

# CHURCH CHAT

It is the mission and purpose of Somers Community United Church of Christ to study and seek the will of God and to transform our understanding into action.



## December 2023



Somers Community UCC  
9918 - 12th Street  
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### Visit us on the web at:

somerschurch.org

And on Facebook

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### Pastor Kathleen Gloff

Ph: 920-418-1600

### Administrative Associate

Barbara Sherman

### Moderator

Dennis Curnes

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### Church Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday,

Thursday

9:00pm - 3:00 pm



The year was 69 C.E. (Common Era). The temple that was built and rebuilt to the glory of God in Jerusalem was destroyed permanently. The temple had been desecrated many times during its history. Solomon—the son of the mighty king David—built the first temple in 960 B.C.E. (Before Common Era), and it lasted until it was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E., at which time the people of Israel were taken into captivity as exiles.

The people began to rebuild the temple in 536 B.C.E, but it took them 20 years to complete the work. The books Ezra and Nehemiah in the Hebrew Scriptures tell of this work. This temple is referred to in history as Zerubbabel's Temple.

In 20 B.C.E., Herod--the governor that Caesar Augustus placed in power over Jerusalem—began a temple expansion project. He continued to expand the temple of the people of Israel from 20 B.C.E. until 64 C.E., which means that the temple was being enlarged by the Roman Government during the lifetime of Jesus...and beyond.

But in 69 C.E., the temple was permanently destroyed. Because the people no longer had a place to worship God together, home became the place where Jewish people worshipped God. New rites and observances became a part of holiday celebrations. Every family now had the power to make a temple for the Living God of their own home and hearth.

The year was 2019 C.E., and the month was December. Doctors in China were treating a mysterious type of pneumonia that had never been seen before. By January 2020 C.E., the first deaths caused by this new virus—COVID 19—were recorded. Our “temple” was not physically destroyed during the months and years that followed, but still...we no longer had a place to worship God together, and we too began to worship God at home. Each of us were presented with the opportunity to make a temple for the Living God of our own home and hearth.


Our rituals and our holiday celebrations change because of many things...age, decreased mobility and strength, mental health, family connections or disconnections...and even illnesses like COVID. We are no longer in worldwide pandemic status, but that does not mean that we are going back to our old patterns and rituals either. We warmly invite you to celebrate the holidays with us this month if you are able, but if you are not, don't forget to make of your own home and hearth a temple to the Living God. More on how you might do that can be found in this newsletter.

# DECEMBER



| December Birthdays     |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 3                      | Phyllis Borger       |
| 5                      | Michael Burbach      |
| 23                     | Christine Sturino    |
| 24                     | Steve Ingham         |
| 25                     | Joseph Rossi         |
| December Anniversaries |                      |
| 1                      | Mary & Randall Rossi |

*NOTE: If we are missing your birthday or anniversary, please let the church office know.*




If you would like to mail your offering:  
Somers United Church of Christ  
PO Box 183  
Somers WI 53171

| Scripture Readings                          |                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>December 3</b><br><i>Communion</i>       | Isaiah 64: 1-9<br>Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19<br>1 Corinthians 1: 3-9<br>Mark 13: 24-37    |
| <b>December 10</b>                          | Isaiah 40: 1-11<br>Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13<br>2 Peter 3: 8-15a<br>Mark 1: 1-8           |
| <b>December 17</b>                          | Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11<br>Psalm 126<br>1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24<br>John 1: 6-8, 19-28 |
| <b>December 24</b><br><i>Christmas Fund</i> | 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16<br>Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26<br>Romans 16: 25-27<br>Luke 1: 26-38   |
| <b>December 31</b><br><i>Shalom Center</i>  | Isaiah 61: 10—62: 3<br>Psalm 148<br>Galatians 4: 4-7<br>Luke 2: 22 —40              |



| Sunday             |           |               |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|
|                    | Liturgist | Altar Flowers |
| <b>December 3</b>  | NONE      | Mary Rossi    |
| <b>December 10</b> | NONE      | NONE          |
| <b>December 17</b> | NONE      | Poinsettias   |
| <b>December 24</b> | NONE      | Poinsettias   |
| <b>December 31</b> | NONE      | Poinsettias   |



**CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER**

Just a reminder, if the weather gets bad and it is dangerous to travel, there's a possibility church may be cancelled. You can find cancellation information on Channels 4, 6, and 12.



