

# St. Johns United Church of Christ

27 N. William Street, Marine City, MI 48039

## News from Pastor Ken



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Well, it looks like we are all camping out in our respective homes a little longer. Regardless of how you feel about all this I hope that you are taking care of yourself and are considerate of those around you if you need to go out. Unfortunately, unique situations such as this seem to bring out both the best and worst in people. That is why it is particularly important to remind ourselves of who and whose we are. By the fact that we label ourselves Christian, we represent the nature of Christ to everyone we meet along the way. Let people know that they are not alone in this journey. We are also called to share the message of mercy, love, compassion and hope with all that we meet along life's path whether that is done physically or virtually. These are indeed challenging times. It is our call to be the true face of Christ to all that we meet along the way whether neighbor, family members, believer, or nonbeliever, regardless of how they vote and by whatever name they call the creator.

In the meantime, call somebody, send a greeting card, email, check in on your family, friends, neighbors. Volunteer safely at a food bank, sew a face mask, shop for essentials for a shut in. Wave or give a thumbs up to first responders and healthcare workers, even your local veterinarians. Say thank you to the grocery and other essential store workers. They are front liners too.

I know that everyone has a story for when the weather has been worse or better or different but... this has been just an odd winter / spring for weather. There was a week when it started in the 60's and ended in the teens. There has been snow in the middle of April. We have had days that included a little winter and summer all in a day of spring. This weather has been teasing us for over a month.

## Pastor Ken Newsletter Continued

I cannot believe how excited I am about the possibility of spring. I cannot wait to spend more time in the yard and in the garden. The gardens seem to be alive already. It is like they could not wait any longer, regardless of the weather. I love watching the gardens come alive.

Taking care of the garden has become a series of great life lessons for me. One of those lessons is that I am still learning to balance the hard work of gardening with remembering to take time to enjoy the garden. I find seeking that balance an interesting metaphor for life. We sometimes get so busy doing life that we forget to enjoy life. However, that being said, I am actually thinking about a couple new garden ideas for this year. They are always a work in progress. As always, we will see how the plan unfolds.

I love the sight, sound and smell of spring, full sensory overload. The garden in early spring serves as a wonderful reminder of all the miracles of life. Just like in our own lives, there is a lot of amazing stuff going on, but because it often happens just below the surface, we sometimes forget to notice it. There exists an amazing opportunity for transition, both in our yards and in our lives. Often where and when we least expect it.

So this Easter season I hope you continue to look for the miracles wherever and whenever they may appear, regardless of how big or how small they may be. Remember, this is truly a season of hope and resurrection. As I work in the garden and experience the joy of new life, my hope is that each of us has the opportunity to experience new life spiritually as well.

With all of challenges that life brings, both in the world and in some of our own homes, it is sometimes hard to remember that God is with us always and at work in our lives. I think that is one of the true miracles of Easter and spring. We are reminded with every winter there comes a season of rebirth and new hope. Sometimes it just takes a while for us to notice it.

So, look around, take a deep breath or two, okay, maybe for some of us three, and know that God is at work in your life right now. Even if you cannot see it or feel it yet, God is preparing you for a personal Easter transformation.

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are held in God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace and there is a place for you here.

And remember, be kind to yourself.

Take care and be well, Peace

Ken

### Happy Birthdays in May

5/2 Judy O'Brien  
5/16 Irene Lindeborg

### Anniversaries in May

5/4 Brenda & Thomas Fisher

### Worship Ministry

#### Volunteers Needed Please sign-up

Please consider signing up for the ministries of Usher/Greeter, Liturgists and Altar Care.

### Prayers For .....

Kathy & Doug	Liza
Mary	Michelle
Tricia	Alma
Diane	Tina
Starr	Linda & Ron
Liz	Jeff
Noah	Nanette
Prange Family	Brenda & Tom
Miriam	Harvey & Lynn
Jim & Karen	Donald
Carolyn	Carissa
Corey	Nick
Becca	Jake
Rosemarie	Mr. Rosello
Don & Lois	Joy
Health Care Workers	
Coronavirus Victims	
Families of St. John & St. James	



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### Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your love one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to be placed on the list.

Josh Bieske	Staff Sgt.	US Air Force
Alex Tite	Private	US Army
Joshua Bieske	Sgt. First Class	US Air Force

Kid's Page

Color the below Poppies in remembrance of our lost veterans.



# Memorial Day Remembrance



**Broad stripes and bright stars.... gave proof....**

**that our flag was still there.**

## Veteran

I was a proud veteran  
That served my country well  
To those that would listen  
I had many stories to tell.

We fought for America's freedom  
In far away places on foreign land.  
Wherever the battle for democracy raged,  
America's finest made a stand.

We fought for your future  
And the right to remain free.  
For we saw what freedom meant  
To those not blessed with Liberty.

For you and yours  
We would gladly have given our life.  
We faced the fears and perils of battle  
We braved endless turmoil and strife.

Please remember us veterans  
And the sacrifices we made for you.  
Please share the blessings of freedom,  
Proudly wave the red, white and blue.

