



The Visitor

St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, OH

October 2024

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The 2024 Women's Retreat has changed its time, location, and theme—see p. 3 for details!

From the Pastor



We worship a God of abundance, rather than scarcity. Our response of generosity (a facet of the fruit of the Spirit) reflects gratitude. Did you know that while the expectation of tithing may not find its way into the job description for the Called Minister at St. John UCC, the denomination and perhaps this church expects that the pastor will set an example of generosity and faithfulness in regular, percentage giving in support of a shared ministry. And, to be transparent with you, I tithe (actually, a bit more – I better re-run my numbers!) based on

the income provided me by the church.

Jesus spoke about money more often than anything else other than the realm of God, making it is clear that money can inhibit or enhance our practice of Christian discipleship. This Stewardship season is an opportunity to preach and teach about money that will hopefully strengthen the body of Christ by lifting up the invitation to offer one's heart to the Lord (rather than one's money to pay the church's bills).

What does this congregation think about talking about money in church? A willingness to talk about money, in general, as an integral part of both personal/family and congregational life allows money to be relegated to its place: It is a tool to be used

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The Visitor

From the Pastor

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Money can be directed to efforts that bring about justice, show a love for kindness, and invite us to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

to reflect the values held by the individual or family and the congregation. Money can be directed to efforts that bring about justice, show a love for kindness, and invite us to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). Honest conversations about money can be a gift the church offers to balance the messages bombarding people from every angle. In reality, the topic of money is one that should be considered year-round, not just during an annual stewardship emphasis.

The month of October (and some of September and November) has been designated as our Stewardship season. On October 6, 2024, we will be handing out the Pledge Cards, with a goal of having all pledge cards returned by October 20. The goal for our pledge cards is \$115,000, and we will report out on November 3, All Saints' Day, if we have met (or surpassed!) that goal.

Also, on October 20, we will have our annual 'Catch Up' Sunday, inviting people to check their giving envelopes and see if you have missed any Sundays this year that you need to get caught up with your gifts of tithes and offerings.

So, please begin to prayerfully consider what your pledge will be for financially supporting the church in 2025. This is between you and God, and no one will come hunting you down if you don't quite meet what you propose as your goal. Conversely, no one (but God!) will celebrate if you give more than your pledge – in other words, we don't keep track of this. You do! And our Lord! So let's praise our God of abundance who has blessed us so richly and begin to think about what our pledges will be for next year. May what we offer up to our King bring him honor and glory and strengthen his kingdom, and his church called St. John UCC!

Rev. Torie Front



Ministry Board of Christian Nurture



Women's Retreat Update:

Due to a schedule conflict at Highwater UCC, the 2024 women's retreat has changed!

The date is the same: Saturday, Oct. 19!

The location has changed: St. John UCC

The time has changed: 10 am-2 pm

The theme has changed:

"Speak, My Soul"

The price has changed: \$35

The concept is the same:

2024 Women's Retreat

Please sign up outside the Cozy Corner if you would like to attend! We will be using the book *Speak, My Soul* by Marsha Crockett, a guide to spiritual discernment through the Psalms. Purchase of the book will be included in the price of attendance. Invite a friend!

Lunch Bunch will meet on Oct. 13 at Benson's Tavern directly after church.

Faith Foundations, when the children are taken out of worship for a Bible story and crafts, will be held on the first and second Sundays of the month, starting in October. The rest of the month, the children will remain in worship. Each week there will be a Children's Chat for our younger worshippers.



Friendsgiving Meal
Tuesday, Nov. 19
11:30 am - 2:30 pm

Join us for "**Friendsgiving**" - a chance for Saints at Home to share lunch and a short worship service at church with us. Please see Shirley Waddell with any questions, and sign up outside the Cozy Corner if you can attend (or help drive).

Are you ready to **Read Through the Bible in a Year?!** Sign up outside the Cozy Corner now so we see how many people are interested, and we'll get you the Bible in December, to begin on Jan. 1, 2025.

HOSPITALITY TEAM: The newly formed Hospitality Team is in need of unused greeting cards to observe birthdays, anniversaries, and sympathy/"thinking of you" times. If you have unused cards to spare, please leave them on the office desk!

The Visitor

Ministry Board of Deacons



*It is not too early
to start holiday
shopping for
our neighbors
in need!*



Deacons would like to thank you for your prayers and continued support. You are a generous congregation. We appreciate all of you!

The busiest time of year is coming for the Deacons. The following is a list of our upcoming events and how you can take part.

