



ST. JOHN

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



December 2019 / January 2020

We are a family of Christians raising children in Christian faith.

From Our Pastor

Dear St. John,

Are you in the Advent and Christmas spirit yet? It seems that every year the focus on Christmas comes earlier and earlier, but this year it had another help: Snow on Halloween and in November! And, lots of snow! I have some friends who decided to put up their Christmas trees earlier than usual because it snowed so early, and I have to admit I was tempted to do the same. When there's snow on the ground and scarves, gloves, and hats are out, it feels like Christmastime.

Advent and Christmas have now become one season, and although we still celebrate the liturgical season of Advent in the church, we're all seeing Christmas decorations and hearing Christmas music throughout December. I used to wish we could keep the two seasons separate as the church calendar does, but then I realized that there's nothing wrong with being excited about Christmas. Yes, most of the excitement is around the shopping, gifts, decorations, and the material aspects of the holiday, but I think there's something deeper happening. For many of us, Christmas is a time of seeing family, of meaningful worship, of renewing our awe of the holy story of Jesus' birth, and of genuine happiness in the season "to be jolly."

This Advent and Christmas season, St. John will celebrate an ancient holiday and remembrance of a child born in a manger in both traditional ways and in new ways. We'll have new Advent and Christmas decorations in the sanctuary, we'll hear the story of Christmas told by our children and youth on Tinsel Day, we'll hold our first "Longest Night/Blue Christmas" worship service for those for whom Christmas is a difficult season, we'll sing Christmas carols to our homebound members, and we'll hear the beautiful Christmas music of our choirs and musical ensembles. Of course, we'll also gather on that silent and holy night, Christmas Eve, to celebrate the miracle of God-with-us in the form of an innocent baby.

In the past months we've been blessed as a congregation to welcome new families, worship authentically, and dream about our future together. I say we should celebrate this Advent and Christmas season combined, separated, or something in between – it doesn't matter – because why not? Why not celebrate such an important season and story for weeks, even months? Why not be excited for the smells of Christmas cookies and Christmas dinners, the lights and music? Why not be ready to experience one of the holiest nights of the year together, as a Christian family, St. John?

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas to you this season!

Pastor Michael

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Christmas poinsettia order forms due on Sunday, December 1st!



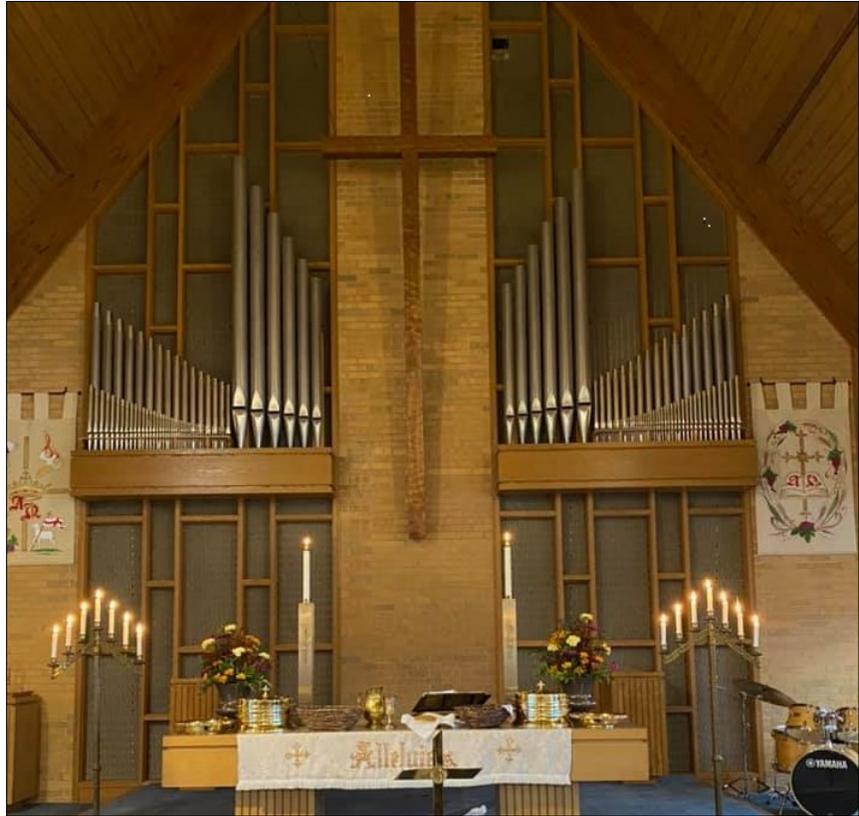
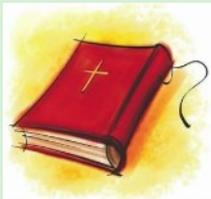
Planned Giving to St. John