Lyrne Carey  
Copyright 2004

**Broad stripes and bright stars ....**

**gave proof .... that our flag was still there.**

## Message from St. John's Council President

Well, these are certainly unusual times we are sharing together- or should I say apart? But God is always with us, never forget that!

Although many functions of our church have been restricted, we are incredibly grateful to Pastor Ken and his crew for providing our Sunday service online. It is live streamed on Facebook as it happens and then the video is available afterwards to watch. As of this writing, it is available only on Facebook, but we're looking into having it available on a more public site, such as YouTube, where you don't have to belong, just go to the website. If you're not online, we look forward to when we're together again.

I realize some people are hesitant to join Facebook, but I'd like to assure you that you can belong there with next to no personal information disclosed. You don't even have to use your actual name, a nickname or something entirely fictional will do. And you don't have to have "friends" or post any personal information. Just ignore the whole thing until you want to view services and use it only for that. That said, many people enjoy the experience when they accept only loved ones as friends; it can be a wonderful way to stay in touch.

I would like to remind everyone that your offering to St. John's is still needed; the life of our church goes on. Bills need to be paid, most staff are still working and there are still needs to be met. There are several ways to remit your offering. Good old mail still works; St. John's address is 527 N William St., Marine City MI 48039. We now offer payment options online via our website, too, at <https://stjohnsmarinecity.org>. You can use a credit or debit card or PayPal. Click on "Giving" at the top and then on "Click here to give" below where it says "Where you can find us". Eventually, you will also be able to give via Facebook, but I believe that is still being ironed out.

As Michigan's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order has been extended to May 15, we will not have services at church until at least then. When the church reopens, we will reach out to let you know. Consequently, the Mary-Martha Guild's Rummage Sale has been at least postponed; details on that to follow, too.

Because our groups, including Church Council, have not been meeting, you will not find reports from them in this newsletter. The same applies to financial reports; until they have been reviewed and approved by the Council, they will not appear here. Please be safe and stay home as much as you are able; this will help lead to an end to this trying time. If you have any needs that are not being met, or would just like to chat, feel free to call me. I had a great "just because" conversation with Judy Lester last week. And Pastor Ken is always available to you for your spiritual needs.

Stay home, stay safe, and I hope to see you all soon-

Georgia

Georgia Phelan, President

St. John's UCC Church Council

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## **Additional Activities**

### **Sunday Services**

**No Sunday Services until further notice.** Services are still being held at St. James UCC on Sunday at 9am.

### **Sunday School**

**No Sunday School until further notice.**

The program is for children ages 4 through 11 and meets after the children attend the beginning of church and have a special time with Pastor Ken. We are in need of additional teachers for this year. Please see Lynn if you have any questions or are interested in teaching.

### **Mary Martha Guild**

**No meetings until further notice.**

We meet on the second Wednesday of every month for lunch and a business meeting (except in July and August). Bring a sandwich. Beverages and dessert are provided. Each month we have a hostess who provides dessert. Dues for the year are \$10. Please see Loretta or Lynn, if you have any questions.

### **Grace of God Prayer Group**

**No meetings until further notice.**

### **Health & Vitality Meetings**

**No meetings until further notice.**

### **Coffee Donations**

There is a container on the counter by the coffee pots for freewill donations to help pay for the cost of Coffee Hour. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

### **Let's Recycle**

Look for the blue recycling bins at St. John's! We recycle paper and cardboard (please, no candy wrappers or trash); this bin is next to the sanctuary door for ease of use following service. We also recycle plastic, like water bottles and clean plastic cups; this bin is near the door to the parking lot. Please do not recycle Styrofoam or plastic wraps. Let's tread lightly on God's earth and try to leave it closer to the way he created it for us!

### **Food Pantry**

God's Grace Through Prayer, our St. John's Prayer Group, is sponsoring a Pantry Box. The box is in the Fellowship Room. We are accepting any non-perishable items. These will be donated to the Downriver Helping Hands and other organizations in the area. Please help support those in need in our Community. Thank you!

## Scripture Reading for May

**Sunday, May 3**  
**Fourth Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 2: 42-47  
Ps 23  
1 Peter 2: 19-25  
John 10: 1-10  
**Powerful Witness**

**Sunday, May 10**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 7: 55-60  
Ps 31: 1-5, 15-16  
1 Peter 2: 2-10  
John 14: 1-14  
**Enduring Witness**

**Sunday, May 17**  
**Sixth Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 17: 22-31  
Ps 66: 8-20  
1 Peter 3: 13-22  
John 14: 15-21  
**Witness of Love**

**Sunday, May 24**  
**Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 1: 6-14  
Ps 68: 1-10, 32-35  
1 Peter 4: 12-14, 5: 6-11  
John 17: 1-11  
**Spirit of Witness**

**Sunday, May 31**  
**Pentecost Sunday**  
Acts 2: 1-21 or Num 11: 24-30  
Ps 104: 24-34, 35b  
1 Cor 12: 3b-13 or Acts 2: 1-21  
John 20: 19-23 or John 7: 37-30

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We're on the Web!  
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## MAY NEWSLETTER