Halloween treats: We need candy donations. Our Active Day volunteers will bag those donations and Deacons will hand them out from 6 to 8pm on Halloween. You are always welcome to join us and meet our neighbors.

Thanksgiving bags: Deacons try each year to provide Thanksgiving treats for our friends that come to the pantry. We need the following: canned yams, boxed stuffing, green beans, mushroom soup, canned fried onions, noodles, chicken or turkey broth, turkey gravy mix, boxed mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, desserts (cookie mixes, cake and brownie mixes, pie shells and fillings) canned baked beans and

canned hams and canned chicken. Holiday napkins are always appreciated. It's not too soon to start gathering these items.

Christmas Giving Tree: For the past several years we have collected gift cards and given them to different organizations that help families in the area. This year we would like to give gifts to families that we see at our pantry each Thursday. We have started to gather names and lists. If you would like to help bring some joy to a family in our community, please let a Deacon know. The tree will still go up with their requests and suggestions. It is not too early to start shopping!

The **Feed My Sheep pantry** has the following needs: toiletries for men and women (deodorant, razors, soap, shampoo, toothbrushes and paste), dish soap, pasta sauce (red), canned fruit, canned vegetables (no corn, we have plenty), peanut butter (jelly is always a welcome treat). Every-

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Ministry Board of Deacons

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one is invited to join us from 4:30-5:30 each Thursday to meet our community. It is an amazing experience!



Active Day is one of the nation’s leading providers of services for adults with developmental disabilities. The mission of Active Day centers is “to provide person-centered opportunities for meaningful and integrated vocational, recreational, leisure, social, volunteer, and educational activities for individuals with disabilities.” And, one of these opportunities often takes place on Thursday mornings at St. John UCC! Steve Culver, a part-time driver and aide support for Active Day of Cincinnati, brings 4-7 people over periodically to volunteer in helping to get food ready for “Feed My Sheep.” The volunteers re-package anything from donuts to dog food, and have a great time doing so. In fact, they made a poster of some of their favorite activities and coming to St. John UCC was first on their list! If you have some time on Thursday mornings between 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, stop by and check out this amazing ministry, where everyone’s souls are fed!



HANDS AGAINST HUNGER®

We will have a ‘pack’ for **Hands Against Hunger** on Sunday, October 20, after the Coffee Hour. We’ll start at 11:30 am and conclude around 12:30 pm. We will be set up for 33 people (3 lines) and hope to pack around 7,000 high protein meals with people from St. John UCC and also “Feed My Sheep” guests. Some of the meals will stay here to hand out at Feed My Sheep, but most will be returned to Hands Against Hunger and sent around the world.

We hope to pack around 7,000 high protein meals with people from St. John UCC and also “Feed My Sheep” guests.

All are welcome to participate - you can stand or sit - it’s a lot of fun! Sign up now!

Hands Against Hunger meals cost less than 25 cents each, consist of fortified soy, essential vitamins & minerals, vegetables and rice and are:

- *Vegetarian: accepted in all cultures*

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Ministry Board of Elders



October 2024 is part of the Stewardship Season, and during worship you

may be hearing different stewardship-themed components. Several of our members have volunteered to give their own Stewardship Testimonials and you'll see those on video before the time of offering. Sermons may include some stewardship buzz words such as 'generosity', 'giving', 'sharing', 'abundance', 'time, treasure, and talent', just to name a few!

Hopefully you will also become familiar with our theme for this year's stewardship campaign "Imagine Together." In these two words, we find some synergistic learnings, such as opening ourselves up to the leading of the Holy Spirit and imagining together what the future might hold for St. John UCC. And, the 'together' is so important – the stewardship decisions that we may make as an individual are also linked to the stewardship decisions made by us as the church, the Body of Christ. Together, we can do so much more, together we can indeed be the hands and feet of Christ, together we can share the Light of Christ with our commu-

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Lectionary

Scripture	Bible Study	Sermon Date
Genesis 2:18-24; Psalm 8; Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16	October 1	October 6
Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31	October 8	October 13
Isaiah 53:4-12; Psalm 91:9-16; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45	October 15	October 20
Jeremiah 31:7-9; Psalm 126; Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52	October 22	October 27

Ministry Board of Elders

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nity, together we can worship, serve, and nurture our faith.

That was a nice segue into our Mission Statement, wasn't it?! Just in case you need a refresher, the Mission Statement of St. John UCC is: ***As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to worship, to serve our community in Christian love, and to nurture our members along their spiritual journeys.***

What we are now working is a Vision Statement, or a Purpose Statement. This is a picture of the ideal future, what we might 'imagine together' what St. John UCC can be, will be, if all that we do fits into our Mission Statement. With that in mind, take some time to think about and pray about these words:

A loving and thriving fellowship of Christians, joyfully serving and feeding all in body and spirit.

