

# The Happenings

# Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ

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Office Hours: Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Worship & Sunday School: 10:00 am

# **Our Staff**

Minister
Building Manager
Christian Education Director
Administrative Assistant
Chancel Choir Director
Children's Choir Director
Organist
Pianist
Childcare Attendants

<u>Custodians</u> Sextons Rev. Mark S. Gregory Mary Ellen Anderson Barbara Thurlby Liz Cronshaw Doug Trumble Sondra Shatters Tina Andersen Lori Runkle Brett Rhodes Mariela Olvera Halle Jones Dana Malinowski Tim & Laurie Strong Steve Redmon Mike Obenauer

# **Our Shepherds**

Chairperson
Vice Chairperson
Recording Secretary
Operations: Personnel
Operations: Bldg & Grds
Operations: Finance
Information Services
Christian Education: Adult
Christian Education: Youth
Worship: Serving
Worship: Preparation
Church Family: Caring
Church Family: Fellowship

<u>Service: Missions</u> <u>Outreach/Welcoming</u> Sandy deRidder Aaron Shatters Sue Kimes Kathy Farren Andy Hamblin Tim Andrus Diane Stablein Fred Gaebler Sarah Pottinger Lori Redmon Pam Hamblin Lou Ann Hoffman Jeff Kline Laurie Houle June Davis Terri Frisk





Okay, Thanksgiving is behind us. So we've all begun to think about Christmas. And there is one thing that I always wonder about when Christmas approaches. I wonder what I would have heard had I been there that night. Would I have heard the choirs of angels singing or simply the sounds of barnyard animals shifting around? Would I have seen the star in the sky that night or simply two poor and very frightened young parents? Would I have felt the power of the divine presence, or only the chill of a cold east wind? Would I have understood the message of Emmanuel, God with us, or would the cosmic implications of that evening never even crossed my mind?

I am convinced that had I been there that night in Bethlehem with one of you, we most likely would have been like two witnesses at an accident scene – we'd have heard and seen two entirely different events. I believe this because all of life is this way. God never reveals God's-self in a manner that forces us to believe in that revelation. We are always left with a choice, for that is God's way. Thus, one of us can say "It's a miracle, while the other says "Nah, it's just coincidence."

You see, what we see and what we hear in life does not depend wholly upon the events we witness, but it also depends upon who we are as people. It's not just what's out there, but also what's inside of us that determines what we truly see and hear.

I am sure we all remember Charles Dickens' classic story, "A Christmas Carol?" There is one scene that has always fascinated me. Christmas Past has just paid a very discomforting visit to Ebenezer Scrooge. Clearly the old miser is shaken by the entire ordeal. But when he awakes from his sleep, does he take the message to heart? No, he simply dismisses it by saying: "Bah, humbug! It wasn't real. Just a bit of last night's undigested beef." A vision to be taken to heart or simply a case of indigestion?

We all like to think that had we been there in Bethlehem that night we would have seen the star. We would have heard the angels. We would have understood. But would we?

Well, there is one of knowing. Ask yourself what you saw this Christmas Season. When you watched the 6:00 news, did you see people doing things that caused chaos and harm to others, or did you see sheep without a Shepherd? When you went out to do your shopping, did you see only hordes of people in the stores or did you notice the worried expressions on some of their faces? Worried because they are facing this Christmas without a loved one who died this year, and the loss is overwhelming. Worried because they have just been given a bad diagnosis, and don't know what to do next. Worried, because their company is downsizing, and they are being let go.

And ask yourself what you heard this Christmas? Did you hear only the blasts of music and carols, or did you hear the silent sighs of the lonely and the bereaved who may be dreading Christmas because it accentuates their loneliness? And in the midst of the sounds of honking horns and people arguing over parking places, did you hear the feint sound of laughter that will be coming from the other parts of Yorkville, because you donated to "Operation Santa", or gave gifts from the "AID Tree"?

