

The Visitor

AUGUST 2026

TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Volume 109 Issue 7

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

A Message from J. Martin Westermeyer

It's been two months since I wrote my last article for the Visitor. I've been on vacation to see my granddaughter and her family in Wyoming, we've celebrated Pentecost, and we've continued to move through the summer. And now, we're looking forward to early fall and a sense of regular routine to begin.

While we have been away from our regularly scheduled gatherings outside of Worship, I have still been meeting with other clergy. We talk about a variety of topics, but one that comes up periodically and is on everyone's radar is the safety and security of our members when we are in the building.

I wanted to share with you a story that was shared at one of these discussions. It comes from Georgia and was part of a larger discussion when thinking about safety of those in the church building.

"The elderly mother of one of our church trustees is one of the sweetest people you could ever meet. She's truly a venerable soul, not just because of age, but because of a wise character that inspires so many. In the decades I've known her, she has exuded warmth and good will.

Some time ago, gun laws in Georgia required our church officers to post signs at our entrances stating that firearms were prohibited, except for designated security personnel. In a trustee meeting where the signs were being discussed, the daughter of that demure elderly woman stated: "Well, I'll have to inform my mother that she can no longer pack her pistol in her purse when she comes to church anymore."

"You're joking," someone said.

"Oh no," she responded. "That sweet little lady we all love has been a licensed gun carrier ever since I've known her. And believe me, she knows how to use it."

Since that day, I've often thought about how to reconcile the sweet venerable woman I'd come to know with the intrepid gun toting woman her daughter revealed her to be. I concluded that my images of her might be conflicted, but the woman herself is the same woman she's always been

I got to thinking, sometimes it's hard for us to reconcile the God who shatters the earth in bolts of lightning with the God whose eye is on the sparrow.

In these days of volatility, we are tempted to desperately search for God's strike – or for God's comfort. But we should know that the God of our tsunami is also the God of our strength.

The Scripture that comes to mind is:

The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. May the Lord give strength to his people!

May the Lord bless his people with peace!- Psalm 29:7 & 11 (NRSV)

See you in church – Pastor Marty

PRAYER MINISTRY– AUGUST BLESSINGS

Seven Things To Tell God Every Morning

1. Thank you for giving me a new day.
2. Please guide my thoughts and my words today.
3. Help me love others with kindness and grace.
4. Watch over my family and my home.
5. Fill my heart with peace even in difficult moments.
6. Remind me that You are always with me.
7. Today I place my worries and my plans in your hands.



PRAYER MINISTRY UPDATE

This is just a reminder about the Prayer Ministry at St. John's. We are a small group of dedicated ladies who set aside time each day to pray for everyone on the Prayer List.

If you know of someone in need of prayer, whether a member of our church or just a friend, please let me know or call Kelli at the church office. Give us the name of the person and the reason for needing prayer. You can also fill out the prayer request cards located in each pew. Everything is kept strictly confidential. I only ask that you keep Kelli or me updated on the person's condition so we know how they are doing. Thank you.

Blessings,

Darlene Knepshield
Chair, Prayer Ministry



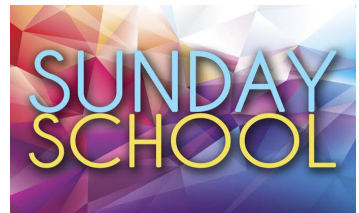
A NEW OPPORTUNITY

Beginning September 6th, on the first Sunday of each month, St. John's UCC located at Park and Nelson Place in Newport, is offering a Sunday School session for grades K-6 during worship. Worship on the first Sunday of the month is our communion Sunday, to which all are welcome!

Sunday worship is 10:00 – 11:00 am. Coffee Hour, a time of fellowship, precedes worship in Fellowship Hall on the lower level below the sanctuary.

Signs in the building will guide you to the Sunday School classroom.

The children's time will be led by
Mr. Matthew Shephard



NEXT VISITOR DEADLINE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 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."

