

The Friendly Call

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • MANCHESTER, MO



Worship Schedule May 2026

May 3 - Mental Health Awareness

9:30 am Pastor Kevin
Music: Sanctuary Choir

May 10 - Mother's Day

9:30 am Pastor Kevin
Music: Judy Lindquist

May 17 - Youth Sunday

9:30 am Pastor Kevin
Music: Youth

May 24 - Pentecost Sunday

9:30 am Pastor Kevin
Music: Sanctuary Choir
Bell Choir

May 31

9:30 am Reverend Don
Frandsen
Music: Kelly Lashley



2026

2026



ST. JOHN GRADUATES

Congratulations Graduates! We are very proud of you! Good luck and much success in your future endeavors. We will be honoring our high school and college graduates at our worship service on May 17. Graduate bios are enclosed in this *Friendly Call*.

High School Graduates:

Erik Campa

Zander Kaden Espinoza

Owen Allen Martin

Jaclyn Morton

Ryan White-Lenard

College Graduates:

Alex Bardo

Samuel Gregory

Our congregation is blessed to have outstanding facilities that allow us to worship and serve in the name of Christ Jesus. The wider community knows us as the church on the hill (Matthew 5:14). As many of you are aware, the maintenance of this building requires considerable time and money. I give thanks to the capable people in our congregation who have the talents and skills for the necessary repairs which minimize our cost.



At our Annual Congregational Meeting, members pointed out the missing tiles on our steeple and the poor condition of our parking lot. These capital projects are not within the scope of our members' abilities. This also comes at a time when we have already replaced the HVAC system for the sanctuary and fellowship hall. We received some donations for that project, but we did use \$110,000 from the Building Reserve fund to pay for the remainder of that expense. That depleted our Building Reserve fund to \$70,000.

The Church Council heard your concerns and they acted promptly. Some of you may have noticed that the steeple repairs were accomplished in March. While the company had the lift, they also restored clay tiles on the roof of the sanctuary. In addition, we have contracted with Topps Paving to overlay the south parking lot and roadways, as well as seal the north lot and handicap spaces in front of the church. This project will take place shortly. Lastly, the roof on the educational building has exceeded its useful life, and we've been patching it for years now. If you've seen the stains in the ceiling tile of the educational wing, then you recognize that this needs to be completed as soon as possible.

I sense you know where this is going. Due to these major building expenditures, we must conduct a Capital Campaign to raise the necessary funds to pay for these projects. For the financial people in our church, here is the breakdown of figures:

Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall HVAC System - \$110,000

Steeple/Sanctuary Roof Repair - \$30,000

Parking Lot Overlay & Repair - \$90,000

New Educational Roof - \$250,000

Thus, the Church Council has formed a committee to launch a Capital Campaign. That committee consists of: Bill Gamewell, Earl Allen, Phyllis Jaudes, Michelle Patterson, and Pastor Kevin. They have had an organizational meeting to develop the process. The plan is to also meet with Reverend Russ Viehmann (Ann Picaud's father) who worked in the Development Office at St. Louis University and Webster University. Once the committee is ready, they will be reaching out to you for your financial commitment and support.

Please know that I understand money is tight in our current economy. My hope is that members, as well as friends of this congregation, will respond faithfully to the call of St. John Church. Besides the abundant gifts and resources that each of us has received, the Lord has blessed us with this beautiful land, with this historic building, and with this gracious community. It's our time to be responsible stewards and to carry forth God's mission. I'm grateful to each one of you and pray that you give to the best of your ability for the preservation of this holy space. May God guide us through this endeavor and lead us into a glorious future.

Peace of Christ,



Notes from the April 14, 2026 Council Meeting:

Calendar of Events:

- April 18 The Green Team will be planting trees on the church property.
- May 2 All Church Supper at 4:30. Cinco de Mayo theme with tacos, rice & beans.
- May 3 Communion
- May 4 Weather permitting, work will begin on the back parking lot. The lot will be inaccessible for 3-4 days. Please use the cemetery lot.
- May 17 WISE/Green Team Walk will be at Faust Park in Chesterfield.