Christmas  
Eve  
Service

*Sunday,  
December 24th  
4:00 pm  
Lessons & Carols  
communion, &  
candlelight*



There are five Sundays in the month of December, which means we will be serving the evening meal at the Shalom Center on **Sunday, December 31st**. If you have never participated in this mission opportunity, why not give it a try? Talk to someone who has and find out what's involved. Those who have served find it a meaningful experience. There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex during the month.



During **December**, we will be collecting for our annual mitten drive. Please bring in **mittens, gloves, hats, earmuffs, scarves, socks, underwear, undershirts, and sweatshirts for women, men, and children in all sizes** to place on the tree in the back of the sanctuary of our church. Articles will be donated to a local mission group.



The Men's Breakfast group will be meeting on **Saturday, December 16th** at 8:30 am. They will gather at the **Phoenix Restaurant 12440 75th St, Kenosha** located west of I-94 on the north side of Hwy 50 at the West Frontage Road Intersection.



### **The Christmas Fund Sunday, December 24th**

The Christmas Fund is for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund which provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. A ministry of the Pension Boards, the offering is received annually on the Sunday before Christmas. We will taking the offering on **Sunday, December 24th**.

**Food Pantry**

Thank you so much for your support and generosity this past year with your monetary donations or food items that you gave to our own food pantry. There are so many families struggling in this economy and sometimes that paycheck just does not stretch far enough. Somers Church members and friends who help support our cause we thank you...we couldn't do it without **YOU**. **No one has ever become poor by giving.**

THANK YOU

Bonnie Curnes, Project Manager



**Holiday Shopping**

Here is one way our church can benefit from your holiday

giving:

♦ **Buy Scrip** - The church has a variety of scrip available for different vendors. On the cart in the Narthex is a sheet that lists companies that scrip cards are available from. **If you do want Scrip Cards for Christmas gifts, please get your order to Dennis Curnes by Sunday, December 3rd.** Any questions see Dennis or call him at 262-914-4523.



**2024 Offering Envelopes**

2024 Offering Envelopes will be available to pick up in December. If you don't find one for you, please let the church office know.



**2024 COMMITTEE BUDGETS**

are due to

Dennis Curnes by

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH.**



**Breakfast & Books  
(B & B)**

On **January 27th**, B & B

(Breakfast & Books) will begin

its 20th year. We will in the Memorial Lounge at **9:30 am** to discuss the book **"Looking for Jane"** by **Heather Marshall**. Jennifer Swartz will be leading the discussion and Debbie Radovanovic will furnish the pastry. Coffee will be provided. If you will be coming, please sign your name to the sheet that will be available on the cart in the Narthex beginning January 7th. If you have any questions, see Bonnie Curnes. **(If the weather is bad on this day, we will then meet on February 3rd.)**



**Shalom Center Update**

On Sunday, October 29th, our Church served over 70 people at Shalom Center Soup Kitchen. Jennifer Swartz made a tasty minestrone soup. The Church provided a garden salad, fruit salad, and cookies. Helping with sandwiches and serving were Stephanie Christiansen, Terra Newhouse, Lynetta Ingram, Char Laba, Pastor Kathy, Barb Flocker, Jennifer Swartz, and Martha Swartz. Thanks to all who helped. We serve again on Sunday, December 31, 2023.



