Dear Sisters and Brothers/Siblings in Christ,

What a winter we are having—day after day after day of gray and gloom, overcast and cloudy skies, and far too little sunshine. As we journey through this new year/this new decade, it feels like, in the midst of the rather depressing weather, we need a reminder of who we are and whose we are and what we are called to be about—no matter what it looks and feels like outside. In the church we are in the Season after the Epiphany, a time when we are challenged to focus on our "call" and our "mission" in the world. To be epiphanies...those who "show forth" and "manifest" the light and love of God we experience through following Jesus. To shine our light not only within our church/Rockwell Buildings with those who are part of our congregation/building partners, but also to look outward into the community around and beyond us, being a beacon of light and offering hope to those who are feeling lost and alone and afraid.

As I reflect on our time during the last seven years and prepare my 2019 annual report for the February 16, 2020 congregational meeting, I see much to be optimistic and hopeful about in terms of where we are in mission and ministry as the people of St. Michael's UCC...and where we are heading. We are about epiphanies large and small and inbetween, some of which include:

- continues on next page
- The 123 Fremont Food Pantry for which we serve as the host church.
- "Project Infinity" PeaceJam Group and the ways they are addressing food insecurity through hydroponics in the basement of the 123 Fremont Food Pantry,
- The Community Clothing Closet in its 16th year and nearing 100,000 gently used pieces of clothing/shoes being shared with the community on the second Saturday morning of each month.

As we explore the Gospel of Matthew this year, we will hear stories of Jesus' call not only his disciples in his day and time, but to us in our day as well. Every week in worship, every month in this newsletter, opportunities are offered, invitations made, to help us all shine our light and live more fully and faithfully. During the month of February, we have Sundays which

- challenge us to have fun as "we tackle hunger" through our support for the Souper Bowl, as we fill baskets with soup and/or monetary contributions -- all of which will benefits the 123 Fremont Food Pantry.
- bring together Faith and Science and Technology.
- celebrate and learn more about Black History, as well as take seriously the current situation of African Americans and the issues of Racial Justice.
- offer us a heart check when it comes to the holiday of Valentine's Day and encourage us to open our hearts wider and deeper than our feelings of love for only those we hold most dear.
- ask us how we will support and encourage not only those who hear God's call to serve in authorized ministry in our denomination, but also the seminaries and theological schools who play an especially important role in the preparation of pastoral leaders for the United Church of Christ.

This month we are invited to bring personal care products to fill our Neighborhood Food Pantries offering basket in the sanctuary. And we'll be volunteering at the Northern Illinois Food Bank on Thursday, February 11, beginning a new year of volunteering every other month on a Tuesday, 6-8 pm. We still have most of this month (through Sunday, February 23) to add coat ornaments to the tree in the sanctuary as we contribute to providing warm winter coats for kids who are part of Educare-West DuPage here in West Chicago. 

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All these are opportunities to share from the blessings we have received. No matter what our income, we all have choices to make about how we utilize our resources and shine our light as we journey through this life. We are called to be "contagious" Christians, sharing our time, talent, and treasure, and shining the light in the darkness not just for ourselves, but for those who are trying to find their way!

Blessings on your journey,

Pastor Sue

Rev. Sue Ebersold

home office: 630-208-8077email: pastorsuesmucc@aol.com

P.S. The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which you can read more about on page 15 of this newsletter. Also, you’ll find more about our Lenten worship on page 16 as we journey toward Easter Sunday on April 12th. Please join us as you are able.

P.S. Thanks to everyone who helped celebrate my birthday on Sunday, January 26. Thirty-five years ago, I was delighted to share my special day with the ’85 Chicago Bears’ when they won the Super Bowl!
Thank you to those listed below (as well as anyone else unintentionally left out) who helped in various ways this past month (since the January Messenger). Please also see the Moderator's Comments as well as the Community Clothing Closet article for additional thank yous not included below:

- **Kathryn Duerr and Sigrid Walsh** for delivering our December offerings of baby products and fifth Sunday pasta & rice, and **Kathy Hummel** for counting and preparing all our offerings for delivery to the 123 Fremont Food Pantry, Neighborhood Food Pantries' West Chicago site.