You see, so often what we see and what we hear is not dependent upon the event but upon ourselves. If you did in fact hear the cry from the lonely, the laughter of poor children, if you saw the sheep without a shepherd, then you might just have seen the events that took place in Bethlehem that night. But if you didn't notice those things this Christmas, all is not lost. Because in the words of one of our most cherished Christmas carols:

No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin, Where meek souls shall receive him still, The Christ child enters in.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ together this Advent Season, may the Holy Spirit open your heart, allowing the Christ child to enter in and forever change the way you see and hear.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Mark

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. (Luke 2:8-18)

# OPERATION SANTA AT YCC BENEFITS LOCAL CHILDREN

By Regina Moe and Barb Thurlby

As we approach the blessed season of Christmas, we are unfortunately reminded that many families in our local area struggle. During this special time of giving we want to remember the littlest ones in our community as we donate to "Operation Santa". Operation Santa' benefits families that are clients of the Kendall County Food Pantry. Recently some 600 family members obtained food from the food pantry; the need is great in our community. This Christmas season let us share with those in need; a simple toy for a child. What a Christmas blessing!

Toy donations are being accepted at the church until **Sunday**, **December 9**<sup>th</sup>. If you are able, kindly consider donating a toy to benefit a local child. If you have questions, please contact Regina Moe.





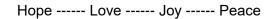




The Joy of Christmas

Thanksgiving is behind us but the beauty of the Advent season is upon us. Time to prepare for our greatest gift of all, the birth of our savior the Lord Jesus Christ. We begin our preparation for the month with our traditional Hanging of the Greens. If possible, please plan to stay and participate in our annual "Hanging of the Greens" on December 2<sup>nd...</sup> Enjoy the fellowship of decorating the Christmas tree, draping the greens and adding twinkling lights to enhance the beauty of our sanctuary. Afterwards, enjoy the" Eating of the Greens". Not sure what that means, then stay and discover for yourself!!!!! In addition to this event, the children's pageant practice begins and all of our children are invited to participate in this special Christmas play.

December 2<sup>nd</sup> is also the first Sunday of Advent. The four Advent Sundays are:





Christmas is also the season of giving. Take a tag from the AID tree and buy a gift of joy for someone. You can also bring wonder to a child by bringing a present for a deserving child for Operation Santa.

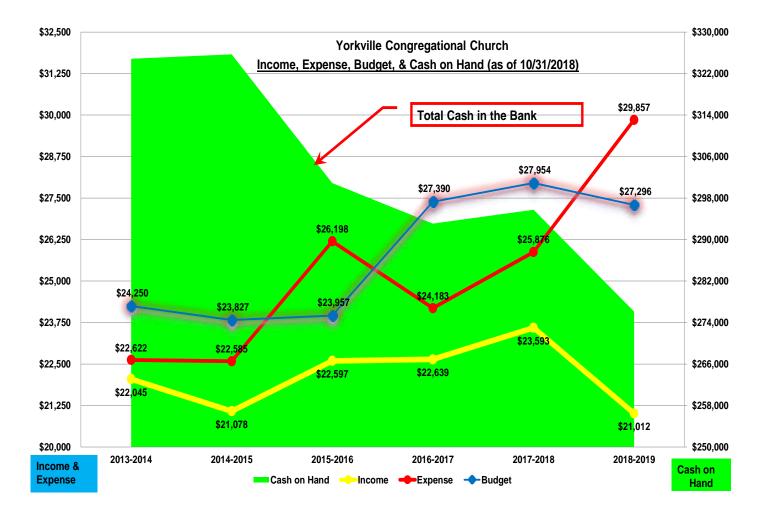
Enjoy and participate in all of the hustle and bustle of this special church season. Bake cookies and/or buy delicious home baked cookies and candy at the annual Cookie Walk on December 1. Enjoy more fellowship and stay for Mission Soup Sunday on December 16. Complete the season by coming to worship service on December 23<sup>rd</sup> for the Sunday school Christmas Pageant. This is such a heartwarming event to watch as the children enact the true meaning of Christmas, the birth of Christ. Then return for Christmas Eve service on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. and hear the beautiful voices of our choir as they sing the Cantata.

