



## Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ

409 Center Parkway  
Yorkville, IL 60560  
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E-Mail: [adminasst@yorkvilleucc.org](mailto:adminasst@yorkvilleucc.org)  
Web Page: [www.yorkvilleucc.org](http://www.yorkvilleucc.org)  
Office Hours: Monday - Friday

### Our Staff

<u>Minister</u>	Rev. Mark S. Gregory
<u>Building Manager</u>	Mary Ellen Anderson
<u>Christian Education Director</u>	Barbara Thurlby
<u>Administrative Asst.</u>	Susan Lange
<u>Chancel Choir Director</u>	Doug Trumble
<u>Children's Choir Director</u>	Sondra Shatters
<u>Organist</u>	Tina Andersen
<u>Pianist</u>	Lori Runkle
<u>Childcare Attendants</u>	Hannah Bazan Luke Schoenfelder Rachel Hart
<u>Maintenance</u>	
<u>Custodians</u>	Tim & Laurie Strong
<u>Sextons</u>	Ed Niesen

8:30 am - 4:00 pm

### Our Shepherds

<u>Chairperson</u>	Kathy Farren
<u>Vice Chairperson</u>	Sandy deRidder
<u>Recording Secretary</u>	Sue Kimes
<u>Operations: Personnel</u>	Deb Myers
<u>Operations: Bldg. &amp; Grnds</u>	Andy Hamblin
<u>Operations: Finance</u>	Tim Andrus
<u>Information Services</u>	Diane Lee
<u>Christian Education: Adult</u>	Fred Gaebler
<u>Christian Education: Youth</u>	Pam Campos
<u>Worship: Serving</u>	Lori Redmon
<u>Worship: Preparation</u>	Lee Kinkade
<u>Church Family: Caring</u>	Lou Ann Hoffman
<u>Church Family: Fellowship</u>	Jeff Kline
<u>Service: Missions</u>	June Davis

**Worship & Sunday School: 10:00 am**

# The December Happenings

## Annual COOKIE SALE





It's December! All week long I have heard people saying, "I can't believe it's almost Christmas!" As a pastor, I can't believe we are already in the Advent Season! I recently had someone, a friend who goes to church fairly regularly, tell me, "I look forward to Christmas, and the celebration of Jesus birth, but I don't get this whole Advent thing. What is Advent really all about?"

Well, I figured if my friend didn't know, maybe a refresher "Musing" on Advent and what we can do to make Advent meaningful would be a good idea!

What is Advent? Well, the word 'Advent' is from the Latin 'Adventus' which means 'coming.' Advent is the beginning of a new liturgical year (in the Western churches), and encompasses the span of time from the fourth Sunday before Christmas, until Christmas (the celebration of the birth of the Christ-child). The first Sunday of Advent is the Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle (which is November 30th), and so it will always fall somewhere between November 27th at the earliest and December 3rd at the latest (which is where it falls this year!). The liturgical color for this season is purple (Usually a deep purple as opposed to the lighter, red-violet shade of purple associated with Lent).

Advent is a season of preparation. It has significance because it is a season of looking forward and waiting for something greater. During the Advent Season, we in the church say we are in two "Advents", preparing for two wondrous events as we are preparing for the annual celebration of Christ's birth, and we are also preparing for the time when Christ will come to us again.

So, that's the Season of Advent from a liturgical perspective. But what is Advent supposed to be from a personal perspective.

Well, I believe that this "season", which lasts four weeks or so, offers each of us, personally, opportunities to grow as Christians. It's a time when we can make a choice to slow down and reflect, and allow the Holy Spirit to help us see things from a new perspective.

The Christmas holiday, especially in our country, seems to be on a course toward total insanity. Black Friday (and the commercial enterprises that promote it) appears to have no desire to remain confined by a 24-hour window - the Friday after Thanksgiving. It now bleeds forward into Thanksgiving Day, and backwards for as much as another week. Even though Advent has not yet arrived, the day once set aside for us to "Give Thanks", has become a day for "shopping and getting great deals".