Have you ever thought about leaving something for St. John in your will or a trust as part of your estate planning? Many of us give regularly to St. John, but we forget that we have the opportunity to continue to support St. John into the future. Many faith communities rely on gifts that are given through estate planning, so if you've never considered this for you and your family, please consider remembering St. John. Contact the office if you have any questions.



Bible Study

Please join us for our weekly Bible Study on Tuesdays at 10am. All are welcome to this gathering where we read from the bible and talk about life and current events. We often talk more than we read. Join us!



All Saint's Day, November 3, 2019

Music Committee

The choirs, orchestra and worship band are rehearsing holiday music to present to the congregation during the Christmas and New Year's season. We will be performing a lovely selection of sacred and contemporary music. Our Christmas Music and Communion service on December 15th will include all choirs and the orchestra.

We received the donation of a grand piano which sits in Fellowship Hall. It's a beautiful instrument and we're very thankful for the donation.



Mark your calendars for February 22nd at 7pm for a jazz concert in Fellowship Hall.

Coffee House has been re-scheduled for April 25th at 7pm in Fellowship Hall.



Spring of Life/Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Opportunities

St. John has been added to the regular rotation of volunteer churches for Spring of Life, the Habitat for Humanity affiliate. We are asked to provide work volunteers for a new house project in Elgin on December 28, January 25 & February 22. We

are asked to provide lunch on-site for workers on December 28 & February 22. There is no limit to the number of people who can participate or how often. Please contact Jay Virchow with questions or if you are able to help on any of the dates.



Help Make the Holidays Brighter for Faith Community Homes Families

For families across America, December is traditionally the most expensive month of the year. Faith Community Homes has, for many years, provided participating families with holiday gifts and gift cards to assist with their holiday expenses so they can put their wages towards bills and savings instead of towards the holidays. We want to ensure that children in our program have something to open on Christmas morning, and that their holiday is festive and memorable, despite the parents' financial situation. If interested, Connie and Tim Wayman are collecting gift cards until 12/15. The greatest need is for gift cards in denominations of \$25 or less to Aldi, Jewel, Walmart, or any area gas station.



Annual Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, January 26, St. John will hold its Annual Congregational Meeting during Coffee Hour after worship. At this meeting, we will vote on the proposed budget for 2020 and officers and committee members, as well. More information, including the Narrative Budget and information about the meeting, will be available in early January. Members are especially encouraged to attend and vote, and all are welcome to attend.

Church Calendar

Did you know that all of St. John's events are on a calendar, which you can find on our website, www.stjah.org? Once you're on our website, click on "About St. John", and you will see Upcoming Events/Calendar. Click on that and you'll see the calendar.



Solution to Sudoku on page 10.