I wish for each and every one of you a blessed Christmas season and a warm and loving Christmas Day.

With Hope, Love, Joy and Peace,

Sandy deRidder Chairperson

# **Finance News**



# So what's changed over the last few years?

- \* New Christian Ed Director
- Overall giving has not significantly increased with the addition of CED
- \* Full Time Administrative Assistant (now back to part time)
- Replacement of several HVAC units
- \* While money has been set aside for repair and replacement of assets, it has not been sufficient to repair and replace everything at this time
- Slight drop in membership

# So what can you do?

- \* Bring friends, family and neighbors to church. We'd love to grow the congregation.
- Continue with your giving. If you can, increase your giving.
- \* Help out with the giving tree items (currently put away until after Christmas)
- \* Convert some credit card points to cash and share with the church.
- \* Do the Quarter Challenge
  - \* \$0.25 per day  $\times 7$  days per week X 52 weeks per year = \$91.00
  - \* \$91.00 per year X 60 families = \$5,460.
- Or the Latte Challenge
  - \* \$5 per week X 52 weeks = \$260.00 per year X 50 families = \$13,000.

# **Christian Education News**

By Barb Thurlby, CE Director

This Fall has been a busy time for Christian Education. After a strong and creative summer program we kicked off our fall programming with registration in September. Our fall curriculum, *Deep Blue*, has been very well received by teachers and students.

Missions continue to be an important part of our Sunday School program. In the month of September, we collected and delivered 40 boxes of cereal to the Kendall County Food Pantry. In October, we collected just over \$60.00 in change for UNICEF; and in November we held our 'Birthday in a Bag' mission where we collected birthday bags filled with birthday items such as cake mix, candles and frosting that were delivered to the Kendall County Food Pantry.

Along with solid Sunday School teaching and missions, our CE program encourages service and community outreach. During the month of October our Alpha Group served as Altar Guild. October saw our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fall Fest event, which provides a wonderful opportunity to reach out to our neighbors as we celebrate the beauty of fall. YCC also participated in our local Biz Boo Chamber event in October which allowed us to show hospitality to several hundred families from the community. Our Children's acolyte and greeter ministry began the first of November, so each Sunday you will see young people as part of the greeting and worship team.



On Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, we had the privilege of presenting Bibles to children in our Sunday School program that did not have Bibles; even our littles church family have their own Bibles to bring to worship. We have mainstreamed our Wednesday night ministry for children and are bringing back Spaghetti night!

As we continue to search ways to minister and grow our children's programming, we also work to encourage our amazing Sunday School and CE leaders. The entire Sunday School team attended a ministry seminar in October and brought back great ideas and suggestions to the classrooms.



# How can you help?

Please pray for our Sunday School teachers; they have made a huge commitment to our church by serving and teaching the love of Christ each week. Please consider helping on our CE team; we currently need a Sunday School teacher for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade or someone to help lead the elementary prayer and closing time so I could teach. These are just a couple ways you can serve, but there are others!

If you feel lead to help in Christian Education, please contact Barb at the church.

# **Building & Grounds**

Building Manager Office Hours Tuesday – Thursday 8:00 – 2:00 pm Mary Ellen Anderson 630-674-4345 blldmgr@yorkvilleucc.org



After having the all church practice fire drill in October, we discovered several things that needed to be corrected in order to stay safe. One fire pull was broken. It was brought to our attention that the congregation was not sure if they should evacuate the building when the alarm went off. We added a strobe light in the sanctuary to help alert the congregation to evacuate the building. We also replaced batteries in the emergency lights. All the children and adults vacated the building in three minutes which is very good.