This is still a draft, but the Ministry Boards are beginning to

work with it, especially as we put together our budgets for the 2025 Ministry Spending Plan.

So keep your hearts and minds open to the Spirit's leading as we Imagine Together the rest of this calendar year, begin to put together plans for 2025, and always lean on the guiding of the Holy Spirit for our future as St. John UCC in Reading!

October 27, 2024, will be our "Laity Sunday" – an opportunity for members of the congregation to share their testimonies or thoughts from the pulpit. Currently, we have Don Pasqualetti, Vicki Gentry, and Bob Cutter sharing a bit about their faith on that day, which will be a celebration of our Triune God as seen through their eyes. If you would like to share a brief comment on that day, please see Steve Prater, Chair of the Ministry Board of Elders, or Rev. Torie, before October 9.



Keep your hearts and minds open to the Spirit's leading as we Imagine Together the rest of this calendar year.



The Visitor

Ministry Board of Deacons

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- *Multi-serving:* one packet will feed six small children
- *Protein-rich:* each packet contains 13 grams of protein in each serving
- *Fortified:* each serving contains 21 essential vitamins & minerals
- *Acceptable:* rice, a globally recognized staple, is used as the base
- *Easy to make:* boil packet contents in water for twenty minutes
- *Preservable:* unopened packet has a shelf-life of three years
- *Affordable:* no other food product that is more nutritious or economical

Learn more at:

thechildrenarewaiting.org/hands-against-hunger/

Many thanks to
Blanck Studio of Art,
the Ruth Schnier
Estate Fund, and to
all who donated to
the stained glass
window fund.

Ministry Board of Property and Finance

Next stop... All Hallows' Eve... and the kids will be out and about looking for snacks and fun. Please be careful and alert on Halloween night. We look forward to handing out candy at the church after Feed My Sheep on October 31! Fall is here and we are hoping for our mid-October show of colors on our trees, however the drought may have other plans for the show...we will see.

Our "Christ Ascending" stained glass window is back home and in place. It looks cleaner, brighter and is definitely more se-

cured into its frame. It was re-dedicated during worship service on Sunday, September 14 after a short presentation of its history and restoration process. Many thanks were given to Blanck Studio of Art, the Ruth Schnier Estate Fund, and to all who donated to the stained glass window fund. The outside protective glass is yet to be installed and will occur once the scaffolding for the tuck pointing is removed.

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Ministry Board of Property and Finance

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Tuck pointing continues every week and progress is definitely being made. The large lift is now gone and the scaffolding is being moved as they tuck point the remaining areas of the building, which is still quite a bit. We have had many responses telling us how good the new mortar looks and we are happy for that. The work is expected to last at least another month.

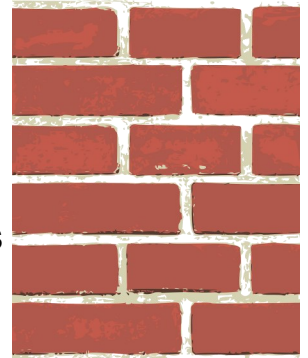
We have not scheduled a Workshop Day yet for October. We will keep you updated on when and if that might occur. We always have a few projects that could use some attention, so please let us know if you would like to work

on anything around the church. The gentlemen from the Joseph House, who volunteer with the food pantry, have graciously offered to assist with some projects and we will certainly appreciate their help.

We are in the season of Stewardship and we hope that you would prayerfully consider what you might give financially to the church and all the ministries we provide. It is heartening to hear other members express their reasons for giving to the church and we hope that you too will offer your time, talents and treasures.

Thanks and God Bless each and every one.

Peace and blessings from P&F.



