

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

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

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.



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

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.

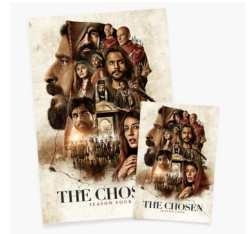
Peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ.

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

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



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.

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 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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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,

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

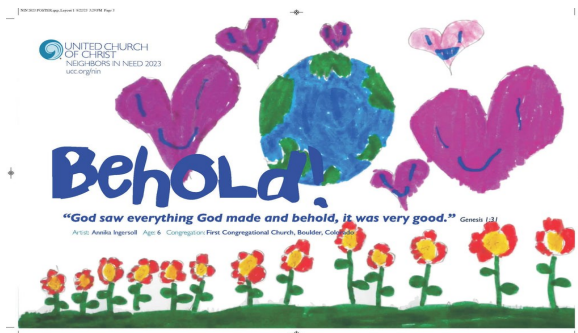
In 2024, the Neighbors in Need theme is **“Mental Health Justice For All!”** This year’s focus is on Mental Health Justice. In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health.

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

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.

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
October 13th: Joan Berkemeyer Birthday October 9th
October 20th: 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



Upcoming Events at St. John's

Sunday, October 6th-World Communion Sunday/Neighbors in Need
Special Offering

Wednesday, October 9th-Noon-2:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch

Sunday, October 13th-Pastor Appreciation Day

Saturday, October 19th-3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Trunk-or-Treat

Saturday, October 5th & 26th-9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. The Chosen

Sunday, October 27th-11:15 a.m. Congregational Meeting

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JEAN MORROW!!

On **Monday, November 4th** our longtime member, Jean Morrow will turn 100 years old! Take a moment to send her a card and wish her a happy birthday!! Jean's address is:



Jean Morrow

41 Arcadia Avenue

Ft. Thomas, KY 41075

Quote of the Day

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.

—Helen Keller

Upcoming Church Business Meeting

Leadership Team Meeting:

Saturday, October 12th -10:00 a.m.

Church Parlor

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, October 27th - 11:15 a.m.

Sanctuary after Sunday Worship

St John's Prayer Ministry October 2024

Prayers for Members

Joan Berkemeyer	Melvin Hanson
Betty Hasse	Rona Hater
Norma Biery	Chuck Hawkins
Betty Jo Haas	Karen Liden
Phil Hamilton	Ed Von Strohe
Marilyn Hanson	Marty Westermeyer



Prayers for Homebound Members

Robert & Betty Hasse

Those Bereaved

Family of Rev. Henry Marksberry

Prayers for Members in Assisted Living and Nursing Homes

Parkside Manor Cynthiana, KY

Pam Maloney

Emerald Trace; Elsmere, Ky

John & Peggy Westlund

Rosedale Green Covington, KY

Marcia Schmidt

The Barrington of Ft. Thomas, KY

Peggy Eckert

River Valley of Butler, KY

Betty Webster

Village at Erlanger Munro House; Erlanger, KY

Judy Adams

Celebration Villa of Highland Crossing; Ft. Wright, KY

Carol Strong

Carmel Manor Ft. Thomas, KY

Bonnie Walter

Legacy Living of Florence, KY

Phil Hamilton

Fields of Florence, KY

Norma Biery

Highland Spring of Ft. Thomas, KY

Gaye McAtee



Prayers For Family and Friends

Sharyn Barbica per M. Hanson
 Lois Bazhaw per D.Knepshield
 Heather Beighle per J. Watts
 Bill Breyer per L. Haas
 Jerry Caldwell per C. Fickenscher
 Donnie Carr per K. Taylor
 Linda Christenson per J. Slater
 Dan Collier per D. Knepshield
 Connor, Ashley & Emmitt per D. Stamm
 Ron & Nancy Derrick per C. Thompson
 Family of Rev. Susan Duker
 Roger Etzold per R. Hater
 Larry Florence per J. Watts
 Helena Foster per D. & D. Stamm
 Margaret Franck per C. Thompson
 Trisha Glahn per P. Paden
 Jack per V. Kennedy
 Joe per V. Kennedy
 J. P. Grimes per J. Watts
 Jim & Dorothy Haas per L. Haas
 Jeane Hawkins per C. Hawkins
 John Haynes per M. Sullivan
 Emma Heck per S. Rice
 Mike Herald per J. Watts
 Jeff Horseman per J. & W. Watts
 Joe Hutchins per C. Thompson
 Marissa Kiefer per K. Kiefer
 Kip per S. Twehues

Sharon Knecht per M. Knecht
 Dorothy Leverman per C. Thompson
 Greyson Manning per C. Haas
 Taylor McElfresh per K. Kiefer
 Hedy McKay per M. Hater
 Patrick McKay per M. Hater
 Tina Neace per J. & W. Watts
 Doug Ollier per J. Ollier
 Cecilia Paskal per K. Kiefer
 Mary Kay Prendergast Per D. Knepshield
 Angie Preus per C. Thompson
 Ruby Rheinhart per C. Fickenscher
 Elizabeth Robson per K. Taylor
 Taryn Ruberg V. Kennedy
 Mike Schlomer and wife & Family per L. Haas
 Corey Schoo per P. Schoo Schierberg
 Sue Scott per B. Boyers
 Steven Small per D. Heitmeier
 Rob Smith per D. Knepshield
 Bob Stafford per P. & D. Goins
 Rebecca Stamm per D. Stamm
 Patti Voelker per K. Kiefer
 Family of Brent Wermes Per L. Haas
 Donald Westermeyer per M. Westermeyer
 Shawn Williams per B. Tuerpe
 Beth Yutze per B. Webster
 Baby Z per V. Kennedy



Prayers for St. John’s

God’s grace and guidance as our church looks onward and upward to the future.

Our church staff and lay leaders.

Strengthening our church ministries, Christian education, and grief support programs.

Stronger involvement in youth and young adult programming.

Designated Pastor J. Martin Westermeyer

Pastor of Visitation John Robson

Our Members and Friends in the Military

Melanie & Jake Adams

Susie Adams

C.J. Allen **South Korea**

Jeremy Allen

Brandon Bailey

Gevin Helf

Brian Huffmann **Afghanistan**

Randy Johnson

Andy Osterhage **Marines**

Ron Rice

Ashley Roberts

Nicholas Schierberg

Chris Spurrier

Michael Sullivan **Afghanistan**

Griffin Thompson **Army**

Brian Trinkle **Afghanistan**

Rob Wickelhaus **Spec. Service**

Bernie Zmurk

Families of those killed in service and members of the military who have returned home physically wounded or suffering PTSD.

If there is someone in the Armed Forces you would like us to pray for, please call the office at (859) 431-1818.