



## THE FEDERATED FORECAST

**The Federated Church**

612 W. State Street, Sycamore, IL 60178

Phone # 815-895-2706 Fax 815-899-2076

A Covenanted Congregation of

The United Church of Christ & The Unitarian Universalist Association

*"An Open and Affirming Church"*

**Welcoming Any and Loving All**

December 2018



By its very nature, Advent is counter-cultural. Its themes move against the currents of our time and our societal values. Its rituals call us to different practices and priorities.

Christmastime lures us into shopping malls and seduces us to break our bank accounts buying things for folks who already have much. Advent reminds us of people forced on the move, needing warmth and shelter.

Christmastime is filled with bright lights, colorful decorations, and joy-filled parties. Advent reminds of us of people living in darkness, poverty and hunger, oppression and unmet need.

Christmastime has joyful caroling and looks forward to a new year. Advent always begins with stories of an apocalyptic end to the world, and the songs of Advent mostly are written in minor keys.

Advent is challenging and bracing, no question about it. As one anonymous scholar observed, "It awakes us to the radical disjuncture between God's dream for creation and the mess we have made of it... It bids us give our all to God's mission of making all things new." And that is good.

If we truly are to celebrate the full meaning of Christmas, then some introspection is in order about the world's need for a Savior. We need to hear again the messianic prophecies of one to come to lead us in the ways of God's justice, righteousness, and peace. We need to recognize anew that in God's new order it is the very least who are to be given the greatest place.

What we need this Advent/Christmas are the stories in Luke. Yes, the story of a barren fig tree; but also the stories of Elizabeth and Mary's miraculous pregnancies. Yes, the story of John the Baptist's fire and brimstone; but also the stories of shepherds and the songs of angels. Yes, the story of abuse by the powerful; but also the stories of an innkeeper's grace and the rabbis' wonderment.

Mark omits the Christmas story entirely. John turns it into a poem. Matthew tells it only briefly, from Joseph's point of view. Luke devotes two full chapters.

Luke. Luke the Physician. Compassionate Luke. Luke who is so concerned about the poor, the sick, and the marginalized. Luke who lifts up women in an otherwise patriarchal society, and foreigners in a xenophobic one. Luke who tells the best parables...and wrote my favorite rendition of the gospel.

Luke: the one to whom the ecumenical church turns to mostly, not only during Advent and Christmastide 2018, but also throughout much of 2019.

Peace and joy!

*Kent*

# God Speaks Through Our Worship

## December



### **Sunday, December 2**

Liturgist: Sally Stevens  
Communion  
Feed My Sheep  
Advent Workshop

### **Sunday, December 9**

Liturgist: Sally Stevens  
Second Sunday of Advent

### **Sunday, December 16**

Liturgist: Sally Stevens  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Congregational Meeting  
Handbell Sunday

### **Sunday, December 23**

Liturgist: Sally Stevens  
Fourth Sunday of Advent

### **Sunday, December 30**

Liturgist: Sally Stevens  
Family Sunday  
Penny March

## IN THIS ISSUE

### **Worship Service**

Worship 10:00 am  
Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am

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## Flowers & Fellowship Hosts

*Please share your commemoration  
of personal dates with your church family  
by providing Altar Flowers  
for the morning worship.*

*The cost is \$25.00 and envelopes are provided  
for your convenience.*

*You are welcome to take the flowers home with you  
following the service.*

***Please commit to these important roles by signing the  
sheets in Dutton Fellowship Hall.***

### Altar Flowers

December 2	Judy Winter in memory of Robert Woggon
December 9	Bruce & Joan Wallace in memory of Arla & Harold
December 16	Bruce & Joan Wallace in memory of Bud Wallace
December 23	Christmas Poinsettias
December 30	Christmas Poinsettias

### Fellowship Hosts Board of Religious Education

December 2	Advent Workshop—Federated Bar-B-Que
December 9	
December 16	
December 23	Bev & Skip Schramer
December 30	





