

Worship with

St. John's

United Church of Christ



July 26th, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

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WELCOME VISITORS! Thank you for coming! Please sign a pew card to place in the offering plate.

WORSHIP: When reading this bulletin Leader Speaks Plain Font,
Everyone Speaks Bold Font

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 20TH!**
We will celebrate St. John's 125th Anniversary. The Rev. Terrill Murf our Conference Minister will be our guest preacher and there will be a meal to follow. Let Pastor Muriel know if you would like to join the planning taskforce.
- **Coffee Hour** Next Sunday at 9:30 am. Thank you Dan and Dawn for hosting.
- **Community Garden** is ongoing, feel free to stop by to water, weed or harvest.
- **The Belvidere Group (AA)** meets every day at 7:00 pm
- **Chair and Mat Yoga** with Katherine Ray is going weekly!
Chair yoga at 10:00 am and mat yoga at 11:30 am No RSVP required and classes are \$5.00.
- **Community Meal:** 3rd Wednesday of each month.
- **Nursery:** Children are welcome in all aspects of worship. The nursery provides an alternative space so kids and parents can both get what they need from worship. Children are encouraged to check in with their adult before going downstairs with the nursery attendant.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT “Change my Heart, O God”

Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.

You are the potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.

RESPONSIVE WELCOME STATEMENT

At St. John's United Church of Christ, we are Living
Outwardly & Valuing Everyone!

We live and work amid God's love!

In that spirit, we extend love to all who come into our midst,
regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race,
nationality, skin color, culture, differing abilities, age or
political affiliations, to participate fully in all aspects of
church.

**Our ministry is to bring the Good News of Christ's love
to all.**

We work in God's name to tear down walls and build
community.

**To walk with each other through all of life's
circumstances,**

To provide for those in need,

To offer comfort to the hurting and the sick, and to uplift
the broken hearted.

Where we fail, we ask for God's forgiveness.

May the Holy Spirit and our siblings continue to challenge us
to do better.

**No matter who you are or where you are on life's
journey, you are welcome here!**

Call to Worship (inspired by Psalm 105)

Give thanks to the Holy One. Make God's deeds known among the peoples.

We call upon the name of the Holy One!

Give thanks to the Holy One. Tell of all God's wonderful works!

We sing praises and remember the wonderful works, miracles, and judgements!

Give thanks to the Holy One. Glory in God's holy name!

We seek the Holy One, and our hearts rejoice! Praise the Holy One!

Invocation

Gracious God, you have made yourself known among us. When we seek you, we find you. You surround us with love and righteousness. Your presence strengthens and upholds us. While we gather together, let us be mindful that your wisdom speaks, your power fuels, and your heart fills us. Grant us discernment. Let us be faithful. May you be glorified. Amen.

HYMN #312 "WE LOVE YOUR REALM, O GOD"

UCC Statement of Faith #885

CHILDREN'S TIME

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #404 "GIVE UP YOUR ANXIOUS PAINS"

(Tune: "This is my Father's World")

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Glorious God, may your face shine upon us. Teach us your ways so that we may live in peace, justice, and righteousness. Keep our way steady and directed toward you. Remove the hold of oppression and evil

from among your people. Transform our hearts and minds so that we might reflect your goodness and love in the world. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Words of Grace

Servants of God, the Holy One radiates grace and mercy. By the power of Love and Spirit, receive the opportunity to redeem and repair every mistake, every passive participation, every deliberate action that has caused harm. Receive God's forgiveness in order to be released from shame and release to make things right. Nothing can separate us from God's love.

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE Romans 8:12-25

SERMON *"Waiting for the Grand Reveal"*

MOMENT FOR MISSION – CARPENTER'S PLACE

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, through whom all blessings
flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**



Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving

Generous God, may these gifts be sufficient to meet the needs before us. May we be good stewards of your

resources. And, may we be moved to live the generous life more deeply and completely in every aspect of our lives. Amen.

HYMN #18 "GUIDE ME, O MY GREAT REDEEMER"

Benediction

What is This?: Service Prayers for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost Year A was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

How to use a QR code: open the camera on your cellphone. Pretend you are going to take a picture of one of the 4 boxes on this page. The camera will focus on the box. Words will appear on the bottom of the screen. Tap on the words.

Free digital donations can now be made on our website stjohns401.org. Follow the QR code and check out all the possibilities! This means no more buying checks and added security! >>>>>>



General Giving



Amazon List

<<<<<<We use an Amazon List to let people know what St. John's needs for our office and different ministries like the Paper Angel Closet and Community Meals. It is always changing. Check it out.



Tea & Coffee

St. John's also has two on-going fundraisers where you can order items and have them delivered right to your door with a portion of the proceeds supporting our ministries.



T-Shirts

Weaving the Future**Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

I have been on a quest to understand better the days of old by learning how to master 18th-century living skills long forgotten. My most recent adventure was a class on how to grow flax, spin it into thread, and then weave it into cloth.

It was there at the loom that my weaving became a prayerful act, and with each pass of the shuttle, I thought of the series of "The Kingdom of God is like" parables that Jesus shared so long ago.

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed — the smallest of seeds that grows so great it becomes a haven where birds make their nests among the branches. The Kingdom of God is like yeast that rises into a pillowy loaf of warm bread.

The Kingdom of God is like ...

I mused that if Jesus was at the loom with me, he would begin teaching how the Kingdom of God is like a weaver creating a tapestry with various colors of threads.

The effectiveness of Jesus' many teachings has always been that he was able to take what was right in front of him and make it a teachable God moment. It was a gift that made God's Kingdom more accessible to others. There was no secret handshake or password to gain entry. Rather, the Kingdom was — and is — all around in ways we are often blind to.

Take a look where you are right now. What is a Kingdom of God parable Jesus would speak of?

Chances are you are sitting in a pew, and you think there is no sign of the Kingdom. Look again.

Could it be that the Kingdom of God is like the threadbare cushion you might sit on? Its patted down stuffing testifying to the generational stories of faith that need to be heard and the ones that still need to be told. Or perhaps the Kingdom of God is like a cracked vase that is holding the flowers on the chancel. Once shattered but not discarded. Rather, lovingly restored by hands who still saw its beauty and worth.

The Kingdom of God is like...

It's now your turn to see with eyes of faith and make a new parable for today.

Story-telling God, may our voice speak of the parables still needing to be told. May everything we see and savor, touch and taste, remind us of the goodness of Your kingdom that is here on Earth all around us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's *Sunday Bulletin*.)