

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

– Psalm 25:4-5

Beloved Church Family,

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, I'm going to be using these next few months to talk about some of the prayer practices, points of learning, and experiences I had over my time of Sabbatical last summer. This month, I'll be starting with one of my biggest ongoing points of learning throughout my life – organization. For some folks, organization comes very easily. However, as someone who has lived with ADHD (although it was undiagnosed until my mid 30s) I have always struggled with this facet of life. If you've seen my desk in the church office, you have witnessed this firsthand.

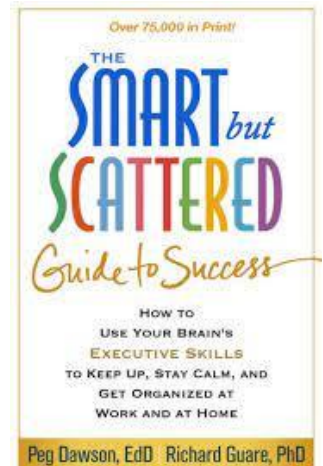
My organization struggles sometimes manifest as a difficulty in keeping the “big picture” in mind. This means that my mind might be hyper-focused on small details or flitting between several tasks, but I might completely forget an appt I made last week. Or, I might be really focusing on worship planning and forget to turn in my monthly newsletter article on time. (Thank you, Bev Adams, for your flexibility and mercy). What might seem like indifference or avoidance on my part is usually a case of forgetfulness. It is something I know I will need to work on and grow through my whole life long.

When I was getting ready to go on Sabbatical, I sat down with Rev. Shana Johnson, our Conference Minister, to talk about what is important during Sabbatical. After talking about the importance of rest and renewal, she asked me a question. “What makes you tired?” It was a profound question with an easy answer on my end. Not being on top of schedules and tasks makes me feel scatterbrained and tired. I feel tired when I miss a deadline or fall short on expectations. In short – my disorganized brain makes me feel very tired. This is especially true when life stressors (divorce, family illness, co-parenting struggles, school concerns, etc) stretch my brain's capacity to the limits.

Rev. Shana Johnson's next question was, “What can you learn or lean into that will help ease that feeling of tiredness?” And so, while I was on sabbatical, I made a point to learn some new tricks and tools to help me bring a little bit of organization to the chaos in my head. I read a book called, “The Smart but Scattered Guide to Success: How to Use Your Brain's Executive Skills to Keep Up, Stay Calm, and Get Organized at Work and at Home” And, I also went onto the ADDitude website ([www.additudemag.com](http://www.additudemag.com)) that has a lot of great tools and learning opportunities for folks with ADHD or those who love folks with ADHD.

These are great resources, and they had some wonderful ideas to help with the 12 executive function challenges that can come along with ADHD. I have begun to implement a few of these tools, and they have really helped me feel more “on top” of the day-to-day flow of work and life in general. I still struggle with organization, but I know how to work with the struggle to grow and learn. These few “brain hacks” have helped shed light and bring hope for me, and they might be helpful to you, too.

- **Making lists** – This seems obvious, but knowing how to keep lists (and not losing them) and letting them both motivate and keep you on task can be life-giving.
- **Keeping it simple** – I had MANY different calendars, and so it was easy for me to misplace meetings and/or important dates. Now, I have consolidated my calendars into 2



physical calendars (one monthly and one hourly), and I back up these calendars to my phone calendar every day.



- **Using a timer & Breaks**– Breaking down big tasks into smaller parts has made tasks less intimidating. And, while I tackle smaller parts, I set a timer for 20-40 minutes. Every 45 minutes to an hour, I give my brain a break by walking around, checking my phone, or grabbing some water. This helps to lower stress and give your brain a short break, so that you feel ready to face the next thing in your day.

- **Routines** – Writing down and keeping a routine for certain parts of the day can help daily tasks not fall through the cracks. When it’s written down and placed somewhere it will be seen every day, it makes it much easier to remember and complete. (This same concept is true for daily affirmations, which can be very uplifting and motivating).

- **Have grace with yourself** – It’s easy to get down on yourself when you have a rough day or fall short on one of your tasks. It’s easy to feel like you don’t measure up when you compare yourself to others who you think “have it all together.” However, it’s important to remember that we’re all human, and you are allowed to make mistakes. Perfection isn’t attainable, and when we expect perfection, we will always be disappointed. Progress over time is a much healthier marker for us to look at. The most important thing to remember is that every day, every hour, even every minute is a new opportunity to dust yourself off, practice compassion with yourself (and others) and try again.