- **Angela Lawson and Julisa Vasquez** for organizing the Fabulous Foodies January activities...and to all who attended!

- **Barb Dieckmann** for coordinating the service chart to ensure that we have lay readers and ushers for worship each Sunday morning.

- **Bob Dieckmann** for supervising taking down the Chrismon tree/undecorating of the sanctuary from Advent/Christmas and **Alex Golovin and Kathy Hummel** who helped.

- **Bill Birch** for preparing/setting up/cleaning up communion each month.

- **Barb Dieckmann and Kathy Hummel** for watering the poinsettias that have remained in the sanctuary for the Season after the Epiphany.

- **Betty Davis and Shirley Schramer and others** for turning on the candles in the altar/chancel displays before worship each Sunday...and **Len Redelsperger and others** who help turn them off following worship.

- **Kathryn Duerr** for all her efforts with **Pastor Sue** to use visual displays on the altar and chancel for each Sunday's worship experience.

- **Len Redelsperger/Alex Golovin/Pastor Sue and Bob Dieckmann** for taking care of getting the garbage and recycling cans to the curb each week and **Kathy Hummel** for returning them to their spots.

- **Alex Golovin** for his work with the St. Michael's “Project Infinity” PeaceJam Group and all their efforts in the basement of 123 Fremont building to prepare for the hydroponics venture...and for taking care of the church and Rockwell building-related "fixes," in his service as co-chair of St. Michael's Facilities Ministry.

- **Wayne Roethler** for managing the church's web site and **Bill Birch and others who take pictures and post them** to the St. Michael's Facebook page.

- **Kathy Hummel** for her time and energy serving as volunteer Administrative Assistant in the church office, editing this monthly newsletter, managing the clothing donations as they appear at the door, and dealing with various things associated with District 33's Birth to Three Program office in the Rockwell Building.
NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK—Our next volunteer event will be on Tuesday, February 11, 6:00 to 8:00 pm. This is a great opportunity to spend an evening with friends while also helping our neighbors in need of food assistance. If you plan to attend, there is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Looking ahead, we will also be volunteering on Tuesday, April 14, 6-8 pm.

COATS FOR KIDS—For the seventh year St. Michael’s has purchased new coats from Operation Warm for the students and their siblings at Educare of West DuPage that are in need of a warm winter coat for our Advent/Christmas/Epiphany mission project. On December 3 Bob and I delivered 250 coats to Educare. The coat tree is in the sanctuary ready to be decorated with little coats that represent your donation through the last Sunday after Epiphany, February 23. For only $20 you can keep a child warm this winter. Please mark your donation “Coats for Kids” and be as generous as you can for this very worthwhile project!

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY—Thank you to everyone who pledged to support the ministry and mission of St. Michael’s United Church of Christ in 2020! Our financial secretary, Bob Dieckmann, will have the pledge report at the annual Congregational Meeting.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING—The annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 16, after worship and the annual Pancake Brunch. There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall if you would like to contribute one of the needed items for the brunch.

HEALTHY WEST CHICAGO COOKING CLASSES—Healthy West Chicago will be holding cooking classes in the Rockwell Building kitchen on Mondays, February 17 to March 9, and April 6 to 27.

MARK YOUR 2020 CALENDAR—The Council has picked Friday, July 31, for our annual All Faiths Night trip to the Cougars baseball game. The game is at 6:30, ticket price is $7, and there will be fireworks! Thank you to Bill Birch for getting the information and tickets, which will be available closer to game time.

- Barb Dieckmann
Jesus taught, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.” –Matthew 5:43-45a

Red hearts, flowers and chocolates remind us that February is the uncontested month of love.

It’s excellent (and easy) to love those close to us, but Jesus tells us to go wider, deeper, riskier—to love even our enemies. In so doing, Jesus says, we become children of God.

This challenges us to embrace love as the key discipline and develop a heart so full of love that it flows to even our enemies. Isn’t that how we’re supposed to live as disciples? It’s just good stewardship of our lives.