The men have been working on the wiring for the camera system that will monitor all the exit doors to our church. They also added a vent to help with air circulation in the new two/three-year-old Sunday School. Time was spent organizing and cleaning the church garage. The men took in metal to be recycled and the proceeds were given to the Youth Program. We now have two can crushers mounted in the garage. Crushed cans are much easier to store until it is time to recycle. You are more than welcome to use the can crushers in the garage when you donate your cans. Not having a Maintenance Person on staff keeps the members of the Building and Grounds committee very busy.

We want to thank Pat Dietz for cleaning while Laurie and Tim Strong took a few days off. Pat did a great job keeping us looking our best during the voting and for the wedding of Jake and Kylie Brewick.

We recently discovered several cracks and holes in the stain glass windows in Fellowship Hall and are waiting to have the windows examined and see what the cost would be for repair work.



The roof leak in the Narthex has been temporarily fixed. Jake Brewick with the Joseph James roofers crew installed architectural shingles over a section of the flat roof, so we can cover up the gap and stop the leaking. Further work will be performed this spring after we settle with the insurance company for the roof damage.

Our men are also setting up and taking down, tables for our Thanksgiving dinner and the Cookie Sale.

Laurie Strong and I had fun making the centerpieces for the tables. The men also brought down the Christmas decorations for the "Hanging of the Greens."

We also needed to replace a thermostat because the old one would not hold the setting. Norm Kuhman is the person who is scheduled to program the thermostats according to the events on our church calendar.

Norm, Andy, Jim, Tony and Bill are great to work with on all of the above tasks. We could always use more help. If you would like your name added to the emails that goes out for different tasks, please let me know. Everyone has a busy schedule, but there are times when you have an hour or two and could stop by and help.

## **Scheduling Meetings and Events**



Communication of new and ongoing church events has improved. Thank you so much for sharing your meeting information so we can have an area ready for you. Knowing in advance events being organized helps us to be ready. With it getting darker sooner at night, we are trying to adjust the lights on the building and in the parking lot to be on when you arrive. We try our best to have the heat programed for all meetings. We have the snow shovels and salt ready to keep the sidewalks safe.

Everyone is doing a great job keeping things in the freezer and refrigerator labeled. With PADS, Sunday Coffee Time and now Wednesday Spaghetti Dinners starting up, it is Important to keep things organized, labeled and dated.

Remember, if you have a quick clean up to do, the closet behind the kitchen door has what you need. You will find a carpet sweeper, vacuum cleaner, mop, broom etc. for you. Extra garbage bags and paper towels are also stored in that closet for you to pull out to use if needed.

# **Missions Ministry**

The Missions Ministry assisted the Church Family Fellowship Shepherds to serve our church's Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. We had approximately 130 people attend. Missions thanks <u>everyone</u> who helped make this event successful.

As designated in our Missions Budget 2018-2019 Wounded Warriors thru the American Legion was sent \$350.00 and The Wayside Cross Ministries in Aurora, Illinois was sent \$350.00 in November.

Our A.I.D. Giving Tree is up in the narthex. Tags are on the tree to take. Please write down your name on the list accordingly. Bring your wrapped gifts with the tag attached by December 9<sup>th</sup>. Delivery is Monday the 10<sup>th</sup>.

One of YCUCC 5 for 5 Offerings, The Christmas Fund will be dedicated on Sunday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund for UCC clergy, and lay persons give direct financial assistance – the funds do not support programs or institutions, but people. Envelopes are included in this Happenings newsletter and in our church pews.

Our next Soup Sunday will be December 16<sup>th</sup> with money raised going to "The Open Door" in Sandwich, IL.







# Christ caring for people through people

Are holiday times difficult for you because you are dealing with frustration, loneliness, illness, separation or divorce, loss of a loved one, or any other of life challenges?

Trained Stephen Ministers are available to care and walk alongside you!