Learning and growing are something we all do, not just as children or young adults in school, but our whole lives long. There is no “graduation” on our spiritual and personal journey. And, God walks alongside us every minute of every day, helping us navigate the ups, downs, twists, and turns of life. We can turn to God and continually seek wisdom to help us expand our hearts and minds and strengthen our growing edges. What a great gift!

*With Love and Hope, Pastor Christy Smith*



*Please join us as we begin the Holy Season of Lent with the Imposition of Ashes. Service is February 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.*



## St. John Prayer List

Chris Bates	Jed Bates	Lois & Stan Clark	Greg Erdmann
Cathy Haller	Denise Hamilton	Pauline Kraemer	Marian Nelson
Billie Rinderer	Orville Rinderer	Rogers Family	Mickey Williamson
Connie Zimmers			

Ken Erdmann	(Greg Erdmann's brother)
Ken Fritz	(Cathy Haller's brother)
Rich Fritz	(Cathy Haller's father)
Richard Haller	(Cathy Haller's brother-in-law)
Roik Hockenberger	(Heather Netemeyer's father)
Logan Miller	(Ron & Kimberly Tremmel's son)
Crystal Minton	(Kim Tremmel's deceased friend's adopted daughter)
Tammy Press	(Marian Funk's niece)
Connie Schildt	(Marian Funk's sister)
Gary & Carol Weshinsky	(Laura Wesselmann's father & mother)
Craig Wheeler	(Kim Tremmel's friend)



Pastor Christy is usually in the office Tuesday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM but will make appointments if needed. Contact her by calling her cell phone at 618-973-3040. Bev Adams, office administrator, will usually be in the office 9 AM to 3 PM, Monday through Friday, but her schedule may vary. Please contact her at [stjohntrenton@gmail.com](mailto:stjohntrenton@gmail.com) or call 224-9828 .



### FEBRUARY Birthdays

**Jarrold Tobin** February 9  
**Lois Clark** February 16  
**Orville Rinderer** February 17  
**Billie Rinderer** February 18  
**Kassie Fisher** February 20  
**Greg Erdmann** February 25



### FEBRUARY Anniversaries

**Dorothea & Tom Louden** February 11



**FEBRUARY COUNCIL  
MEMBER ON DUTY**




Elaine Hoffmann

# Virtual Worship Services

Virtual services continue for those wishing to attend. We want to make worship as convenient as possible for our members and the community. Please see our website or our Facebook page for the Zoom link.

- To call in with phone audio only, call
- **1-312-626-6799** and then the meeting ID:
- **8436488110** followed by the pound sign.
- Password, if needed, will be: **62293**

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- *To everyone who put away the Christmas decorations*
- *To Ron Tremmel & Lonna Patton for agreeing to another term on the council*
- *To all the committee members who will be doing the work of the church that is so necessary*

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## GREETING CARDS

Don't forget to sign the greeting cards in the vestibule when you come to worship service on Sundays. The Sunshine Ministry appreciates your help in keeping connected with members.



## POP UP SUNDAY SCHOOL

**When:** February 18, 2024, during Pastor Christy's sermon

**What:** Genesis 6:9-14 Trust, Obedience, and God's Promise

**Activity:** Let's Make a Puppet!

Lesson continues in March - don't miss it!



## Trivia Corner

We stopped the story of Moses for a while and left him when he and his brother Aaron were being summoned to the top of Mount Sinai by God to receive the Ten Commandments.



1. Which Commandments talk about our relationship to God?
2. Which Commandment connects God and the people?
3. Which Commandments talk about how we live with and treat others?
4. Why were the people afraid when God spoke to Moses?
5. What did Moses tell the people was God's reason for giving the Commandments from the mountain?

Answers are on page 5

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**Condolences to Cathy Haller and her family** on the passing of her father, Rich Fritz, on January 26, 2024. Visitation will be Friday, February 16 from

9:00 to 11:00 AM at Moss Funeral Home in Trenton. A memorial service will be on Friday, February 16 at 11:00 AM at Moss Funeral Home in Trenton with Pastor Bob Marsh and Pastor Christy Smith officiating. Interment will follow at Trenton



Cemetery. Afterwards a luncheon will be served at St. John UCC. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex for those who can help with the luncheon.