So, I believe Advent takes on an even greater importance for Christians today, as it provides us with another opportunity to pause and give thanks. We need to reflect on God's goodness and give thanks for all God's gifts to us, especially the gift of the Christ-child, if we are to be fully prepared to receive Him.

Advent also provides us with an opportunity to engage in activities that will help us go back to the center, the core of our faith. Whether through daily readings, candle-lightings, or other Advent-

themed traditions, we can use the Season of Advent to reflect and re-center our hearts. Advent is a time to be still and know God.

So, as you celebrate the season of Advent, as we celebrate it together as a church family, I hope you will let this Advent Season be an opportunity for the Spirit of Advent to grow, fill your heart and renew your mind. May it be for you, a time of thankfulness. May it be a time when you reflect on God's goodness to you, and God's patience. May it be a time to reflect and re-center your life on living God's way, the way of Christ Jesus. May Advent not just be a time of preparing for the celebration of Christmas, but may it also be a time when you prepare your heart, mind and soul for Christ to be born again, born anew in your heart!

Blessings and Peace,

### **7th Annual Christmas Cookie and Candy Sale**

**Saturday, December 2, 2017 8:00AM to 11:00 AM**



**Yorkville Congregational Church United Church of Christ**

**409 Center Parkway, Yorkville, IL.**

Let us help with your holiday baking. Select from an array of festive and delicious Christmas Cookies and Candy. Cookies are sold for \$ 8.00 per pound.

Money raised will support Disaster Relief.

For more information please contact the church office at 630-553-7308.



### **Why Pray?**

Someone once asked me, “If God knows all that we need, as Jesus once said, why do we need to pray?”

Prayer is one of the most important things we can do as a follower of Jesus. Prayer is an act of worship, prayer is an act of thanksgiving, prayer is an act of intercession, prayer is an act of love and relationship. It’s a time we are communing with Jesus and communicating with God. While there is deep spiritual meaning in prayer, it doesn’t have to be something complicated and difficult. It’s something anyone can do anywhere at any time. In fact, the Apostle Paul instructs the early Christians to “pray without ceasing”, in other words, to make their lives one constant prayer, one constant conversation with God.

It’s impossible to know someone if you don’t spend time with them. Prayer is an opportunity to spend time with God. To connect with God, to really understand the heart and the will of God, we need to pray. In John 15:15, Jesus told his disciples, “I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.” For us to know those things, we need to be in a close relationship with Jesus too – we need to be his friend, and make him our friend. I think you already know this, but you cannot be a friend of someone you don’t ever talk to, you can’t be friends with someone you don’t really know!

Talking with God develops a deeper relationship with God. Spending time in the presence of Jesus through quiet conversation, draws you closer to Him and His way of being. Prayer is so important that it is mentioned over 250 times in Scripture.

I spend time each day praying for various people in my life - friends, family, church family, neighbors, organizations, community leaders, political leaders - and the list goes on. Recently, as I was praying, I felt God nudging me to invite my church family to pray with me, to start a prayer ministry at YCUCC. With all that is going on in the lives of people in our church family, with all the adversity that people in our community, our nation, and in the world, are currently facing, such a prayer ministry is needed.

So, I want to invite anyone who is interested in meeting once a week to pray, to join me. I plan to begin this ministry in January after the rush of the holidays is over.

Once I know who wants to be a part of this group, we will meet and discuss a day and time that works. I picture this group meeting for 45-90 minutes, depending on the number of people involved. It will include a short time of check-in, a devotional reading, a lifting up of thanks and concerns, and then a time of both silent prayer and praying out loud.

If you want to join me, please call me, email me or tap me on the shoulder when you see me!

You brother in Christ,  
*Pastor Mark*



Most of us grew up feeling that church was a place of refuge and safety. Unfortunately, the shooting at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, on Nov. 5 shattered that notion.

When the Shepherds Leadership Team met later that same week, we discussed the shooting and what steps our church could take to keep our members, our children and visitors safe in the event of an attack like the one in Texas.

Our church's Vision Statement says we "Welcome All," and SLT members were not inclined to lock the doors while we gather for worship. However, we decided to reach out to our local law enforcement officials for ideas on what we can do if such an emergency occurs here.

