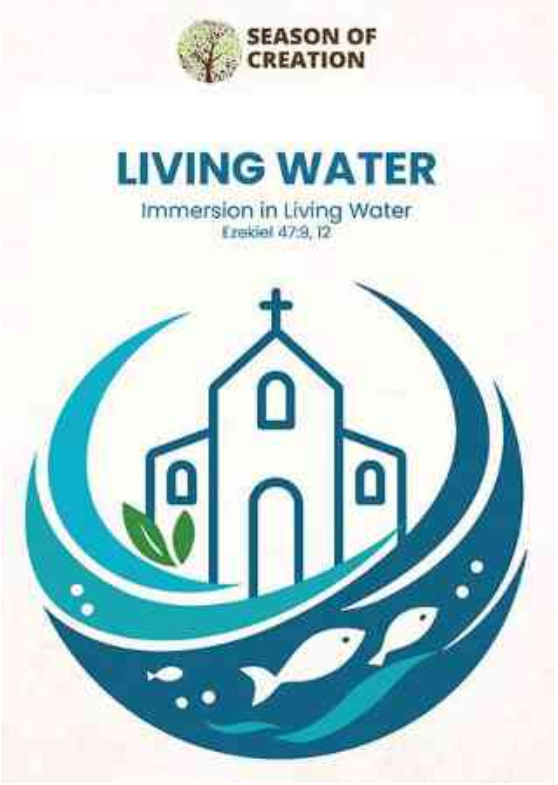
St. John's United Church of Christ

-Shining God's Light Where All Are Welcome-

September 27, 2026

10:00—Worship
11:15—Fellowship



Leading Worship: Pastor Margaret Mills, Lynn Grear,

Last Sunday Attendance: 43 **Offering:** $1,238.00

www.uccelmore.org
https://www.youtube.com/@StJohnsUCCElmore
https://facebook.com/StJohnsUCCElmore



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

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



“When Moses strikes the stone, water gushes forth. Fresh hope , new life, clear truth. The shock of exactly what the people needed.”
Laura Kelly Fanucci

“What could be riskier than striking a stone in the desert with the expectation that water would flow from it?”
Tony Robinson

“Again, the Holy One has delivered the people from their trial. At the same time, God uses Moses and a tangible gift of the earth to perform the miracle. It is a reminder that the Holy One works through people and that we are participants in our collective salvation. That ultimately is the sustenance that the people may drink.”
Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

“Living Water, quench our thirst for faith and trust. Amen.”



The Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

September 27, 2026

GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

Prelude: "Living Waters" - Carlisle

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. So whether you arrived here first this morning or came in as the service was beginning, we bid you a joyful welcome. You are precious in God's sight, a delight in God's presence. Know that God's compassionate love is poured over you this day no matter when you arrived.

**Call to Worship (inspired by Psalm 25)*

One: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We trust you!
All: Make your ways known to us. Teach us your truths.
One: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We follow you!
All: Lead us in your ways. Your path liberates and saves.
One: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We worship you!
All: Guide us in humility and goodness. Praise the Holy One!

**Opening Hymn*: "Come Away From Rush and Hurry" #655

**Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

Lord God, we come this day to worship with so many things on our hearts and minds. We are drawn away by problems and cares. Heal our spirits. Open our hearts. Help us be your disciples. 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 Sory for All Ages **Yes or No?**

A Message for Today **Quench My Thirst**

Exodus 17: 1-7
Psalm 78: 1-4, 12-16
Matthew 21: 23-32

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Invitation to the Offering

May the gifts that we bring reflect the generosity of the Creator's abundance and goodness. Thanks be to God!

**Doxology* - "We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise" #651

We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord;
We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.
And we offer up to you the sacrifices of thanksgiving;
And we offer up to you the sacrifices of joy.



**Prayer of Dedication (in unison)*

God who provides, as we present our offerings before you, sanctify them for your glory and magnify them for your people. 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

In love God created us, and in love God sustains us, day after day. So it is with confidence that we bring our prayers to God, knowing that we are heard, and that God will respond. So be silent. Be still. Be aware. In your own heart the Spirit is at prayer. Listen and learn. Open and find. Heart-wisdom, Christ. And so we pray…

Pastoral Prayer

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

God knows our hearts and our spirits. God sees our struggles and forgives our weakness. Know that it is in God's healing love that you live and move and have your being. Rejoice, for God is with you always. And so let us pray as Jesus taught us as we say…Our Father…

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 - “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.

