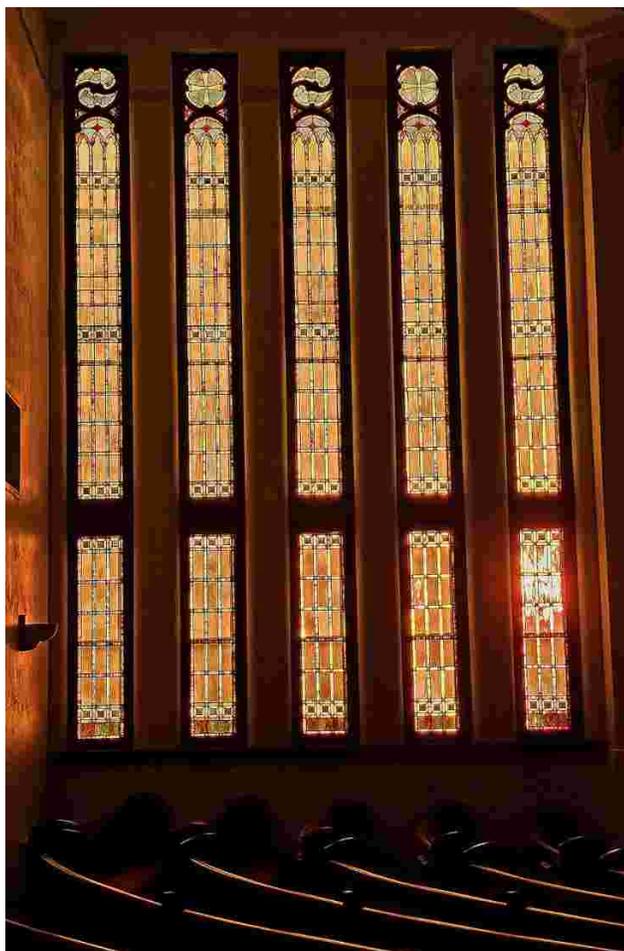


St. John's United Church of Christ
-Shining God's Light Where All Are Welcome-

February 8, 2026

10:00am—Worship
Communion
Faith Formation
11:15am—Souper Bowl Fellowship



“In a very real sense not one of us is qualified, but it seems that God continually chooses the most unqualified to do the work, to bear the glory. If we are qualified, we tend to think that we have done the job ourselves. If we are forced to accept our evident lack of qualification, then there's no danger that we will confuse God's work with our own, or God's glory with our own.” *Madeleine L'Engle*

Glory shines in gloom, and gloom cannot put it out. That was true at the time of Isaiah and the time of Jesus. Let us make it true today. Make glorious the way.

Glorious God, shine your life on us and make glorious the way we follow you. Amen

Leading Worship: Pastor Margaret, Lynn Grear

Last Sunday Attendance: 45 Offering: \$5,202.00

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

February 8, 2026

GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

Prelude: "Here I Am Lord" - Carter

Lighting of the Candles

**Call to Worship*

One: Jesus calls us to praise and prayer, to song and silence;

All: Jesus calls us to worship.

One: Jesus calls us to hearing and healing, to service and solidarity;

All: Jesus calls us to love.

One: Jesus calls us to advocacy and action, to protest and provision;

All: Jesus calls us to justice.

One: Come, then, all who yearn for justice; all who hope for healing, all who hunger for joy.

All: We come to the dawning way, we come to the hopeful way, we come to the way God makes glorious.

One: Let us heed the call of Christ.

All: Let us worship together with joy.

**Opening Hymn:* "Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult"
#345

**Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

Holy One, your light dawns where our shadows are deepest. You are never far, your presence remains with us. Awaken us to the glimmers of your glory breaking into our world's weariness. Shine upon the paths we walk – paths obstructed by fear, uncertainty, and the heavy burdens our communities carry. Yet, your compassion rises like morning light. Make us ready, alert, and courageous – people who move with your Spirit. Descend upon us, Spirit of the Living God. Remain with us. Awaken us. And guide our worship into the brightness of your new day. 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:

Our Little Kitchen

A Message for Today:

**Gloom and Glory...
The Rest of the Story**

Isaiah 9: 1-4
Matthew 4: 12-22

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Invitation to the Offering

Faithful friends of God, the prophets tell us that devotion is revealed in the way we lighten each other's load – right here, in our streets and neighborhoods, where strain is real and hope needs partners. When we give, we join the work of lifting burdens and repairing the places we call home. Let our offering be simple and true: open hands, willing hearts, and commitment to our shared life. Let us bring forward our gifts.

**Doxology*

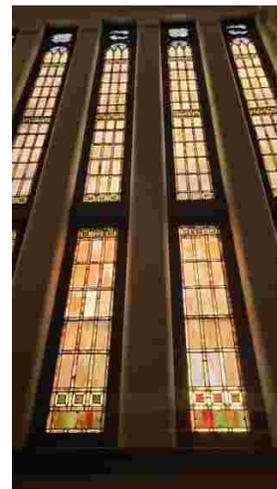
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low.
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
One God triune, whom we adore.**

**Prayer of Dedication*

God of our salvation, receive these gifts we offer and bless them for the work of your kingdom. With gratitude for all you are doing in us and through us, we dedicate these gifts to the work of compassion you entrust to our care. Amen

WE SHARE OUR COMMON LIFE

Announcements and Concerns may be emailed to: st.johnsuccelmore@gmail.com, texted to 440-487-2549, or call 419-862-3511 and leave a message.