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## FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST



**The Fellowship Breakfast is the first Tuesday of the month at 8:00 AM at Good Ol' Days in New Baden.** So mark your 2024 calendars for Feb. 6, March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4, July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5 & Dec. 3. Come join us for an enjoyable breakfast with others. It's a time for great conversation, food and fellowship. Everyone is welcome!

## Women's J.O.Y. Fellowship



John Zeller did the traveling to East St. Louis on the 23rd, taking along seven reams of copy paper, 380 plus envelopes, two spiral notebooks, 24 pencils, 14 pens, three rolls of scotch tape, and a packet of Post-It notes. There were also 14 sippy cups donated. There were several bottles of hand sanitizer that came in after the trip was made so those things were donated to Rainbow Preschool. The week of February 19 will be the next trip. Kindercottage needs something different this time: trash bags. It is the first time we have ever been asked to supply trash bags. They are also in need of toilet tissue. Your generous donations help make the tuition payments at Kindercottage stretch from month to month to supply all the things a preschool needs to operate. Thank you so much.

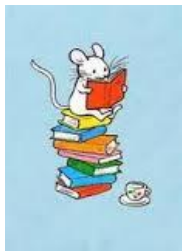
The J.O.Y. will be having their Ash Wednesday program and worship service on February 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM. Guest speaker will be Rev. Tarrah Vaupel who will be representing a woman from the Bible in order to give a perspective of events from that time period. Refreshments will be served afterwards. A sign-up sheet is out in the narthex for those who would like to attend.

## RUMMAGE SALE

Did you make a New Year's resolution to "get rid of stuff"? Well, the next rummage sale at St. John won't be until mid-April but we want to take advantage of any cleaning, purging, or updating that you will be doing in early 2024. Now is the time to tackle that closet, cabinet, basement, or cluttered room that has been on your mind for so long. In order to accommodate those who wish to bring donations for the rummage sale, the vestibule will be open two days a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) starting January 9<sup>th</sup>. So bring your clean and serviceable books, household items, clothes, bedding, knick-knacks, decorations, toys and drop them off in the vestibule on any Tuesday or Thursday for the next rummage sale (no large items at this time and please no weapons or ammunition). We appreciate your donations and look forward to another successful fundraiser.



## BOOK CLUB



The Book Club will be meeting on Wednesday, March 13, to discuss their newest pick, *Braiding Sweet Grass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer which is available for check out in the church library. As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together to take us on "a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise"

## Chili/Soup Drive-Thru

St. John will be having a chili & soup fundraiser on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 AM until 2:00 PM (or until we run out). A sign-up sheet is in the narthex for those who can help on Friday, February 23 and Saturday, February 24. We will need cooks, servers, runners, and a clean-up crew. We appreciate all help for this church fundraiser!

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IN 2024

St. John will once again partner with the First United Methodist Church to present a VBS experience for the children of Trenton and surrounding communities. Material for VBS will be available for purchase in February and the theme will be chosen at that time. The date will be early June and in the evening as in the past two years. It is FUMC's turn to host at their church. We will need volunteers to do many things and we will need children to attend. Exact details will be ready sometime in February. Watch the bulletin and the newsletters for information on VBS and the Pop Up Sunday School days at St. John this January through May.



## Council Meeting Highlights – January 16, 2024

- The 2024 proposal budget is ready for the annual meeting.
- Ron Tremmel and Lonna Patton have agreed to second terms as council members.
- The date of February 24<sup>th</sup> is set for annual Chili/Soup Drive Thru.
- Next council meeting date is Tuesday, February 20 at 6:00 PM.



## Trivia Corner Answers

1. The first three Commandments tell us how to see God: #1 – “Have no other gods before me”, #2 – “Do not make idols”, #3 – “Do not make wrongful use of the name of God.” Exodus 20:2-7
2. The fourth Commandment tells us to “Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.” Exodus 20:8-11
3. Commandments 5 through 10 tell us to “Honor our father and mother”, “You shall not murder”, “You shall not commit adultery”, “You shall not steal”, “You shall not lie about others”, “You shall not covet.” Exodus 20:12-17.
4. “The people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid...do not let God speak to us lest we die.” Exodus 20:18-19
5. “Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid, for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.’” Exodus 20:20

## Rainbow Preschool News

As I sit here and write this I can't believe how quickly the month of January has come and gone. We welcomed students back from Christmas break January 4<sup>th</sup> and January 5<sup>th</sup> and we were excited to hear what Santa brought them for Christmas.