1	2	3	5	9	6	7	4	8
9	4	8	7	1	3	5	2	6
6	7	5	8	2	4	9	1	3
3	5	6	1	7	2	4	8	9
7	8	2	4	6	9	1	3	5
4	9	1	3	8	5	6	7	2
8	6	4	2	5	1	3	9	7
2	3	9	6	4	7	8	5	1
5	1	7	9	3	8	2	6	4

Letters to St. John



4 October 2019

The Rev. Michael D. Jones
St. John United Church of Christ
308 N. Evergreen Ave.
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Dear Rev. Jones,

We are in the midst of an exciting transition at The Night Ministry! In July, we signed a 10-year lease for three floors in the historic industrial Mural Building. By early 2020, The Crib shelter, our Outreach and Health Ministry, and our administrative offices will all be operating from our new headquarters. Here's a glimpse of our new home:

The Crib: The 21 young people who stay at the current location share one shower and sleep on mats on the floor in the same room where they eat dinner and breakfast. In the new space, we'll have a separate dorm for sleeping, four showers, and a roomy kitchen for staff and volunteers to prepare hearty meals. There will also be more space for laundry, storage, offices, and separate rooms for counseling and quiet activities like doing homework.

Outreach and Health Ministry: Our Outreach and Health team is housed at our main office in Ravenswood, but the Health Outreach Bus is parked three miles away in Lincoln Park. Each day, a staff member drives 30 minutes to fetch the Bus, and another 30 to bring it back to the office to load soup, sandwiches, and medical care supplies. The new space will house an expanded storage area for medical care and survival supplies, along with the Bus, the back-up Bus, and our new Street Medicine Van.

Administrative Headquarters: In 2002, we moved our main office from a small church space to our current location in Ravenswood. Since then, our programs have grown exponentially. The staff housed at our Ravenswood office has more than doubled. Our new home will more than double the amount of space for staff and storage, and provide multiple meeting spaces on two sunny, open floors.

Will you partner with us to make these upgrades a reality? We are fully renovating the Mural Building to meet the needs of our growing programs. In addition to the many ways you already support our ministry, please consider making a donation to our capital campaign.

Also, on the weekend of January 10-12, we ask that you join faith communities across greater Chicago in collecting a special offering for The Night Ministry's new home. We thank you for your consistent support for those experiencing homelessness and poverty. We couldn't do this work without you!

With Much Gratitude,

Rev. Barbara Bolsen
Vice President of Strategic Partnerships
& Community Engagement

Rev. Brittany Caine-Conley
Community & Congregational Relations Coordinator

Message from the Family of Jim Vogt

St. John friends,

Thank you for all of your kind words, prayers, cards, and celebrating the life of Jim Vogt with us. Your kindnesses during our journey with Alzheimer's and following Jim's death are a gift beyond measure.

The Family of Jim Vogt

Sunday School

The preschool through seventh grade students have been hard at work learning about the Lord's Prayer! The older students have been doing well trying to memorize this prayer, while the younger students are becoming familiar with the different parts. Both classes will be done with this study by the end of November. The third through seventh grade class also spent November 17th packing care packages for our college students! Thank you again to Dave and Janet Landeweer for organizing this fun activity. As we move into December, we prepare for Tinsel Day on December 8th and will start the Heifer project once again which will take us into the new year. Please email Gabby Slonke at gslonke@stjah.org or see me at church if you would like to get involved with Sunday School!

Middle School Youth

The Middle School Youth has had two fun events so far this school year! On October 26th, we got together at church to watch Hocus Pocus. It was a great way to begin the Halloween season with some yummy treats! Also, on November 9th, we gathered for a fun night of trivia sponsored by Christian Education. Our Veggie-Tails themed table (which we called "The Cucumbers") ended up winning first place, proving that age was to our advantage! We will continue to have more fun events after the holidays. If you would like to get involved with the Middle School Youth, please email Gabby Slonke at gslonke@stjah.org or see me at church!



Advent Night

Advent Night will be held on Sunday, December 1st. Pasta and salad dinner and dessert will be served at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be followed by a craft event celebrating the Advent Season. We will learn the meaning of the four Sunday's of Advent and create the Advent wreath (pictured above right) to take home. We hope to see you all there!



All Church Mission Project

During Coffee Hour on Sunday, December 8, everyone will be invited to wrap Christmas presents for children and families in need. You don't have to be an expert wrapper, just come ready to help!



