

# The Tidings

**Saron United Church of Christ  
W3830 County Road J Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085**

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**Saron Website: [www.saronucc.org](http://www.saronucc.org)**

## **January 2024**

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### **A Message From Pastor RaeAnn**

Feels like yesterday I was writing my first Tidings article, re-introducing myself to those who remembered me from my time as seminary intern and introducing myself to those who did not. Now, here I am almost six years later writing my final goodbye article. Goodbyes are always hard, but harder when you have really loved the people you are leaving behind. I truly believe we have done great ministry together.

At my exit interview with the Consistory, one of the questions we reflected on were the memories of my time here at Saron. There are so many, and this list is not exhaustive. The Time with the Children when I wasn't sure what direction things would go or if we would end up where I had planned. They have an awareness that we adults often don't expect. Watching them grow and change has definitely been a highlight for me. Seeing Confirmation Classes come together and gel as a group and seeing the world through their eyes. Our outdoor worship services and all the other special services throughout the years. Being invited into the most vulnerable times of your lives and being trusted with your sacred stories. And of course, navigating the pandemic. Those early days of Barb holding my cell phone to record a message, adding Bonnie and Becky so we could have music, and finally added a real video camera. No more sore arms!

Which brings me to the next question we reflected on, some of the most significant accomplishments of the congregation during my time here. What was borne out of necessity – online worship – became a vital part of Saron's ministry. People who would otherwise not be able to worship or worship with their own faith community, are now able to do just that. Some participate on Sunday mornings and others throughout the week. I have had many people tell me how much they appreciate this option for when they are ill or out of town. Then there are all the people who participate on Channel 14 in Plymouth. Saron has sure expanded its reach in the community in ways we don't even know. Speaking of reach in the community, our Mission Team often in conjunction with the Women's Guild has been working hard to find places in our community where Saron can make a difference in people's lives. I am grateful for their commitment and for all of you who participate in these projects. Because of you people are fed, children are clothed, families are able to celebrate Christmas, and children are able to go to school with all the supplies they need to be successful. This is what church is really all about.

But the most important thing to me is the relationship we have developed. Ministry is not a solo sport. It requires all of us working together. I am grateful for the relationships I have with all of you. Now that I am retiring, these relations will be changing. I will no longer be your pastor and so I cannot participate in any kind of pastoral care. This includes weddings, funerals, baptisms, or hospital/home visits. You will have a new pastor who will fill this role. I will still be living in Plymouth, and I am sure we will run into one another. I look forward to those times to catch up on what is going on in your life. The only thing we can't talk about is church or a pastoral concern. I will not be able to pray with you, but I will always pray for you as I hope you do for me. For those who are friends of mine on Facebook, I will probably not be replying to posts or liking your posts as I have in the past. This is all a part of that separation that needs to occur.

Saron and all of you will always hold a special place in my heart. I am deeply grateful God led me to you and you to me.

Blessings,  
Pastor RaeAnn

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE CONSISTORY

We are reaching out to inform you about changes in the schedule for our upcoming budget and annual meetings. Due to circumstances and in the interest of ensuring the best possible participation and engagement from all members, we have decided to adjust the dates for the upcoming meetings.

- **The annual meeting of Saron UCC normally held the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of January has been moved to January 21<sup>st</sup> 2024 immediately following service.**
- **Budget meeting has been moved to Sunday January 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am in the fellowship hall.**

Please make note of these changes and adjust your calendars accordingly. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility during these adjustments. Thank you for your continued dedication to Saron, and we look forward to your active participation in the upcoming meetings.

This year we will have two special proposals to consider:

Proposals:

1. Parking lot sealing and maintenance
2. Cemetery sign

See the following written proposals for details, any questions will be happily answered.

Thank You

Saron Consistory



**Proposal #1 for annual meeting January 21<sup>st</sup> 2024**

Dear Saron UCC Congregation

We are writing to seek approval for a project that is essential for maintaining the integrity and safety of Saron's premises. We propose to invest up to \$25,000 in sealing the parking lot and church. This project is crucial to extend the lifespan of the parking lot, improve its appearance, and ensure the safety of our employees, and visitors.

