

Faith in Action

The United Church of Christ strongly supports the right to worship God, or not, as each person sees fit. Yet in this present time religion has been weaponized as a license to discriminate against the marginalized, deny care to women and transgender people, and actively harm beloved children of God. We cannot abide by this.

That's why we urge Congress to pass H.R.1954 (S.894), the Do No Harm Act. The Do No Harm Act will restore the original purpose of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA): protecting the free exercise of religion while ensuring that RFRA cannot be used to undermine civil rights, labor protections, public health, child welfare, or access to healthcare.

In recent years, RFRA has increasingly been invoked to justify discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, restrict reproductive healthcare, weaken worker protections, and deny services to marginalized communities. The Do No Harm Act provides a balanced approach that safeguards genuine religious liberty while protecting the dignity and rights of all people.

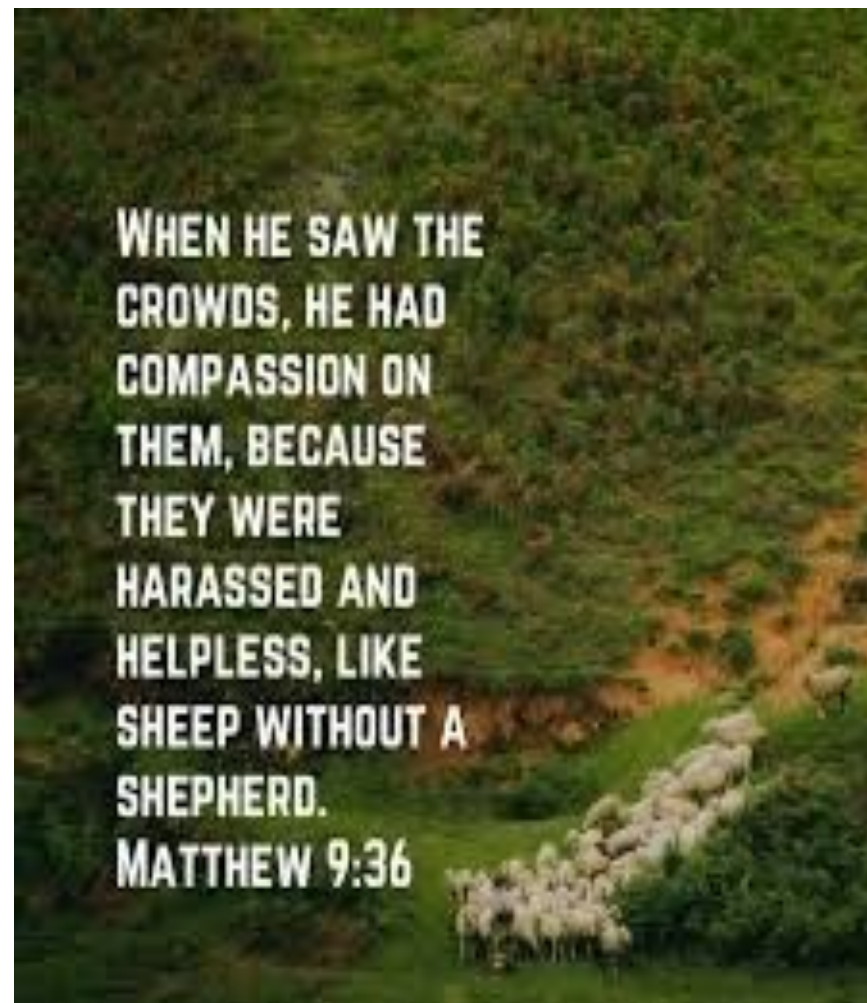
The United Church of Christ has consistently advocated for a vision of religious liberty rooted in justice, inclusion, and care for our neighbors. Scripture calls us to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8). As people of faith committed to justice, compassion, and the inherent dignity of every human person, we believe religious freedom and civil rights should not be pitted against each other. We should not allow our faith to be used as a tool to discriminate.

Contact your members of Congress and ask them to support the Do No Harm Act.

<https://www.ucc.org/action-center/>

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 Speak Bold Font

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.

Special thanks to Jeanne Anderson for playing for our service today!!

- ✚ **Confirmation** by Zoom today at 2pm
- ✚ **Father's Day Meal with Train Travel Program** after worship Sunday, June 21st,
- ✚ **Compassion Camp:** Bible School June 22-26, 5-7pm. Registration is open. All ages welcome. Invite friends.
- ✚ **Community Meal** this Wednesday at 5pm. Menu: chicken scallop, vegetables, desert, milk, lemonade
- ✚ **Community Garden** is ongoing feel free to stop by to water, weed or harvest.

Monthly Events

- ✚ **Worship at Heritage Woods** every 3rd Sunday of the month at 3pm.
- ✚ **No July Coffee Hour**
- ✚ **Fellowship Meal** every second Sunday of the month after worship.
- ✚ **The Belvidere Group (AA)** meets at everyday at 7pm.
- ✚ **Chair and Mat Yoga** canceled Saturday the 20th and resumes the 27th. Chair yoga at 10 AM and mat yoga at 11:30 AM. No RSVP required and classes are \$5.

How to use a QR code: open the camera on your cell-phone. 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.

Fee Free digital donations can now be made on our website stjohs401.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

SERMON "Blessed to be a Blessing"**INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

What shall we return to the Holy One for God's bounty to us? God calls us to live fruitful and faithful lives that witness to and spread the good news of the kingdom in the world. God provides for our needs abundantly so that all may flourish. May we use the bounty that we receive as gifts to share rather than as resources to hoard. Let generosity, trust, and hope guide us to support the ministry of this faith community and the wider church.

MOMENT FOR MISSION~ Mother House Crisis Nursery**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 & THANKSGIVING

**Faithful God, thank you for the gifts we receive
and that we give. Bless them so that needs will
be met, your beloved will experience communal
embrace, and you will be honored and glorified.
Amen.**

HYMN #393 "Blessed be the Tie that Binds"**BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE****ANNOUNCEMENTS****CHORAL INTROIT "I Love You, Lord"**

**I love you, Lord
And I lift my voice to worship You,
O my soul rejoice.
Take joy my King in what You hear,
May it be a sweet, sweet, sound
in Your ear.**

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 brokenhearted.**

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

God is calling us

Out of the places we hide

Out of insecurity

Out of shame

Out from under that which silences love and justice.

Come out, people of God!

Though we may be afraid

Though we will be at risk

Though the cross stands as a threat

God calls us to courage!

Our God is a god of resurrection. Of new life after devastation. Of hope in the grip of evil.

And so we dare to proclaim, with pride and faith, our truths:

We believe in the power of love.

We believe in solidarity with the suffering.

We believe we are each valuable.

We believe that our togetherness is transformative.

The world is longing for Holy truths that reveal, voices that speak real words of hope.

Come out, people of God!**HYMN #42 "O For a 1,000 Tongues"****INVOCATION**

God who calls us, we are here, here to serve, and here to worship. We are here to sing and to pray, to let the word resound in us and the community to envelop us. We are here, O God, to know you and be known by you. We enter with thanksgiving and praise. We enter in safety of love and hope of peace. Holy One, we respond to your call. We are here. Amen.

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART TIME**PASTORAL PRAYER~ THE LORD'S PRAYER****HYMN #327 "Jesus Loves Me"****PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION & NEW LIFE**

Inspired by Romans 8:38

For we are convinced,
that neither death, nor life,
neither the things that bring us pleasure,

nor the things that seek to make us feel ashamed,
neither threats from the state,
nor any structure of dominance,
neither the legacies of harm freshly unfolding,
nor any that are still to come,
neither the days when life feels unlivable,
nor the days when loving ourselves comes easy,
neither doctrines of hate,
neither respectability politics,
nor bigots nor bullies,
neither fatigue,
nor passion,
neither regrets,
neither the struggles we cannot yet name,
nor the ones that always seem to stay the same,
nor anything else in all of creation,
will be able to separate us from Love. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE**WORDS OF GRACE**

Gracious ones, you may receive the nourishment and encouragement of God Gracious ones, you may receive the nourishment and encouragement of God to be fruitful even when the Holy One amazes us beyond expectation and dream. God is with us in season and out of season. Expect an abundant and bountiful harvest to witness to God's grace at work in and through us.

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

Matthew 9:36 - 10:8 ESV

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION