

# The Visitor

## October 2024

### TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Volume 107 Issue 9

A Publication of St. John's United Church of Christ

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#### *A Message from J. Martin Westermeyer*

*Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name. The righteous will surround me, for you deal bountifully with me.*

I've preached in September about understanding who we are in our faith journey, how we want others to remember us and looking "down the road".

As we are on journeys of faith, what do we remember about it? Do we only see sad things, disappointing things OR do we remember the fun things, the enjoyable things, those things that bring us joy!

I remember reading about Francis of Assisi in relation to understanding joy in our lives and wanted to share that story with you:

"Francis of Assisi died on the night of October 3, 1226, just as the brothers were reciting the last verse of Psalm 142. He didn't go easily. I'll spare you the medical details; suffice it to say it was unrelieved agony.

Well, almost unrelieved. For as he lay dying, a dear friend arrived, a noblewoman named Jacoba Settesoli. Francis used to stay at her estate when he was in Rome. He became sick there once, and she made him an almond confection. He loved it.

Francis had written her a note advising her to hurry if she wanted to say goodbye: time was running out. And would she please bring him some of that almond cake? Legend says she was on the road before he'd even finished writing.

When she arrived, the brothers didn't know what to do with her. Francis was notoriously strict about boundaries with women. They were afraid to open the door. But for Jacoba, Francis made an exception. He declared her a brother, and they let her in.

Continued on next page

She brought a shroud, some candles for his burial and the pastry. Francis could manage only a crumb. No matter, she would come with cake. For one shimmering moment, everything was sweet.”

So, my friends on the journey, if you could do only one thing in your life, wouldn't you want it to be this? To sense a suffering somewhere, and hurry there? To arrive with cake? And with Christian love, and purpose of presence, bring them joy to sweeten their life – even for a moment?

That is what we are called to be – to minister to each other in all aspects of life. For we are all part of the Family of God.

Keeping you all in prayer – see you in church!

Pastor Marty

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### **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS CAMPAIGN FOR ST. JOHN'S**

St. John's is setting a goal of raising \$25,000 to use for buildings and grounds work at the church. The church is in need of some work like cleaning the air ducts in the sanctuary and repairing the windows in the sanctuary. Members and friends can place their donations to the campaign in the offering but it is in addition to their regular offering not a replacement. The Leadership Team will put on a celebration for the church once the goal is met. Please join us in this goal and work together to strengthen our foundation.



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### **UPDATE ON ST. JOHN'S BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS CAMPAIGN**

Thanks to the generosity of all of our members and friends of St. John's, we are excited to announce that we are over halfway to reaching our goal. Right now we are above \$12,500 and we could not achieve this without the support you have provided. Remember to continue your donations to the buildings and grounds campaign so we can hit our goal of \$25,000. Thank you for your continued support. Kyle Taylor

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### **NOMINATIONS FOR 2025 LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Nominations are open for the 2025 Leadership Team. If you or another member of St. John's would like to run for a position on the Leadership Team, please contact Past President, Laura Haas to express interest. Positions available are President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Questions about each position can be asked of current members of the Leadership Team. Please contact Laura Haas with any additional questions.



## PRAYER MINISTRY-OCTOBER BLESSINGS

### October Thoughts

Be the reason others strive to learn about Jesus.

Always pray to have eyes that see the best in people,  
A heart that forgives the worst,  
A mind that forgets the bad and  
A soul that never loses faith in God.



Every day is a chance to change your life.

Peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ.

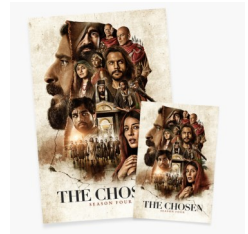
Life without Jesus is like an unsharpened pencil—it has no point.