**\*\*Project Scope: \*\***

The project will include the following key elements:

Project scope limited to church property parking lots and drives. (Proposal excludes cemetery property, cemetery maintenance will be conducted and paid for with cemetery funds).

1. **\*\*Surface Preparation: \*\*** Thorough cleaning and preparation of the parking lot surface to remove debris, dirt, and loose materials. This step is vital to ensure proper adhesion of the sealant.
2. **\*\*Crack Filling: \*\*** Filling and repairing any cracks in the pavement to prevent water infiltration, which can lead to further damage.
3. **\*\*Sealcoating: \*\*** Application of a high-quality sealant to protect the asphalt surface from UV rays, water damage, and general wear and tear. Sealcoating will also enhance the overall appearance of the parking lot.
4. **\*\*Line Striping: \*\*** Re-striping the parking lot for clear and organized traffic flow, parking space delineation, and ADA compliance. Fresh paint will improve visibility and safety for all users.

**\*\*Benefits: \*\***

1. **\*\*Prolonged Lifespan: \*\*** Sealing the parking lot will significantly extend its lifespan, reducing the need for costly repairs and resurfacing in the future.
2. **\*\*Enhanced Appearance: \*\*** A freshly sealed parking lot not only looks better but also creates a positive impression for customers and visitors.
3. **\*\*Safety: \*\*** A well-maintained parking lot with clear line striping enhances safety by reducing the risk of accidents and ensuring accessibility for all, including those with disabilities.
4. **\*\*Cost Savings: \*\*** Proactive maintenance is more cost-effective than reactive repairs. Investing now can save us money in the long run.

**\*\*Budget: \*\***

The estimated cost for this project is \$20,000, which includes all materials, labor, and equipment needed for the job. We have obtained competitive quotes from reputable contractors in the area.

**\*\*Timeline: \*\***

We propose to initiate this project at the earliest convenient date after approval and complete it within a reasonable time frame to minimize disruption to our daily operations.

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The funds required for this project will be allocated from our Improvement Fund in accordance with our financial guidelines.

**\*\*Recommendation: \*\***

The consistory recommends that we move forward with this parking lot sealing project to maintain our facility's safety and functionality. The long-term benefits outweigh the initial investment, and it is a necessary step in ensuring the well-being of our employees and visitors.

We kindly request your approval for this project, and we are available to provide further information or clarification as needed.

Thank you for your attention to this proposal. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Saron Consistory,

Doug VanHelden (President), Jeff Meinnert, Justin Boedecker, David Rautmann, Judy Glander, Barb Post, Linda Barthels.

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**Proposal #2 for annual meeting January 21<sup>st</sup> 2024**

Dear Saron UCC Congregation

The cemetery board is proposing the installation of a new sign on our west cemetery, currently there is no sign designation in the west cemetery.

**Purpose of the project:**

To install a new cemetery sign that is visually appealing and durable.

Enhance the overall appearance of the entrance, creating a more inviting atmosphere for visitors.

**Design and Features:**

Similar in design to the south cemetery sign using polished mahogany granite tablet and base.

Grey granite side marker would be etched with an image of Saron UCC.

Poured on site concrete foundation.

**Estimated cost:**

The estimated cost for the sign project is \$22,500, inclusive of design, materials, labor and installation.

**Funding source:**

With consistory approval we propose to allocate funds for this project from the Memorial Fund, which has been set aside for improvements that honor and respect the memory of those laid to rest in our cemetery.

Cemetery funds cannot be used for this project in accordance with our financial guidelines.

**Benefits:**

Improved aesthetics that contribute to a dignified and respectful environment.

Enhanced visibility and ease of navigation for visitors.

**Project timeline:**

Pending approval, the project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2024.

**Next Steps.**

Upon approval, we will initiate the design and fabrication process, coordinating with reputable vendors to ensure the highest quality.

**Conclusion:**

The cemetery board with the full support of the consistory believe that investing in a new cemetery sign is a meaningful way to honor the memory of those we've lost and to provide a more comforting experience for their loved ones. We appreciate your consideration of this proposal.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to the opportunity to enhance our cemetery's entrance and provide a lasting tribute to those we serve.

Sincerely

Jack Hanke, Jay Flagel, Steve Bender and Roy Herzog.

