

The Visitor

JUNE/JULY 2026

TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Volume 109 Issue 6

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A Message from J. Martin Westermeyer

I wrote this early, since I will be traveling with my stepson, Rick, out to Wyoming. We are going to deliver items, my wife Betty had stipulated in her will, she wanted to go to our granddaughter, Alyssa- Rick's daughter. It will be "guy time", but also a time to be with the extended family we aren't able to see often.

As I was thinking about the trip, and Rick and I were getting all the arrangements together, I ran across a devotional that reminded me of my grandfather (Mother's father). He had been a Minister in the German Evangelical Church, which eventually became one of the parent congregations of the United Church of Christ. My memory of his preaching (though not very clear) was how loud he could be at times-not like my father and definitely not my style of preaching.

The text was Habakkuk 2:1 (NRSV): *I will stand at my watch post, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what God will say to me.*

The devotion spoke of the writer's grandfather, also a preacher, shouting at the end of a sermon:

"Even if you stand alone, stand!"

Her grandfather was the kind of man people described as "fearless." He was known for not backing down or for taking the safe routes to which his colleagues clung.

I know those colleagues, those who interpret Gospel in a more radical way. The ones whose congregations have made life difficult because they challenged the status quo. At times, in my career, I have felt like standing in the middle of a stream, while currents rush by, while I was still trying to find footing or tread water.

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The question then is: Who do we need to stand with us? When the *@#& hits the storm, when everything seems to be falling apart and we feel completely isolated; who do we need with us?

At the watch post, the question is less “Who is there?” than “Who sees what is coming?” Some of us know and what we know is ... overwhelming. The human response of being overwhelmed can clash with the perception of the prophetic response of what to do in the moment. Knowing can be the very thing that makes it difficult to stand.

In our personal life and in the life of a local congregation, there comes a time when difficult topics need to be addressed-when a different direction needs to be considered to meet the current and future needs of ourselves and the church.

Here’s what we know from Habakkuk: on the ramparts, God speaks. You may not know what God has to say. This may mean that you are not on the ramparts.

So, my friends, as we continue on a journey of self-examination, find your way there even if you have to do it alone. And in so doing, find God, who is the maker of ways out of no way.

May God, give us the footing to stand on the ramparts with God, no matter what may happen.

See you in church – Pastor Marty

PRAYER MINISTRY– JUNE/JULY BLESSINGS

God’s Garden:
Lettuce praise Him
Squash the gossip and turnip at church.

Faith is like Wi-Fi–
Invisible but connects you to what you need,

Worry less, pray more.

Summer vacation?
Don’t forget to invite God to go.

When you can’t sleep, talk to God.

Take the time to thank God for our freedom.



CHORAL SPRING CONCERT

What an amazing concert we had at St. Johns on Sunday evening, May 17th. Our Chancel Choir, soloists and musicians all did an outstanding job praising God with their musical gifts. Thanks to Tony, Joy, Houston, Matthew and Michael for their musical leadership. Thanks to the Gloria Dei Handbell Choir for their beautiful music. It was such a joy to hear the Lisa Stamm memorial bells playing beautiful music once again. And special thanks to our Chancel Choir for their hard work and dedication in bringing this wonderful program to our church!!



NEXT VISITOR DEADLINE: THURSDAY, JULY 23, 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.”

LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, June 10th

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

Bring Your Own Lunch

Drinks & Desserts Provided

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!!

LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, July 8th

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

Details to Follow-Check Your Sunday Bulletin

Drinks & Desserts Provided

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!!



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 Walk. 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.



FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP

Our food pantry is always in need of financial donations, or donations of food and personal hygiene products. At this time we have a high need for deodorant, body wash, (we already have plenty of bar soap), hand and body lotions, toothpaste, shampoo and hand sanitizer. If it is easier to make a money donation simply mark it "for the food pantry" and we will pass your donation along to John Robson to make the needed purchases.



Any number of goods or amount of money that you are able to contribute will be much appreciated by those who turn to our church in their times of need.

The collection will begin **Sunday, May 24th** and continue through **Sunday, June 21st**. We'll have boxes to collect items at the entries to the sanctuary. Thank You

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to help serve dinner at the Henry Hosea on **Friday, July 31st 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.



SUMMER FELLOWSHIP SUNDAYS

Please join us after Sunday worship for **lemonade and cookies**. Enjoy a few moments of fellowship outside the entrance at the parking lot drop off. We will celebrate the last Sunday of each month - **June 28th, July 26th, and August 30th**. Cookie donations are needed for each gathering.



BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

St. John's is excited to announce the return of our Back-to-School supply drive benefiting the Newport Independent School District and Washington UCC. This year the schools are looking for any of the following items: Crayola Crayons, Crayola Colored Pencils, Crayola Markers, Folders, Pencils, Pens (blue, black & red), Glue Sticks, Erasers, Pencil Boxes, Scissors, Single Subject Spiral Notebooks (wide & college lined), Composition Books and Backpacks.

If you can't make it out to shop, no problem! We will collect monetary donations and send them to the organizations to help them get the supplies they need. Make your check payable to St. John's UCC and mark it for the "Back to School Drive." This donation drive will kick off on **July 5th** and run through **August 2nd**. Boxes will be located at each of the entrances to the sanctuary to drop off supplies. Please contact the church office with any questions.