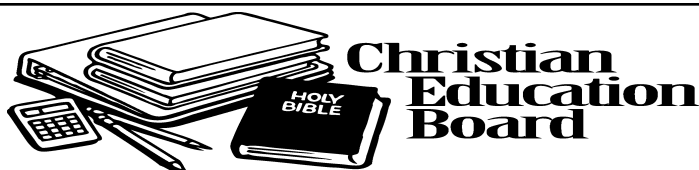
## Moderator's Notes

By the time the newsletter arrives in the homes of our members and friends here at Federated Church, the holiday season will be in "full swing!" We'll have finished our Thanksgiving Dinners with our loved ones and begun to think about the Birth of the Baby Jesus! What a joyous time of year! Many activities abound within our church and community! All are invited to help with Hanging of the Greens at 9:00 am, Saturday, Dec. 1; our Advent Workshop and Lunch will follow the worship service on Sunday, Dec. 2; Cookies to our Shut-Ins and Staff occurs Sunday, Dec. 9; caroling at the Civic Apartments that same afternoon; our Christmas Cantata will be the following Sunday, Dec. 16. Look for community opportunities within our church during these holiday weeks where we can help those less fortunate have a Merry Christmas.

Even though December is the 12<sup>th</sup> month of the year, we're also well aware that the Stewardship Campaign has ended; that our Federated Church will be having a Congregational Meeting on December 16 to review and vote on the proposed 2019 church budget; that the Nominating Committee has been diligently asking members to consider serving on vacated board seats in the new year; and that the Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 20. Please know, too, that the Search Committee has begun meeting with the guidance of Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Kathy Lawes.

Lots of exciting goings on in our Federated Church family! Let us now celebrate and enjoy this Christmas Season and prepare for the New Year!

Your Moderator,  
*Pam*



### Advent Sunday

Everyone welcome! The first Sunday in December is Advent Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will gather for food, conversation and activities in Dutton Hall after worship. Come and enjoy the fellowship, Federated BBQ, and brownies. Anyone wishing to help could do so by bringing a batch of BBQ or brownies. Signup sheet and BBQ recipe are in Dutton Hall. Intergenerational Advent activities are planned to help beautify our courtyard. Let's join our children, work together, and make it happen! See you there.



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Get ready to bake! On December 9th, the Board of Deacons is asking for donations of 2 dozen Christmas cookies to be brought to the church that Sunday. The Deacons (along with anyone who could volunteer a bit of time after the worship service!) will prepare cookie plates to be distributed to our homebound members and friends. We usually make up about 20 cookie plates. We also could use volunteers to help distribute the cookie plates. If we have several volunteers to help us, no one person will have to deliver more than 2, 3 plates!



## Preschool News

November is a month of change. We begin letting go of warm afternoons with cooler evenings and shift to cold weather and thoughts of snow for the approaching winter season. This November the children were delighted with an early snow. The beautiful big snowflakes were being caught on many tongues and created many giggles. We also focused on the early first settlers that created our towns and forged new opportunities for us today. We talked about being thankful and really paying attention to the small little miracles we enjoy every day.

We thank you very much for the opportunity to teach, learn and grow with all these special children through your ministry of early childhood education started 50 years ago as the nursery school and now named the preschool. We celebrate the 50 years every month and in November we collected food items for those who need a little assistance at the table. Our goal was 50 items for 50 years and the families donated 153 items to be distributed!

At the end of the month we all wore our 50 year special preschool t-shirt on the same day, that was an amazing site. 101 children plus 7 teachers all celebrating together the 50 year anniversary of a very special mission for children and families. Thanks so much!!!

*Merry Christmas*





# Church DEACONS

Communion this month is on December 2 by intinction. As always, if you need to be served in your pew, do not hesitate to let us know.

