

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

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September 14, 2025

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10:00am Worship  
11:15am Fellowship



“Gracious God, as we gather today, we remember our role as learners and seekers of faith. May we remember that all of us are seekers and learners no matter our age. We give thanks for all those — present or away— who support the teaching and learning that take places through our congregation. Be with all of our children, youth, and adults who will be participating this year in all of the ways nurturing takes places. Bless our times of study and learning so that we may grow in faith. Bless our times of fellowship so that we may truly live as brothers and sisters in Christ. Bless our times of prayer and worship so that we may be enriched in our spirits. Amen.”

Redeemer, seek us and call us back when we stray from your path and let us rejoice whenever one of us finds our way back to you. Amen.

**Leading Worship:** Pastor Margaret, Lynn Gear  
**TODAY** 10 am – Worship  
11:15 am– Fellowship  
**Last Sunday Attendance:** 46 **Offering:** \$2,685.00

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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 Office Hours  
Office Administrator—Erica Baker  
Office hours by appointment

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

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



## The Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

September 14, 2025

### GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

*Prelude:* "The Lost Chord" by Sullivan

*Lighting of the Candles*

*\*Call to Worship*

One: Come, let us celebrate the forgiving, reconciling love of God.

**All: For once we were lost and felt so far away; now we have been found and welcomed home.**

One: Know that God's love is lavished upon you forever.

**All: We rejoice at the news of forgiveness and hope!**

One: Come, let us celebrate and praise the God of love.

*\*Opening Hymn:* "Amazing Grace"  
#422

*\*Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

**Holy One, our Maker; you call to the lost, the least, and all who long for home; you call us when we wander from the path chosen for us and waste the gifts we have been given. You call and welcome us back to worship this day to renew our spirits, and to connect as a community as we welcome each other as learners and teachers. Some of us crave a joyful noise, some flourish in quiet contemplation, others desire movement, while others need to ponder our thoughts. However we worship, let us celebrate and rejoice in your presence forever. 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.**

### BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

*Blessing of the Backpacks* by Lindsey Robison

Prayer of Blessing:

One: God of Wisdom, we give you thanks...and as an adult taught by story and example of your great love for us. And we all pray together:

**All: We pray that our children and youth remember that we are here for them, and that all that we teach them will lead them back to this place where you are surely here for them and for each one of us. Amen.**

### WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

*Special Music:* Faith Medley - Songbirds

*A Story for All Ages:*

Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Lost Son

*A Message for Today:* Lost and Found

Psalm 51: 1-12  
1 Timothy 1: 12-17  
Luke 15: 1-12

### WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*Invitation to the Offering*

Let us bring forward our gifts, given generously and lovingly to support the ministry of the Gospel—loving our neighbors as ourselves through sharing the abundant gifts of God.

*\*Doxology* "Lord, Be Glorified"  
Hymn # 465 verse 3

In your Church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.  
In your Church, Lord, be glorified today.

*\*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)*

**God our Provider, receive these gifts in gratitude from your people. We pray that these offerings meet the needs of the world and our community. May they serve as a public witness of our commitment to being your church. Amen.**

### WE SHARE OUR COMMON LIFE

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

## **WE COME TOGETHER IN PRAYER**

### *Pray with Tuvalu*

A UCC prayer initiative.

### *Call to Prayer*

Maker of Heaven and Earth, we rejoice in your presence. In you, we find joy and strength, comfort and courage, truth and insight. Speak to us again. Reveal your power in and through us. Show us your glory. Hear us as we pray. May your light shine through hidden spaces. May your blessed darkness make space for rest. Fortify us for this journey and make us instruments of your kingdom. Let us pray together:

### *Prayer of Transformation and New Life (in unison)*

**Holy God, you seek us when we are lost. You do not turn away from those who others minimize and demean. Help us to recognize the belovedness of every human being and all your creation. Give us courage and curiosity to engage with those that others would ignore or isolate. Let us rejoice on earth as you rejoice in heaven as we make restoration, redemption, and reconciliation abound among us. Amen.**

### *Words of Grace*

But this we call to mind, and therefore have hope: the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. In the name of the Lord, who is our portion and our hope, God brings the lost home. May we be filled with praise.

### *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 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*

"Change My Heart, O God"

#373

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

## **SENT FORTH TO SERVE**

### *\*Closing Hymn*

"Jesus Loves Me"

#437

### *\*Benediction*

I'm not what I do.  
I'm not what I have.  
I'm not what people say about me.  
I am the beloved of God. Its' who I am.  
No one can take it from me.  
I don't have to hurry. I don't have to worry.  
I can trust my friend Jesus and share his love with the world.  
Go in peace. Walk in love.

*\*Postlude* "Savior, Like a Shepard Lead us"  
By Huss

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PASTOR MARGARET'S 80TH BIRTHDAY POTLUCK** will take place after worship on September 21. Chicken sandwiches, cake, ice cream, and drinks will be provided. Please bring a dish to share.



**BEACON** The September Beacon is on the back counter. Please take one ONLY if you cannot access it any other way. Thanks!

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

**SONGBIRDS AND BELLS** rehearse every Wednesday night - Songbirds from 6:30-7:30 and Handbells from 7:30-8:30. Please consider participating in one or both. We really need about 3-4 more hand bell ringers! Some of us are trying to ring 4 handbells and that's not an easy task! :)

**HONOR WORKERS** "Annual Anniversary Outing" will be on October 7 at 6pm at The American Table in Oregon. Call Judy Suto for reservations: 419-862-3675

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT.**

**PASTOR ON THE PORCH** will continue Thursday evenings from 7:00 until dark. We will close the porch when the weather makes it too uncomfortable.

**CALLING ALL GARDENERS:** Donate your fall surplus to the Elmore food pantry. They are open the second Friday of each month from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and are located at Grace Lutheran Church, 19225 Witty Rd., Elmore. Call ahead to drop-off your fresh produce on the second Thursday of each month Grace Lutheran Church (419.862.3630) or Pat Shaffer (419.351.0150).

**MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY** will resume on September 8 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 – sheet coming soon.

**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.

**"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.

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH** is sponsoring a Chicken Dinner Drive-Thru on September 28 from 11:30am to sell out. Cost is \$15 and proceeds go to the Ottawa County Holiday Bureau. 19225 W. Witty Rd, Elmore, OH.

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS** will be **October 12**. Bring them to church, or bring a picture and we'll bless your pets. We obviously will be outside.

## **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!

### **Hospitalized:**

**Bereavement:** Cade Gwynn (son of Dava Warner's brother-in-law, Joe Gwynn)

**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

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