NKY UCC DART BASEBALL TOURNAMENT AND CARRY IN LUNCH – AUGUST 30TH

On Sunday, August 30, 2026, we at St. John's UCC will be hosting the other UCC churches in Northern Kentucky at a Dart Baseball Tournament. (participation in the tournament is optional)

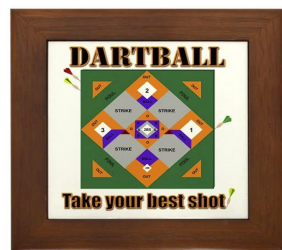
The meal will begin at 12:30 pm, with the tournament to follow at approximately 1:30 pm. It will be an opportunity to share food and fellowship with our sister UCC folks in Northern Kentucky. We are the hosts, and will provide drinks, paper plates, etc. The main course will be open-faced roast beef and open-faced turkey sandwiches. The flyer elsewhere lists what items individual churches are to bring. If you feel motivated to provide a side or a dessert – no one will turn you down.

As I understand it, there was a team at St. John's UCC that participated in the Northern Kentucky league that was formed in the late 1980's and ran until 2020. If you are willing to participate, then please attend and represent St. John's UCC-Newport in the tournament. (Pastor Marty wants to have bragging rights). If you will participate and/or bring your boards, please let Rachel at St. Mark's UCC know at rachelswirrig@gmail.com.

As I understand it, there will be other people from the denomination (moderator, Association Minister, etc.) attending and fellowshiping with us. Please plan to share lunch and the afternoon together with other UCC folk and share in the fellowship.

Please note flyer elsewhere in the Visitor and posted throughout the church. Thank you!!

See you in church – Pastor Marty



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 have celebrated the last Sunday of each month and **August 30th** will be our last social for the summer. Cookie donations are needed for each gathering. Thank you!



NKY UCC
DARTBALL GATHERING

with a Carry In Lunch

Sunday, August 30, 12:30

at

**St. John's Newport
415 Park Avenue**

Come enjoy a day of food and fellowship
with all our NKY UCC churches!

Any one who is interested is welcome
to join in a friendly game (or two) of dartball.

DRINKS:

St. John's Newport

SIDES:

St. Paul Alexandria
Christ Ft. Thomas

MAIN COURSE:

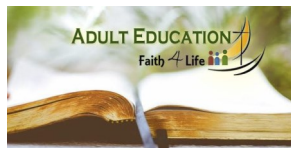
Immanuel Bromely
(Open-faced roast beef
and turkey sandwiches)

DESSERT:

Grace Ft. Wright
St. Mark Latonia
St. John Bellevue

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

We hope you'll consider joining us for fellowship and growth in your faith. A reminder that all are welcome – neighbors, friends and family. Gatherings are always – come as you are able.



1. Book Discussion - Saturday August 29, 10:00 – 11:30 am

“Who Needs God” by Harold Kushner. In this book Rabbi Kushner “makes religious commitment understandable and attractive to everyone as he explores the importance of God and religious faith in our daily lives”. Whether you’ve read the book or not, you would likely enjoy the conversation.

2. Bible Study – Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30 am, September 12 through October 31

“Acts 1-12 The Church is Born” by R. Albert Mohler, Jr. Good Book Guide. This is an 8-session study of the first half of The Book of Acts. “The story of Jesus does not end with the resurrection and ascension; what did Jesus do next? As the parable of the mustard seed teaches, great things can come from small beginnings. We see this principle play out in the history of the Church.”

The first 12 chapters include the ascension, Pentecost, the first Christian martyrdom, the conversion of Saul, and the coming of the gospel to the Gentiles. When we take time to not just read, but to understand the Bible, we are better able to apply what we learn to our lives and participate in growing the church.

On September 12 we will share in discussion of session #1, Promises, pages 7-12. The book can be purchased easily through Amazon. This is the 2025 edition published by The Good Book Company. If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to reach out.

Laura Haas, 859-240-9807, lauraclairehaas@gmail.com

3. Book Discussion - Saturday November 14, 10:00 – 11:30 am

“Theo of Golden” by Allen Levi. This is a novel about “the power of creative generosity, the importance of wonder to a purposeful life, and the invisible threads of kindness that bind us to one another”. A *New York Times* bestseller and Levi’s first novel, you can’t read this book and avoid the desire to discuss it with others!

4. Advent Study – Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30 am, November 28 through December 19

Our gatherings during Advent will be led by Vickie Kennedy.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

August Birthdays

August 2nd: Fred Haas, Jr.

