

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

August 16, 2026

10:00—Worship



Leading Worship: Pastor Margaret Mills, Lynn Gear

Last Sunday Attendance: 33

Offering: \$3,355.00

www.ucceImore.org

<https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsUCCEImore>

<https://facebook.com/StJohnsUCCEImore>



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Pastor's Phone: 440-487-2549

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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 Maven—Erica Baker

Office hours by appointment



“Leonard Bernstein said he set Psalm 133 to music as a
‘prayer for peace.’ But it is a prayer born of pain and struggle.”
Debra Dean Murphy

“There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot
appear to them except in the form of bread.”
Mahatma Gandhi

“You have drawn us together this day from a variety of
backgrounds, experiences, hopes, and dreams, Lord. Be with
us as together we experience your presence and your healing
love. Open our hearts and our spirits to receive strength,
encouragement, and peace.”
Laura Jaquith Bartlett

“God builds ‘a house of prayer for all peoples.’ All means all.”
Luke Powery on Isaiah 56: 6 - 8





The Order of Worship

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GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

Prelude: "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" - Berry

Lighting of the Candles

Gathering Words - An Invitation to All

Come and worship, all you who love and serve the Lord – outsiders and insiders, old-timers and new-comers, the young, old and the in-between. Come as you are, for this is God's house – a house of prayer for all people, and God welcomes each one who comes.

**Call to Worship (based on Psalm 133)*

One: Though we may be inclined to brag, let us come together with humility.

All: How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

One: Though we may be tempted to use harsh words, let us come together with gentleness.

All: How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

One: Though we may want everything to happen quickly, let us come together with patience.

All: How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

One: Though the world around us often encourages hate, let us come together in love.

All: How good a thing it is when all of God's people live together in unity.

One: In humility, gentleness, patience, love, and unity.

All: Let us worship the God who has called us together.

**Opening Hymn: "They'll Know We Are Christians" #595*

**Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

Gracious and Healing God, in your presence, we find the fullness of joy, love, and life. Expand our vision and write a new way forward upon our hearts. We seek your wisdom and guidance. We need your comfort and conviction. We trust your provision and power. As we come near to you, we affirm your goodness and the goodness within us. Receive our presence and our dreams of the world you help us make possible. 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

Getting Along!

A Message for Today

All? Unity? Estranged?

Genesis 45: 1-15

Psalm 133

Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28



WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Invitation to the Offering

Knowing that every good and perfect gift has the Holy One as its original source, let us share the blessings that God has trusted with us. May you always give generously and lovingly in the name of the Holy One. Let us bring our offering forward in thanksgiving.

**Doxology - "O Bless the Gifts"*

**O bless the gifts our hands have brought;
And bless the work our hearts have planned.
Ours is the faith, the will, the thought;
The rest, O God, is in Your hand.**

**Prayer of Dedication (in unison)*

Generous God, receive these gifts as an act of trust and gratitude. May these offerings provide for the needs of our neighbors and enable this faith community to offer ministry in your name and your honor. 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

Be silent. Be still. Be aware. In your own heart the Spirit is at prayer. Listen and learn. Open and find. Heart-wisdom, Christ.

Pastoral Prayer

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

You have reached out for the Lord, seeking God's healing power. It is given to you through God's awesome love. Receive the love of God. Reach out to others with that same compassion. Amen

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 trespasses/sins/debts, as we forgive those who trespass/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 - "People Need the Lord" #568

**People need the Lord, people need the Lord;
When will we realize people need the Lord?**

SENT FORTH TO SERVE

**Closing Hymn: "Sent Forth By God's Blessing" #712*

**Benediction*

Jesus' love and compassion has been poured out for you today. Go into the world in confidence, bearing forgiveness and love for all God's people. Go in peace. Walk in love.

**Postlude: "All Hail the Power of Jesus's Name" - Berry*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TONIGHT – OUTDOOR VESPERS ON THE PARSONAGE

LAWN: Once again we'll gather to worship informally on the parsonage lawn. Bring your lawn chair as we sing, pray, hear scripture and share in a brief message. We'll gather at 6:30.