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### THE CHOSEN

You are invited to join a “watch and discuss” group for Season 4 of “*The Chosen*”. We will gather on the Saturdays listed below from 9:30-11:00 in the church parlor. If you have already seen this season, nothing can be better than watching it again and discussing it with others. If you haven’t seen previous seasons of *The Chosen* it will be easy for you to follow and enjoy the season. All are welcome and we welcome your family and friends too!

- Saturday October 05, 9:30-11:00
- Saturday October 26, 9:30-11:00
- Saturday November 09, 9:30-11:00
- Saturday November 23, 9:30-11:00
- Saturday December 14, 9:30-11:00



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### NEXT VISITOR DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2024

If you would like to submit an article or receive *The Visitor* via email please contact [StJohnsUCC@StJohnsUCCNewport.org](mailto:StJohnsUCC@StJohnsUCCNewport.org).

You may also visit the “News” heading on our website and fill out the appropriate form.

A digital copy of *The Visitor* can be accessed at our website: [StJohnsUCCNewport.org](http://StJohnsUCCNewport.org) under our “News Section.”





## **“THE ENDURING POWER OF “AMAZING GRACE”**



A few Sunday’s ago, we ended our service by singing the hymn “Amazing Grace”. As I was playing the organ, I could feel the voices in the congregation singing with such vigor and power. I could tell how much this hymn means to everyone. Because of that, I thought you might like to know the story behind this Christian classic.

As one of the most beloved hymns of all time, “Amazing Grace” has been a source of inspiration and solace for centuries. Written by John Newton in 1773, this timeless classic continues to captivate hearts with its poignant message of redemption, forgiveness, and the transformative power of faith.

Newton, a former slave trader turned abolitionist, drew from his own experiences of darkness and redemption to craft the hymn's iconic lyrics. The song's majestic melody, paired with Newton's heartfelt words, has created a masterpiece that transcends denominational boundaries and resonates with people from diverse backgrounds.

The hymn's central theme – the astonishing grace of God that rescues us from darkness and restores us to wholeness – speaks directly to the human experience. The opening lines, "I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see," have become an anthem for countless individuals who have experienced the liberating power of faith.

"Amazing Grace" has been translated into numerous languages, adapted into various musical styles, and featured in countless films, television shows, and performances. Its enduring popularity testifies to the hymn's ability to comfort the afflicted, inspire the seeking, celebrate redemption and unite believers across generations.

As this beloved hymn continues to echo through the ages, its message remains steadfast: God's amazing grace is available to all, offering hope, healing, and transformation to those who seek it.

Let us all be thankful for the beautiful and inspirational hymns that God has revealed through the pens of His disciples.

## \*Interesting Facts:\*

- "Amazing Grace" was originally titled "Faith's Review and Expectation"
- John Newton wrote the hymn for a New Year's Day service in 1773
- The melody, "New Britain," was paired with Newton's lyrics in the early 19th century
- "Amazing Grace" has been performed by over 7,000 artists worldwide.

# Amazing Grace!

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The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music. The first system has five lines of lyrics, and the second system has three lines. Chords are indicated above the treble staff.

**System 1:**

Chords: G, G/D, D7, Em, C, G, G/D, D/C, G/B

1 A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!  
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears re-lieved;  
3 The Lord has prom-ised good to me, his word my hope se-cures;  
4 Through man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I have al - read - y come;  
5 When we've been there ten thou-sand years, bright shin - ing as the sun,

**System 2:**

Chords: G, G/B, C, G, Em, G/D, D7, G

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.  
how pre - cious did that grace ap - pear the hour I first be-lieved!  
he will my shield and por - tion be as long as life en-dures,  
'tis grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

WORDS: John Newton (1725-1807), alt.; vs. 5, anonymous  
MUSIC: Virginia Harmony, 1831; adapt. Edwin O. Excell (1851-1921)

NEW BRITAIN  
C.M.

## WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

World Communion Sunday offers congregations a distinctive opportunity to experience Holy Communion in the context of the global community of faith. The first Sunday of October is when Christians in every culture break bread and pour the cup to remember and affirm Christ as the Head of the Church. On that day, we recognize that we are part of the whole body of believers. Join us on **October 6th** as we celebrate World Communion Sunday.



## NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING

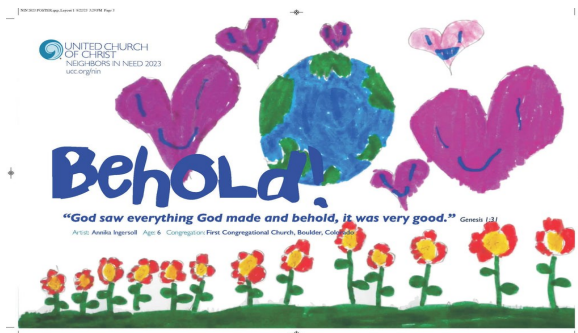
In 2024, the Neighbors in Need theme is **“Mental Health Justice For All!”** This year’s focus is on Mental Health Justice. In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health.

A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life’s mental health journey.

Please join us in promoting this year’s NIN **“Mental Health is a Universal Human Right”** campaign at your church.

As you may recall, one-third of the offering supports Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

St. John’s will collect this offering on **Sunday, October 6, 2024**, as part of World Communion Sunday. We thank you for your support and generosity.



## **PASTOR APPRECIATION DAY**

**Sunday, October 13th** is Pastor Appreciation Day. Take a moment and let Pastor Marty and Pastor John know how much we appreciate all that they do for St. John's and for everyone here at St. John's.



## **THANK YOU FOR A SUCCESSFUL SEPTEMBER SHOES AND SOCKS DRIVE**

During the month of September St. John's collected (NEW) shoes and socks of all sizes and types along with monetary donations to be donated to the Washington UCC community store. Not only did we collect shoes and socks, but we had monetary donations of \$405.

Thank you for participating in this community service. Your support of the important work that Washington UCC does for so many people makes a difference.





## Washington United Church of Christ

2950 Sidney Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45225

Phone (513) 541-7757 Fax (513) 541-7579

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September 1, 2024

St. Johns United Church of Christ  
415 Park Ave.  
Newport, KY 41071

Dear Friends,

Thank you! We received your generous contribution of \$150 for the Back to School ministry at Washington UCC. In addition to the school supplies you donated.

Your gift provided two students with a school uniform (if required) or school clothes, along with underwear and socks, and school supplies. Other donors gave backpacks and personal hygiene kits for each child.

The families are so appreciative!

Because of gifts like yours, the low-income children connected to Washington UCC are proud to go to school with all the clothing and supplies they need.

If we have extra funds or supplies, we will continue to assist students in our Homework Club after-school tutoring program throughout the school year.

On behalf of the children, we thank you.

Sincerely,

*Laurel Humes*

Laurel Humes, Washington UCC Church Council  
For Nancy Matthew, Back to School project chair  
Rev. Melissa Stephens, Pastor





**LUNCH BUNCH**  
Lunch Bunch Octoberfest  
**Wednesday, October 9th**  
12:00 p.m.-2:00p.m.  
“Welcome All”

**JOIN US  
For  
LUNCH!**

You are invited to join the Lunch Bunch in celebrating Octoberfest with  
Mets, brats, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes and/or cottage ham and green  
beans, bread, apple pie and drinks.



**THANK YOU CAROL FICKENSCHER &  
MIKE HANSON**

Many thanks to our favorite church decorators Carol Fickenschier and Mike Hanson who have been busy decorating our sanctuary and doorways for the fall season. Thank you Carol and Mike for always taking the time to make our sanctuary look beautiful. You are appreciated!!



