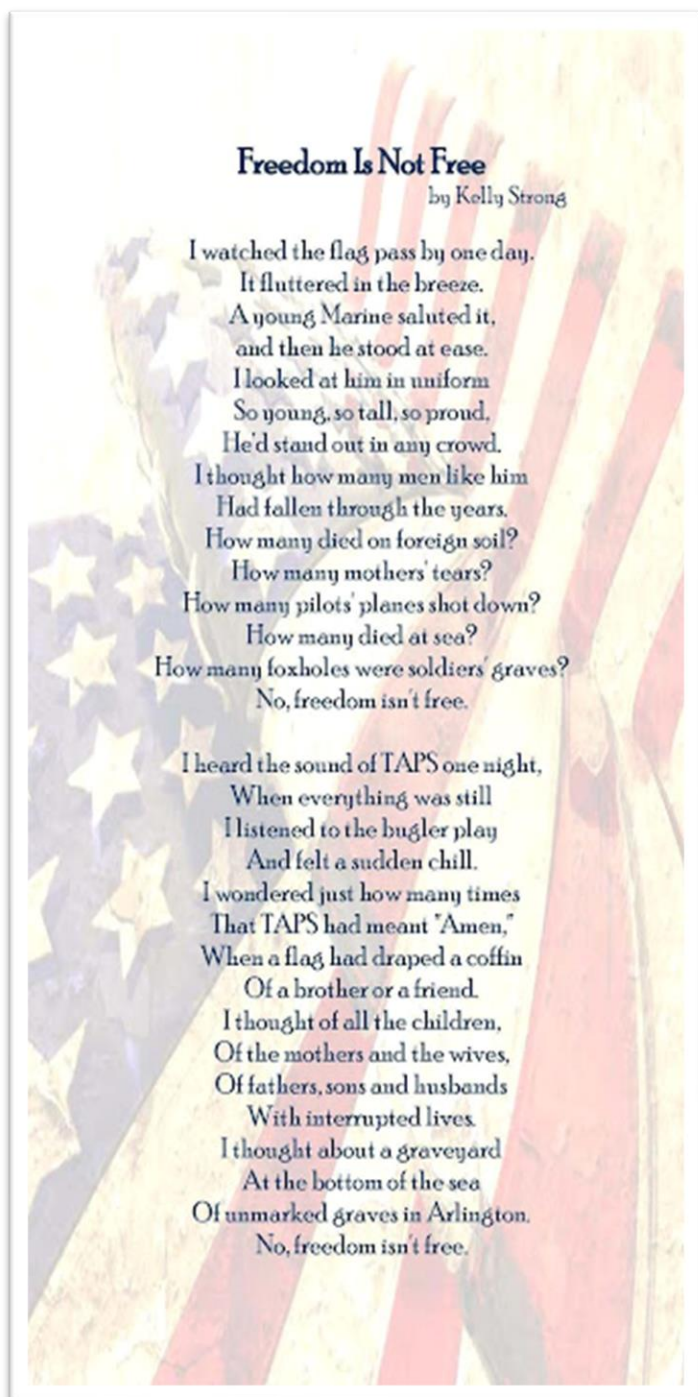
- 2 - Evan Hill & Caden Huddleston
- 9 - Maddie Huddleston & Landen Johnson
- 16 - Jackie Keller & Derek Knoll
- 23 - Henry Knoll & Ella Matzenbacher
- 30 - Kaylee Muertz & Rowan Schilling

Prayer List:

- *Please keep Linda Sutter in your prayers as she recovers from heart concerns.*
- *Penelope Kate Karrenbrock is an 8yr old little girl with a cancerous tumor on her upper spinal cord. She is receiving radiation and then to a hospital in Michigan for special treatment.*
- *Ralph Chastain as he recovers from a stroke.*
- *Jenny Linker Candler as she battles cancer.*
- *Dennis Rodenberg as he battles cancer.*
- *Dave Berg Sr. is receiving treatment to ensure his cancer does not return.*
- *Mona Mothershead is receiving treatments for her cancer.*
- *Victoria Ripplemeyer's Sister-in-Law, Natalie Watson, is facing an aggressive cancer. Please keep Natalie and her family in your prayers.*
- *Florence Feldmeier is now recovering at Carla's and doing great!*
- *Dennis Knobloch as he heals from his surgery and receives the last rounds of chemo.*
- *Kaylee is getting stronger every day but still needs our prayers.*
- *Tim Branson in his battle with cancer.*
- *Scott Stoeckel, as he battles cancer.*
- *Renesmae Brown, she is 3 yrs. old, has autism and now seizures.*
- *Denise Farmer as she seeks answers for some neurological issues.*



Remember our military men and women on Memorial Day



Visitor Report:

Beginning Balance -	\$305.00
Income -	\$0.00
Expense -	\$0.00
Ending Balance -	\$305.00

Faye Birk, Treasurer

Sunday School – Checking Account:

Beginning Balance -	\$925.63
Income -	\$53.00
Offering -	\$53.00
Expenses -	\$671.29
Michelle Vogt, VBS Kit & Supplies	\$292.85
Michelle Vogt, Sun. Sch. Curriculum	\$258.00
Anna Massie - Easter Candy	\$54.44
Children's International -	\$66.00
Ending Balance -	\$307.34

Sunday School – Savings Account :

Beginning Balance -	\$7036.00
Income -	
Interest -	\$ 1.75
Expenses -	\$0.00
Ending Balance -	\$7037.75

