

CONTACTS

Phone	859-431-1818
Email	stjohnsucc@stjohnsuccnewport.org
Website	www.stjohnsuccnewport.org
Facebook	St. John's United Church of Christ–Newport, KY

PROGRAM

PROGRAM	LOCATION	TIME
Coffee Fellowship Time	Fellowship Hall (L.L.)	9:00 a.m.
Worship	Sanctuary	10:00 a.m.
Infant, Toddler, Preschool & School Age Child Care	South Hallway	9:30 a.m.

CHURCH STAFF

POSITION	PERSON	CONTACT
Designated Pastor	J. Martin Westermeyer	Shaman4@zoomtown.com
Pastor of Visitation	John Robson	Jmarrobson@gmail.com
Director Of Music/Organist	Michael Sullivan	Michael.Sullivan@stjohnsuccnewport.org
Associate Director of Music	Dobin Park	Pianist0587@gmail.com
Office Administrator	Kelli Taylor	Kelli.Taylor@stjohnsuccnewport.org
Director of Communication & Outreach	Kyle Taylor	Kyle.Taylor@stjohnsuccnewport.org
Financial Administrator	Chris Baker	Financialadmin@stjohnsuccnewport.org

CHURCH LEADERS

PERSON	POSITION	CONTACT
Jan Knepshield	Church President	(H) 859-261-2567 (C) 859-912-2563
Carol Fickenscher	Church Vice President	(H) 859-635-4638
Carolyn Garriott	Church Secretary	(C) 859-801-0067
Chuck Hawkins	Church Treasurer	Hawkins@NKU.EDU

Church Office Hours

Monday	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Thursday	Closed
Friday	9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Calls will be answered off-site on days when the office is closed.	



December 31, 2023
10:00 a.m.
First Sunday After Christmas



Thought for the Day before Worship

*Faith in Jesus is far more than a solitary experience.
He connects us to a past heritage and a present family.*

*All who are able are welcome to stand

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” (Gordon Young)
(Kendra Franke-Flute)

Tower Bell

***Call to Worship** - from Psalm 148

Fill the air with Christmas praise!

Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; all you shining stars, you highest heavens, you waters above the heavens!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars. Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, old and young together!

Praise the name of the Lord, his glory is above earth and heaven.

Let us Worship our God!!

***Hymn #179** “Joy to the World” (Antioch)

*Prayer of Adoration & Confession

God of the generations, we have heard the story of Jesus' birth, and we are newly attentive to the children among us in families. We pray that our congregation will be a place for children to be safe and secure and to be nurtured in the faith. We pray that the older members will feel welcome and at home and will offer blessings and

guidance. May all our young grow in faith and become strong. May our elders be wise and grow in the favor of God. May we all know your peace in Jesus Christ.

Forgive us, O God, for slighting your church, for making it less than you want it to be.

Forgive us also for expecting it to be perfect, for thinking we can make it more than you know it will be.

You have given us this treasure of the saving gospel of Jesus, and it is placed in this earthen vessel, your church on earth. You have called us to be your church, and we are no more than human. But we are no less than human, and with your grace we can serve you. Your life within us, your love around us, and your grace among us provide the gifts we need. In Jesus' name. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon**
Hear Paul’s words of assurance: “If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.... The death he died to sin, once for all. But the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” In Christ we are forgiven. Dearly Beloved, believe the Good News!

***Gloria Patri** *(Greateorex)*

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

From the Major Prophets: Isaiah 61:10-62:3
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my whole being shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
You shall be a beautiful crown in the hand of the LORD
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Welcoming and Leading Us This Morning

Preaching Today: Rev. J. Martin Westermeyer

Liturgist: Tom Williams

Organist: Michael Sullivan

Choral Director: Dobin Park

Sound Technician: Robert Pettus

Greeters: Darlene Knepshield, Shirley Rice & Mike Hanson

Ushers: Steve Twehues, Ralph Schoulthies & Mike Hanson

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This Week

Sunday, December 31: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Monday, January 1: **New Year’s Day -Church Office Closed**
7:00 p.m. AA & Al-Anon Meeting

Tuesday, January 2: 6:30 p.m. East Row Historic Foundation Meeting
7:00 p.m. NA Meeting

Saturday, January 6: 9:00 a.m. AA Meeting

Sunday, January 7: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Hearing Assistance

We have wireless receivers for the hearing impaired which you may obtain from an usher.