**Nominee's To Be Voted On At The Annual Meeting**

**Elder:** Mike Walsh

**Deacon:** Tim Feldmann and Melissa Fleck

**Board of Education:** Cindy Knopp

**Trustee:** Andy Boll

**Endowment:** Judy Dumke

**Cemetery Board:** Jack Hanke

**Pastor Parish Relations Committee:** No nominations/ The committee does not meet without a settled pastor.



**Saron's Search Committee**

The following people have graciously accepted the position of being on Saron's Search Committee. We thank them for their willingness to serve.

**Carl Laack**

**Allen Nohl**

**Jacob Barthels**

**Marian Jarvis**

**Cindy Knopp**

**Katie Haas**

**Jay Grosshuesch**



**PASTORAL  
SEARCH  
COMMITTEE**

## Treasurer's Update

### As of November 30, 2023

First and foremost, the Consistory would like to thank you for your generosity. Without your financial support the mission and ministry of Saron UCC would not be possible. The Consistory would also like to keep you, the congregation, updated on the financial situation at Saron.

The **General Fund** supports the work of the church through salaries, programs, building upkeep, office expenses, utilities, supplies, and of course insurance (the items that are included in our line-item budget).

YTD income    \$151,960        YTD expenses \$167,475                      YTD Deficit \$15,515

For the month of November, there was a net deficit of \$1,290 which increased the year-to-date deficit in our general fund to the amount shown above. **Please prayerfully consider your support of the daily and weekly vital functions of Saron Church as we head into the new year.**

The **Improvement Fund** supports all maintenance of the buildings and property that is not covered under General Fund expenses. Monies in this fund can be carried over from year to year.

YTD income    \$16,260                      YTD expenditures    \$7,700 (includes final septic bills)

Total Available Fund Balance \$49,300

The major improvement projects of the new roof and the septic system have been paid in full. Thanks to the generosity of all of you, these costly projects were completed without depleting the improvement fund. There are no improvement projects scheduled, so the balance in the fund should cover any emergency issues that might come up.

The **Benevolence Fund** supports our OCWM commitment, our SPARE student, other mission opportunities and acts as a pass-through account for the UCC Special Mission Offerings.

YTD income    \$22,350

Designated Disbursements:

SPARE (minimum of \$1,250 - \$0 designated)

OCWM (\$20,500 commitment - \$17,650 designated, = 86% of commitment)

One Great Hour of Sharing - \$1,295.68.

Neighbors In Need - \$ 380

Souper Bowl of Caring (distributed to the Sheboygan County Food Bank) \$464.

Strengthen The Church - \$380

Blanket Fund - \$1,872

Other pass-throughs for special mission offerings and projects are distributed as they are collected throughout the year.

This update does not include all funds at Saron. An update on these funds is available from the treasurer. If you have any questions about Saron's finances, please contact Treasurer Linda Barthels or any Consistory member.

## A Message From Our Interim Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of Saron UCC,

I am honored to have been called to serve God's will at your church in a part of the world that I truly love. My wife Dorry, daughter Laura and I lived just across Lake Winnebago in Oshkosh for 18 years and in Door County for 3 years before moving to Colorado. Dorry told me that when she retires, she is going to live close to our daughter "are you coming?" My response was, "Well, uh, sure!" Since moving out to Colorado 5 years ago, I have spent about 75% of my time back in Wisconsin serving churches in transition.

I will introduce myself in much more detail in a separate document and, of course, we will learn much more about each other as our time together progresses. In the meantime, let me highlight a couple of important areas that I come, as intentional interim, to help facilitate during your transition from Pastor RaeAnn to a new settled pastor.

1. With any new pastor/spiritual leader you will experience change. As interim, it is my responsibility to introduce you to change, (Yup, I said change!) including different styles of worship, liturgy formats, etc. and perhaps a better understanding of our faith partners that brings us closer to our neighbors, whoever or wherever they may be. At the end of our time together you will have the option of maintaining your current way of doing things or integrate what you, with the guidance of your new spiritual leader, find meaningful from our transitional experience. For some of us, the word "change" is frightening. I encourage you to be open-minded, to relax and enjoy something a little different during this time of transition.
2. Assist you in developing your **vision for "What God is Calling Saron UCC To Be"** and an overall plan on **"How we intend to get there."** This process was used in the majority of the ten churches I served before coming here. I believe that in the majority of cases it was very helpful.