Caroling for the Holidays

The holidays are right around the corner, and nothing spreads good cheer better than some good old fashioned caroling! Please join us on Saturday, December 21st, at 3:30 p.m., as we carpool to various locations around Arlington Heights for a time of carol-singing and cheer-spreading. Pizza will be provided at St. John afterwards. A sign-up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall prior to the event for those who are interested. All are welcome and encouraged to participate!



Advent and Christmas @ St. John Details:

Sunday, December 1: Advent Night. All ages welcome! Pasta and salad dinner and dessert will be served at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be followed by a craft event celebrating the Advent Season. We will learn the meaning of the four Sunday's of Advent and create the Advent wreath to take home. We hope to see you all there!

Sunday, December 8, 9:30 A.M. Tinsel Day! Come to hear St. John's children and youth tell the Christmas story in a new and exciting way! Their Christmas play is called "Away in a Mango." We will have worship for the first half of the service and then the kids take over.

Sunday, December 8, Coffee Hour All Church Mission Project. During coffee hour everyone will be invited to help wrap Christmas presents for children and families in need. You don't have to be an expert wrapper, just come ready to help!

Sunday, December 15, 9:30 A.M. Christmas Music Sunday Join us for a worship service where all of St. John's choirs and ensembles will be filling our sanctuary with beautiful Advent and Christmas music!

Thursday, December 19, 7:00 P.M. Longest Night/Blue Christmas Worship Is Christmas a difficult time for you because of the loss of a loved one or some other, personal reason? Many of us struggle during the holidays for many reasons. Join us for our first Longest Night/Blue Christmas where we'll approach the Christmas season in a different way with candle lighting, song, silence, and recognizing God's love and comfort in difficulty.

Saturday, December 21, 3:30 P.M. Christmas Caroling Nothing spreads good cheer better than some good old fashioned caroling! Please join us on Saturday December 21st at 3:30 as we carpool to various locations around Arlington Heights for a time of carol-singing and cheer-spreading. Pizza will be provided at St. John afterwards. A sign-up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall prior to the event for those who are interested. All are welcome and encouraged to participate!

Christmas Eve Services: 4:00 P.M. & 9:00 P.M. Come on the holiest night of the year as we sing carols and hymns, partake in Holy Communion, hear the Chancel Choir and the Bell Tones, sing by candle light, and welcome the birth of our Savior. Please note the time change for the late service. **Christmas cookies and hot chocolate will be served after 4:00 P.M. worship!**

5:00 P.M. Worship Services will continue every Sunday throughout Advent and Christmas, so if you can't come on Sunday morning or know someone who needs an alternative worship time, join us!

Capital Campaign

Over the last two months, the Capital Campaign Committee and our consultant, Partners for Sacred Places, have been gearing up for our next phase of the project. The Committee and the church Council had a kickoff meeting at the end of August where various tasks and a timeline were discussed. Last month the Committee met to discuss roles of the participants of the Committee and to continue our discussions on this next phase. Then, on October 3, the committee and Sacred Places met to start going into the details of the tasks. One of the earliest tasks will be to prepare a Case Statement. The purpose of the case statement is to look at St. John and it's building in new ways, discover hidden historical associations with people and events, and imaginatively answer the question "why should we give?" One of the steps in the creation of the case statement involves current research to answer the question, "What is important about St. John today?" This step involves everyone from the congregation in preparing answers to a number of questions. We conducted this activity during Coffee Hour on November 17.

We will follow that up with an Asset Mapping exercise early in 2020. Asset Mapping is a group exercise with people from all different walks of life and interests. Sacred Places will be providing more information about this in the coming months, but one thing they are looking for is to get participants from outside of our congregation to be involved in the exercise. The participants could be elected officials from the Village, Schools, and other agencies; business owners, managers or other workers; non-profit organizations; other churches; or any others that could help us here at St. John to enhance our role in the community. If you have anyone in mind who would be a candidate for participating in this exercise, please see a member of the committee.

And, as always, if you would like to assist or participate in this exciting campaign in any way, you are more than welcome to help.