Contact Pastor Mark or Lou Ann Hoffman

# Stewardship Ministry

In-Gathering Sunday was November 25<sup>th</sup> for "What Shall We Bring?" our theme title. Pledges are still being received. Place pledges in the offering plate marked for Pledge/Givings campaign. If you prefer to use the Easy Automatic Giving Plan you can do so anytime of the year. See Fred Gaebler or June Davis for more information or questions.

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28 NV



# YCC CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT COMING!

By Sondra Shatters and Barb Thurlby

The Children's Christmas Pageant at Yorkville Congregational Church is a time-honored tradition that entertains and celebrates the wonderful season of Christmas. The program slated for this year will be performed on Sunday, December 23, 2018 during our regular worship time at 10:00 a.m.



This year's program, "3 Wise Men and a Baby" by Pam Andrews is a Children's Christmas Musical teaching about the very best gift of the season. The story is told from the point of view of the "Star", the star of Bethlehem. Star and the other stars from Heaven are planning a birthday party for Jesus' birth. There are also 3 Wise Men on their own journey to meet the baby Jesus. The question becomes, 'What is the best gift to give a baby King?'

This fun-filled Christmas musical includes entertaining and upbeat music, while offering a hint of familiar Christmas carols. You will not want to miss this lively performance from some very excited church performers. 3 Wise Men and a Baby will not disappoint; so, begin your holiday festivities by joining us for this delightful holiday production.



Christmas Pageant rehearsals begin.

# 9th ANNUAL COOKIE AND CANDY SALE



Saturday, December 1st 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Yorkville Congregational Church,

409 Center Parkway, Yorkville, IL. 630-553-7308

Let us help you with your Holiday Baking!

Choose from a wide variety of Home-made Cookies and Candy.

Only \$8.00 per pound.

Funds raised support Hurricane/ Disaster Relief.

# YCC SUNDAY SCHOOL KIDS DRESS THE PART

By Barb Thurlby, CED Director

As a young girl involved in church there was always the question on whether 'church' kids should celebrate Halloween. I have had many friends and acquaintances that banter on the topic of Halloween. Personally, I enjoyed the Halloween season with my own children, and now my grandchildren. I think trick-or-treat time is an opportunity to engage with neighbors and community and the perfect opportunity to provide the witness of Christ through hospitality. I firmly believe the words in I Corinthians 10:31, "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God"; and that becomes my foundation for the choices I make, at Halloween, and every other day.

Our kiddos came and worshipped the Lord....in costume! There were lots of giggles, and of course treats. I found families that love the Lord, love their church, and are encouraging the next generation to be a part of a church family, even in costume.



Dec	embe	r Birthdays	
Marcus Schulz	01	Barbara Davis	17
Bob Clack	02	Anne Stout	17
Terri Frisk	03	James Anderson	19
Dorothy Sanderson	06	Joey Jerabek	22
Josh Kolowski	09	Parker Trumble	25
Nancy Modery	09	Marie Wayne	25
Giovanni Olvera	10	Olive Fahey	28
Sue Kimes	11	Bob Johnston	29
Melissa Olvera	12	Gail Gaebler	30
Gavin Redmon	13	Jeff Kline	31
Holly Erickson	15	Ann Seagrave	31

**Anniversaries** 

12/15 Erik & Michael Mallon 7 years 12/31 Dusty & Abby Rhodes 25 years



# First Sunday of Advent (Year C)

Violet or Blue Jer 33:14-16, Ps 25:1-10 1 Thess 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36 Sign of Things to Come

# **Second Sunday of Advent**

Violet or Blue Mal 3:1-4 or Bar 5:1-9 Luke 1:68-79, Phil 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6 Make Ready

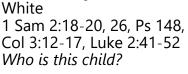
# Third Sunday of Advent

Violet, Blue or Rose Zeph 3:14-20, Isa 12:2-6, Phil 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18 Look Forward

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

Violet or Blue Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55 or PS 80:1-7 Heb 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45 (46-55) Moving with Mary's Song

# First Sunday after Christmas



# **Alter Guild**

December, 2018
Gayle Jacobs & Joanne Vitek
January, 2019
Kristine Arch & Chanel Bravo





# **Those Grieving:**

All those who revisit their grief at Christmas time.

