

The Visitor

MAY 2026

TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Volume 109 Issue 5

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A Message from J. Martin Westermeyer

Easter was a month ago, on April 5, and we have entered another liturgical season of the year, as well as another season with Mother Nature. We are into Spring and looking forward to Summer – and our focus changes as we can become more active in other ways. I pray that attendance and participation in activities at St. John's UCC will be high on your priority list.

My last semester in seminary was the first time I took notes on a laptop instead of in a notebook. I remember typing as fast as I could while the professor spoke about the psalms and the prophets. Some people really know how to teach, and images from that semester stay with me. Psalm 46 became my favorite after he captivated me with the title for one particular lecture, "The Glad River," reminding me of the Ohio River that flowed by my hometown of Cincinnati.

The psalm holds images of mountains shaking, foaming seas, and nations in uproar, too familiar in this time of trial. Jerusalem had been under attack by a much more powerful enemy, the army of the Assyrians. Picture, if you can, the siege towers in the Lord of the Rings movies, and the amazing, unexpected victory the heroes win in the end, or a last-moment rescue of a heroine from the railroad tracks.

I wish I still had those notes; I lost them in a move from one computer to another (and they're probably in a format I can't access). But I still have the "aha" moment of connection with the glad river and with the psalm's words of assurance I turn to again and again. That assurance is the home I seek, wherever I may be. When the world shakes around us, whatever kind of threat we are facing, God is our refuge and strength. God will make war cease. God will help us.

Remember: when things seem to be out of control, God is there for us. Thanks be to God, our refuge and strength!

See you in church – Pastor Marty

BIBLE STUDY, THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (2026 LECTIONARY YEAR A)

Saturdays 10:00 – 11:00 AM
April 11 through June 27
St. John's UCC Newport, church chapel

Consider studying the Gospel of Matthew during this Spring season.

“Matthew’s life was changed when he met Jesus. In his Gospel Matthew shares the glorious good news about Jesus’ life. From start to finish Matthew reminds us that Jesus is more than just a carpenter. He is our King.”

Max Lucado’s “Life Lessons from Matthew” is a 12-lesson study including readings, stories, questions, and reflections. The study can be done individually or in a small group. The book can be purchased through Amazon (\$7.15), Kindle, or other online or local book sellers (\$4-\$10).

You may wish to join our small group, complete a lesson before each Saturday gathering, and enjoy the fellowship of discussion, or you may prefer to complete the study individually at your own pace with family or friends at home. If you choose the small group you may have to miss now and then, no problem, it is easy to catch up and stay connected.

Saturday April 11 – Lesson 1-First Session
Saturday April 18 – Lesson 2
etc to Saturday June 27 – Lesson 12

Questions? Contact Laura Haas at 859-240-9807,
lauraclairehaas@gmail.com

NEXT VISITOR DEADLINE: THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026

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.”



LENTEN 2026 PRAYER PARTNER LIST

First Sunday of Lent, February 22 – Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026

Darlene Knepshield	was praying for	Pat Padin
Kelli Taylor	was praying for	Chuck Shay
Laura Haas	was praying for	Diana Stamm
Vickie Kennedy	was praying for	Julie Ollier
Carolyn Garriott	was praying for	Pat Goins
Michael Sullivan	was praying for	Carol Thompson
Carol Fickenscher	was praying for	Carol Haas
Bonnie Hoffman	was praying for	Flo Grey
Flo Grey	was praying for	Bonnie Hoffman
Carol Haas	was praying for	Rev. Marty Westermeyer
Pastor Marty Westermeyer	was praying for	Carol Fickenscher
Carol Thompson	was praying for	Carolyn Garriott
Pat Goins	was praying for	Michael Sullivan
Julie Ollier	was praying for	Laura Haas
Diana Stamm	was praying for	Darlene Knepshield
Chuck Shay	was praying for	Vickie Kennedy
Pat Padin	was praying for	Kelli Taylor

I wanted to thank you for your willingness to be a Lenten Prayer Partner for 2026. I hope you took some time to seek out the person for whom you were praying and chatted with them about their life during this time of prayer and see if they experienced God in a different way.

Thank you again for your commitment to be in this prayer covenant with each other.

Pastor Marty

PRAYER MINISTRY– MAY BLESSINGS

Don't wait to pray until you need something.
Pray and be thankful everyday for your blessings.

Always pray :
To have eyes that see the best,
A heart that forgives the worst,
A mind that forgets the bad.
And a soul that never loses faith.