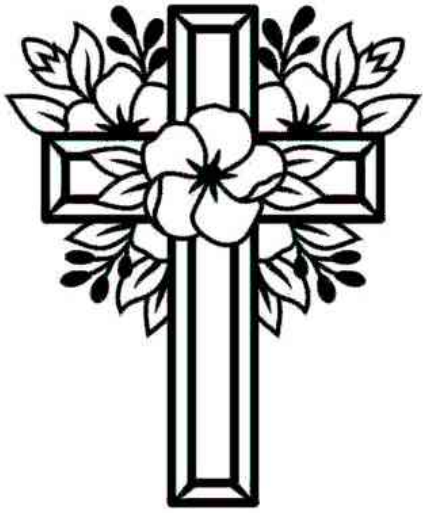
SENT FORTH TO SERVE

**Closing Hymn:* “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” #501

**Benediction*

The blessing of God be with you,
the love of Jesus fill you,
and the power of the Holy Spirit sustain you,
now and forevermore.

**Postlude:* “Watermark” - Enya



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY: October 4 is World Communion Sunday and Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ invited congregations to welcome a speaker on the work of Global Ministries around the world. Of course, I took them up on it. So next week we will welcome Abigail Reed, with a very long title that I'll share with you next week in TWRF, who will bring the message. We will be connecting around the world with Global Ministries as a result of our Our Churches Wider Mission giving.

FALL GATHERING: On October 25th, right after church, the Faith Formation team is hosting a trunk or treat event complete with hot dogs and a bouncy house. More information will be in the October Beacon but SAVE THE DATE.

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.

HONOR WORKERS: The next meeting of the Honor Workers will take place on Tuesday, October 6th at 6:00p.m. for the "Annual Anniversary Outing" at The American Table in Oregon. Call Judy Suto at 419-862-3675 for reservations.

SAVE THE DATE: CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER—The Annual Chicken and Biscuit Dinner will take place on Saturday, October 17th from 4:00-6:00pm. Drive-Thru only, $15/meal, includes: chicken, biscuit and gravy, tossed salad, homemade cranberry sauce, applesauce, and pie.

LOOSE OFFERING: We have loose offering envelopes next to the offering plates by the doors. The loose offering that you put in the plates is not for our general operating fund but for our benevolent institutions. For September, the loose offering goes to Sunshine Communities.

SONGBIRDS AND BELLS: Practice is every Wednesday. Songbirds meet at 6:30pm and Handbells meet at 7:30pm. All who are interested are welcome!

PASTOR ON THE PORCH: All good things must come to an end and Pastor on the Porch is coming to an end – but not yet. We'll gather for one more Thursday evening – October 1st at 7:00 We'll close up at dark and regroup again next spring. On October 8th, I'll be at the Great Lakes Association of United Church Educators in IN so Oct. 1 seems like a perfect ending date. Thanks for our porch nights.

BIBLE AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE COLLECTION (ends 9/30): Mission Cry out of Fowler, MI is sponsoring a Bible and Christian Literature collection through the end of September. These items can be new or gently used. Grace Lutheran Church will facilitate getting them to Mission Cry who will then distribute them to places in need.

PLASTIC BAGS: Keep them coming – we are well on our way to our second 250 lbs that will take us half way to our bench.

A GRIEF REFLECTION GROUP began on Thursday, September 17th at St. John's UCC in Genoa, facilitated by Rev. Dawn Balduf, ordained UCC pastor and certified chaplain. The group will meet on the third Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m.. There are flyers on the back counter.

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY: The Bible Study group resumed on 9/14 with the study of the Book of Acts. It continues the story Luke began in his Gospel, covering the 30 years after Jesus was taken to heaven. Everyone is welcome to join us in person or on Zoom at 7:00 pm

"OFFICE HOURS" at Christy's: Pastor Margaret will be at the round table in the front of Christy's with her sign made by Kathy's daughter on Thursday's from 9:00 - noon. Pull up a chair and join us for great pastries, coffee, tea, or chai, and great conversation 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.

SEPTEMBER FOOD PANTRY ITEM is tuna.

SEPTEMBER LOOSE OFFERING goes to Sunshine Communities.

SUNSHINE COMMUNITIES (Northwest Ohio) is a non-profit based in Maumee, OH. Founded more than 75 years ago, it supports children and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. They provide residential care (including campus homes and neighborhood group homes), vocational training, therapeutic and clinical care, recreation, and adult day services. Also part of the Sunshine Communities is Georgette's Grounds and Gifts - a fair-trade coffee and gift shop. Sunshine Studios offers a storefront of art and classes for the community, all while employing Sunshine artists with developmental disabilities who teach about and sell their art. Both Georgette's and the Studios can be found on Conant Street in Maumee.

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), Family of Steve Schneider, Rose/Scott families for the loss of a beloved wife to a rare form of cancer, Family of Nancy Weidner

Hospice: Dolores Neeb

Nursing Home/Rehab: Mary Sue James, Al Amstutz, Zoe Moore

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, Saundra Shaffer, Russ Krumnow, Jim Krumnow, 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), Nan Card, Jill Stinebaugh, Rosemary Acha, Elizabeth Reiners (Pastor Margaret's aunt), Rev. Jim Garner

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 you 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.*