The **foundation and masonry base for the electronic sign** will be installed before the end of April.

The **Capital Campaign Committee** had their initial meeting on April 14. The campaign is expected to run from the last half of 2026 through 2027. See Pastor Kevin’s comments in this edition of the *Friendly Call*.

St. Louis Association Gathering –This meeting will take place on May 7 at the First Congregational Church in Webster Groves. Anyone may attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Ramin
Recording Secretary

Financial Report - March 31, 2026

<u>Actual Receipts</u>	<u>Budget Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Actual Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Budget Receipts</u>
\$38,904.28	\$39,656.00	\$139,546.82	\$114,968.00
<u>Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>Budget Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Budget Expenditures</u>
\$44,705.68	\$46,197.75	\$102,845.29	\$105,335.25

Members of the Church Council of St. John United Church of Christ, Manchester, meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Hospitality Room of the church (or via Zoom). The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 12, 2026.**



It is time to sign up for Summer Camp at MoVal!

Camp MoVal has been welcoming all ages to participate in a wide variety of programs and activities since 1962. They ensure an amazing and unique camp experience in a safe and fun atmosphere for everyone, no matter their age.

Sessions for 2026 include:

- June 21-26 High School Camp (completed 8th-12grades)
- June 28 - July 2 Family Camp (all ages)
- July 5-10 All Ages Camp #1 (grades 3-9)
- July 12-17 All Ages Camp #2 (grades 3-9)
- July 19-23 Adventures in Community (ages 18+)



For more information and to register, please go online at: missourimidsouth.org/camp-moval
If you have any questions, please contact Julie Mock, Christian Education Coordinator at julie@stjohnmanchester.org St. John offers assistance with the cost of the camp.



We are pleased to announce we have chosen Topps Paving & Sealing LLC to repair and repave our parking lot and drives. Topps has tentatively committed to begin paving of the south parking lot and all three (3) entrance roads on **Monday, May 4th**. The plan is to take three (3) to four (4) days to complete and stripe the south lot (**weather permitting**). During most or all of that time, access to the church will need to be from the north entrance.

Groups meeting at the church during that time will need to inform their team members of the temporary change in entering the building.

The north parking lot and the north handicap spaces that are receiving the patch and seal will be done later when the weather is warmer.

We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation during this time.

YOUTH SUNDAY - May 17th

We will celebrate **Youth Sunday** here at St. John United Church of Christ, Manchester on **Sunday, May 17**. The Youth will be leading the worship service that day. It promises to be a great service and a wonderful way to support the fantastic young people we have in the church. Mark your calendar and plan to be in attendance. We will also be recognizing our graduates during the service. Plan to join us on this special day!



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH



The Strengthen the Church Offering furthers the work of our conferences and the national UCC as we work together to strengthen and renew existing congregations, fund leadership development, and provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults. The offering is divided with 50% staying regionally within our conference and 50% supporting the National Ministries.

We will be collecting this special offering on **Sunday, May 24th**. Thank you for your consideration!



Christian Education

Youth Christian Education & Sunday School



CHILDCARE FOR NURSERY and TODDLERS is available at the 9:30 am service. Also, for your convenience, a Family Assistance Room is located at the rear of the sanctuary.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL We will hear stories and lessons taught in the Old and New Testaments combined with worksheets, games, and crafts to focus on getting the children acquainted with the Bible and understanding how our families and church are part of a greater community in God's world. Students should come to the sanctuary for the 9:30 am service with their families and will be dismissed to their classes.

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS The Youth Group will meet at 9:30 am in the classroom – except on the first Sunday of each month when we will attend church service with our family and friends. A mix of formal lessons and open discussion increases understanding of our faith and how it relates to our church and the world around us. We strive to get youth involved in church groups and activities, as well as community service events. Friends are always welcome!!



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

BCE members will now be meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm via ZOOM. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19. We are always looking for new study ideas and help with upcoming projects with the adults and children. Contact Pam Boucher if you have any questions or would like to sign up to volunteer.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER - CITY OF MANCHESTER, MISSOURI

The **National Day of Prayer** in Manchester will be observed on **Thursday, May 7**, as part of the nation wide annual event held on the first Thursday of May. The 2026 theme is "Glorify God Among the Nations, Seeking Him in All Generations".

