

Worship with

St. John's

United Church of Christ



September 13th, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

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

stjohns401.org

stjohnsucc401@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** **224-234-7749**

Choir Director: **Jeanne Anderson** **815-985-2652**

Nursery Attendant: **Hanna Jarvis** **815-914-4718**

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

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- After service, we have a Celebration Potluck (Fellowship Meal before) downstairs, with the meeting for the anniversary committee following the meal.
- **NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH!** We will celebrate St. John's **125th Anniversary**. The Rev. Dr. Terrill Murf our Conference Minister will be our guest preacher and there will be a meal to follow.
 - 9:30a.m. Coffee Hour, History and Fellowship
 - 10:30a.m. Worship with The Rev. Dr. Terrill Murf our Conference Minister as guest preacher
 - 11:30a.m.- 3pm Bounce House and outdoor Games open
 - Noon Meal. Please RSVP by September 17th.
- **Day of Caring** Wednesday, September 30th 8am-3pm. We are partnering with United Way to prep the Community Garden for Winter and pack care kits for the schools and CORE.
- **Trunk or Treat** Sunday, October 25th at 2pm-3pm. Parking Spaces can be signed up for in the Narthex. Invite your friends.
- **Totenfest/All Saint's Day** Sunday, November 1st . Honor your loved ones and those who have passed on to eternal life by giving names to Pastor Muriel by October, 20th or bring an item in memory of your loved one to worship.

- **Fellowship Circle** All ladies are invited to join in fellowship and a treat on Thursday, October 8th at 11:30 in the Conference room.
- **Day of Caring** Wednesday Sept. 30th we will be packing care packages and working in the Community Garden. Sign up with Pastor.
- **Holiday Bazaar** Friday, October 30th 9am-3pm and Saturday, October 31st 9a,-1pm. Donations can be brought to the church starting October 1st
- **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 \$8.00 (financial assistance is available). Also, keep an eye on my Facebook, Hippy Yoga, for more information and schedule changes.
- **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.

CHORAL INTROIT "SHOUT TO THE LORD"

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King;
Mountains bow down and seas will roar
At the sound of Your name.
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands,
Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand;
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

My Jesus, my Savior, Lord there is none like You,
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love;
My Comfort, My Shelter,
Tower of refuge and strength
Let ev'ry breath, all that I am,
Never cease to worship You.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King;
Mountains bow down and seas will roar

At the sound of Your name.

I sing for joy at the work of Your hands,

Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand;

Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

Nothing compares to the promise I have in 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 103)

Bless the Holy One! Bless God's holy name!

Bless God our Healer, Redeemer, and Friend.

Bless the Holy One! Remember the works of God.

Bless the God who saves us, loves us, and forgives us.

Bless the Holy One! Bless the God of life and justice!

**Bless the One whose loves and mercy endures but
whose anger does not. Bless God, O our souls!**

INVOCATION

**God of Heaven and Earth, we bask in your presence.
We thank you for being our Companion and Counselor.
Receive our praise, thanksgiving, worship, and
petitions. You are the object and center of our worship
so we fix our attention on you. We remember your
awesome acts. We worship you for who you are. Amen.**

HYMN #397 "Thank our God for Sisters, Brothers"

Tune: Alleluia, Gracious Jesus

A NEW CREED #887

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART TIME

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #388 "HELP US ACCEPT EACH OTHER" vs. 1,3 & 4

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

(Inspired by Romans 14)

**Holy One, you have given us companions in life, family,
friends, and neighbors. As Romans 14:7-8 reminds us,
"For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to
ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die,
we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether
we die, we are the Lord's." Help us live in ways that
reflect your goodness, righteousness, and truth. Help
us to love our neighbors with the fullness of shared life,
accountability, and community. Help us repair what has
been damaged, redeem what has been lost, and restore
what has been broken for your name's sake. Amen.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

WORDS OF GRACE

Beloved, God blesses us with the gift of accountability so that we need not settle for forgiveness that trivializes harm, ignores the need for repair, and leaves relationships fractured. God has given us accountability so that we may be transformed both individually and collectively, offender and offended, perpetrator and survivor for restoration, reconciliation, and righteousness. Receive the conjoined gifts of accountability and forgiveness.

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 14:1-12 and Matthew 18:21-35

SERMON *"To Settle Account"*

MOMENT FOR MISSION – NEIGHBORS IN NEED

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, magnify the offerings we bring and may they be fruitful for the nurture and care of creation, the faithfulness of your church, and the needs of the communities and world we inhabit. Be glorified through our generosity. Amen.

HYMN #394 "IN CHRIST THERE IS NO EAST OR WEST"

BENEDICTION

To Settle Accounts: Service Prayers for the Sixteenth 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 Givina



<<<<<<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.

Amazon List



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

Thank you for giving to Neighbors in Need

***Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us.
Ephesians 5:1-2 (NRSVUE)***

I have often found it difficult to preach from Ephesians. It is challenging not to turn the text into a sermon full of scolding. Act this way, don't act this way. There are certainly plenty of instructions in Ephesians that Christians haven't been living up to for thousands of years.

And yet, I find myself drawn to the encouragement to be like Christ. This is a movement at the heart of our faith, that we can be transformed to be more Christ-like. There is hope that what we were doesn't have to dictate who we will be.

This is at the heart of why this scripture is the theme for our Neighbors in Need offering this year. When we come together as a church to do the work of justice and advocacy, we are acting out of the hope that change in the world is possible.

As you encourage your congregation to participate in this offering, I hope you will share the following. First, this offering is transformative because it calls us to collective justice—not isolated programs and pitches, but a genuine ecosystem of people who work collaboratively across issues and geographies to bring about social change. Second, our gifts represent our faith in God's ability to multiply what we have. Jesus' ministry was full of abundance, but not because he started with overwhelming resources. Rather, what was offered in community became enough to meet the needs of the day.

When we walk, roll, and march in love together, justice will come.

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/smo>