

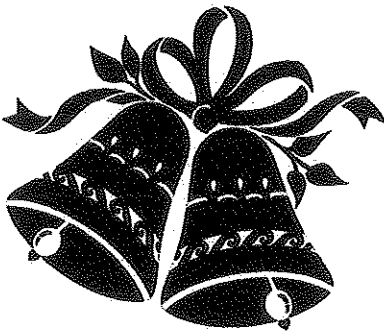
Seward Congregational Church
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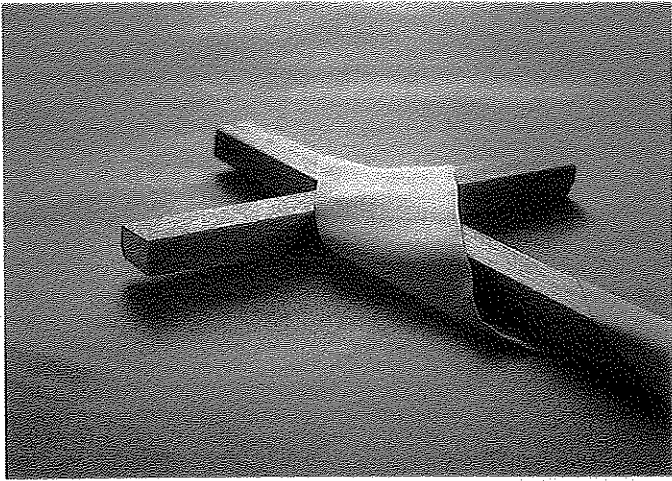
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*The
Chimes*

February Church News



**SEWARD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SEWARD, ILLINOIS**



Lent 2024

Lent begins on February 14, a day when most are celebrating their love for one another. What an appropriate time for this time of reflection and self-examination as we look forward to celebrating our Risen Lord at the culmination of this season. This reminds us why we love; it reminds us that the God that we serve gave us the capacity to love—even in the hard times of our lives.

Lent is a period of forty days leading up to Easter Sunday—not including the Sundays of these weeks. Why is the number forty important? Here are a few examples forty days being times of trial and also times of being in God's presence. Genesis 7:4 tells us that God told Noah—after the ark was built—that in seven days He would send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights. 1 Samuel 17 tells of Goliath taunting the Israelite army for forty days. While he was in Egypt, after killing the Egyptian who was beating an Israelite, Moses fled to Midian. After forty years, Moses

followed God's leading that took him back to Egypt to lead his people from that place. The Israelites spent forty years wandering in the desert. Exodus 24 relates that Moses spent forty days and nights in the presence of God on the mountain where he received the covenant from God.

Three great Hebrew kings—Saul, David, and Solomon—were said to have ruled forty years each. Forty was considered a generation in Scripture.

In Matthew 2 we read that Jesus, before His ministry began, spent forty days and nights in the desert fasting. During this time, He was tempted three times and refuted the tempter by quoting Scripture to him. In Acts 1 we see that Jesus appeared for forty days to His disciples from the time of His resurrection to the day of His ascension into heaven.

So we see that this time of Lent leading up to our celebration of our Lord's resurrection is no accident. Though this time was not recognized in the early days of the Church, it is an appropriate time for us to reflect on where we are in our walk with our Wonderful Lord, and to spend time worshiping and listening to Him, drawing closer to Him so that we will be the disciple that He called us to be in this weary world. Galatians 6:9— *"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."*

--From the desk of Pastor Joel

Seward Congregational Church
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 20, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm. Present were Peggy Whitney, Matt Cowman, Effie Hoppe, Brenda Van Hauen, Pastor Joel Hicke and Ella Rose (visitor). Absent were Dick Remer and Maury Daubs.

Opening prayer was offered by Pastor Joel.

November minutes were read; a motion to accept the minutes as read was made by Matt; seconded by Peggy; and approved.

Finance reports were given by Effie and Brenda; Maury's report was also given. Matt made a motion to accept the reports; seconded by Peggy; approved.

Pastor gave a report on the number of in-person visits he made.

OLD BUSINESS: The cost of the repairs to the sewer system was discussed. DPI (\$4750) and Kirby Cable Services worked on this and it was completed.

There was a discussion about using the contribution envelopes and we decided not to purchase them in 2025. Pastor Joel was to ask Theresa about cancelling the order for 2024.

NEW BUSINESS: Pastor Joel has not received an update from Lee from SVL to date. Pastor will ask if he is available on January 17 to come to our Trustee meeting.

We accepted the resignation of Laura Booth, the janitor. Jessica Cowman will fill in until a new janitor is hired. We will try to find someone who will clean the church every two weeks, asking people who use the kitchen to be sure to take their garbage out.

Image Signs personnel have been contacted and we are on their schedule to come and fix the sign. They said they were booked two weeks out and get out to Seward as soon as possible.

The washer in the parsonage is leaking and Joel has been asked to call Ron Diedrich to come and identify the problem.

We discussed needed changes in the budget.

A motion to adjourn was made by Effie, seconded by Brenda, and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Joel Hicke

Announcements

TRUSTEE'S: Will meet on February, at 6:30 p.m. We will meet in the Rose Room

DIACONTE: Will have a brief meeting following the annual meeting on February 4.

REMINDER: All contributions for the CHIMES newsletter are due to the Office by the 3rd Friday of every month.

MONTHLY SUMMARY

Monthly Budget \$7,026.50

January-December

November

General Fund Income \$64,206.15
Expense \$ 87,532.44

5,840.00
17,451.85

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

Anniversaries

3-Kaitlin Asche, Roger Hilton
8—Lois Ascher
9—Betty Kendell
15-Mary Jane Zipse, Bev Weerda
17-Carrie Vaught (Remer)
18-Joel Hicke
25- Stephanie Cannon

13-Matt & Jessica Cowman
14-Jim & Karleen Merchant
15-Dennis & Sandy Freedlund
22- Richard & Judy Beuth

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Annual Meeting and Potluck	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Ash Wed Service 6:30 Trustee's 10 a.m.	15	16	17
18	19 	20	21 1st Pres Service 6:30 p.m.	22 Trustee's 6:30 p.m.	23	24
25 Communion	26	27	28 Seward Service 6:30	29		