### How the **Visioning Process** works:

It involves three meetings with the **entire congregation** invited to attend and participate. Sessions last approximately 2 to 2.5 hours (not necessary but usually after worship on Sundays because folks are already there, food often is offered to keep stomachs from grumbling and to get **maximum participation which is important.**)

1. The three meetings are one month apart. One month before our meetings, you will be emailed a copy of one chapter from the book ***Transitional Ministry Today*** by Norman B. Bendroth (most readings are about 10 pages long.) We will also email a preparation sheet containing several questions to consider before the meetings.
2. During each meeting, I will provide a PowerPoint Presentation designed to convey data and to help us think “out-of-the-box.”
3. During the first session, Demographic information is provided to help us understand the characteristics of our community today with projections of where they will probably be 5 and 10 years down the road. In addition to the population information will be a so called “Quad” report that identifies religious characteristics of our area. Note that a variety of detailed demographic reports are available to us free from a UCC Wisconsin Conference subscription made to serve churches like us.
4. Sessions two and three are an assessment of our core values historically and today and determination of what they should be going forward.
5. Generate a list of the resources we have available today (skills, facilities, financial, etc.) Generate a list of unmet needs in our church, the close in and distant communities.
6. In other words, answering the question: With our tradition, core values and resources clearly defined, “***who is God calling us to be in our church, community and world?***”
7. Then develop a list of programs and projects to focus our resources and help us reach the goal(s).

The **result** is envisioned to be:

- A list of actionable items and a planned timeline to reach our ministry goal(s).
- A profile of preferred settled pastor characteristics, experience and skills needed as input for consideration by the Search and Call Committee.

Again, I am thrilled that God has called me, and has moved you to call me, to serve Saron UCC. I look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you and getting to know our brothers and sisters in the Sheboygan Falls community. As we lean on the wisdom and guidance of God, let us move in partnership through what can be an exciting and joy-filled time of transition.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Gary



## ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

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The Endowment Fund Committee is excited to announce we have finalized the application process for distribution of funds. We will have applications available at the Annual meeting on January 21st, 2024. Distributions can support Saron UCC programs. Christian Education, Community Services and Wider Missions. More details will be provided at the annual meeting. If you have questions, please contact any member of the Endowment Committee consisting of Teri Strub, Donna Rautmann, Nate Dassow, Jack Jarvis or Luke Kwekkeboom



THE  
ENDOWMENT  
FUND

### Upcoming Mission Opportunities sponsored by Saron's Mission Team

Below are several opportunities for Saron members to serve the community in the name of Jesus. Please consider supporting one or more of these worthwhile projects.

**Immanuel UCC Food Pantry**– We encourage Saron members to continue to support this food pantry. Mac n' Cheese is the suggested food item to donate for January and February

**Sheboygan Warming Shelter**–Saron is in charge of providing a warm meal for this homeless shelter in Sheboygan on Jan. 23 and March 12. We are planning on preparing the first meal on Monday evening, Jan. 22nd. Sign up sheets to donate ingredients or help prepare and deliver the meal will be forthcoming.

Members of Saron's Mission Team are Darlene Gumm, Jay Grosshuesch, Joan Laack, Kari Mooney, Barb Post and RaeAnn Beebe. Please contact any of these people with your feedback.

### SAVE THE DATE

Rural churches **Mission Soup Cook-off** at Laack's Hall, Sunday, February 25, 2024.

Enter your favorite soup.

Be a taste tester.

Enjoy the fun, fellowship and raffles.

Proceeds to support Mission work through our rural churches.



### Looking Ahead To The Cornhole Tournament

On Saturday, March 9, Saron will again be hosting a brat fry and cornhole tournament at Laack's Hall. We are hoping all members of Saron will attend to enjoy some food and fellowship and perhaps form a team for the tournament. There is also an opportunity to help by volunteering to serve food, work with the raffles or bake some bars or cookies to sell. Saron members can also put together a basket for raffle. Sign up sheets will be up in a few weeks. Contact Devin Gardapee, Carl Laack, Dave Rautmann, Micah Rautmann or Jay Grosshuesch with any questions or suggestions.



