

*St. John's United Church of Christ*  
-Shining God's Light Where All Are Welcome-

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October 12, 2025

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10:00am Worship  
Faith Formation  
11:00am Fellowship Hour



The animals of God's creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life. God, who confers gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them reminders of the gifts of salvation. Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made part of the covenant with Noah. (Genesis 9: 9-10) The Paschal Lamb recalls the Passover sacrifice and the deliverance from slavery in Egypt. (Exodus 12: 3-14) A giant fish saved Jonah; (Jonah 2: 1-10) ravens brought bread to Elijah; (1 Kings 17: 6) animals were included in the repentance of Nineveh; (Jonah 3: 7) and animals share in Christ's redemption of all God's creation. And of course we remember the stories of the animals at the manger, and the humble donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem. We, therefore, invoke God's blessing on our animals. As we do so, let us praise the Creator and thank God for setting us as stewards over all the creatures of the earth." umcdiscipleship.org (edited)

**Leading Worship:** Pastor Margaret, Lynn Grear  
**TODAY** 10 am—Worship  
11 am—Fellowship  
**Last Sunday Attendance:** 53 **Offering:** \$4,655.00

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P.O. Box 288 – 448 Rice St. Elmore, OH 43416  
Pastor—Margaret Mills  
Pastor Emeritus—John W. Bock  
Ministers—All the Members of St. John's

**Church Phone:** 419-862-3511  
**Church Email:** st.johnsuccelmore@gmail.com  
**Pastor's Phone:** 440-487-2549  
**Pastor's Email:** millsm92445@gmail.com

Church Office Hours  
Office Administrator—Erica Baker  
Office hours by appointment

<https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsUCCElmore>  
<https://facebook.com/StJohnsUCCElmore>



## The Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

October 12, 2025

### GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

*Prelude:* "All Things Bright and Beautiful" -Keveren

*Lighting of the Candles*

*\*Call to Worship*

One: All dogs and cats, large and small:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: All rabbits, hamsters and guinea pigs:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: All goldfish, guppies, and swimming creatures:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: All parakeets and budgies and singing birds:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: All horses, cows and sheep:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: All lizards, crawling creatures:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

One: Every animal in the sky, the sea and the forest:

**All: Praise the Lord!**

*\*Opening Hymn:* "All Things Bright and Beautiful" #30

*\*Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

**God, our Creator, help us to love all creatures as our kin, all animals as our partners on Earth, all birds as messengers of praise, all small beings as expressions of your mysterious design. As we enter your presence with thanksgiving and hope, remind us that you have formed us as your creations, your creatures, your critters. You join us on the journey of life through valleys, upon mountains, and on the plains. We set our attention and seek your wisdom, encouragement, and grace. Reveal your will and display your glory among your people as we worship your holy name. Amen**

*\*Invocation Response*

"What Does the Lord Require of You"

**What does the Lord require of you,**

**What does the Lord require of you.**

**Justice, kindness, walk humbly with your God.**

**To seek justice, and love kindness,**

**And walk humbly with your God.**

**To seek justice, and love kindness,**

**And walk humbly with your God.**

## WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

*A Story for All Ages:*

The Wolf of Gubbio

### WE BLESS OUR ANIMALS

*Praying Together:*

**Loving God, we thank you for those creatures who live alongside us as our companions and friends; for their loyalty, love and trust which enrich our lives and give us joy; teach us the value of kindness, the power of mercy, the strength of gentleness; and create in us a new spirit of humility and joy as we see your Spirit in the face of your creatures. And now, bless, O God, these creatures and fill our hearts with thanksgiving for their being. Amen**

*Bring your animals (if we are outside), or pictures of animals, or a treasured stuffed animal up at this time.*

*Blessing of the Animals*

One: You were created by God, and you are loved by God. May you and your human family experience joy and companionship together, and continue to be a blessing to each other. Amen

*Prayer of Remembrance (in unison)*

**We remember our animal companions who are no longer with us. We give thanks for the gifts they gave us and the variety of ways they enriched and blessed our lives. We are confident that our Creator continues to care for them. Amen**

*\*Song*

"A Place in the Choir" (see insert)

*A Message for Today:*

**Francis of Assisi: Stories of the Animals**

Excerpts from Genesis

Psalm 148

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*Invitation to the Offering*

The heavens and the earth, the sun and moon and stars, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea – all things belong to God, and to God all things return.

*\*Doxology*

"I Sing Praises To Your Name"

Hymn # 660

I sing praises in your name, O Lord,

Praises to your name, O Lord,

For your name is great and greatly to be praised;

I sing praises to your name, O Lord,

Praises to your name, O Lord,

For your name is great and greatly to be praised.

\*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

**Lord God, you have entrusted us with the works of your own hands. Now we return these gifts to you with thanksgiving and praise. Use them all for your glory and for the good of your world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen**

## **WE SHARE OUR COMMON LIFE**

*Announcements and Concerns may be emailed to: millsm92445@gmail.com, texted to: 440-487-2549, or call into: 419-862-3511*

## **WE REST IN PRAYER WITH GOD**

*Prayer for Today from St. Francis' Prayer for All Created Things*

One: God created us and placed us on the earth to be stewards of all living things, therefore let us proclaim the glory of our Creator, saying;

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

One: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you create the animals and give us the ability to train them to help us in our work.