Pastor Christy came in and read *The Legend of Old Befana* and *The Prince, and the Witch, and the Thief, and the Bears*. Students loved both stories and talked about what their favorite part was.

Our M/W/F students have been working on writing their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and birthdays. They continue to work on writing their uppercase and lowercase letters and writing numbers from 1-25. They have also completed numerous alphabet, color by number, cutting, and

many more projects for the month of January. Our Tu/Th students have been working hard on writing their names and learning their birthdays. In addition to identifying uppercase letters and numbers from 1-15, they have completed many alphabet, color by number, cutting and other projects for the month.

By the time you read this we will have already completed the first week of the alphabet box. Each week students are asked to bring/draw something that starts with the letter we are working on for the week. We will share what the students brought in with their classmates.



Happy January birthdays to the following students Steven B.R. January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Warner K. January 4<sup>th</sup>, Rydon K. January 10<sup>th</sup>, and Clare B. January 12<sup>th</sup>. Each student brought in their favorite snack to share with their classmates to celebrate their birthday.

Students had their first snow days of the year. With the bitter cold temperatures the Preschool board and I decided to cancel class to keep our students safe. We try our best to do what the Wesclin school district does, but if we feel that it is necessary to cancel before Wesclin does we will meet and will notify parents as soon as possible.



We are currently enrolling students for the 2023-2024 school year. If you know anyone that is interested or looking for a preschool, please have them reach out by sending us an email at [rainbowpreschooltrentonil@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowpreschooltrentonil@gmail.com) or by calling the office.

If you would like to see what our students have been doing in class please check out of Facebook page for daily updates.

## Reminder

### Reminders:

- Please make sure your child has a warm coat, gloves/mittens, and hat. Weather permitting, we will go outside.
  - **Snow days-** If Wesclin school district cancels school due to the weather, Rainbow will be closed as well. When you are looking for the school closure on the news, just remember it will be listed as Wesclin school district. You will be notified by email and/or by text, and it will be posted on our Facebook page as well.
    - We try our best to do what Wesclin school district does, but if we feel that it is necessary to cancel before Wesclin does the Preschool board and I will meet to discuss what we should do.
  - Once a decision has been made parents will be notified via email and a post will be made on our Facebook page.
  - No school Monday February 19<sup>th</sup>- President's Day
  - M/W/F students will be performing on Wednesday February 14<sup>th</sup> at the Ash Wednesday Service at 9 am. If you have not returned your RSVP please do so.
  - If you have not returned your enrollment form for the 2024-2025 school year, please do so as soon as possible.
  - I will be contacting RMS studios to set up a date for pictures.
- If you have any questions or concerns please contact me.

Happy New Year! From Ms. Misty

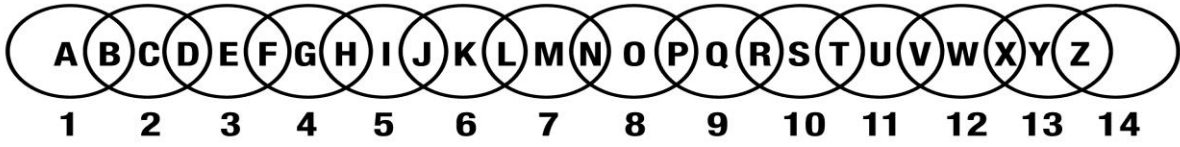
Happy New Year ♥ Happy New Year ♥ Happy New Year



# Puzzle!

Use the code to complete the blanks — and find out how God wants us to treat people.

CODE:



1,2 3      6 5 7,8 2,3      1 7,8 2,3

2 8 7 8,9 1 10 10 5 8 7,8 1 10,11 3

10,11 8      8 7,8 3      1 7,8 8 10,11 4,5 3 9,10 ,

3,4 8 9,10 4      5 11,12 5 7,8 4      3 1 2 4,5

8 10,11 4,5 3 9,10 ,      5,6 11 10 10,11      1 10

5 7,8      2 4,5 9,10 5 10 10,11      4 8 2,3

3,4 8 9,10 4      1 11,12 3      13 8 11 .

EPHESIANS 4:32, NIV

Answer: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32, NIV