Celebrations in October

Birthdays:

October 2 - Melissa Harman

October 6 - Haven Reardon

October 19 - Rosalie Byrd

October 20 - Todd Patterson

October 24 – Nick Eddelmon

October 25 – Sherri Marshall

October 25 - Jim Stacey

October 27 - Charlotte Bell

October 28 - Brian Hall



St. John UCC Regularly Scheduled Events

Weekly			
Event	Day	Time	Location
Handbell Choir	Sunday	9 am	Sanctuary
Worship	Sunday	10 am	Sanctuary
Bible Study (Afternoon)	Tuesday	1 pm	Bible Study Room
Bible Study (Evening)	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Mt. View Terrace
Chancel Choir	Wednesday	6:15 pm	Choir Room
Feed My Sheep	Thursday	4:30 pm	Fellowship Hall

Monthly			
Event	Day	Time	Location
Communion	1st Sunday	10 am	Sanctuary
Deacons	Last Thursday	2:30 pm	Cozy Corner
Lunch Bunch	2nd Sunday	After Worship	Various
Men's Group	Various Sundays	11 am	Various
Missionary Sewing	1st Wednesday	10 am	Fellowship Hall
Property & Finance	2nd Tuesday	5 pm	Fellowship Hall
Christian Nurture	1st Tuesday	4:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
Elders	2nd Thursday	2:30 pm	Bible Study Room
Euchre	Last Thursday	6 pm	Reads' home
Church Council	3rd Thursday	6 pm	Fellowship Hall
Work-ship Day	Last Saturday	8 am	Church



Fall



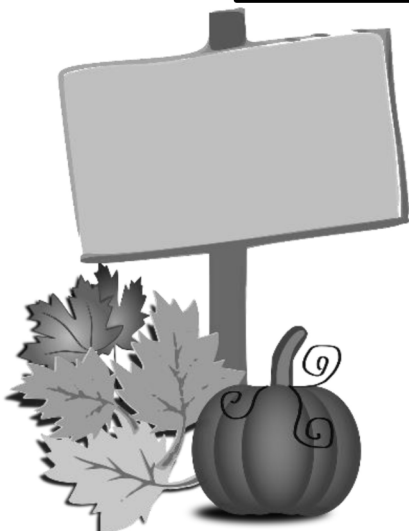
Word Search

Find the words listed. Words may appear forward, backward, up, down or diagonal. Words may overlap and cross each other. When you have found a word, be sure to circle it and cross it off the list.

- ACORN
- APPLES
- AUTUMN
- CHANGE
- CHESTNUTS
- CIDER
- COLORS
- COOL
- FALL
- FOOTBALL

Z	V	M	F	Z	K	Z	D	M	G	L	C	Y	T	B	M	Y	K	L
Z	P	N	M	P	L	M	G	X	W	D	K	H	W	Y	K	F	C	K
T	R	K	Z	S	R	O	L	O	C	M	R	T	A	I	N	Y	L	M
W	B	R	T	S	E	V	A	E	L	T	T	P	S	N	N	R	M	H
O	C	T	O	B	E	R	X	C	L	R	D	T	G	N	G	D	M	A
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P	A	F	K	A	T	I	A	S	H	R	R	D	F	Z	V	N	N	M
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I	S	W	Z	T	T	A	T	L	V	R	A	K	H	Z	N	T	T	T
N	S	V	Z	O	C	J	M	L	M	E	P	U	T	A	G	S	C	P
S	P	F	O	K	R	E	K	A	R	N	S	R	Q	H	R	N	L	E
P	B	F	P	L	P	D	W	F	G	B	D	T	Q	S	J	D	L	S

- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST
- HAYRIDE
- HAYSTACK
- LEAVES
- MAIZE
- NOVEMBER
- NUTS
- OCTOBER
- ORCHARD



- PUMPKINS
- QUILT
- RAKE
- SCARECROW
- SEPTEMBER
- SQUASH
- SWEATER
- THANKSGIVING
- TURKEY
- WINDY

HAPPY
FALL
y'all!



**St. John United
Church of Christ**

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United in Christ's love, we seek justice for all.

Thank-Yous from the Estelle Nierman Family

Greetings,

On behalf of the Nierman family, I extend our gratitude to all who assisted with the funeral service and luncheon for my aunt.

We are grateful for her church family, who provided her so much love and support over the years.

Dear Rev. Torie,

Thank you for attending to my aunt's spiritual needs over the last few years. You didn't know her in her full capacity, yet you offered such a personalized service that touched my heart deeply and certainly those members of her church family who attended.

I am grateful for all that you did for my aunt and for arranging the livestreaming.

Kindest regards,
Jaylyn Stall

Kindest regards,
Jaylyn Stall



A Note from Allen Hank

Gary,

Your Sunday summary of the stained glass restoration project was very comprehensive and emotional. The beautiful "Christ Ascending" Window has been the backdrop for my family's religious journey, baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals over the past 100 yrs.

Cliff Schneeman, Sandy's uncle, provided the finances for the '89 renovation. I know Uncle Cliff would absolutely approve of today's masterpiece.

Thank you for your stewardship in the life of St John's.

Sincerely,
Allen Hank