Where: Manchester Justice Center
When: Thursday, May 7, 2026 - Noon

For other locations please see gatewayndp.net.





Worship Attendance			
<i>Date</i>	<i>In Person</i>	<i>Streaming</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
March 29	117	59	176
April 2 Maundy Thursday	34	43	77
April 3 Good Friday	53	55	108
April 5 Easter Sunrise	20	N/A	20
April 5 Easter Worship Service	155	68	223
April 12	108	61	169
April 19	89	52	141

NOTE: Streaming count is household so it could include more than one person; count is taken during LIVE streaming.

NAME	DATE	YEARS
Marcella & Lance Armstrong	5/7	49
Mary Ellen & Tom Berg	5/8	55
John & Jennifer Forbis	5/10	18
Jason & Kimberly Derucki	5/13	26
Gary & Linda Kalin	5/14	43
Tim & Tonya Osiek	5/16	17
Rick & Patti Siefert	5/17	51
Diane & Joe Beckerle	5/19	36
Chris & Natalie Morton	5/20	20
Paul & Stephanie Allen	5/23	34



Pentecost Sunday | May 24th | WEAR RED!

In celebration of Pentecost *on Sunday, May 24th*, we are asking members of the congregation to wear red that day. Please show your Christian spirit by joining us and wearing **red!**

Church Office Closed

The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, May 25** In observance of **Memorial Day**. The office will reopen on Tuesday, May 27 at 9:00 am.



Articles and information for the **June/July** issue of The 'Friendly Call' are due on **Friday, May 15, 2026**. Please place a hard copy of the article in the church office mail slot or email to:

jane@stjohnmanchester.org.



CONFIRMATION

As Tertullian once said, “Christians are made, not born.” Thus, the church has been given the task of confirming (to make firmer and stronger) the faith of our young people. St. John is inquiring about a Confirmation Program for 2026-2027.



If you know of a young person who will be in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade next fall, and is interested in Confirmation, then please let us know. We are trying to make arrangements now. At this point, we are looking at classes on Sunday morning, along with some field trips. Those who make a commitment to the program are invited to affirm their baptismal vows and are received into full church membership through the Rite of Confirmation. The Confirmation worship service would take place on Sunday, May 16, 2027. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact Pastor Kevin by phone (636-391-6655) or email (kevin@stjohnmanchester.org). Hope to hear from you!



WALK AT FAUST PARK

The **WISE/Green Team** nature walk will be on Saturday, May 16th at 10:00 am. This mental health walk will be held at **Faust Park** in Chesterfield. We will meet in front of the Butterfly House. If you are interested, please sign up on the sheet across from the church office. Should you have questions, feel free to talk with Carol Ruh or Pastor Kevin.

May is ...



1810 Craig Road, Suite 124
St. Louis, MO 63146
info@namistl.org
HelpLine: 314-962-4670

St. John UCC Manchester holds a **NAMI Support group** meeting the third Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is scheduled for **May 21, 2026**. The group meets in the Hospitality Room at 6:30 pm. Please note that you must go to the **NAMI** website to sign up to attend the meeting prior to arrival. Everyone is welcome to join us!
NAMI contact at St. John is Angela Kern, akern@sbcglobal.net.

Website: <https://www.namistl.org>



OUTREACH TEAM MEETING

The **Outreach Team's** next meeting will be **Thursday, May 7, 2026** at 6:30 pm in the Hospitality Room. Please join us!

MAY OUTREACH CHALLENGE - SHANNONDALE

Blessing Box

Outreach has chosen Shannondale as our Mission Partner for May. They are in need of items for their **Blessing Box** as follows:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Soups | Chili | Pasta in a can | Mac & Cheese bowls and boxes |
| Peanut butter | Jelly | Tuna | Canned chicken |
| Noodle/rice mixes | Toilet tissue | Paper towels | Laundry Detergent |



We will be collecting these items throughout the month of May. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please use the Helping Hands envelopes (on the back of the pews) and write Shannondale in the memo line of your check.