***In Loving Memory of, and In Honor of...***

**Food Pantry**

In Loving Memory of Sue Wagner ~ Gary Wagner

**Memorial Fund**

In Loving Memory of Rev. Henry Marksberry ~ Jan & Darlene Knepshield

**Buildings and Grounds**

In Loving Memory of My Father, Howard Hanson ~ Mike Hanson

In Loving Memory of Rev. Henry Marksberry ~ Dr. Michael Hanson



# Trunk or Treat

Saturday, 19th October  
3pm to 6pm

FOOD • GAMES • MUSIC  
CAR DECORATING • COSTUME CONTEST  
FACE PAINTING • EXCITING PRIZES AND MORE!

**St. John's UCC Parking Lot**

415 PARK AVENUE NEWPORT KY 41071

859-431-1818

STJOHASUCC@STJOHASUCCNEWPORT.ORG

WWW.STJOHASUCCNEWPORT.ORG

## **TRUNK OR TREAT**

Join us Saturday, October 19, 2024 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. as St. John's hosts a Trunk-or-Treat. This event will take place in the parking lot of St. John's. We are asking members and friends to bring their cars and decorate them and pass out candy to children as they come to your car. Costumes are encouraged for both children and adults and there will be a winner for best costume. There will also be games and activities for kids to participate in as they make their way through the treat trail. Invite all of your children, grandchildren, and friends to join us for this fun event.

If you would like to participate by providing a car or hosting an activity please contact the church office or place your name on one of the sign-up sheets located in the church.

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## **ST. JOHN'S UCC ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES**

You will be able to access the worship service by following the link below:

**St. John's UCC website**  
**<https://www.stjohnsuccnewport.org>**

**St John's UCC YouTube Channel**  
**St. John's Newport UCC**

**St. John's UCC Facebook Page**  
**St. John's UCC Newport**



## Updating the 2025 Church Directory

It's that time of year again and the church office will begin the process of updating our church directory. **You will only need to complete a new form if you updated or changed any information in the past year (ex. new telephone number, cancellation of landline, change of email address etc.).** Thank you for your help with this endeavor.

**Family Name & Children 17 years and under:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Adult 1** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Birthday:** We never reveal your age but PowerChurch requires us to enter the year you were born.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Anniversary:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult 2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Birthday:** We never reveal your age but PowerChurch requires us to enter the year you were born.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Anniversary:** \_\_\_\_\_

## *October Birthdays and Anniversaries*

### *October Birthdays*

October 3rd: Barbara Copping, David Stamm & Marty Westermeyer  
October 4th: Peggy Westlund  
October 5th: Jeri McLane  
October 7th: Paul Bergmann  
October 8th: Joyce Bauer  
October 9th: Joan Berkemeyer  
October 11th: Barbara Crapser  
October 13th: Sue Williams  
October 18th: Shirley Suggs  
October 23rd: Tom Williams  
October 24th: Ed Von Strohe  
October 26th: Paige Barber  
October 27th: Carol Thompson  
October 28th: Jim Thompson



### *October Anniversaries*

October 9th: Barbara & Charles Crapser (53 years)  
October 10th: Christine & Jim Schwalbach (26 years)  
October 23rd: Darlene & Steve Dawson (53 years)



St. John's would like to wish a happy birthday and happy anniversary to our friends and family celebrating during the month of October!

### **OCTOBER HOMEBOUND MEMBERS OF THE WEEK**

We would like to celebrate and honor our homebound members of the week for the month of October. We appreciate and celebrate these individuals as our members of the week!

October 6th: Peggy Westlund Birthday  
October 4th: Joan Berkemeyer Birthday  
October 9th: Carol Strong  
October 29th: Jean Morrow Birthday  
November 4th

### **GREETERS WANTED**

If you are willing and able to serve as a greeter on Sunday mornings, we could use your help in this role! One Sunday a month is all that it takes or you could be a substitute greeter if you want to help when needed. Please contact the church office by phone (859-431-1818) or by email [kelli.taylor@stjohnsuccnewport.org](mailto:kelli.taylor@stjohnsuccnewport.org)