The Board of Deacons' annual Christmas Cookies delivery (to those Federated Church friends and families who are not often able to come to our services and activities) will be held on **Sunday, December 9**, this year. We are asking for donations of 2 dozen cookies to help make up our beautiful Christmas plates on that day. The cookies can be dropped off before church services on the 9th; then the Deacons will assemble the plates immediately following the church service. We also could use any volunteers who may wish to help the Deacons deliver these lovely plates. So many of you have supported this event throughout the past years. We thank you and hope that we can make this another successful cookie delivery!

We are once again offering Christmas Poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for the season. Linda Mason will be taking orders after church on December 2nd and December 9th. The price is \$16.00 again this year, which is at cost. They will be delivered in time for the December 16th, December 23rd, and Christmas Eve services; you may take your plant home after the 10 pm Christmas Eve service.

**Reminder:** Christmas Eve service will be a candle-lighting service at 10:00 pm. Please join us in worship.

*Merry*  
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY  
*New Year*

## The Worlds Greatest Cookie Sale



The Federated Preschool's annual Cookie and Candy Sale will be Friday, December 14, 2018 beginning at 10:30 a.m.!

Our families bake and donate beautifully decorated and very tasty holiday treats that are sold by the pound. Please mark your calendars and help support the children. This is our main fundraiser for the school year.

Thanks from Preschool Staff & Parents



### Stocking Stuffer!!!

Looking for something for that special Federated Church lady in your life? Look no further -A Federated Church polo shirt is the perfect gift and they are even on sale. There are three polo shirts left in sizes large (2) and medium (1). The price is \$15 (originally \$25). See Paula von Ende for more information.

## Mission and Society News



### Support Safe Passage This Holiday Season

Safe Passage has been a pillar of safety and support for victims of domestic and sexual violence in our community since 1981 and The Federated Church has been a supporter of Safe Passage from the start. Our Christmas mission in 2018 will be to donate items from the Safe Passage Wish List to Safe Passage. There are many items to choose from and all of them will make someone's holiday brighter!

You may find the Wish List at [safepassagedv.org](http://safepassagedv.org) under "Get Involved" or you may pick up a copy of the Wish List on the divider in Dutton Hall. Please bring the items to the church by Sunday, December 16. Safe Passage asks that all items be unwrapped and new.

### Angel Tree Ministry Drive Postponed

Sorry to report that we have had to postpone the gift drive for children of prison inmates until 2019. Our application did not arrive in time to be included in the sharing of names for 2018. We'll try again next year!

### Join Us for Christmas Caroling at the Sycamore Civic Apartments on December 9

The Board of Mission and Society invites Federated Church members and friends to congregate at the Sycamore Civic Apartments on Sunday, December 9 from 3:30-4:30. We will join residents for some lively Christmas singing. The apartments are located at 350 Grant Street, a short walk from the church, or you may park on the street alongside the apartment building. We will meet at the building entrance at 3:30. Refreshments will be served. A sign-up sheet for this event is on the divider in Dutton Hall.

### December Love Offering Supports the UCC Christmas Fund

The December Love Offering will go to the UCC Christmas Fund. This fund helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants, as administered by the UCC Pension Boards.

Envelopes for the monthly Love Offerings can be found in a basket at the back of the church.



## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Federated Church will be having a Congregational Meeting on December 16 to review and vote on the proposed 2019 church budget

### A FRIENDLY REMINDER TO ALL BOARD CHAIRS:

December is the time for each of us to begin preparing our Board reports for the Annual Meeting on January 20! It takes **LIZ HOURS** to review and prepare the reports, data, and other pertinent information that is put into the Annual Meeting booklet.