Yorkville Police Chief Rich Hart and Kendall County Sheriff Dwight Baird have agreed to collaborate on presenting a program for our members. Because of other events on our church calendar, this will most likely be scheduled in January.

This comes at a time when the church is in the process of revising and updating our Safe Church Policy. The policy as written now primarily covers measures to protect our children. But we know there is more we need to include.

Following the church shooting in Texas, the state sent all Illinois churches information from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. No doubt many of their suggestions will be included in the revised Safe Church Policy. This includes training of church employees, leaders and members as well as some common sense reminders to be aware of our surroundings in the event of any emergency.

Our Christian Education and Building and Grounds Ministries have prepared the children in Sunday School by holding a trial fire drill but we ALL need to know how and where to exit the church building in the event of a fire. We also need to know where to go in church if there is a tornado warning and what to do in the event of violence at our church.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE WELL VISITED

The holidays are upon us and schedules seem to get busier and busier. However, that does not dampen the supportive spirits of the members at Yorkville Congregational Church! YCC held its first Sunday School Open House on Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup> and it was very well attended.

Many members and friends of the church took time to meander through the various Sunday School rooms to experience the beautiful changes throughout the different classrooms. Teachers and helpers, along with the Building and Grounds team, have worked diligently to update and beautify the classrooms. From nursery through middle school, rooms were given a spark of color and tasteful decorating to create a warm, welcoming and inviting area for children to experience at the church.

Thank you to the Building and Grounds team for all their hard work; and to teachers that work so consistently to create a loving

environment for all the children at YCC. If you missed the Open House, take a moment to walk the halls and take a peek.....it will be worth your time!



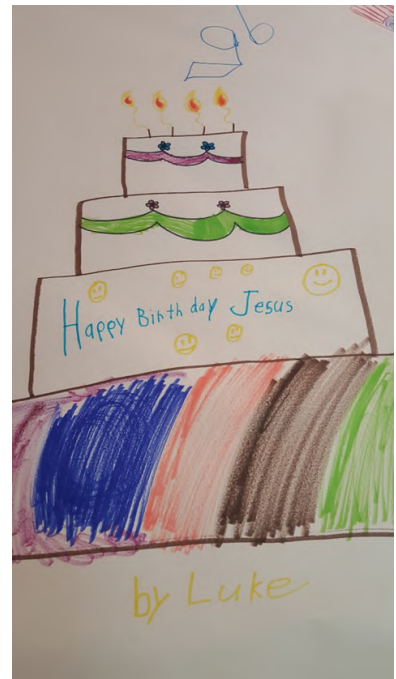
## GOD'S WORLD SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN

Recently the elementary students of YCC studied scripture from the Book of Isaiah where he shares God's vision of a new and better world. Our elementary students talked openly about what kind of world God would want us to have and what it would look like from their perspective.

Next, the students drew a mural of what our world would look like if it were pleasing to God. It was moving to see the openness and tenderheartedness of young children as they put into words and pictures the beauty of a world of peace, joy, love, happiness and contentment. It was the perfect venue to lead us into Advent when we focus on the pillars of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love with Christ as the center.

*"A child is a beam of sunlight from the Infinite and Eternal,  
with possibilities of virtue and vice, but as yet unstained."*

~Lyman Abbott,  
American  
Congregationalist  
minister



## Worship Preparation

Lee Kinkade

We need help in getting our portable church signs placed on the weekends. The signs can be picked up at the church and put out on the corners – (1) Rt. 34 & Center Pkwy and (1) on Rt. 34 & 47 - at any time on Friday and then removed on Sunday after service.

If you can help with this, please see Andy Hamblin at 630/801-9643 for more information.

Date	Greeters & Jr. Greeters	Acolytes
12/3	Andy & Pam Hamblin with DJ Melhouse & Grayson Tsusaki	Aidan Donahue
12/10	Greg Ryerson & Sandy deRidder with Chanel Bravo & Cayla Pottinger	Mariana Olvera
12/17	Ron & Deb Bezroukoff with Luke DeFuss & Owen Shatters	Alexia Prochaska
12/24 @ 10am	Jo Pigrez & Tess Tsusaki	
12/24 @ 10pm	JoAnn Vitek & Jean Anderson	
12/31	Art Prochaska & Linda Melhouse	



**A Stephen Minister will care, listen  
and encourage you.**

**Christ caring for people through  
people**

Contact Pastor Mark, Becky Jerabek or  
Lou Ann Hoffman



To help with better communication when scheduling an event or meeting, it was brought to my attention that some clarification of space available and times for these spaces needed to be shared.