Faye Birk, Treasurer



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Shirley Stafford	May 1
Elise Sandra Rohlfing	May 3
Caleb Hicks	May 3
Shannon Marie Jansen	May 4
Luca Michael Heidenreich	May 4
Megan Vogt	May 5
Lilly Carron	May 5
Jensen Michael Roever	May 5
Sara Schreder	May 6
David Hesterberg	May 7
Dawson Goldschmidt	May 7
Clinton Hicks	May 9
Terry Roberson	May 10
Lane Dale Mathews	May 11
Cole William Dilley	May 12
Eva Novakov	May 13
Lynden Prange	May 14
Paige Jackson	May 15
Kathy Ann Poole	May 15
Mikayla Krebel	May 17
Megan Kempf	May 17
Bryanna Crouch	May 18
Reid Schilling	May 18
Judith Tomlinson	May 19
Braxton Lee Boman	May 19
David (Eli) Buchanan	May 20
Maiana Asselmeier	May 20
Clay Juelfs	May 21
Angela Dixon	May 21
Clay Juelfs	May 21
Amy Lynn Stirnaman	May 22
Debbie Walster	May 23
Dwight Asselmeier	May 23
Tom Schilling	May 23
Nathan Keller	May 23
Joel Alexander Parris	May 23
Marietta Schneider	May 24
Hannah Patrice Rohlfing	May 24
Sandra Berg	May 25
Michael Stafford	May 26
Tucker Lee Schwarze	May 26
Maddie Carron	May 27
Drake Coats	May 27
Milo Greydon George	May 27
Manlee Knobloch	May 28
Coley Hoffmann	May 28
Kynlee Sue Andres	May 28
Callie Elise Rohlfing	May 29
Ava Jean Edler	May 29
Christina Kay Muertz	May 30
Jackie Hoffmann	May 30
Pat Harris	May 31
Audrey Lee Knobloch	May 31
Jamie Grace Nolan	May 31

Julie Ann Birk	June 2
Curtis Rusteberg	June 6
Wesley Kuergeleis	June 6
Breck Rohlfing	June 8
Aaron Esker	June 9
Reagan Rohlfing	June 9
Gretchen Brandt	June 11
David Alan Berg, Jr.	June 12
Ripken Voelker	June 13
Wyatt Braun	June 13
David Asselmeier	June 14
Parker Brandt	June 14

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Terry & Debbie Walster	May 4
Ronald & Larita Mohl	May 7
Tim & Mary Branson	May 10
Kyle & Kaitlyn Andres	May 12
Erik & Erin Floarke	May 14
Pete & Dr. Jennifer Goessling	May 14
Jared & Amy Roever	May 14
Morris & Pat Brandt	May 15
Brad & Amy Juelfs	May 17
Larry & Marlene Wild	May 19
Pastor Patrick & Kathy Poole	May 19
Paul & Miki Skaggs	May 21
Jeffrey & Joy Hines	May 23
George & Linda Green	May 24
Christopher & Amanda Schweigert	May 25
Jeff Edward & Julie Ann Roy	May 27
Steven & Heather Hicks	May 27
Justin & Cody Rohlfing	May 28

Jonathan & Jessica Liefer	June 1
LJ & Jennifer Rosenkranz	June 1
Wesley & Andrea Kuergeleis	June 2
Randy & Michelle Coats	June 3
Mark & Brenda Rey	June 3
Cole & Laura Goldschmidt	June 3
David & Amanda Rusteberg	June 5
Mike & Dr. Shannon Krebel	June 6
Aaron & Katie Esker	June 6
Matt & Paige Galligos	June 6
Greg & Jaclyn Knobloch	June 9
Paul & Jackie Hoffmann	June 10
Scott & Hannah Rohlfing	June 10
Brent & Cherie Langsdorf	June 11
Ryan Dean & Lauren Hesterberg	June 13
Ryan & Emily Richeson	June 13
Lynden & Karen Prange	June 14

Congregation Meeting on Sunday, May 19 immediately following worship for the purpose of voting to call Tim Burns, Jr as a Student Pastor of St. John UCC and Zion UCC.

STUDENT PASTOR

Description and responsibilities for the proposed St. John and Zion UCC Student Pastor position

- **Primary responsibilities:** Learn and grown in their gifts for ministry.
- **Secondary responsibilities:** Provided added support to the many missions, ministries, and programs of the church, congregation and community.

Participation in Ministry

- **Preaching:** Leading the Sunday worship service at least once every 6 weeks, as well as filling in for Pastor Poole when absent.
- **Senior Programs and Ministries:** Aiding with the existing programs as well as helping develop new ministries.
- **Music Ministry:** Special music for Sunday Worship Service as needed, sharing personal songs and their context with the Youth Group, as well as the seasonal outdoor performances held prior to the Sunday worship service outside the Church Hall.
- **Wednesday Warmup Program:** Continuing the existing Wednesday warmup program, as well as exploring other possible media ministries.
- **Youth Ministries:** Providing devotional messages at youth group meetings, as well as added support for the After School Program and all other youth events and ministry efforts.

Education

- Currently enrolled since August of 2023 in an online Pastoral Certificate Program provided through Phillips Theological Seminary Center for Ministry and Lay Training.

UCC Illinois South Conference

- As of February 2024, approved and accepted into the Conference as a Member in Discernment (Student-In-Care) pursuing licensed ministry.

Hours and Income

- Hours and income will be divided between St. John (2/3) and Zion (1/3) churches
- 15 hours a week at \$15 an hour, totaling \$11,700 yearly
- St. John responsible for \$7,800 (2/3) **\$5,000 currently in the budget for seminary student
- Zion responsible for \$3,900 (1/3)





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Thought for the day

When life gives you a rainy day, play in the puddles.