OFFERING: Since we are not passing the offering plates, you are invited to place your offering in the plates by the doors to the sanctuary. If you didn't have a chance as you entered, there are plates by the doors as you leave. Thanks for your giving.

LOOSE OFFERING: For many of us, the loose offering isn't something familiar. It began several years ago as a way to give to a benevolent institution on a regular basis. Council decides on the organization. If you have a suggestion for a location, please be in touch. May and June our loose offering went to Bistro 163. July and August we will be giving to Cherry Street Mission. In September and October – to Sunshine Communities. November we will give to Christy's and in December, to the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund. Information on these organizations will be in the September Beacon. We will share information on how to designate your giving to the loose offering if you don't have offering envelopes where the offering goes to the church. Stay tuned.

UPDATE ON PLASTIC BAG COLLECTION: Keep those plastic bags coming. We only need 750 pounds more. Grab from your neighbors, steal from the recycle bins at the grocery... ok, kidding. Stay tuned for information on how we're taking the bags in fellowship hall to the recycle facilities recommended by NextTrex.

TRUE RD. CONNECTIONS AND A CHANGE OF PLANS WILL RETURN ON SEPTEMBER 20TH.

SONGBIRDS AND BELLS: The time is approaching for Songbirds and Handbells to resume. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** Songbirds meet at 6:30 on Wednesdays and Handbells meet at 7:30 every Wednesday night beginning August 26. **SEE YOU ALL SOON!**

PASTOR ON THE PORCH – As in the past, on summer Thursday evenings, all who wish for some conversation and sometimes light refreshments gather on the parsonage porch from 7:00 until dark or the bugs drive us off. All are welcome.

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY We are studying Proverbs: “Life is about choices. How should we lead our families, how should we manage our finances, how should we handle relationships? God’s Word provides the answers.” All are welcome!

“OFFICE HOURS” at Christy’s Stop by and catch up with Pastor Margaret and enjoy some great drinks and coffee, all while supporting a cherished local business.

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.

AUGUST FOOD PANTRY ITEM is canned veggies.

AUGUST LOOSE OFFERING goes to Cherry Street Mission. The Cherry Street Mission Ministries is a major faith-based non-profit in Toledo, OH., providing emergency shelter, meals and personalized care for the homeless, addiction recovery, and career training. Their main campus is located at 105 17th Street, Toledo. Thanks for your generous loose offering gifts.

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.

Bereavement: Family of Dolores Beck, Family of Nate Walker (Pastor Margaret's great-niece Rebecca Goetz Walker's husband)



Hospice: Dolores Neeb

Hospital: Jill Stinebaugh, Rosemary Acha

Nursing Home/Rehab: Mary Sue James, Al Amstutz, Nancy Weidner, Zoe Moore, Elizabeth Reiners (Pastor Margaret's aunt)

At Home: Joanne Busdeker, Carlton Giesler, Doris Klaustermeyer, 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, Ken Moore, Janet Ottney, Paul Holewinski, Rachael (neighbor of Sue Applegate,), Jennifer and Joe Shamy, Sandra Shaffer, Russ Krumnow, Jim Krumnow, Jim and Jane Garner, Jeff and Nancy Wegman, Tom & Sharon Crozier, Sharon and John Virtue, Karen Nolen (friend of Jamie Verbryke), Kim Applegate, Briann, Phyllis Brimmer (Deb Ferguson's mother), Mike (Susan Cole's friend's husband), Kayla (Branden Rizzo's sister), Matt Karlovec, Tracey Floyd, Loren Sampson, Liliana Rankin (relative of Pastor Margaret)

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

Statement of Faith

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust your forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

*The original (traditional) version of the **UCC Statement of Faith** was adopted in 1959 by General Synod and is widely regarded as one of the most significant Christian faith testimonies of the 20th century. The Statement of Faith in the Form of a Doxology was authorized by Executive Council in 1981.*

