

CONTACTS

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

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	Dr. 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
Kyle Taylor	Church President	859-394-5256
David Stamm	Church Vice President	859-322-2426
Pat Goins	Church Secretary	859-250-2830
Vickie Kennedy	Church Treasurer	859-653-2630 text or call

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.	

TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES



December 15, 2024
10:00 a.m.
Third Sunday of Advent



Thought for the Day before Worship

Take back your life from all the personalities and competing interests that have claimed you, and prepare for living with God.

*All who are able are welcome to stand

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude “O Little Town Of Bethlehem” (Richard Purvis)

Tower Bell

Introit

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
 of Jesse's lineage coming as saints of old have sung.
 It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of
 winter, when half-spent was the night

*Call to Worship

Stop, feel the excitement, the expectation!

The whole creation is standing on tiptoe, waiting to see what God is doing.

Sing! Rejoice! Do not fear! God is coming among us!

We are renewed in God's love for God changes shame to praise. God gathers the outcast under a gentle shade tree.

God gathers you and me and brings us to our true, spiritual home.

Sing, O Daughters of Zion. Rejoice, Sons of the Most High. God is doing a marvelous thing.

Let us praise God for gathering us today as we prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ into our lives.

***Hymn #189** *“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”* (Regent Square)

Welcoming and Leading Us This Morning

Preaching Today: Rev. J. Martin Westermeyer

Liturgist: Dr. Charles Hawkins

Organist: Michael Sullivan

Choral Director: Dr. Dobin Park

Cantor: Jean Nutgrass

Candle Bearers: Katheryn Jones
Charlie Frederick
Diana Stamm

Sound Technician: Robert Pettus

Greeters: Darlene Knepshield & Julie Ollier

Ushers: Steve Twehues, Ralph Schoulthies & Mike Hanson

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This Week

Sunday, December 15: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service/Third Sunday of Advent
7:00 p.m. Choral Christmas Concert

Monday, December 16: 7:00 p.m. AA & Al-Anon Meeting

Tuesday, December 17: 7:00 p.m. NA Meeting
7:00 p.m. East Row Garden Club Meeting

Thursday, December 19: 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Yoga Class-Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 21: 9:00 a.m. AA Meeting
10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Pause for Advent
Discussion Group

Sunday, December 22: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service/Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

Judy Adams, Joan Berkemeyer, Norma Biery, Yvonne Daniels, Betty Jo Haas, Marilyn Hanson, Melvin Hanson, Betty Hasse, Rona Hater, Chuck Hawkins, Gayle McAtee, Carol Schoulthies, Ralph Schoulthies, Ed Von Strohe, Bonnie Walter & Marty Westermeyer

Weekly Prayer List for Northern Kentucky UCC Cluster

Immanuel UCC; Bromley

Christ UCC; Ft. Thomas
Ed Goode

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

Homebound Member of the Week

Our homebound member of the week is John Westlund. John's birthday is Saturday, December 21st. Take a moment this week to send him a card or give him a call as we celebrate John as our member of the week!

His address is:

John Westlund
Emerald Trace on Turkeyfoot
3802 Turkeyfoot Road
Elsmere, KY 41018

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.

Online Video Worship Services

You can view our online video Sunday worship services through our church website: www.stjohnsuccnewport.org, our Church's Facebook Page or YouTube Channel (just search our church's name on Facebook/YouTube) and through the Constant Contact weekly email, (just click the online worship button at the bottom of the page). Hope you enjoy the services!

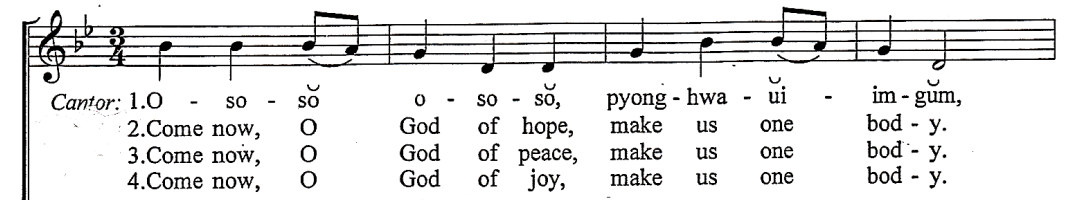
*Prayer of Invocation

Beckoning God, draw us closer to you and to the home you have destined for your whole universe. Open our eyes to what still needs to be done in our own hearts and minds and souls to reveal that home in this place and this time. Open our ears to the proclamations of the prophets among us now, and open our hopes to the vision you offer us through their words and deeds.

Beckoning God, draw us deeper into the covenant entered into by our mothers and fathers in faith on behalf of all your servants in all ages. Inspire us to fulfill what our parents promised so that not one more day will pass before peace and justice enfold this whole world and your Son can be truly welcome in his coming. Amen.

Please be seated

Lighting the Advent Candle of Joy



(congregation sings verse 4 as directed)

Prayer (unison)

Come, O Holy One, breaker of chains and renewer of life! Open our eyes to your presence in all the earth. Stir us to proclaim gladly the signs of your love: the liberation of those oppressed, the healing of those frail and broken, springs of water in all the parched places, and Jesus Christ risen and alive, through whom we pray. Amen.

Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust and will not be afraid,
for the Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.”
With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.
And you will say on that day:
“Give thanks to the Lord;
call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted.
Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.
Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Children’s Chat

Scripture Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Anthem	<i>“Child in a Manger”</i>	<i>(arr. Lloyd Larson)</i>
	Child in the manger, infant of Mary; Outcast and stranger, Lord of all; Child who inherits all our transgressions, all our demerits on Him fall.	
	Once the most holy Child of salvation, Gently and lowly lived below; now as our glorious mighty Redeemer, see Him victorious o’er each foe.	
	Child in a manger! Prophets foretold Him, Infant of wonder; angels behold Him on His throne; worthy our Savior of all our praises; happy forever are His own.	
	Infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe Is Lord of all. Swift are winging, angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing : Christ the babe is Lord of all.	

CALL FOR COOKIES

If you or anyone you know has a special cookie recipe you would like to showcase, we would love for you to include it in the Christmas Concert Reception. The Choir is looking for cookies for their reception after the concert on Sunday, December 15th. Cookies can be dropped off during church office hours or before the concert. Contact the church office with any questions (859) 431-1818 Option 3.

PAUSE FOR ADVENT

Please consider joining our small group gathering. A “Pause for Advent” by Trevor Hudson will be the group’s daily resource during the Advent and Christmas seasons. During this time, we will gather in a discussion group each week for reflection and learning together. Taking time to pause for a few minutes each day can help us maintain balance in our lives, invite us to a deeper understanding of these seasons, and discover how we can open our hearts and lives more generously to God.

This discussion group will meet from 10am-11am in the church parlor on Saturday Dec 7, Dec 14, Dec 21, Dec 28, and January 4. All are welcome. You do not need to be following Hudson’s book to join us, nor do you have to participate every week. If you have questions, please contact Laura Haas (lauraclairehaas@gmail.com) or Kelli in the church office.

CHRISTMAS SEASON

The Christmas Season begins on Sunday, December 24th when we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Join us at 7:00 pm for our candle light Christmas Eve Service with communion.



The poinsettias in church today are provided
by our members and friends of the church.

Open flower dates are December 22nd.
To reserve your special date, please call the church office.



BIRTHDAYS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 15th

December 15th: Karen Schofield

December 18th: Eric Haas

December 21st: John Westlund



2025 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES AND CHURCH DIRECTORIES

The 2025 church offering envelopes and church directories are available to be picked up in the hallway by the church office. You can pick them up on Sunday morning or during church office hours which are Monday & Wednesday 9:00 am-3:00pm and Friday 9:00am-1:00pm. If you do not have offering envelopes and would like a set, please contact Kelli in the church office.



CHRISTMAS FUND

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is one of the UCC’s special mission offerings.

Join with others in the United Church of Christ to help return to those who have given so much to each of us and to our churches by giving generously to the Christmas Fund this year.

This special offering will be collected on Sunday, December 22nd.

Scripture Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has taken away the judgments against you;
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
“Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.”
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Sermon

“Let Us Rejoice”

Rev. J. Martin Westermeyer

***Affirmation of Faith:** Colossians 1: 15-20 (adapted)

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Christ all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through Christ and for Christ.

Christ is before all things, and in Christ all things hold together.

Christ is the head of the body, the church; Christ is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything Christ might be preeminent.

For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Christ all things are reconciled to God, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of Christ's cross.

***Hymn #188** *“Angels We Have Heard on High”* (Gloria)

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

In gratitude to the Creator of heaven and earth, who waters the parched places in our lives, we now bring our offerings with joy and singing. Join in the happiness of those who share in the transforming work of God.

Offertory “Jesus, What A Wonderful Child” (Spiritual/arr. Raney)

Jesus, Jesus, Oh what a wonderful child
 Jesus, Jesus, So lowly meek and mild
 New life, new hope, new joy He brings
 Won't you listen to the angels sing
 Glory, glory, glory to the new born King

He was heralded by the angels, born in a lowly manger
The virgin Mary was His mother and Joseph was his earthly father.
Three wise men came from afar, guided by a shining star
To see King Jesus where He lay in a manger filled with hay

Jesus, Jesus, Oh what a wonderful child
Jesus, Jesus, so lowly meek and mild
New life, new hope, new joy He brings
Won't you listen to the angels sing
Glory, glory, glory to the new born King.

Amen, see the little baby, Amen, lying in a manger.
Amen. What did they call him? Amen, they named Him King Jesus.

*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

Most high and holy God, in the quietness of the night, when we are most afraid, when we face overwhelming difficulty, we make promises to you in return for your assistance. This morning we acknowledge that you need nothing from us, for you are complete and without need. Still, we are grateful. So, accept in the precious name of Jesus Christ our lives, our loves, our hopes, our dreams, our plans, and our gifts. Take us and use us for the sake of this most desperate and hurting world. Amen.

***Hymn #183** “Once in Royal David’s City” (Irby)

***Benediction**

*Choral Response

Postlude “*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*” (*Lani Smith*)

† †

GO IN PEACE, SERVE THE LORD

THANKS BE TO GOD!

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.