**2023 Annual  
Reports**

If you have any reports for the 2023 Annual Report booklet, get them to the church office by **Sunday, January 7th.**



Here is a list of our homebound members/ friends, if you would like to remember them with a card this holiday season:

- Phyllis Borger  
Villa Ciera  
1940 27th Ave Apt 203  
Kenosha WI 53182
- Joyce Duesing  
Harvest Home  
3820B South Old Green Bay Rd  
Mt Pleasant WI 53406
- Judy Thomas  
1306 Highview Ave  
Union Grove WI 53182



In the midst of the holiday season we remember those members or friends who have died this past year and we hold their families in our prayers:

*Leroy Johnson  
Maureen Schauer  
James Smith*

To these families and others who have lost loved ones, we pray for comfort and peace.

*Be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.*

*Psalm 31:24*



★  
**JOY**  
**NOEL**  
**ANGEL**  
**JESUS**  
**PEACE HOPE**  
**WISEMEN**  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**BELIEVE FAITH**  
**PRINCE OF PEACE**  
**THANK YOU**



## OTHER DAYS OF HOLY CELEBRATION IN DECEMBER

### Saint Nicholas Day—December 6th



Saint Nicholas was an actual bishop in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century C.E. who served the church in Turkey. He wore the red robes of a bishop, and he was said to have great love for children and for the poor. Nicholas often did deeds of charity in the dark of night, leaving food and money for poor families. It was said that he would fling gold coins through open windows and that they would land in the shoes of the poor. After Nicholas died, stories of his generosity spread throughout Europe, and people began to wear red clothes as he did and to leave anonymous gifts of food and money for people in need.

Celebrate Saint Nicholas by anonymously giving to those who are in need (Whether you wear red when you do is up to you.)

### Saint Lucia Day—December 13th



Saint Lucia lived in Sicily around the year 300 C.E. She was martyred by the Romans because of her Christian faith. When the Vikings invaded Sicily, they heard of her story, and they took it back to their Scandinavian homes. The name Lucia means light. At the darkest time of the year (near the Winter Solstice) the Scandinavian people use her story and her name to symbolize the coming of the light of Christ into the world.

In celebrating Saint Lucia Day, the oldest girl in the family arises before sunrise; she puts on a white gown (symbolizing purity) with a red sash (symbolizing martyrdom) and she wakes up the rest of the household by bringing sweet rolls and coffee to them. The girl that was doing the serving as Lucia was also to wear a wreath of green leaves and lighted candles on her head. If you do decide to replicate the attire of Lucia, please use battery-operated candles instead of actual flame. (We have made this adjustment for our Christmas Trees...we can make it for our daughter's heads too!)

Thanking God for the Light of Christ in the world, while having a breakfast of sweet rolls and coffee in bed sounds like a good way to celebrate every morning to me...not just a holiday morning in December.



| Sun                                                                                                                                                         | Mon                        | Tue                                                 | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Dates and times are subject to change, call the church or check the website for updates.</p> </div> |                            |                                                     |     |     | 1   | 2                                                                       |
| <b>3 Communion</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Worship                                                                                                            | 4                          | 5<br><br><b>2:00 PM—5:00 PM</b><br>Diaper Ministry  | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9                                                                       |
| <b>10 2024 Budgets Due</b><br><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Worship                                                                                                | 11                         | 12<br><br><b>2:00 PM—5:00 PM</b><br>Diaper Ministry | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16<br><br><b>8:30 am</b> Men's<br>Breakfast at<br>Phoenix<br>Restaurant |
| <b>17</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Worship                                                                                                                     | 18                         | 19<br><br><b>2:00 PM—5:00 PM</b><br>Diaper Ministry | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23                                                                      |
| <b>24 Christmas Fund</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Worship<br><b>4:00 AM</b><br>Christmas Eve Service                                                           | <b>25 Merry Christmas!</b> | 26<br><br><b>2:00 PM—5:00 PM</b><br>Diaper Ministry | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30                                                                      |
| <b>31</b><br><b>10:00 AM</b><br>Worship<br><br><b>Shalom Center</b>                                                                                         |                            |                                                     |     |     |     |                                                                         |