Thanks,  
Pam



#### Prayers for Healing from Illness or Injury

Mike Carlson  
 Dick Carter  
 Friend of Peggy Safford  
 Friend of Bill Greisenauer  
 Don Gould  
 Karen Hamingson's cousin, John  
 Judy Hoke-Jackson's granddaughter, Elizabeth  
 Pam Kitterman's brother and sister, Larry & Sally  
 Margot Mattin  
 Bill Nagy  
 Victims of California Fires

#### Prayers for Peace at Time of Passing

Bill Lantz's family  
 Joe Fraccaro's family  
 Bruce & Joan Wallace family  
 John "Jack" Bauer family  
 T.J. Jackson's family  
 Lancaster family

#### Additional Prayer Requests

Rachel and family, niece of Bev Whildin

**Note: If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please let Liz know.**

#### Hanging of the Greens Saturday, December 1 9:00 am



## *Membership* *Committee*

**Membership and Fellowship Board News**  
 From Board Chair, Pam Wagener

#### Christmas Potluck and White Elephant Gift Exchange

Bring your appetizer, salad, dessert, and your special white elephant gift to the home of Peg Vitkus, 1382 Prosser, Sycamore, on **Monday, December 17, 2018 at 6 pm.**

All ladies of the church are invited to this annual holiday gala!

So, clean your closets and basements to find that perfect gift or maybe you saved yours from last year. This is a good re-gifting opportunity! Your gift might be a gem to someone else and you will have a chance to swap!

Looking forward to seeing you all there. Please use the sign-up sheet in Dutton Hall so our hostess can plan.







### December Birthdays

12/01	Jennifer Covert
12/03	Mark Pietrowski
12/04	Margot Mattin
12/05	Malorie Nelson
12/06	Jerry Lane
12/12	Kiyah Jones
12/13	David Salvatore
12/14	Marilyn Hrymak
12/15	Meg Ulery
12/15	Rachel Happ
12/17	Tom Foster
12/22	Brad Nelson
12/25	Rachel Todd
12/26	Sally Stevens
12/28	Kay Jacobson



### December Anniversaries

12/19	Michael & Tonilynn Carlson
12/19	Linc & Ann Smelser
12/27	Isaac & Jennifer Covert
12/27	Mark & Tracy Ekstrom

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 2	Advent Workshop
Sunday, December 9	Cookies for Shut-ins
Sunday, December 9	Christmas Caroling
Friday, December 14	Preschool Cookie & Candy Sale
Sunday, December 16	Music Sunday/Christmas Cantata
Sunday, December 16	Congregational Meeting
Monday, December 17	Ladies Night Out-6:00pm
Monday, December 17	Guy's Night Out-6:00 pm
Sunday, December 24	Candlelight Service at 10:00 pm



**Be  
a  
Good  
Steward**

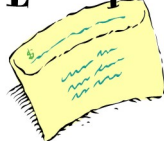
### Stewardship Report November 25, 2018:

Attendance Last Week:	49
Kids Club:	3
Offering Y-T-D: \$	149,140.59
Covenant with God: \$	158,169.00

### Notice

Anyone wanting Offering Envelopes for the 2019 Year, please let Liz know in the office.

**Offering  
Envelopes**



*Sunday, December 16*



## **Your Federated Church Staff**

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Kent Ulery  
Pastor's Emergency: 207-570-5627  
Pastor's email: kent@ulery.net  
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dale Beaman  
Administrative Assistant: Liz Finney  
Admin Assistant email: thefederatedchurch@frontier.com  
Director of Music: Gary Mattin  
Music email: mattincurtain50@aol.com  
Keyboardist: Yule Dain Yoon  
Handbell Director: Marilyn Montzka  
Custodian: Almasa Camo  
Office phone: 815-895-2706  
Office fax: 815-899-2076  
Office email: thefederatedchurch@frontier.com  
Web Link: <http://thefederatedchurchsycamore.com>

## **Federated Preschool**

Preschool Director: Jan Scheffers  
Preschool Phone: 815-764-9473  
Federated Preschool email: Federatedchurchpreschool@gmail.com

**Sandra Mineau, pastor at Woodside Congregational Church in Rockford, is collecting bottle tops. They will be recycled into benches, similar to those at Mayfield.**