Pastoral Care Notice

If a pastoral care need arises, please contact the church office at (859) 431-1818 and we will get a message to Pastor Marty or Pastor John Robson to contact you.

In Our Prayers

Joan Berkemeyer, Norma Biery, Flo Grey, Betty Jo Haas, Family of Mary Haas, Donna & Phil Hamilton, Marilyn Hanson, Melvin Hanson, Family of Carol Marksberry, Henry Marksberry, Family of Barbara Runge, Bill Seibert, Ed Von Strohe, Bonnie Walter, Wendy Watts & Betty Webster

Continued Prayerful Support

Homebound members.
Those in assisted living and nursing homes.
Church Leadership Team, Ministry Teams, and all our church leaders.
Designated Pastor Rev. J. Martin Westermeyer
Pastor of Visitation John Robson

Children’s Activity Bags

Activity bags for the children are located at each entrance of the church. Feel free to pick up a bag for your child (children) to work on during the worship service. When the service is done just drop the bags off at each exit so that we may replenish the bags for the following week.

Audio Recordings of Our Sunday Services

Did you miss a Sunday service or would like to hear one over again? You can get a CD audio recording of any service each week down on the table located at the North Lobby entrance. The recordings are separated by date so just look for the service you want to hear and take it home.

Children’s Chat

Vickie Kennedy

From the Gospels: Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

Anthem

*“Shepherds”
(Kendra Franke-Flute)*

(Wilbur Held)

From the Letters of Paul: Ephesians 1:3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s own people, to the praise of his glory.

Sermon “Starting Over” Rev. J. Martin Westermeyer

*Hymn “God Himself is With Us”
(see insert)

Gathering Together in Prayer
Joys & Concerns – Silent Prayer – Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Response

O Holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels...The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

Offertory Invitation

Consider once more our covenant with God. The One for whom and by whom all things exist has blessed us with abundance, mercy, and steadfast love. We are called to respond with our whole being in an outpouring of thanksgiving. Let us worship God with our offerings.

Offertory “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (Wilbur Held)

*Doxology
Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heav’n-ly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of naught,
and with his blood man-kind hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

*Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we have left behind the gifts under the tree, signs of your love reflected in our relationships. We have placed in the plates the gifts of our finances given in a spirit of both duty and delight. But now we give you our hearts, our lives, our very self, in deep gratitude for your love. The story of Jesus touches us and evokes a strong response. Receive our best intentions, dear God, and renew our spirits daily that we may walk where you lead us and serve you all of our gifts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*Hymn #198 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” (In Dulci Jubilo)

*Benediction

Postlude “Joy to the World” (Gordon Young)

WELCOME!

Welcome to this house of prayer and worship!
We pray that your experience of worship will deepen your faith and prepare you for the week ahead. We believe God’s Spirit is present in our listening to the Word and our response of discipleship. In our greeting of one another we sense the presence of Christ.
May you know His grace and peace today!
Please sign the guest register when it comes to your seat.



Open flower dates are January 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th
To reserve your special date, please call the church office.

CHURCH BOOK CLUB - ALL ARE WELCOME!

Saturday January 27, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.-church parlor
The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom

LITURGISTS WANTED

Pastor Marty is looking for individuals who are interested in serving as liturgist for our Sunday Worship Service. The responsibilities of being a liturgist include reading a couple of scriptures, the call to worship and the offertory invitation. If you would like to serve in this role, please reach out to Pastor Marty or Kelli in the church office.