St. John has a long and rich history with Shannondale as Rev. Paul Wobus and St. John were instrumental in the founding of this ministry in 1929. Annually a group from St. John makes a weekend trip to Shannondale to provide help with projects needed there. We are scheduled to go to Shannondale June 26-28; please consider joining us!

To find out more information about Shannondale, please visit the conference website at: [missourimidsouth.org/shannondale-](http://missourimidsouth.org/shannondale-ministries)

[ministries](http://missourimidsouth.org/shannondale-ministries). If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Outreach Team.

Thank you for your support!

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
Workday - Saturday, June 6**

Would you like to help build an affordable home for a deserving family? Sign up to volunteer with our church. A Habitat Leader will instruct us on simple tasks. The only requirements are:

- ◆ Meet at church at 7:15 am to carpool
- ◆ Wear closed toe shoes
- ◆ Bring a sack lunch and water bottle
- ◆ Be prepared to have fun and feel rewarded

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the church offices. Any questions...see Jan Meckfessel.





CURRENT NEEDS: The most needed items for **Circle of Concern** currently are:

- ♥ Dinner Helpers
- ♥ Cereal/Oatmeal
- ♥ Snacks (8-12 servings)

You can also order items for **Circle** online at:

- ◆ Amazon Wish List
- ◆ Walmart
- ◆ Target



and they will be delivered directly to **Circle of Concern**

OR

by buying Dierberg gift cards (denominations of \$50 or \$100) through our own Shop N Support program. See Harry Gaehle on a Sunday morning.



Thanks for your help keeping our red shopping carts full!

FONTANA FRIENDS

The Outreach Team continues monthly visits to our **Fontana Friends** in their home. Visits are on the **second Thursday of the month from about 2:00 to 3:00 pm**. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the offices. We meet at church at 1:40 pm and carpool to Fontana. Our next visit will be on **Thursday, May 14, 2026**. If you need additional information, please contact Mary Ellen Berg.



LUNCH AT SUNSHINE MINISTRIES



St. John Outreach continues to provide and share a meal each month with the men at the residence center for **Sunshine Ministries**. We will carpool from church at 11:15 am (lunch at noon) and return by 1:15 pm. We need one or two people to help each month. If you are interested in joining us on **May 14, 2026**, please see Judy Lindquist. To learn more about the men's outreach of Sunshine Ministries go to: <https://www.sunshineministries.org/men-s-outreach> .

St. John Weekend at SHANNONDALE - June 26-28

Mark your calendar for a wonderful weekend at **Shannondale**. We'll eat, work, eat, play, eat, relax, eat, have fellowship, and then eat some more! Home-made ice cream and foil packs are a tradition! Additional information will be available as we get closer to the event. There's a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the church offices. The lodge is air-conditioned! If you have any questions, see Dave Gaehle. **Please plan to join us; you won't be disappointed you did!**



SUNSHINE MINISTRIES EAGLE LODGE WORK DAY – MAY 23

As part of their youth program, our outreach partner **Sunshine Ministries** operates a camp near Foristell. On Saturday, May 23, we will be taking a team to Eagle Lodge to help prepare the camp for the children. Tasks will include cleaning and light yard work. If you are interested in helping, please contact Judy Lindquist.



Details:

- ♥ **Arrival Time:** 9:00 AM
- ♥ **What to Bring:** Sack lunch
- ♥ **Finish Time:** Around 1:00 PM

For more information about the camp go to <https://www.sunshineministries.org/camp>. Thank you for supporting this important ministry!

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP Tuesday, May 19 10:30 am

May Women's Fellowship, May 19, our yearly luncheon will be in Old St Charles! 1818 Bistrot, 515 Main Street. Please sign the list across from the offices by May 17. We will car pool, so meet at church 10:30 am! Any questions, see Marty Boucher.



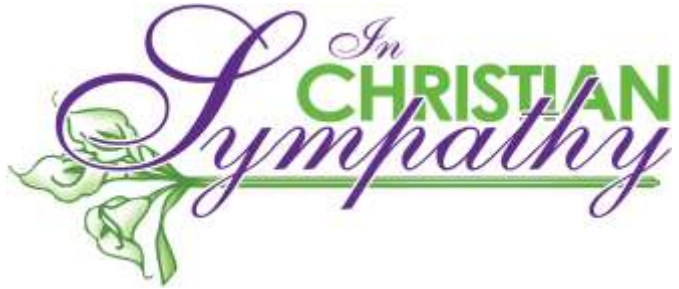
GREEN TEAM NEWS

- ♥ Planting has begun in our gardens and will keep us busy throughout the summer.
- ♥ In April, the team planted a red maple tree donated by Cindy Boddy. Thank you, Cindy!! A Callery Pear tree on our property was cut down and replaced with a Hackberry tree from the Missouri Department of Conservation's Callery Pear Tree Buy Back Program.
- ♥ Thank you to all who helped fold plastic bags for the letter carriers. Many hands made quick work!
- ♥ We will continue collecting plastic for the Manchester City Park Bench Project.



Have you heard of the 20-5-3 Rule to improve your physical and mental health? It encourages people to spend 20 minutes outdoors three times a week; five hours a month in a semi-wild outdoor location and 3 days a year in nature. Please consider joining the **WISE/Green Teams'** walks as part of your outdoor time. The next walk is scheduled for **Saturday, May 16**.

Our next **Green Team** meeting is on **Thursday, May 14**, at 7:00 pm.



In memory of **Evelyn Schirmer**

Cemetery Association

Shirley Krausch

Memorial Fund

Karen Gaertner

Vernon Keune Family

Geniece Miller & Keith Schirmer

Greg Sonderman

Grace & Chelle Vesper

Technology Fund

Keith Gaertner

In memory of **Pauline Ostermeyer**

(Sandy Ostermeyer's sister-in-law)

Technology Fund

Keith Gaertner

to the family of

Evelyn T. Schirmer

on her passing from this life to God's eternal care on April 4, 2026.

Please keep Evelyn's family and friends in your prayers.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION



SUNDAY

Sunday - May 17, 2026

St. John will recognize all youth graduating from high school and college this spring during the worship service on **Sunday, May 17 (also Youth Sunday)**. We are proud of each and every one of our young men and women graduating this Spring. Please plan to join us for this special worship service. A reception for the graduates will follow the service. Try to stop by to wish the graduates well.

TEA WITH FRIENDS

Enjoy coffee, tea, or your favorite beverage, as you take some time to visit with friends on Wednesdays, at the **Panera** at 14646 Manchester Road, Ballwin, between 3 and 5 pm to share conversations that lead to community. Kathy Hoadley or Joan James will be the host. **All generations are invited to stop in!**



OUR 2026 GRADUATES



Alex Bardo

Alex graduated summa cum laude from Auburn University with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He was a four-year member of the Auburn Marching Band, serving as section leader of the mellophones his senior year. He also played in the pep band. He has accepted a position with Ullman Schutte Construction, a national leader in construction and renovation of water and wastewater treatment plants, flood protection systems and other water infrastructure. He has been assigned to a project in Clemmons, North Carolina, beginning in early June. Alex is the grandson of Mary Frances Tokar and the late Bob Tokar.

Erik Campa

Erik managed a good grade point average throughout high school. Also, he has been recognized for his creative artwork. He plans on getting a BS degree in Aerospace Engineering at Missouri University of Science and Technology. Erik is the son of Valarie & Patrick Breen. His paternal grandparents are June Breen & Roger Schmitt.



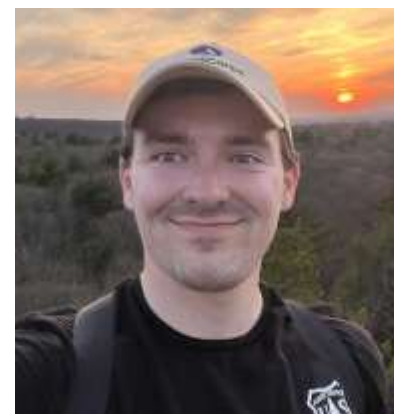
Zander Kaden Espinoza

Zander will graduate from Parkway South High School in May. During his four years there he developed strong friendships and challenged himself to grow. His junior year he was nominated for and received the Patriot Award which embodies the school's core values and outstanding character.