August 3rd: Krista Meadows

August 6th: Erma (Sammie) Deslongchamps

August 10th: Tara Connley & Brooks Morris

August 13th: Mike Boyers

August 20th: Carol Peper & Judy Slater

August 26th: Judy Adams



August Anniversaries

August 1st: Sue & Tom Williams (73 years)

August 12th: Alison & Matthew Morris (20 years)

August 19th: Betty Jo & Fred Haas (65 years)

August 25th: Laura Haas & Jim Breyer (14 years)

August 25th: Darlene & Jan Kneppshield (64 years)

August 28th: Jodi & Fred Otto (46 years)



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

AUGUST HOMEBOUND MEMBER OF THE WEEK

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

August 2nd: Janice Keeney

August 9th: Robert Hasse

August 16th: Judy Adams-Birthday August 26th

August 23rd: Carol Strong

August 30th: Shirley Rice

MID- YEAR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

The 2026 Mid-Year Contribution Statements will be mailed out around the first or second week of August. If you did not receive a contribution statement and feel that you should have, you can contact our financial administrator Chris Baker at: Financialadmin@stjohnsuccnewport.org or you can call the church office at (859) 431-1818 option 3 for Kelli or option 7 for Chris for more information.



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HENRY HOSEA HOUSE VOLUNTEER DAY

On Friday, May 29th a group of volunteers from St. John's took time out of their day to volunteer at the Henry Hosea House. These volunteers helped serve food to those in need in the local community that came to the center that day. They were joined by children who have been serving meals during the school year. We are so grateful for all of the work our volunteers do in the local community. The next volunteer day is in October. Look for more details in your October Visitor.



LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, August 12th

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

White Elephant Bingo

Veggie sticks.... Chips..... dips...

BRING YOUR OWN SANDWICH and a wrapped White Elephant

Gift to share for bingo prizes.

Drinks & Desserts Provided

ALL are Welcome! Come and Enjoy!



Congratulations Baby Lily

St. John's would like to joyfully celebrate the baptism of Lily Jueun Park. Lily was baptized at St. John's on Sunday, July 19, 2026. Her parents are Dobin and Saneek Park and her Godparent is Michael Sullivan. Congratulations to everyone!!



Baptism

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COOKIES & LEMONADE JUNE FELLOWSHIP SOCIAL

Following Sunday worship on Sunday, June 28th, St. John's members and friends had a time of cookies, lemonade and fellowship under the church canopy. We had a wonderful time catching up with friends and enjoying the summertime weather. Thanks to everyone who baked/ brought cookies for this event.



COOKIES & LEMONADE JULY FELLOWSHIP SOCIAL

Following Sunday worship on Sunday, July 26th, St. John's members and friends had another fun time of cookies, lemonade and fellowship under the church canopy. It is always a wonderful time catching up with family and friends and hearing about everyone's fun summer. Thanks to everyone who baked/brought cookies for this event.



**THANK YOU ST. JOHN'S ON A SUCCESSFUL
FOOD PANTRY DRIVE**

Thank you St. John's on another successful mission moment. We collected \$570 to buy personal hygiene products for the Food Pantry and the congregation brought in countless bottles of personal hygiene items. Our clients who visit the Food Pantry will be forever grateful for these items. Thank you again St. John's.



THANK YOU

Thank you so much for all your kind words and thoughts for Betty Webster. She loved her church and all the people that made it possible for her to continue watching when she could not attend.

Ron and Brenda Webster

*Thank
You*

THANK YOU MIKE HANSON

We want to give a big shout out to Mike Hason for weeding our flowerbeds and cleaning up the landscaping around the church. Mike spent over 2 hours cleaning up around the church to make sure our landscaping was clean and well maintained. Thank you again Mike for all of your hard work and dedication.



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

Food Pantry

In Loving Memory of Sue Wagner ~ Gary Wagner
In Loving Memory of Sue Wagner ~ Gary Wagner
In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ Paul Bergmann
In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ Ralph & Carol Schoulthies

Joseph Haas Sr. Choral Scholars Fund

In Loving Memory of Betty Webster ~ John Robson
In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ John Robson
In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ John Robson

Memorial Fund

In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ Mary Beth Luyckx
In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ Elizabeth Hale

General Fund/In Loving Memory

In Loving Memory of Betty Webster ~ Jan & Darlene Knepshield
In Loving Memory of Walter, Helen & Don Berkemeyer ~ Joan Berkemeyer
Donation made by William Rowekamp
In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ Jan & Darlene Knepshield
In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ Jan & Darlene Knepshield

Music Fund

In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ Tom & Carol Haas
In Loving Memory of Bonnie Walter ~ Joan Berkemeyer
In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ Tom & Carol Haas
In Loving Memory of Betty Hasse ~ Joan Berkemeyer

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