For this “month of love,” practice loving your enemies.

The effort is especially timely in our season of discord, when our loudest voices encourage us--through name-calling, denigrating, lying, smearing--to hate those with whom we disagree. Even calling them “enemies” is too much (they’re really neighbors!).

Loving our “enemies” doesn’t mean we agree with them or tolerate bad behavior. It means respecting, listening, discussing, refraining from anger and revenge. Here are some ideas for loving our enemies:

- Jesus gives us the first step: Pray! For them and for you!
- Stop seeing them as enemies. They’re our neighbors whom God loves.
- Resist hate, the very thing our culture encourages.
- Treat everyone as you would want to be treated.
- Lastly, keep praying.

By embracing love as a spiritual discipline, we cultivate a heart of love that opens our lives to the transformation Jesus dearly desires for us -- to be children of God. Now that’s good stewardship.

--Rob Blezard

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Hello Everyone,

Welcome February! Like many of you, I am ready for spring and looking forward to longer days and more sunlight. I can’t wait to start growing veggies in the garden. Speaking of growing veggies, the PeaceJam crew has continued to work on our hydroponics site in the basement of the 123 Fremont Food Pantry.

We are fortunate to have Mr. Blake Davis who teaches hydroponics at College of DuPage as a consultant on our project. He also teaches at the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora and has trained people in aquaponics at "The Plant" in Chicago.

The PeaceJam crew took time to visit Mr. Davis at the Greenhouse at COD and to learn about the different types of systems used for hydroponics. We decided on what is called a gutter system. The photo in this article is very similar to the one we will be building/assembling later this month. With Mr. Davis' help I talked with a fellow who had a large hydroponics operation here in West Chicago and had moved the operation into the City of Chicago. After looking at the equipment and listening to our consultant's advice we decided to purchase some of his used equipment and plan to start assembling and building our system mid-February.

That's it for now. Have a great February. My thanks to Pastor Sue for organizing the photos on the next page.

Alex

Alex Golovin
St. Michael's UCC "Project Infinity" PeaceJam Group Leader & PeaceJam Specialist
phone: 630-650-0869 and email: alex.peace2u@gmail.com

Just a reminder, if you are in 3d through 12th grades (i.e., elementary, middle and high school), you are welcome to come and join us. We meet on Sundays at 1 pm (after fellowship time) and/or at other times depending on schedules, etc. Call, email, or text if you have any questions.

EVERYTHING IMAGINABLE IS ATTAINABLE

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Here is an example of the hydroponics gutter system we will be installing in the basement of the 123 Fremont Food Pantry. Below our "Project Infinity" PeaceJam crew continues preparing the basement.
Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. The event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating black history.

The story of Black History Month begins in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by black Americans and other peoples of African descent. Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs and host performances and lectures.

In the decades the followed, mayors of cities across the country began issuing yearly proclamations recognizing Negro History Week. By the late 1960s, thanks in part to the Civil Rights Movement and a growing awareness of black identity, Negro History Week had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses. President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Since then, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme. (All of the above is from [http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month](http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month))
This year’s theme is "African Americans and the Vote." The year 2020 marks the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment (1920) and the culmination of the women’s suffrage movement. The year 2020 also marks the sesquicentennial of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) and the right of black men to the ballot after the Civil War. The theme speaks, therefore, to the ongoing struggle on the part of both black men and black women for the right to vote. This theme has a rich and long history, which begins at the turn of the nineteenth century, i.e., in the era of the Early Republic, with the states’ passage of laws that democratized the vote for white men while disfranchising free black men. Thus, even before the Civil War, black men petitioned their legislatures and the US Congress, seeking to be recognized as voters.

Tensions between abolitionists and women’s suffragists first surfaced in the aftermath of the Civil War, while black disfranchisement laws in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries undermined the guarantees in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments for the great majority of southern blacks until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The important contribution of black suffragists occurred not only within the larger women’s movement, but within the larger black voting rights movement. Through voting-rights campaigns and legal suits from the turn of the twentieth century to the mid-1960s, African Americans made their voices heard as to the importance of the vote. Indeed the fight for black voting rights continues in the courts today.

