

Worship with

St. John's

United Church of Christ



September 6th, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

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

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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

PRELUDE

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.
- **Fellowship Circle** All ladies are invited to join in fellowship and a treat on Thursday, September 10th 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 \$5.00.
- **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 “There’s Bread for the Journey”

There’s bread for the journey and friends for the way.

There’s hope for tomorrow and love for today!

The cup of forgiveness, all blessings release,
to heal and renew us and bring us God’s peace.

O Holy Spirit, bind us together, now.

O Holy Spirit, bring us your peace.

O Holy Spirit, bind us together, now.

O Holy Spirit, bring us your peace.

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 149)

Praise the Holy One! Make our praise known in the
gathering of the faithful, the hopeful, and even the

questioning.

Let us praise God with a new song. Let the rhythm of praise resonate in our being.

The Holy One takes pleasure in the presence of God's people.

Let us glorify God with our senses, our hearts, and our spirits.

Let us praise the God of justice with high praise!

We worship the Holy One in truth and righteousness!

Praise God!

INVOCATION

Spirit of the Living God, may your presence reign among us as we gather. We give thanks for your abiding covenant and the path of life you set before us. We delight in your revelatory word and your compassionate care. We come to you because you come to us. Keep our hearts tuned to your hopes and promises. Receive our prayers and praise with grace and love. Amen.

HYMN #332 "As We Gather at Your Table"

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father
almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

**HYMN #336 "Here, O my Lord, I See You Face to Face"
(Verses 1-3)**

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

Holy One, Romans 13 reminds us that, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." Forgive us for those moments when we had the opportunity to choose love and did not. Forgive us for the days we kept silent when love required our voice. Forgive us for the instances when we could have extended grace and mercy and, instead, chose bitterness and resentment. Forgive us for the times when we have been hard to love and failed to appreciate the love given to us. Transform our lives and our hearts into vessels that reflect your love in the world. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

WORDS OF GRACE

Beloved, rest in the love of God that is faithful and true. Know that love may be replicated through each of us toward one another and our neighbors. Be assured that the reservoir of love never runs dry and is amplified the more you draw from it. Let your love flow and the grace of God will sustain and strengthen you.

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 Exodus 12:1-14

SERMON *"Eat and Remember"*

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

BLESSING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

All are invited to participate in this Holy symbol of Communion.

*You are invited to eat the as a sign of your own personal faith
and hold the cup to drink together as a sign of our communion
faith.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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

**Gracious God, may these gifts shift us from scarcity to
abundance and from hoarding to sharing. Continue,
Holy One, to plant seeds of generosity within us, and
allow us to see these gifts bloom in and beyond this
faith community. Amen.**

HYMN #348 *"Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"*

BENEDICTION

There Among Them: Service Prayers for the Fifteenth 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.

Fee 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

What is the “Neighbors in Need” special mission offering?

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's justice ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. Who participates in Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering?

Anyone can give a donation by contributing to Neighbors in Need either through their congregation's annual collection drive or anytime online at ucc.org/nin.

How is the offering used?

Through this offering we express our deep commitment to reaching out and touching our neighbors with justice and compassion. This allows us to speak prophetically to those in power and to advocate for a society where all people have a voice in decisions that affect their lives. In the spirit of Christ, we will seek to confront evil in the world and to alleviate suffering. We will do this through direct service as well as advocacy.

Where and how are the funds dispersed?

Not only are NIN funds shared with CAIM, they are utilized by staff to develop curated and created social justice resources, i.e. webinars, bible studies, curriculums, advocacy tools, etc. within the program areas of environmental justice, racial justice, LGBTQ justice, economic justice, women's justice, immigration justice, and more. Additionally, a portion of the monies collected are used to fund grants at the following levels and needs:

- Direct Service (\$1,000 – \$3,000) – provides funding to meet the immediate needs of an individual or group (i.e. food, clothing, utilities).
- Advocacy (\$3,001 – \$5,000) – offers funding to assist communities who wish to change policy on a state or federal level via an advocacy campaign.
- Grass Top (\$5,001 – \$10,000) – is a highly competitive tier which seeks to award uniquely innovative programs which can be replicated in other settings.

What percentage of NIN donations are used directly to fund our commitment to service and mission?

At present, we are pleased to state that nearly 100% of the monies raised from are used to fund our mission projects and programs which include our largest commitments to NIN grants and CAIM.

How are the decisions made to fund various projects and/or programs?

Decisions on which much of our programs and projects are based on resolutions that have been passed at our General Synod biennial meeting.