Offering Envelopes

Due to our increase of on-line giving, we have lowered our quantity of numbered envelopes. Because of this decrease, starting in January, some of you may have new offering envelope numbers. Some will undoubtedly have the same number, while others will change. Those who give online will retain their current numbers. Should you have any questions, please give the office a call or see Lana Cochran. Thank you for your supportive, generous giving for St. John.



PADS Volunteer Opportunities

St. John will be serving and providing meals for PADS guests on the second Thursday of each month at Congregational United Church of Christ at 1001 W. Kirchoff Road in Arlington Heights. There are a number of opportunities available, from preparing and delivering part of the dinner, to providing food and beverages for Friday's breakfast or sack lunches. We ask that food items be delivered directly to CUCC on Thursday evenings from 6-6:30 p.m. If you cannot make that time frame, please contact Michelle Johns at mmjohns03@yahoo.com or 630-606-9801. We will gladly make arrangements to accommodate you. We also need volunteers to assist with set up of the site or to be a shift volunteer. You can learn more and sign up at: <http://tinyurl.com/y3yn5wy4>. Please contact Kathy Winters (kwinters7@sbcglobal.net) or Michelle Johns (mmjohns03@yahoo.com) with any questions.

Trivia Night

Thank you for attending Trivia night!



THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE PRESENTS:

TRIVIA NIGHT!

Saturday November 9 | Fellowship Hall
Potluck Dinner starting promptly @ 6 PM
Trivia @ 6:30 PM

Prizes for the winning team!



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN

JOIN US!

Sunday, December 1 First Sunday of Advent
Communion Worship 9:30 A.M. & 5:00 P.M.
Advent Night Dinner / Advent Workshop 5:30 P.M.

Sunday, December 8 Second Sunday of Advent
Tinsel Day 9:30 A.M. (Children's Christmas program)
5:00 P.M. Communion Worship

Sunday, December 15 Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Music & Communion Worship 9:30 A.M.
5:00 P.M. Communion Worship

Thursday, December 19
Longest Night / Blue Christmas Worship at 7:00 P.M.

Saturday, December 21
Christmas Caroling (Meet at church at 3:30 P.M.)

Sunday, December 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent
9:30 A.M. Worship & 5:00 P.M. Communion Worship

Christmas Eve
4:00 P.M. & *9:00 P.M. Communion Worship
(*Please note the change to 9:00 P.M.)



December Birthdays

1st	Stephanie Frost
2nd	Nancy Wirth
3rd	Diane Bednarz & Al Drummond
5th	Isac Chagoya
6th	Judy L'Amoureux & Ryan Petersen
7th	Meadow McNaney
8th	Daniel Salazar & Gabriela Slonke
9th	Chad Kurka & George Polk
10th	Alex Blye
12th	Holly Petersen
14th	Brenda Buske
15th	Charlotte Brinson & Hannah Goto
17th	Lois Pump
18th	Julie Kurka
19th	Noel Payne & Cliff Schultz
20th	Tyler Delahanty & Corrie Roesslein
23rd	Holly Endicott
25th	Kayla Brunetti
30th	Jodi O'Brien & Rachel Thoms
31st	Brad Kave



december



Do we have your birthday? If not, please call the office and let us know!

January Birthdays

1st	Judy Grimes & Blake Mosser
5th	Frank Styzek, Kimberly Vogt & Lori Vombrack
6th	Jecsa Rivera Vega & Tim Travis
8th	Cheryl Riley
9th	Michelle Brinson
11th	Kelly Johnson
12th	Latosha Polk
15th	Alberto Mantovano
18th	Hanna Cooper
19th	Lenore Stelling
23rd	Grace Breisch & Nicole Kuhl
24th	Lorraine Messenger
25th	Sue Thoms
28th	John Buske & Katie Checuga
29th	Stan Wieczorek