The theme of the vote should also include the rise of black elected and appointed officials at the local and national levels, campaigns for equal rights legislation, as well as the role of blacks in traditional and alternative political parties.
There are some who believe that faith and science are competing schools, that they do not intertwine. But there are others, including United Church of Christ pastors past and present, who believe the notion that faith and science can coexist and complement each other. The Rev. Jeff Spencer, pastor at Niles Discovery Church in Fremont, Calif., is a believer of the latter. He says, “For me, the issue is that somewhere along the way, people started to think one can’t embrace both knowledge and science from discoveries and be a person of faith. I find that I can and that the two aren’t and shouldn’t be seen as antagonistic.”

...So what is a good, tangible example in today’s world how faith and science complement each other?

Spencer offered the following: “Science says that given the action of burning fossil fuels in changing the chemistry of the atmosphere, that change in climate means a change in water and ability of earth to sustain food are going to shift, that means there is going to be starvation, famine, weather-related disaster. Where faith comes in relation to that is, ‘I am my brother’s keeper.’ If the person down the street or around the globe is starving, that person is my brother or sister. I care about climate change because I am a Christian.”

Faith, Science, and Technology Sunday was inspired by a 2008 Science Recognition Sunday initiated by former General Minister and President, John H. Thomas in conjunction with the denomination’s Pastoral Letter on Science. That letter was the product of a UCC Science and Technology working group, which first began discussing ways to marry science and religion in the 1980's.

When the disciples went up the mountain with Jesus, they first encountered the past, seeing their transfigured friend alongside the prophets Moses and Elijah. Having glimpsed the past, they were prepared for future ministries and the leadership role they would play in a changing world and a changing church.

Six graduate schools and programs in theology play an especially important role in the preparation of pastoral leaders for the United Church of Christ—both helping student ministers engage with the wealth of our church’s tradition and preparing them for ministry of the future. Although there are other institutions where a prospective minister might receive credentialing, these six seminaries of the United Church of Christ have been recognized for their special commitment to and relationship with the UCC.

On Seminary Sunday and Church Vocations Sunday—observed annually on the last Sunday in February, which this year is also Transfiguration Sunday/ the last Sunday after Epiphany—we give thanks for the generations of new pastors, past and future, who find community, commitment and challenge at these institutions of higher learning:

- **Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School**, New Haven, CT
- **Chicago Theological Seminary**, Chicago, IL
- **Eden Theological Seminary**, St. Louis, MO
- **Lancaster Theological Seminary**, Lancaster, PA
- **Pacific School of Religion**, Berkeley, CA
- **United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities**, New Brighton, MN

Mission Moments are made possible by our gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and are available on the UCC website at [http://www.ucc.org/stewardship/mission-moments/](http://www.ucc.org/stewardship/mission-moments/)
Before Hallmark, before long-stemmed roses delivered to your door, before heart-shaped boxes of chocolates with embossed “flavor maps”--there was St. Valentine. Actually, there may have been two. The history’s pretty murky, and includes legends about an early Christian priest (or was it a bishop?) martyred for (perhaps?) surreptitiously helping Christians to wed. So uncertain are the details, in fact, that in 1969 the Roman Catholic Church officially discontinued liturgical veneration of St. Valentine -- though he’s still on the list of recognized saints.

But the holiday lives on. It turns out Chaucer, of all people, may be the reason why: the late-medieval poet penned “Parliament of Foules” sometime around 1375, including a link--embellished by more than a little poetic license--between courtly love and St. Valentine’s feast day. February 14, Chaucer wrote, is the day birds come together to find a mate: “For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne’s day/Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate.” A lovely day indeed--and as the poem’s fame spread, so did the day’s association with love, both avian and human.

But however fanciful these various legends may be, there’s a deeper wisdom beneath the whimsy. For centuries in Christian thought, the most prestigious book in the Bible--the “graduate school” of Christian spirituality--wasn’t Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, or the Book of Genesis, or the Psalms. It was the Song of Songs, an ancient--and pretty racy!-romantic poem about love in a world fraught with danger. Over the centuries, the poem was interpreted as an unsurpassed figurative portrait of the love between God and God’s people.

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Not that God’s love for us is sexual—rather, the idea is that the intensity, intimacy, and delight of sexual love can be a kind of window, a sacramental parable, for God’s love. Divine love is tender and kind, immersive and ecstatic, full of longing and delight. It’s vulnerable, beautiful, gentle, and strong.

No doubt St. Valentine would approve :) 

So this Valentine’s Day, think of all the love in your life—-the love you feel and the love you witness; even the love among the birds of the air!- -as a glimpse of God’s care for all creation. And if you’re especially perceptive (or especially mischievous), you can glimpse divine love in places likely and unlikely, common and uncommon. Even in a sweet little greeting card, an arrangement of flowers, or a “flavor map” embossed on a heart-shaped lid.

For if we have eyes to see and ears to hear, the truth about God’s love is that it’s all around us, the Song of all songs, the Symphony of all symphonies, echoing everywhere. 

Happy Valentine’s Day!

LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP
February 26, 2020
12 noon and 7 pm in the sanctuary at St. Michael's UCC

Two worship opportunities will be offered on Ash Wednesday, February 26, this year. The first will be at 12 noon and the second at 7 pm; both services will be held in the sanctuary and have the same liturgy and music.

Ash Wednesday begins the Season of Lent, a time of 40 days (not including Sundays) leading up to Easter. It is a time when we look deeply inside ourselves to see the ways we hurt one another and our world by not living as God intends; a time when we commit ourselves to change and to new beginnings and to opening ourselves up to be renewed through Christ. It is a time for us to remember God’s promises to us.

In biblical times, when people sinned and were sorry, they would sometimes wear a sackcloth and put ashes on their heads as symbols for their grief and regret. Even now, when we intend to live as God’s people, loving and caring for others, living in God’s way, following Jesus, we often fall short. Just like the crowds who waved palms on Palm Sunday so long ago, we too will find ourselves shouting “Crucify him!” on Good Friday.

On Ash Wednesday, we use the symbol of ashes to express our sadness about sin, our separation from God. The ashes remind us that we are creatures of the earth. They also remind us of new life from which seeds and plants grow and abundant life which springs forth. Those of all ages are invited to join in worship to seek God’s forgiveness, and make a commitment to new life. All are welcome.
Looking Ahead…

to the Season of Lent and Easter Sunday

Ash Wednesday, February 26
The Season of Lent begins with worship
Two identical services – 12 noon & 7 pm in the sanctuary - Imposition of Ashes

First Sunday in Lent, March 1
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary

FYI: The 40 day Season of Lent actually spans 46 days, but since Sundays are not included, we refer to them as Sundays "in" Lent, not Sundays "of" Lent.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Begin receiving Neighborhood Food Pantries’ March Offerings of Paper Products

Second Sunday in Lent, March 8
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary

Third Sunday in Lent, March 15
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary
Begin Receiving One Great Hour of Sharing Special Mission Offering
Easter Flower Orders Due

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 29
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary
Dedication of Neighborhood Food Pantries’ March Offerings of Paper Products

Palm-Passion Sunday, April 5
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary
The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem with palm branches for everyone
The story of Jesus’ Passion as told in the Gospel of Matthew
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Begin receiving Neighborhood Food Pantries’ April Offerings of Cleaning Products

Good Friday, April 10
Worship at 7 pm in the sanctuary
Tenebrae Service with Extinguishing of Candles and the Seven Last Words of Jesus

Easter Sunday, April 12
Worship at 9:30 am in the sanctuary
Celebration of Christ’s Resurrection and the Empty Tomb
Chancel & Altar Decorated with flowers given in memory/in honor of loved ones
Bringing the cross to life with cut flowers
Dedication of One Great Hour of Sharing Special Mission Offering
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Fellowship Time – Easter Brunch
Photo Album – From January 2020

Two of those who celebrated birthdays in January: Tracy and Ray

The Fabulous Foodies
bd's Mongolian Grill, Naperville
Wednesday Evening, January 22nd
The Community Clothing Closet at St. Michael's UCC continues to provide clean and gently used clothes and shoes to all in our community who are in need. Each visiting family member is encouraged to select five items from our selection each month.