**Please call if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.**

**815-229-3265**



## **Church Leadership**

**Moderator:**  
Pam Kitterman 815-899-7032  
**Assistant Moderator:**  
Jerry Lane 815-895-2617  
**Clerk:**  
Suzanne Juday 815-895-2082  
**Treasurer:**  
Karen Hamingson 815-895-4631  
**Assistant Treasurers:**  
David Wood 815-756-1680  
Linda Babcock 815-758-0763  
**Council Members-at Large:**  
Nancy Renfer 815-895-4742  
Dave Wood 815-756-1680  
**Board of Deacons:**  
Linda Babcock 815-758-0763  
Bill Griesenauer 773-720-8324  
**Board of Membership & Fellowship:**  
Pam Wagener 815-895-9852  
Alice Whitney 815-895-5023  
**Board of Mission & Society:**  
Paula von Ende 815-758-7375  
Fe Gould 815-901-7313  
**Board of Religious Education:**  
Malorie Nelson 815-784-6060  
Tomi Greisenauer 312-802-1486  
**Board of Trustees:**  
Nate Kitterman 815-751-1481  
Skip Schramer 815-751-4817  
**Pastor-Parish Relations Committee**  
Jerry Lane  
Roger Jacobson  
Karen Hamingson  
Nancy Renfer

### **Pastor's Office Hours**

Tuesday and Thursday  
9:30am—4:30pm

### **Secretary's Office Hours**

Monday—Wednesday—Friday  
9:00am—3:00pm  
Tuesday and Thursday  
9:00am—noon

# The Federated Church

# December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> 9:00am Hanging of the Greens 11:30am Harambee Rehearsal
<b>2</b> Advent Sunday Communion Feed My Sheep 10:00am Worship 10:15am Kids' Club 11:15am Fellowship 6:00pm Troop #16 8:00pm AA	<b>3</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 12:30pm Federated Preschool 7:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry	<b>4</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool	<b>5</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 9:00am Sewing Circle 12:30pm Federated Preschool 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>6</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 8:00pm AA	<b>7</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 12:30pm Federated Preschool	<b>8</b> 11:30am Harambee Rehearsal
<b>9</b> 8:30am Membership Bd 10:00am Worship 10:15am Kids' Club 11:15am Fellowship 11:30am Bd of Religious Ed. 3:30pm Christmas Caroling 6:00pm Troop #16 8:00pm AA	<b>10</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 12:30pm Federated Preschool	<b>11</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool	<b>12</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 9:00am Sewing Circle 12:30pm Federated Preschool 6:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>13</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 10:30am Handbell Concert 7:00pm Church Council 8:00pm AA	<b>14</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 10:30am Preschool Cookie/Candy Sale 12:30pm Federated Preschool	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Christmas Cantata 10:00am Worship 10:15am Kids' Club 11:00am Congregational Meeting 11:15am Fellowship 11:30am Bd of Mission & Society 11:30am Board of Deacons 6:00pm Troop #16 8:00pm AA	<b>17</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 12:30pm Federated Preschool 6:00pm Guy's Night Out 6:00pm Ladies Night Out	<b>18</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool	<b>19</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 9:00am Sewing Circle 12:30pm Federated Preschool 6:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>20</b> 8:30am Federated Preschool 5:30pm Bd. of Trustees 8:00pm AA	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 10:00am Worship 10:15am Kids' Club 11:15am Fellowship 6:00pm Troop #16 8:00pm AA	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Office Closed 10:00pm Candlelight Service	<b>25</b> Christmas Day Office Closed	<b>26</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>27</b> 8:00pm AA	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> Family Sunday Penny March 10:00am Worship 10:15am Kids' Club 11:15am Fellowship 6:00pm Troop #16 8:00pm AA	<b>31</b> New Year's Eve Office Closed					