## Advent Angel Tree



If you attended church on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> you were greeted by a multitude of gifts under the Christmas tree. It was a sight to behold! The generosity of the members of Saron UCC is truly amazing. Thank you so much for stepping up and helping buy winter coats so these people can have a nice warm coat to wear this winter.

We have brightened the lives of many children and their families in the Sheboygan County Head Start Program this Christmas. Also thank you to the people who gave cash donations. We used the money to purchase a few gifts we needed.

We are so thankful for your kindness during this Christmas season!!!

Sincerely,

The Women's Guild



### CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE

The Women's Guild and the Shawl Ministry would like to send a big THANK YOU to all those who purchased cookies. The proceeds will help support special projects.

Those who are homebound or in care centers: Marilyn Perronne (at home), Eugene Weiskopf (Field of Dreams Assisted Living, Kiel) Shirley Schmidt (at Song Bird Pond), Merlin Schmidt (at home), Sally Nohl (at Rocky Knoll).....



We extend our Christian Sympathy to the family of Alyce Beeck, mother of Cheryl Walsh, Mike Beeck, and Keith Beeck who died on December 13th, 2023..... AND to the family Howie Heiden who died on December 15th, 2023.....






**Ben Lenz**  
(U.S. Air Force)

**Christopher Kletzien**  
(U.S. Army)

**WHAT TO DO IF WE ARE HAVING BAD WEATHER**

Winter is here! We hate to cancel worship, but if we need to, Tune in to WHBL 1330 AM (Sheboygan), Milwaukee TV Stations 4 (WTMJ), FOX 6, 12 (WISN), 58 (CBS 58) or Green Bay TV Stations 2 (WBAY) or 5 (WFRV); call the church office to listen for a cancellation message (467-6202) or check the church website for a cancellation notice ([www.saronucc.org](http://www.saronucc.org)).



**Happy Anniversary** We hope you keep the following people in your prayers as they celebrate their Anniversary this month. If we missed your special day or reported a wrong date please let us know by calling the church office at (920-467-6202 or email [adminoffice@saronucc.org](mailto:adminoffice@saronucc.org)).

- January 11 Glenn & Linda Ubbelohe
- January 12 Art & Janet Lammers
- January 19 Jay & Jill Grosshuesch



- January 24 Doug & Jill Daun
- January 26 Don & Judy Ryan

*A Prayer for the New Year*

*Lord, Whether we're leaving behind a year of joy and blessing or trials and difficulties, we pause to give thanks.*

*We thank You that You are always with us every single day of every single year.*

*Please remind us of Your presence in the year ahead, even when life is busy.*

*We are so thankful that we serve a God who makes things new and gives us the grace of fresh starts and new beginnings.*

*Be glorified in our lives this year.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Happy Birthday** We hope you keep the following people in your prayers as they celebrate their Birthday this month. If we missed your special day or reported a wrong date please let us know by calling the church office at (920-467-6202 or email [adminoffice@saronucc.org](mailto:adminoffice@saronucc.org)).

January 3 Carrie Nickel  
Lisa Prange

January 6 Elise Casadonte

January 7 Matt Meinnert

January 8 Randy Sixel

January 9 Ed Schmidt

January 10 Jill Farnum

January 11 Dorene Hanke  
Waylon Kwekkeboom

January 12 Tim Feldmann  
Jay Pike

January 13 Jan Binder  
DuWayne Nohl  
Emma Pike  
Lois Schlichting  
Haley Wimmier

January 14 Kari DeHart  
Glenn Nohl  
Coleson Trumm  
Linda Wieck  
Kathie Zittel

January 15 Izzy Dassow

January 17 Nathan Roehl

January 18 Katie Haas  
Laura Rautmann

January 19 Roberta Coppersmith  
Russ Reichert

January 20 Dan Roehrborn

January 21 Matt Wilke  
Kendrick Kuzulka  
Kalvin Kuzulka

January 24 Shirley Schmidt

January 27 Jeff Lubach  
Marlene Mohr

January 29 Matt Boedecker  
Ryan Herzog  
Carl Lindquist

January 30 Virginia Braun  
Bill Gardapee  
Kurt Mauk  
Bentley Schmidt

January 31 Katelyn DeHart  
Duane Hitsman