Upcoming Events at St. John's

Saturday June 6th & Sunday, June 7th: East Row Garden Walk
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 7th: Pentecost Celebration/Communion Sunday-
Remember to wear something red.

Wednesday, June 10th: Lunch Bunch 12:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 11th: Food Pantry 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 21st: Father's Day (Every dad in attendance will receive a special gift)

Friday, June 19th: Juneteenth - Church Office Closed

Sunday, June 28th: Cookies & Lemonade Social following morning worship

Friday, July 3rd: Independence Day Observed - Church Office Closed

Wednesday, July 8th: Lunch Bunch 12:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.

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

Sunday, July 26th: Cookies & Lemonade Social following morning worship

THANK YOU RALPH SCHOULTHIES

We would like to thank Ralph Schoulthies for his 25+ years of service to St. John's UCC as our head usher. Each Sunday Ralph would take the lead for us as he made sure everything was in order for Sunday worship and our coffee hour. Ralph did everything from getting the Sunday morning ushers for offering and communion, preparing and cleaning up after communion, passing out and collecting attendance pads, unlocking/locking doors and many more tasks that are done each Sunday morning so that everyone has a pleasant worship experience. Coming in early and staying late, Ralph never complained and was always asking what else needed to be done. We thank you Ralph for your many years of service and dedication to this church. We will miss you as head usher but still look forward to seeing you and Carol each Sunday morning.





GRADUATE RECOGNITION 2026



Avery Barber graduated from Highlands High School on May 26, 2026. She will attend the University of Kentucky in the Fall and major in Elementary Education and Speech Pathology. Avery is the daughter of Tim and Tracy Barber and the granddaughter of Joann Winstel.

Mark Behrendt graduated from the University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music on May 1, 2026 with a Bachelor's of Music in Music Education. He is currently looking for a middle or high school choir job in the Cincinnati area. Mark is the son of Jeff and Diana Behrendt.

Jackson Bittner graduated from Campbell County High School on June 1, 2026. Currently Jackson is participating in a Cooperative Education program with a local electrical company. He plans to work with them after graduation and attend Enzweiler Building Institute trade school and become an electrician. Jackson is the son of Kyle and Cindy Bittner and the grandson of Tom and Carol Haas.

Jenna Hurtt graduated from Northern Kentucky University on May 9, 2026 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Jenna is the daughter of Bob and Beth Gies and the granddaughter of Garry Miller.

Grant Kiefer graduated from Ohio University on May 2, 2026 with a bachelor's degree in broadcasting and journalism. Grant is the grandson of Karen Kiefer.

Max Meadows graduated from Newport Central Catholic High School on May 18, 2026. He will attend the University of Kentucky in the Fall. Max is the son of Dave and Krista Meadows and the grandson of Mike and Brenda Scharber.

Luke Robert Slater graduated from Loveland High School on May 17, 2026. He will attend The Ohio State University in the Fall and major in Chemical Engineering. Luke is the son of Robert and Sarah Slater and the grandson of Judy Slater.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026!
We wish you much happiness and success!

Pictured:
Left to Right
Mark Behrendt,
Avery Barber,
Pastor Marty,
Jackson Bittner,
Max Meadows



June Birthdays and Anniversaries

June Birthdays

June 9th: Beth Gies

June 10th: Tom Haas & Oliver Morris

June 13th: Joanna Haas

June 20th: Betty Jo Haas

June 27th: Stuart Suggs

June 28th: Emily Fussinger



June Anniversaries

June 9th: Patty & Jack Patterson (47 years)

June 13th: Diana & David Stamm (56 years)

June 22nd: Carol & Tom Haas (58 years)

June 25th: Pat & Dan Goins (55 years)



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

JUNE HOMEBOUND MEMBER OF THE WEEK

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

June 7th: Gayle McAtee

June 14th: Marcia Schmidt

June 21st: Pam Maloney

June 28th: Joan Sheanshang-Birthday July 2nd



WELCOME BABY LILY

Congratulations to Dobin and Sane Park on the birth of their new baby daughter Lily Jueun Park.

Lily was born on May 11, 2026.

Congratulations to the Park Family!!



July Birthdays and Anniversaries

July Birthdays

July 2nd: Joan Sheanshang
July 5th: Makenzie Connley
July 9th: Sheila Bogen
July 10th: Macy Morris
July 11th: Zachary Rice
July 12th: Phyllis VonStrohe
July 20th: Jennifer Withrow
July 26th: Pat Goins & Garry Miller
July 27th: Bertie Jo Tuerpe
July 29th: Mark Hater
July 31st: Dan Goins



July Anniversaries

July 7th: Amy & Matthew Greenert (14 Years)
July 17th: Pam & Paul Schierberg (49 years)
July 23rd: Kelli & Scott Taylor (38 years)



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

JULY HOMEBOUND MEMBERS OF THE WEEK

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

July 5th: Jean Morrow
July 12th: John Westlund
July 19th: Bertie Jo Tuerpe-Birthday July 27th
July 26th: Peggy Eckert

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