He is currently dually enrolled in South High School and South Technical High School and will graduate with a general construction certificate. His plans after High School include joining the heavy operator's union here in St. Louis. We are very proud of him. Zander is the son of Aimee and Adam Spiroff and Anthony Espinoza (of England); his paternal grandparents are John and Joan Walker.

Samuel Gregory

Samuel is graduating from the University of Massachusetts – Boston with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, while also completing coursework toward a Master of Education in Middle/Secondary Education. Alongside his studies, he works as a Library Circulation Assistant at the university, supporting students and helping manage daily operations. After graduation, Samuel plans to finish his master's degree with the goal of teaching middle school social studies. He is son of Pastor Kevin and Laura Gregory.





Owen Allen Martin

Owen will graduate from Francis Howell High School in May. Owen has played on the soccer team all four years. He has also played club soccer. He has been on the tennis team all four years of high school as well. He is a member of DECA.

His plans include getting a degree in business and joining the IEC for their electrical apprenticeship. We are very proud of him. Owen is the son of Katie and Jeffrey Martin; his paternal grandparents are John and Joan Walker.

Jaclyn Morton

Jaclyn is graduating from Lafayette High School and will be attending the University of Missouri – Kansas City where she plans to major in art history and minor in integrated performing arts. Her goal is to become a museum curator and hopes to remain involved in community orchestras playing the bassoon. Jaclyn is the daughter of Chris and Natalie Morton.



Ryan White-Lenard

Ryan is the son of Michael Lenard. Ryan will graduate with honors on May 12th, marking an important milestone in a journey defined by dedication, discipline, and achievement.

Ryan is a distinguished member of the National Honor Society and the A+ Program, reflecting his strong commitment to academic excellence and service. In addition to his academic success, Ryan has excelled both athletically and musically. He played three years of high school baseball, one year of tennis, and devoted an impressive 14 years to club baseball, demonstrating teamwork, perseverance, and long-term dedication. Ryan is also an accomplished musician,

having played the saxophone in band and earning recognition as a member of Honor Band, highlighting his versatility and commitment beyond the classroom and athletic field.

Ryan plans to pursue a degree in Physical Therapy, where he will continue to apply his strong work ethic and passion for helping others reach their full potential.

Congratulations, Ryan, on your outstanding accomplishments and best wishes for continued success in the next chapter ahead. Love Dad!



PRAYER REQUESTS

You will find **PRAYER REQUEST** cards in the pews. A box is located on the table in the Gathering Area for completed cards to be deposited. There are times when we all need an extra prayer said for us and where better than from our friends at St John!



KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Landon Weber - Houston, Texas
Nancee Miller - Clarendale Clayton
Carol Matthews - Brooking Park
Elaine Van Gels - Lake St. Charles Senior Center
Harry Taub - Dolan Memory Care (Lyon Manor)
Annette Owings - Promenade Senior Living
Michele Dahlem - Van Well Home
Aiden White-Lenard and Family
People in the Middle East
People in Ukraine

AT HOME

Ron Carr	Betty Fox
Frank & Lois Leahy	Diane Olano
Laura Waller	Jennifer Weber



Commander Andrew Brennecke, Coast Guard, Norfolk, VA, son of Bob & Joy Brennecke
Sgt. Codey Burnham, U.S. Marine Corps, Indian Head, MD, grandson of Betty & Howard Anton
Sgt. First Class Douglas Krohn, United States Army Recruiting Command, Quincy, IL
Technical Sgt. Michael Kargauer, Eielson AFB, Alaska, son of Dawn (Martin) Dorris
E Sgt. Bryan Milberg, Fort Campbell, KY, grandson of Derald & Donna Forbis
Sgt. Matt Starck, Marines, Camp Lejeune, NC, son of Walter & Marcia Starck
E-7 Master Sergeant Chris Dwiggins, U.S. Air Force, Scott AFB, Nephew of Lisa and Jeff Karl