# **Those in Cancer Treatment:**

Cindy Fix Andrea Andres Debbie Potempa
Cheryl Roberts Dusty Rhodes Allen Killpatrick
Sandy Veselka Pat Rogers

# **Health Concerns:**

Don Ament Mazie Marshall Ross Fraser
Bill Andersen Joanne O'Brien Mary Dycus
Michelle Atwood Dale Perkins Jeff Davis
Lynn Belcher Ethel Perkins
Joe Duran Cliff Jahp

Bob Freeman Linda Melhouse Dale Keith Walter Scott

# **General Concerns:**

Karsjen Family Marie Wayne Phil & Maxine Forney

Mary Freeman Rhonda Ladson

Michelle Terri Barb Reynolds Norrup

# **Homebound/Assisted Living:**

Bob (Doc) Coleman Andrea Prochaska
Cindy Coleman Dorothy Sanderson
Jim Follmer



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

# December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 7:30 –3 pm Christmas Cookie Sale
2. Advent Hope sign of things to come 10:00 Worship - Hanging of the Greens and Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Time—FH 11:15 Pageant Practice Finish Hanging of the Greens—Pam Hamblin and then "Eating the Greens" - Arron Shatters Love Your Neighbor—Diane	3 6:30 pm PAD n	4 Noon Preschool Screening Noon JOY Circle Christmas Luncheon Kennedy Point 5:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Stephen Ministry Supervision—Lou Ann	5 Noon Bible Study 4:00 pm Alpha 5:30—6:45 Choir / Pageant 6:00 pm Brownie Troop 162 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	6 11:30 am Staff Meetings 3:00 pm Pastor & SLT Chair 6:00 pm Prayer Group 6:00 pm Boy Scouts	7	8 1-4:30 pm Private Party— Anderson
9 Advent Love Look Forward 10:00 Worship - kids sing Christmas Fund Offering Communion / Sunday School 11:00 am Coffee Time—FH 11:15 Pageant Practice Missions / CE Meeting 2:00 pm Private Party—Doug	10 6:30 pm PAD	11 10:00 am Pastoral Care Information Meeting 5:00 pm Bible Study	12 Noon Bible Study 4:00 pm Alpha 5:30—6:45 pm Choirs/Pageant 6:00 pm Pastoral Care Meeting 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	13 11:30 am Staff Meetings 6:00 pm Financial Committee 7:00 pm SLT	14 7:00 pm "Reel" People @ the home of Fred Gaebler	15
16 Advent Joy Moving with Mary's Song 10:00 Worship Sunday School 11 am Mission Soup Sunday—June 11:15 am Pageant Practice	6:30 pm PAD	18 5:00 pm Bible Study	19 Noon Bible Study 4:00 pm Alpha 5:30—6:45 Choir/Pageant 6:00 pm Brownie Troop 162 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice Newsletter Deadline	20 11:30 am Staff Meetings	21	22
23 Advent Peace Make Ready 10:00 Worship—Sunday School Christmas Pageant 11:00 am Coffee Time—FH	Christmas Eve Office Closed No PADS 10 pm Worship Choir Cantata	Christmas Day Church Closed	26 9:00 am Newsletter Mailing No Bible Study 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice	27	28	29
30 Who is this child? 10:00 Worship—Hymn Sing NO Sunday School— <i>Children's</i> Fellowship in the Kid Zone 11:00 am Coffee Time—FH	New Years Eve Office Closed 6:30 pm PAD	Sorn.				

<u>Our Vision</u> - 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.

**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.



# Yorkville Congregational Church United Church of Christ



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# **Change Service Requested**

# **DECEMBER 2018**