1. Check the calendar to see if that date is available. The calendar is constantly changing so you need to talk to Mary Ellen. **Our church calendar is now a Google calendar posted on our web site.**

2. Check with Mary Ellen to see what space is available and when can you possible set up for your event. We have several ongoing events that we need to respect when planning a special onetime event. Certain rooms are NOT available until after regular scheduled activates have been completed.

**Examples:** *Coffee Time is every Sunday. They use the kitchen to prepare and set up from 9:00 – 9:45 am. Usually Fellowship Hall is where they host Coffee Time. They generally have the kitchen cleaned up by 12:30 pm. When they know in advance, they can serve Coffee Time in the Narthex. Sunday School program uses the Kid Zone (the low ceiling area) every Sunday. It is part of their weekly program. This area is not available until **after 11:30 am.***

3. Church Safety Policy requires parents to pick up their children after Sunday School. We need to be consistent week after week, so parents know where to go to pick up their children.

4. Mary Ellen needs to know who is the **main contact person** for this event. Questions come up and she needs to know who to contact for answers.

5. Allowances can be made if there is good communication. Room setup diagrams are posted for Fellowship Hall and the Kid Zone (low ceiling area). You are free to change the room configuration, but **you MUST return the space to its original set-up.** Please check the posted signs which are in the kitchen, Fellowship Hall and the Kid Zone (low ceiling area). If you leave the room in the condition you found it, everyone is happy.

6. Spaces available for events:

The library 4-6 people

3 Classrooms for about 6-8 people

Large Meeting room 10-12 people

Fellowship Hall 100 – 150 people

Kid Zone (low ceiling area) 40 people

Kitchen (limited storage in refrigerator is available over night)

Sanctuary – 150-200 people

Mary Ellen Anderson, Building Manger

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 8:30 – 2:00 pm

Wednesday 8:30 – 3:30 pm

Thursday 8:30 – 2:00 pm

**Cell Phone :** 630-674-4345

**Email:** [bldmgr@yorkvilleucc.org](mailto:bldmgr@yorkvilleucc.org)

**\*\*\*When you have your date, please text or email me on my non-work days. We want to get your event on the calendar asap, so you can move forward with your plans.\*\*\***

## December Birthdays

Bob Clack	2	Barbara Davis	17
Terri Frisk	3	Ally Fisher	18
Dorothy Sanderson	6	James Anderson	19
Melanie Lange	7	Joey Jerabek	22
Josh Kolowski	9	Terri Patterson	23
Nancy Modery	9	Marie Wayne	25
Giovanni Olvera	10	Parker Trumble	25
Sue Kimes	11	Olive Fahey	28
Amy Ems	12	Bob Johnston	29
Melissa Donahue	12	Gail Gaebler	30
Gavin Redmon	13	Ramona Young	30
Anne Stout	17	Jeff Kline	31



### First Sunday of Advent

VIOLET or BLUE

Isaiah 64:1-9 **Psalm 80:1-7,17-19**

1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37

Where Are You, God?