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

One: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you give us food from animals to replenish our energies.

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

One: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; for the sake of our comfort you give us domestic animals as companions.

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

One: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you care for us even as you care for the birds of the air.

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

One: Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you offered your Son to us as the Passover Lamb and in him willed that we should be called your children.

**All: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.**

*Pastoral Prayer*

One: Celebrating the coming of the One who brings the reign of God to all people, let us pray for the world God loves, the Church God calls, and all the people, around the world, according to their needs.

**All: Hear our prayer!**

*Silent Prayer*

*The Lord's Prayer*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

*Prayer Response*

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" #489

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

## **SENT FORTH TO SERVE**

*\*Closing Hymn*

"For Beauty of Meadows" #28

*\*Benediction*

May God, who created the animals of this earth, continue to protect and sustain us all, now and forever.

And may the love of God assure you, the hope of God guide you, and the peace of God sustain you as you go receiving and extending God's grace in the world.

*\*Postlude* "Bless the Beasts and Children"

DeVorzon

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NEW MEMBER GATHERING** Several folks have expressed interest in becoming members of St. John's. We will send options for a date to meet in the near future. If you would like to explore membership, please contact Pastor Margaret at [millsm92445@gmail.com](mailto:millsm92445@gmail.com) or 440-487-2549 or call the church at 419-862-3511. We'll explore the history of St. John's, who we are as a United Church of Christ, and what it means to be a member of the church. I look forward to gathering together. If others wish to be reminded of the history, and who we are, and what it means to be a member, please feel free to join us. Stay tuned.

**FELLOWSHIP HOUR** After church this morning, come and enjoy pastries and coffee, tea or punch, and time together.

**CHURCH COUNCIL** will meet next Sunday, 10/19, immediately after church. All are welcome.

**UPDATED DIRECTORY** Erica sent out a link to update your information for the church directory. If you're viewing this online, [click here!](#)

**A NEW WEBSITE** is in the works! If you have anything specific you'd like to see included, email [st.johnsuccelmore@gmail.com!](mailto:st.johnsuccelmore@gmail.com)

**ELMORE RETIREMENT VILLAGE** is currently accepting applications for residency. If you are aware of anyone that is interested in living in Elmore, please feel free to have them contact Jeanette A. Buckantz, Manager, at 419-862-2408.

**PASTOR ON THE PORCH** There will NOT be a Pastor on the Porch next week, 10/16. Stay tuned for information regarding the following Thursday...it is getting dark and chilly, but dress warmly. I will turn the porch light on and we'll meet if anyone wants to.

**MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY** meets Monday evenings at 7:00pm in the Council Room.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** The Annual Chicken 'N' Biscuit Dinner Drive-Thru is on Saturday, October 18, 2025 from 4:00-6:00pm. It will be \$12/person. We need 9" PIES (apple, pumpkin, cherry). Please sign up on the sheet on the back counter.

**AA MEETING** is every Thursday evening from 7:00 - 8:00. We are so glad to have them meet in our Fellowship Hall.

**HOME COMMUNION:** If you wish Pastor Margaret to bring communion to your home, please call 440-487-2549.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT.

**HONOR WORKERS** will host a fire safety event with our very own Jim Wilburn on November 11, 2025! Hosted by Barb Bruntz.

**"OFFICE HOURS"** at **Christy's** will continue on Thursdays from 9 to noon. All are welcome at the round table just inside the front door. You'll see my sign.

## IN OUR PRAYERS

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM THE LIST OR IF ANYONE WISHES TO BE ADDED. PLEASE WRITE THOSE REQUESTS ON A PRAYER CARD.  
THANK YOU!

**Bereavement:** Janet Kuhlman (Cindy Little's aunt), Rex Gardener

**Nursing Home/Rehab** —Mary Sue James, Al Amstutz, Nancy Weidner, Zoe Moore

**At Home** — Joanne Busdeker, Carlton Giesler, Doris Klaustermeyer, Cindy Calhoun, Jerry Haar, Heidi Holub, Lois Rader, Dustin Schmidt, Catherine Aldrich (Sue Applegate's friend), Joanne Price, Sherry Sherman (Pastor Tim's wife), McKinley Blausey, Jamie Irwin (Lois Rader's granddaughter), Dave Mate (friend of Paul Holewinski) and Debra Mate (Dave Mate's sister), Bob Hensel, Betty Walker, Don and Helen Hollis (friends of Bill Verbryke), Ken Moore, Melody Haar, Jerry and Dolores Beck, Janet Ottney, Rosemary Acha, Paul Holewinski, Marvin Kates, Tracy Crone, Rachael (neighbor of Sue Applegate), Shawn Meager, Becky Truman, Jennifer and Joe Shamy, Amanda Downey, Sandra Shaffer, Jane Kruse, Russ Krumnow, Jim Krumnow, Jim and Jane Garner, Amy M, Lois Pelly, Jenny Northup, Loren Sampson, Jeanette Tangeman, Jeff and Nancy Wegman, Tom and Sharon Crozier, Susan Millinger, Jane Kruse, David Reimer

**Service Men & Women:** Kyle Babka, Dr. Samuel L. Preston III, Captain Benjamin Wideman