St. John's UCC Chancel Choir and Friends

— present —

A NIGHT OF WORSHIP

*A Concert of Inspiring Music to Benefit
Our Choral Scholars Program*

**Sunday, May 17, 2026
7:00 p.m.**

*St. John's United Church of Christ
415 Park Avenue
Newport, KY*

— FREE ADMISSION —

MAY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

May Birthdays

May 3rd: Amy Greenert
May 10th: Robert Hasse & Alison Morris
May 15th: Flo Grey
May 16th: Karen Liden
May 17th: Dave Coppage & Bonnie Walter
May 21st: Janet Ginter
May 25th: Jack Watts
May 27th: Lois Von Strohe
May 30th: Brooklyn Greenert



May Anniversaries

May 13th: Julie & Charles Croley (37 years)
May 22nd: Patricia & James Penrod, Jr. (33 years)
May 24th: Vanessa Nichols & Jim Vago (23 years)



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

MAY HOMEBOUND MEMBER OF THE WEEK

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

May 3rd: Robert Hasse-Birthday May 10th
May 10th: Flo Grey-Birthday May 15th
May 17th: Bonnie Walter-Birthday May 17th
May 24th: Shirley Rice
May 31st: Joan Berkemeyer

Congratulations Baby Archie

St. John's would like to joyfully celebrate the baptism of Archie Joseph Sester. Archie was baptized at St. John's on Sunday, March 29, 2026. His parents are Shane and Abby Sester and his Godparents are Sean Sester and Jacob Marquet. Congratulations to everyone!!

Baptism



Upcoming Events at St. John's

Sunday, May 3rd: Communion Sunday

Saturday, May 9th: 10:00 a.m. Leadership Team Meeting

Sunday, May 10th: Mother's Day-Every woman in attendance will receive a flower.

Wednesday, May 13th: Lunch Bunch 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 14th: Food Pantry 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 17th: Graduate Recognition Sunday

Sunday, May 17th: Spring Choral Concert 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 24th: Memorial Day Roll of Remembrance Service

Monday, May 25th: Church Office Closed-Memorial Day

Friday, May 29th: Volunteer Day at Henry Hosea House 3:30-6:30 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to help serve dinner at the Henry Hosea on Friday, May 29th from 3:30-6:30pm. All you need to do is serve on the food line and provide a warm, welcoming smile to the people who come for dinner. If you and a family member or friend would be willing to do this, please text or call Pat Goins at 859-250-2830 or contact Kelli in the church office.



LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, May 13th

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Lunch Will Be Provided

Cincinnati Reds Theme

Drinks & Desserts Provided

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!!



MEMORIAL DAY ROLL OF REMEMBRANCE

If you are a church member and would like to add a member of your family to update our Military Roll of Remembrance for Memorial Day 2026, please contact the church office. The deadline for names is **Wednesday, May 20th**. Our Memorial Day Service will be held on **Sunday, May, 24th**.

Please note that names featured in previous years will be included again, and there is no need to re-submit them. Thank you!



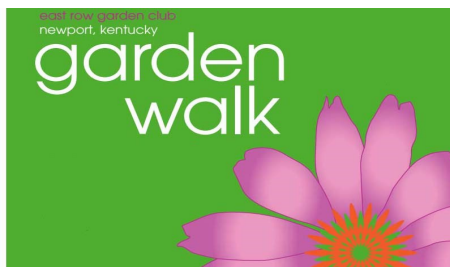
GRADUATE RECOGNITION



During worship on **Sunday, May 17th** St. John's will be recognizing the graduates in our midst. If you know of someone graduating from High School, College, University or another academic institution, please contact the church office to let us know. **Last day to submit names is Monday, May 11th.** Thank you!

EAST ROW GARDEN TOUR

St. John's United Church of Christ is proud to be partnering with the East Row Garden Club for their East Row Garden Tour. The Garden Tour will be taking place on **Saturday, June 6th and Sunday, June 7th from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.** Music, food, vendor booths, and of course the garden tour are sure to make for a wonderful start to the summer. Tickets can be purchased the day of the tour at one of the vendor booths located here at St. John's.



EASTER BREAKFAST AT ST. JOHN'S

What a wonderful Easter Sunday we had at St. John's! The morning started with a pre-service Easter breakfast in Fellowship Hall prepared by our leadership team.

We then enjoyed a wonderful service filled with beautiful music and an uplifting message. Thanks to our Chancel Choir and our musicians for helping us to praise and celebrate the risen Christ.

Thanks to all who came and worshiped with us this morning. You are always welcome!!

Christ is risen! He is Risen indeed!



THANK YOU CAROL FICKENSCHER & MIKE HANSON

We thank Carol Fickenschier for her hard work and dedication with decorating our sanctuary this Easter season. We all enjoyed the beauty of the tulips and lilies that were displayed throughout the sanctuary thanks to her hard work. Thank you Carol!

We thank Mike Hanson for his hard work and dedication in helping to set up the sanctuary for our Easter morning service. Thank you Mike!



TRENT MONTESSORI STUDENTS SAY THANK YOU ST. JOHN'S!

The students from Trent Montessori School were all smiles and laughter when they received their Easter bags filled with candy and treats thanks to St. John's.

We want to thank the Lunch Bunch crew for assembling 95 treat bags for the students of Trent Montessori and our kids at St. John's.



Congratulations St. John's on another successful Outreach Project!

LIVE STREAMING NOW AVAILABLE FOR ST. JOHN'S

LIVE STREAMING. Join us Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. on our church Facebook page to join our service live as it happens. The service will be available to watch at any time on our Facebook page and will be uploaded to our YouTube page and website. We hope you can join us for worship in any format that works for you.

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