The Clothing Closet was open last month on Saturday, January 11, 2020, when seventeen families visited the Clothing Closet. These families took home 317 clothing items. The Community Clothing Closet has now distributed 99,689 clothing items to visiting guests since opening our doors more than fifteen years ago.

The Community Clothing Closet will be open this coming month on Saturday, February 8, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Our scheduled workday for this month will be on Thursday, February 6, 2020. The Happy Hangers will work in the morning from 10:00 a.m. to noon, and the Evening Organizers will work from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. If you are willing and able, please join us on the regularly scheduled workdays, or talk to Bob Dieckmann or Kathy Hummel to schedule alternative work times.

We continue to gratefully accept donations of clean and gently used clothing items. We also welcome cash donations for the purchase of new underwear and socks, along with new or gently used children’s books to refill our bookcase. We remain thankful for all who have donated items and monetary funds to the Clothing Closet, and for all who volunteer their time to this ministry. Volunteers for the month of January included Betty, Shirley, Jane, Barb, Bob, and Pastor Sue on the Thursday workday, and Bob, Barb, Len, Shirley, and Pastor Sue on Saturday.
Food pantry offerings for the month of January is personal care products. Every other month is Paper Products; Fifth Sundays are Pasta & Rice. You are invited to bring your food pantry offerings on the following suggested Sundays in February.

- February 2: Deodorant
- February 9: Shampoo
- February 16: Bath Soap/hand soap
- February 23: Toothpaste/tooth brushes

Please be sure to purchase individual size products as they are easier to distribute to the clients. See Bob Dieckmann for details. For more information on Neighborhood Food Pantries visit their website at www.neighborhoodfp.org

Total items (excluding toilet paper) donated in January - 16
Total rolls of toilet paper donated in January - 54

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"Let's Tackle Hunger" especially on these Sundays
January 26 and February 2

For two Sundays--January 26 and February 2--you are invited to bring cans of soup (and/or monetary contributions) and put them in one of three baskets located underneath the historic raised pulpit (to the left at the front of the chancel). These three choices include two baskets--one for each of the two football teams--San Francisco 49ers and Kansas City Chiefs--playing in this year's Super Bowl on Sunday, February 2--and the third option basket if you would like to participate, but don't have a preference for who wins the Super Bowl! All of what is received will be given to the Neighborhood Food Pantries West Chicago site, the 123 Fremont Food Pantry. We always have fun seeing how the totals of our Souper Bowl baskets compare with the Super Bowl outcome. And it's for a great cause!

San Francisco
49ers

Kansas City
Chiefs
Dinner at Alfie's Inn

Thursday, February 20th, 6:30 pm
425 Roosevelt Rd, Glen Ellyn; phone: 630-858-2506
Those wishing to carpool meet at church at 5:30 pm
Check out their website http://www.alfiesinn.com/ for more information!
For over 50 years, Alfie's Inn has been proud to serve their famous burgers and delicious baby back ribs, as well as chicken, shrimp, and much more.

AND

Saturday Morning Matinee

Saturday, February 29th
in the church fellowship room
Doors open at 10 am, movie starts at 10:30 am.
“The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers”
The journey of the Lord of the Rings Trilogy continues with this second installment. While Frodo and Sam edge closer to Mordor with the help of the shifty Gollum, the divided fellowship makes a stand against Sauron’s new ally, Saruman, and his hordes of Isengard. Directed by Peter L. Jackson (2002, rated PG-13, Adventure-Fantasy-Drama) Stars include Elijah Wood, Ian McKellan, and Viggo Mortensen. Running Time: 2 hours, 59 minutes.