WE REST IN PRAYER WITH GOD

Invitation to 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!

Pastoral Prayer

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news of the Gospel: people who have walked under heavy burdens have been met by the One who lifts them. People who have carried what felt unshakeable have felt the yoke break from their shoulders. Into every place of strain or sorrow, God's mercy draws near. God's compassion reaches out. God's grace opens a way forward. In this promise, receive your freedom. In this grace, begin again.

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

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" #177

Jesus name above all names,
beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us,
blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Communion Prayer

Communion Music

"You Are My All in All" - Songbirds

Breaking Bread Together

Please hold the bread until everyone is served.
Inside ring of the communion tray is grape juice.
You may drink the wine/juice as you are served.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Together we trust in this moment of transformation which is made possible by You. Give us the strength to continue on the journey and to set tables that are welcoming and ever expanding. Amen

SENT FORTH TO SERVE

*Closing Hymn "Shine, Jesus, Shine" #319

**Benediction*

Go now in the presence of the One who lifts what is heavy, breaks what binds, and opens the way before you. As a new day unfolds, may courage rise in you, may compassion guide you, and joy find room to grow. The Spirit who descends and remains goes with you, goes before you, and goes within you – making glorious the way you walk. Go in peace, walk in love to begin again. Amen

*Postlude "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations"
-Austin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW: The constitution with proposed changes is on the back counter. Please take a copy and make any comments to Brian Holub by Sunday, February 15th. Thank you.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING will take place on February 15, 2026 at 7:00pm.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING—Today is the culmination of the focus on tackling hunger by participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring program. But since we missed a Sunday due to weather, you can still contribute canned goods or money to the program. Check the February Beacon for more information. Thanks to Dava Warner for leading us in this program called Tackle Hunger that focuses on mobilizing communities to fight food insecurity together. Rachel and Jamie and the Faith Formation kiddos have helped to shine light on food insecurity through programs in their Faith Formation times. And now we eat soup.

SONGBIRDS AND BELLS meet at 6:30 and Bells meet at 7:30 on Wednesdays. Please join us.

HONOR WORKERS will meet again on February 10th in the Fellowship Hall for a presentation from Julie Mayle, Curator of Manuscripts from the Rutherford B. Hayes Museum. All are invited! Text or call Joyce Bruntz, your hostess, at 419-345-3160 for more info.

ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT.

NEXT SUNDAY, FEB. 15 IS MARDI GRAS SUNDAY: Time to get the jollies out before the solemn season of Lent..complete with a King's Cake. And **TUESDAY, 2/17** is Shrove Tuesday or Fat Tuesday or **PANCAKES AT THE PARSONAGE** – when we use up all the fatty stuff before Lent...5:30 pm. **WEDNESDAY, 2/18** is Ash Wednesday with a service at 7:00 p.m. More information about all these and more will be provided in a special flyer.

"OFFICE HOURS" at Christy's continues on Thursday mornings from 9:00 to noon. Come for conversation, food, and a beverage anytime during the morning.

FEBRUARY LOOSE OFFERING will go to help the needy pay their utility bills.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS: The last few months have brought many neighbors to the pantry. Just a note we served 38 families during the month of January. Thanks to everyone in the community for your generosity.

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

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

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY Our next Bible Study begins February 16th. Its focus is on the life of David. He records his weaknesses and struggles but also was a man of great faith. Everyone is welcome to join us Monday evenings at 7:00 in person or on Zoom.

FEBRUARY BEACON & ANNUAL REPORT have been sent electronically and there are a limited number of printed copies of each on the back counter..

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!

Prayers from Congregation: Cal Jennings, Andrew Barringer (diagnosed with ALS), Timothy (Mossman) Phillips in NICU and his family

Bereavement: Family of Vern Patton

Nursing Home/Rehab: Mary Sue James, Al Amstutz, Nancy Weidner, Zoe Moore, Lois Rymers

At Home: Joanne Busdeker, Carlton Giesler, Doris Klaustermeyer, Cindy Calhoun, Heidi Holub, Lois Rader, 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, Helen Hollis (friends of Bill Verbryke), Ken Moore, Jerry and Dolores Beck, Janet Ottney, Paul Holewinski, Marvin Kates, Tracy Crone, Rachael (neighbor of Sue Applegate,), Shawn Meager, Becky Truman, Jennifer and Joe Shamy, Sandra Shaffer, Russ Krumnow, Jim Krumnow, Jim and Jane Garner, Amy M, Lois Pelly, Loren Sampson, Jeff and Nancy Wegman, Tom and Sharon Crozier, David Reimer, the Fielding family, Sharon and John Virtue, Karen Nolen (friend of Jamie Verbryke), Ron Dangler, Kim Applegate, Briann, Rosemary Acha, Don Brimmer (Deb Ferguson's brother), Dolores Neeb, Nikki Christensen, Cathy Willey, Sue Applegate, Mary Ann Zolman

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