### Second Sunday of Advent

VIOLET or BLUE

**Isaiah 40:1-11** Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8

Messengers of Hope

Human Rights Day

### Third Sunday of Advent

VIOLET, BLUE or ROSE

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 **Psalm 126** or

Luke 1:47-55 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Shouts of Joy

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

VIOLET or BLUE

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:47-55 or

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 Romans 16:25-27

**Luke 1:26-38**

Birthing of a Promise

Christmas Fund Offering

### Christmas Eve

WHITE

Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97

Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

### Christmas Day

Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

### First Sunday after Christmas

WHITE

## December Anniversaries

31 Dusty & Abby Rhodes 24 years





### **Those in Cancer Treatment:**

Dan Duus  
Norm Kuhman  
Sandy Lindblom

Olivia Mann  
Mary Ratos  
Cheryl Roberts

Judy Schrand  
Sandy Veselka  
Debbie Vogel  
Bill Wallace

### **Health Concerns:**

Bill Andersen  
Myrah Baldwin  
Lynn Belcher  
Michael Franciose

Bob Freeman  
Joe Hudgins  
Dale Keith  
Holly Mann

Mazie Marshall  
Joanne O'Brien  
Ethel Perkins  
John Schneider

### **General Concerns:**

Tina Andersen  
Mary Freeman  
Karsjen Family

Dale Perkins  
Michelle Terri  
Marie Wayne

### **Homebound/Assisted Living:**

Bob (Doc) Coleman  
Cindy Coleman  
Jim Follmer

Ralph Ginger  
Andrea Prochaska  
Dorothy Sanderson



Capt. Alex Houle, son of Tony & Laurie Houle  
Marine Cpl. Christopher Johnson, son of Chris & Eva Schoenfielder  
Staff Sgt. Ryan Strong, son of Tim & Laurie Strong

## YCC ALPHA GROUP SERVES AT KENDALL COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

The middle school Alpha Group at Yorkville Congregational Church kicked off the holiday season by a morning of service at the Kendall County Food Pantry. Six students and three chaperones sorted over 700 pounds of food at the Pantry.

Hard work and efficiency were intertwined with middle school humor and laughter as the students sorted a lot more food than the pantry planned on. Three additional pallets of food were sorted as the group diligently plowed through the heaping piles of food.

Once the work was finished the group attended a tour of the facilities and learned a lot about the high numbers of people needed food in and around their community. The young YCC people were respectful and attentive during their trip to the KCFP and I am sure they will welcome another chance to serve there again.

The morning ended  
Culvers, followed by, of



with lunch at  
course, ice cream!







## **MISSIONS**

Soup Sunday on November 19, 2017 netted \$310.00 for the Special Olympics of Kendall County.

Our annual (13<sup>th</sup> year) A.I.D. Christmas Tree with gift tags to support the Association for Individual Development started on November 12<sup>th</sup> and goes until Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. All gifts will need to be at church by the tenth for delivery on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Cookie & Candy Sale will take place on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dozens of cookies are needed. Sign-up sheet in Narthex.

The Christmas Fund (5 for 5 Offering) for retired ministers and lay people will be on Sunday, December 12-17-17. Retired clergy and lay employees rely on this income supplementation. Envelopes are in this Happening for you to use.

### *Upcoming Activities:*

Our next Soup Sunday will be on January 14, 2018, and the following one Sunday, February 11, 2018. Mark your calendars.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

Thirty-Six Faith Promise Giving/Pledges were received at our in-gathering on Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, totaling \$122,183.00. Pledges can be put in the offering plate in an envelope marked Faith Promise Pledge at any time.





## Miller Monthly Minute 11/17/17

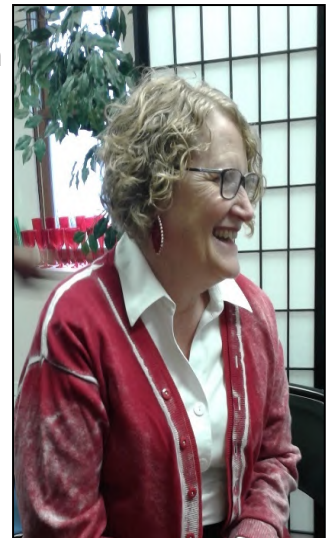


Dear Friends at Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ,

We gathered at 8:30pm to pray in front of the house that we hoped would be the future home of Casa Tanya – a safe and loving environment where young women from our neighborhood and other places grow into generation changers through the experience of transformative living. This house was strategically located and structurally sound. With tons of potential with renovation it also shared a side yard with a family from a church partnering with us. And right then there was a bidding war going on between our realtor and someone else. We could see on our phones that the bid was creeping up to the maximum price agreed upon by our investors. A quick phone call to one of them who happened to be out of the country but awake and praying as well and with vision and faith believing that this was to be Casa Tanya's future home, he gave the OK to raise our top bid. And a few hours later, the other bidder dropped out – just two thousand dollars short of our limit! God answered prayer and we are excited to see the ways He will continue to provide for what is needed for renovating this house built in 1910 and designing it to meet the needs of the future women who will come to live in Casa Tanya. Please join us in praying as we trust Him together each step along the way!

My ministry with The Navigators is with one of the missions called I-58 – taken from Isaiah 58 where God asks for worshippers who will partner with Him to renew hope, restore justice and work alongside people to rebuild communities where reconciliation to God, others and oneself can flourish. This is the primary reason I live in Little Village – a predominantly Mexican neighborhood in Chicago and partner with two other staff women in the ministry of Casa Tanya. Also, I am the city leader for other I-58 staff in Chicago as well as serve on the I-58 national staff care team. The staff I lead in Chicago are ministering to people who are reentering life from places of brokenness like prison, homelessness and addiction and walk with them toward wholeness. My ministry is supported by prayer and financial gifts of churches and individuals. If you desire to support this ministry through an ongoing monthly gift or a one-time gift, you have lots of options to begin: by phone at (866) 568-7827, sending a gift via mail to The Navigators, PO Box 6079, Albert Lea, MN 56007-6679 marked for the ministry of Nan Miller or online at <https://donations.navigators.org>. I am grateful to tell my stories and share about life with you in The Happenings!

Nan Ament Miller (630-272-6337) 2851 S Ridgeway Ave., Chicago IL 60623



# December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Evening set up for the cookie sale	2 8-11am Christmas Cookie & Candy Sale
3 <b>Advent—Hope</b> 10:00 am Worship Hanging of the Greens Communion Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Time CE Meeting Poinsettia orders due	4 6:30 pm PADS 7-9 pm Fox Country - Music room	5 12:00 Preschool Screening 5:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Stephen Ministry 7-9 pm Fox Country Auditions —sandyuary	6 Noon Bible Study 2:00 pm Staff Meeting 5:15 pm Alpha Group 5:30 & 6:30 pm Children's Choirs 7:00 pm Adult Choir	7 12:00pm JOY Circle Christmas Circle Whitetail Ridge Golf Course 6:00 pm Boy Scouts	8 7 pm "Reel" People	9 11– 6 pm Private Party Doug Clevenger FH
10 <b>Advent—Peace</b> 9:00 am Missions 10:00 am Worship Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Time Outreach & Welcoming 1:00 pm Private party - Anderson	11 6:30 pm PADS	12 5:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Stewardship	13 10:00 am Pastoral Care 12:00pm Bible Study 2:00 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 & 6 :30pm Children's Choirs 6-7:15 pm Brownie Troup 162 6:00 pm Pastoral Care 7:00 pm Adult Choir	14 6pm Financial Committee 7pm SLT	15 5:15 pm Alpha Christmas Caroling	16 9:00am Men's Fellowship Poinsettias Delivered
17 <b>Advent—Love</b> 10:00 am Worship Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Time Worship & Serving Love Your Neighbor	18 6:30 pm PADS	19 5:00 pm Bible Study	20 Noon Bible Study 2:00 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 & 6:30 pm Children's Choirs 7:00 pm Adult Choir	21	22	23
24 <b>Advent—Joy</b> 10:00am Worship Children Pageant 10:00pm Christmas Eve Cantata Service	25 Christmas Day 6:30 pm PADS <b>Church Closed</b>	26 Pastor Mark Vacation	27 9:00am Newsletter Mailing 2:00 pm Staff Meeting	28	29	30
31 10:00 am Worship <b>NO Sunday School</b> 11:00 am Coffee Time						

**Our Vision** - YCUCC is an open and affirming congregation that seeks to meet each child of God—persons from the full diversity of creation including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical and intellectual ability, age, race, nationality, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing and family structure—where they are on life's journey as together we seek to transform all our lives through Christ's Gospel.

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**Our Mission** - To nurture the divine spark within all people so that together we can advance God's peace and justice, serve others and care for creation with open minds, generous hearts and willing hands.

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YORKVILLE, IL  
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**Change Service Requested**

**December, 2017**