january



december

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Advent Night Sunday 9:30am Communion Worship & Sunday School 10:50am JuBellation Rehearsal 5pm Communion Worship 5:30pm Advent Night	2	3 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones Rehearsal 7pm Spiritual Life Committee Meeting 7pm FCH Meeting	4 7:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	5 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm St. John Crafters 7pm Steering Committee meeting	6	7 9am 2nd Sunday School Music Rehearsal 
8 Operation Christmas-All Church Mission Project 9:30am Worship & Sunday School—Tinsel Day Play during AM Worship 10:50am JuBellation Rehearsal 5pm Communion Worship	9	10 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones Rehearsal 7pm Council Meeting	11 10am Restoring Wholeness 7:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	12 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm Cards CMA Meeting—Pastor Michael & Kathie Schultz	13	14 Faithful Friends Christmas Party in Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary
15 9:30am Christmas Music & Communion Worship & Sunday School 11am Christian Ed Meeting 11am Stewardship Meeting 5pm Communion Worship	16 2pm Book Club 	17 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones Rehearsal	18 7:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	19 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm St. John Crafters 7pm Longest Night/Blue Worship	20	21 4pm Christmas Caroling & 6pm Dinner in Fellowship Hall
22 9:30am Worship & Sunday School 5pm Communion Worship	23	24 Christmas Eve 4pm Worship & 9pm Worship Cookies & Hot Cocoa after 4pm Worship	25 	26 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm Cards	27	28
29 9:30am Worship & Sunday School 5pm Communion Worship	30	31 New Year's Eve				Worship Band Rehearsals are on Tuesdays at 7pm.

ST. JOHN UCC
WWW.STJAH.ORG

5PM EVENING WORSHIP

STARTING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Sudoku Puzzle

1			5	9		7		
			7		3	5	2	
						9		3
		6	1	7				9
7								5
4				8	5	6		
8		4						
	3	9	6		7			
		7		3	8			4



St. John Baptisms



Baptism of Emmett Thomas Hahn, 9/29/2019



Baptisms of Paige Olivia Mollie Jones & Lucia Mary Isabel Jones, 10/6/2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Worship Band Rehearsals are on Tuesdays at 7pm.</i></p>			<p>1</p>	<p>2 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm St John Crafters 7pm Steering Committee Meeting</p>	3	4
<p>5 9:30am Communion Worship & Sunday School 5pm Communion Worship</p>	6	<p>7 10am Bible Study 6pm Spiritual Life Committee Meeting 6:15pm Bell Tones 7pm Council Meeting</p>	<p>8 7:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm Cards</p>	10	11
<p>12 9:30am Worship & Sunday School 11am Altar Guild 11am Stewardship Meeting 5pm Communion Worship</p>	13	<p>14 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones</p>	<p>15 7:15pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>16 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm St John Crafters</p>	17 6:30pm	18 Faithful Friends
<p>19 9:30am Communion Worship & Sunday School 11am Christian Ed Meeting 5pm Communion Worship</p>	20	<p>21 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones</p>	<p>22 7:15pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>23 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm Cards</p>	24	25
<p>26 9:30am Worship & Sunday School 11am Annual Meeting 5pm Communion Worship</p>	27	<p>28 10am Bible Study 6:15pm Bell Tones</p>	<p>29 11am Lunch & Learn 5:30pm Asset Mapping 7:15pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>30 9am Morning Work Crew 1pm Cards</p>	31	



Contact Us

St. John United Church of Christ
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9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Staff

Rev. Michael D. Jones, Pastor – mjones@stjah.org
Janice Gilligan, Church Administrator – office@stjah.org
Gabby Slonke, Director of Children’s Ministries – gslonke@stjah.org
Dr. J. Paul Cochran, Organist
Linda Styzek, Pianist
Alberto Mantovano, Choir Director
Carin Zachar, Bell Director



ST. JOHN UCC OPEN & AFFIRMING STATEMENT



The congregation of St. John United Church of Christ rejoices that our community of faith is strengthened by diversity. We declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation, extending God’s extravagant welcome to all people regardless of culture, economic status, age, sex, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, marital status, or physical/mental condition. We invite everyone to join our journey of faith and participate fully in the life of our congregation.

St. John United Church of Christ

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Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Phone: 847-255-6687

E-mail: office@stjah.org

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PLACE
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ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST