

Rarely have I seen a church without some form of ministry that helps feed people. From community meals to food pantries, churches across the country make sure people have enough to eat. But I always wondered, wouldn't it be better if none of these services had to exist. What if everyone simply had enough to eat?

Our churches share compassion by not only providing for the basic needs of our neighbors but also asking deeper questions of why these inequalities exist in the first place. Our immediate call to alleviate the suffering of those around us is paired with a prophetic witness calling for systemic reform.

All congregations in the United Church of Christ are invited to take part in the **Neighbors in Need** offering to address just this. Two thirds of the offering support justice and witness ministries of the United Church of Christ with one third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Your gifts directly fund the Neighbors in Need grant program. This grant, for UCC congregations and partners, offers funding for both direct service and advocacy projects.

Thank you for your generosity!

The Rev. Rachel McDonald works for the National Ministries of the UCC as Generosity Officer, OCWM and Special Mission Offerings. The four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ are One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. Together they demonstrate a commitment to building a just world for all. To learn more, go to https://www.ucc.org/ocwm_special-support/



October 26, 2025

St. John's United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 794, 401 N Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008

Sunday Christian Education 9am Worship 10:30
Office Hours: Tues – Thurs, 9am-Noon stjohs401.org
(815)544-2977 stjohsucc401@gmail.com

Pastor: Rev. Muriel Morley Jahn 815-544-2977
 murielmorley@gmail.com
Pastoral Associate: Beth Carson 815-979-0473
Minister of Music: Mary Albrecht 815-547-7503
Choir Director: Jeanne Anderson 815-985-2652

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.

You Are Not Alone

The following support groups meet regularly at St. John's

- The Belvidere Group (AA) meets at everyday at 7pm.
Women's Group meets Mondays 5:30pm
- T.O.P.S. Mondays 11am



Delicious Fundraiser



Amazon List



T-Shirts

Announcements

- ✚ Thank you to everyone who participated in any way for the Holiday Bazaar! Your help and dedication are appreciated.
- ✚ **Trunk or Treat** today at 3pm. All are welcome.
- ✚ Totenfest is next week during worship.
- ✚ Decorate for Advent/Christmas time begins November 23rd.
- ✚ **Every 3rd Sunday of the month**, St. John's leads services at **Heritage Woods** at 3 pm. Join after their service for time to socialize with the residents and meet some great people.
- ✚ **Community Meal** every third Wednesday of the month from 5p-6pm.
- ✚ **Blessing Box** non perishable are welcome. Make sure any items in cardboard have an inner layer of protection to prevent creatures from contaminating the food. As temperatures drop we need to avoid items in cans.
- ✚ **Paper Angel Closet** needs toilet paper, paper towels, women's deodorant, bleach, shampoo, and dish soap.
- ✚ **Menards Ministry:** If you have unused Menards rebates, or even receipts. We use these rebates for projects around the church.
- ✚ **Open Door Fundraiser:** We are still collecting money to upgrade our parking lot doors. Our goal is to collect enough money to automate the doors and make it a double entry to hold the temperature in the office area.

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– unison

If our lives, our love, our gifts are not shared with
 others, the words we offer in prayer and praise
 are hollow. So receive what we offer, Holy God,
 and bless them in the work of that kingdom
 which values the people we ridicule, lifts up
 those we have stepped over, and brings hope
 and healing to all. In Jesus' name, we
 pray. Amen.

Hymn #207– Just As I Am, Without One Plea**Benediction****Postlude****Prelude****Announcements****Choral Introit– “Rain Down”**

(Refrain)

Rain down, rain down, rain down your love on your
 people.

Rain down, rain down, rain down your love, God of
 life.

God of creation, we long for your truth;

You are the water of life for our thirst.

Grant that your love and your peace touch our
 hearts,

All of our hope lies in you. (Refrain)

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 iden-
 tity, 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 cir-
 cumstances,**

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 chal-
 lenge us to do better.

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

Gathering Prayer– unison

God of rain and harvest,
 God of the humble and the hopeful,
 You draw us in to be renewed by Your presence.
 We come as those who long for Your restoration,
 yet confess we often look for it in our own
 strength.
 We come as people blessed and broken,
 hungry for the mercy that lifts the lowly.
 Open our eyes to see Your restoring work in our
 midst.
 Open our hearts to be part of it.
 In this worship, let our praise rise,
 let our hope deepen and let our love overflow.
 Amen.

Hymn #451- Be Thou My Vision

The Apostles' Creed: an alternative version #882

Children's Time**Pastoral Prayer – The Lord's Prayer****Hymn #286– Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness****Call to Reconciliation– Leader**

When we pray to God, do we do so with pride in
 what wonderful people we are, or with that humble
 hope which recognizes how we have not lived as
 God's children, and how we need God's forgiveness
 and grace in our lives? Join me as we pray to our
 God, saying,

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

Watching God, like the Pharisee, we think we can
 stick our thumbs into life, pull out a prayer, and
 congratulate ourselves for being such good
 Christians. Then, we remember the harsh words

we have spoken this week, the hurt we have inf
 licted on someone we loved, the lack of compass
 sion we failed to offer to someone who needed
 our help.

Forgive us, God of Grace, and deal gently with
 us. May we become more like the tax collector -
 humble, penitent, acknowledging our faulty lives
 to you. Then, may we receive the mercy prom-
 ised to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and
 Savior.

Silent Prayer**Assurance of Pardon**

Forgiven and healed, we open ourselves to the
 grace, the peace, the hope offered to us
 through our loving God. This is the good news
 we have received!

Graced and blessed, we are able to
 live our lives for others, taking them
 by the hand to reach that finish line
 called the Kingdom. Thanks be to
 God. Amen.



General Giving

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

Joel 2: 23-32
 Luke 18: 9-14

Sermon– “Being Humble”

Moment for Mission
Neighbors in Need

Musical Offering