Please sign-up on one or both sheets posted on the bulletin board in the church fellowship room, so we know how many to anticipate for each gathering!
And, if you need more information, talk with Angela (email: nightgirl2019@yahoo.com, Co-Chair of Membership and Stewardship, or Julisa (email: julisavasquez@lewisu.edu), 2019 Member-at-Large on the Church Council.

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!
In Our February Thoughts and Prayers

- Our members and friends, especially Gladys D, Jackie H, Marge K, Les T, who are homebound, living with family, and/or in nursing homes/assisted living/retirement communities.
- Those in the grieving process, dealing with deaths of loved ones, family, and friends, as well as anniversary times/special moments in this still new calendar year of 2020.
- "Snowbirds," including Wayne and Doreen R and Holly B, wintering in Florida, and returning to the north as needed.
- Rita C. recovering at home from recent hospitalization/surgery and dealing with ongoing health issues.
- Gladys D. recovering from recent hospitalization and now back at home.
- Tim S.' parents, Mary and Gerald, moving to a more accessible home...and Tim and his siblings as they help with the process.
- Leeina S, dealing with family health issues.
- Volunteer, as well as paid, caregivers for loved ones, family, and friends.
- All those dealing with cancer...for the first time, in remission, or a recurrence:
  - Bill D and ongoing issues related to cancer and Betty helping manage these issues.
  - Jackie H, who completed treatment after breast cancer diagnosis and surgery.
  - Rita C's cousin Betty being treated for breast cancer.
  - Holly B's friend's 15 year old grandson Garrett with leukemia.
  - Rita C's friend Kay healing from broken bones and other fall-related injuries.
  - The D family's Uncle Mike in remission from kidney cancer.
  - Sherrie A, Leeina S's daughter, having another round of chemotherapy.
- Tenzin, the four year old boy we sponsor through the UCC-Disciples of Christ Global Ministries. He attends school at the Tibetan Refugee Center in Kalimpong, India.
- All throughout our world who are victims of hate fueled by gun violence, and the ongoing concerns for those who are Muslim, Jewish, and other targeted groups.
- Those dealing with the very real effects of climate change, particularly the bushfires in Australia (caused by the heat and dry conditions)...and those affected by the most recent eruption of the Taal volcano in the Philippines.
- All refugees and immigrants throughout our world, especially those of all ages being held in detention centers at the southern border of our country.
- Elected and appointed leaders throughout our country, particularly those in the three branches of the federal government.

FYI: If you have names/situations or updates for the March newsletter prayer list, please be in touch with Pastor Sue. Requests shared during Sunday morning worship time of prayer are not automatically included!!!
Church Activities at a Glance

Church Council
Sunday, February 9 - 11:30 am in Fellowship room

Clothing Closet
Thursday, February 6 - Happy Hangers 10:00 am - 12:00 noon
Evening Organizers 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Saturday, February 8 - Clothing Closet 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Congregational Meeting and Pancake Breakfast
Sunday, February 16 - 11:30 am in Fellowship Room

Fabulous Foodies
Thursday, February 20 - 6:30 pm at Alfie’s in Glen Ellyn
Saturday, February 29 - 10:00 am “Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers”

“Project Infinity” PeaceJam Group
Every Sunday at 1:00 pm and at other times as arranged by the group

February 9  Leeina Smith
10  Lincoln Nagel
   Bryan Kelsey
11  Luke Allen
18  John Duerr (son)
19  Emily Nagel
25  Brian Bendeich
26  John Duerr (father)

2/10/2013  Nancy Fraley’s Ordination

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Sunday, February 2, 2020
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Continue Souper Bowl 2020 - "Let's Tackle Hunger" with Cans of Soup and Monetary Contributions - all for the Neighborhood Food Pantries' West Chicago site, the 123 Fremont Food Pantry
Begin Receiving Neighborhood Food Pantries February Offerings of Personal Care Products
Altar Flowers: Given by Julisa Vasquez and Angela Lawson - in honor of Yolanda Mendoza's (Julisa's mom) birthday on January 28
Chancel/Altar Display: Kathryn Duerr and Pastor Sue
Lay Reader: Tim Sasse
Usher/Communion Server: Alex Golovin
Communion Preparation/Set-Up/Clean-Up: Bill Birch
Child Care: Alex Golovin
Fellowship Host: Kathryn Duerr - Super Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 9, 2020
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Racial Justice Sunday in the UCC
Faith, Science, and Technology Sunday in the UCC
Altar Flowers: Given by Leeina Smith – in honor of her birthday and loved ones
Chancel/Altar Display: Kathryn Duerr and Pastor Sue
Lay Reader: Barb Dieckmann
Usher: Bill Birch
Child Care: Alex Golovin
Fellowship Host: Shirley Schramer

- continues on next page
Sunday, February 16, 2020
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Annual Congregational Meeting Following Pancake Brunch Fellowship Time
Altar Flowers: Given by Bob and Barb Dieckmann - in memory of Bob's father, Jack
Chancel/Altar Display: Kathryn Duerr and Pastor Sue
Lay Reader: Bill Birch
Usher: Yolanda Mendoza
Child Care: Alex Golovin
Fellowship Host: Pancake Brunch

Sunday, February 23, 2020
Seventh (and Last) Sunday after Epiphany
Transfiguration Sunday
Seminary Sunday and Church Vocations Sunday in the UCC
Dedication of Neighborhood Food Pantries February offerings of Personal Care Products
Scripture Readings: Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9
Altar Flowers: Given by Shirley Schramer - in honor of her Grandson Kurt's 21st birthday
Chancel/Altar Display: Kathryn Duerr and Pastor Sue
Lay Reader: Kathy Hummel
Usher: Kathryn Duerr
Child Care: Alex Golovin
Fellowship Host: Open

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
Ash Wednesday - The Season of Lent Begins
Imposition of Ashes at two identical services in the sanctuary - 12 noon and 7 pm
Scripture Readings Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Altar Flowers and Fellowship Hosts
If you would like to give the altar flowers and/or host fellowship time for a particular Sunday, please sign-up on the bulletin board in the church fellowship room.
Altar flowers can be given in memory or in honor of loved ones or for other reasons! Cost is $20 total (payable to St. Michael's UCC) for both arrangements which are delivered each week by a local florist. The flowers are yours to take/give to others following worship.
Fellowship hosts provide the treats, as well as set-up and clean-up. Coffee and hot water for tea are made for you and ready to serve by the beginning of fellowship time. You may sign up on your own/as a couple or with another person or more folks. If you have questions, talk with Pastor Sue.
St. Michael’s United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming (ONA) Congregation of the UCC since 2008
Celebrating 150 Years in West Chicago (2019-2020)

Church Building Located at:
400 West Washington Street, West Chicago, IL
Mailing Address/Church Office:
108 Sherman Street, West Chicago, IL 60185
Church phone: 630-231-0687
Church email: churchoffice@stmichaelsucc.org
Church web site: www.stmichaelsucc.org

Like us on Facebook!

Church Staff

Pastor and Teacher
Rev. Sue Ebersold
Home office phone: 630-208-8077 (confidential message)
Pastor’s email: PastorSueSMUCC@aol.com
(please email/call to set up an appointment)
Administrative Assistant
Kathy Hummel
Music Director
Len Redelsperger

2019 Church Council (2020 Council will be elected at Annual Meeting)

Moderator............................Barb Dieckmann
Vice Moderator........................Tim Sasse
Recording Secretary....................Kathy Hummel
Treasurer...............................Bill Birch
Financial Secretary....................Bob Dieckmann
Member-at-Large.......................Julisa Vasquez
Christian Education Ministry........Kathy Hummel
Communications Ministry............Arielle Duerr and Melissa Ferguson
Evangelism/Mission/Outreach Ministry...Bob Dieckmann
Facilities Ministry.....................Bill Birch and Alex Golovin
Membership/Stewardship Ministry.....Barb Dieckmann and Angela Lawson
PeaceJam Ministry....................Alex Golovin and Arielle Duerr
Worship Ministry......................Kathryn Duerr and Pastor Sue

“No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, or what time you arrive, you are welcome here.”
Especially in the midst of this winter's gloom

Let Your Light Shine