

# *St. John's United Church of Christ*

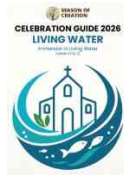
-Shining God's Light Where All Are Welcome-

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September 6, 2026

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10:00—Worship  
Communion  
**Season of Creation**



**Leading Worship:** Pastor Margaret Mills, Lynn Gear  
**Last Sunday Attendance:** 41      **Offering:** \$1,855.00

[www.ucceImore.org](http://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



“Let’s clean up every river and finally the seas. Let’s campaign to uncover every stream and river in our cities. Let’s integrate the rivers back into the urban space and plant trees beside them. Let’s enjoy the peace, healing and tranquility they will bring. God made them all to be living waters.”

Rev. Dr. Reynaldo Ferreir a Leao Neto

“The Season of Creation offers an opportunity to participate personally in the full reality of the gospel and to become agents of God’s renewing work – embracing both personal salvation and the restoration of all creation under the lordship of Christ.” Rev. Botrus Mansour, World Evangelical Alliance General Secretary

“You make springs pour water in the valleys; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.” Psalm 104: 10 - 13

God of Creation, may we be immersed in the living water flowing from the throne of God - stepping in deeper and deeper, inspired by your Spirit, working together for the renewal of Creation. Amen





# The Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

September 6, 2026

## **GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER**

*Prelude: "Watermark" - Enya*

*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 8, Genesis 1)*

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!  
Your glory is higher than the heavens."  
We gather to praise you!

**All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..."**

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!  
Your glory is higher than the heavens."  
We gather to celebrate you!

**All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..**

**And God saw that it was good..."**

**We gather to celebrate our God.**

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!  
Your glory is higher than the heavens."  
We gather to worship you!

**All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...**

**And God saw that it was very good."**

**We gather to worship our God!**

**All praise, honor, majesty and power  
belongs to our Creating God!**

*\*Opening Hymn: "Morning Has Broken" #35*

*\*Prayer of Invocation (in unison)*

**Creator God, whose hands built the earth, molded our bodies, sowed the stars across the sky, and made the clear waters, we gather in your presence this morning with praise and thanksgiving for your mighty deeds. Meet us here, Worker God; strengthen our hearts and our hands to work with you in the building of a world filled with justice and peace. 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*

**Look What God Has Created!**

*A Message for Today*

**Living Water!**

Genesis 1: 1-10  
Ezekiel 47: 9, 12  
John 4: 13-14

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

*Invitation to the Offering*

Everything we have – from the food on our tables and the clean water we drink, to the resources that sustain our daily lives - is a gift from our Creator. As we return a portion of our financial gifts to God today, let us remember our sacred calling to cherish and protect this earth. May these offerings that we bring forward now, sustain our community, heal our neighborhoods, and support the care of God's magnificent creation. We give with grateful hearts.

*\*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, our Creator, through your love you have given us  
these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expres-  
sion of our deep thanks and our concern for those in need,  
including our fellow creatures on planet Earth. 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*

Beloved, rest in the love of God that is faithful and true. Know that love may be replicated through each of us toward one another and our neighbors. Be assured that the reservoir of love never runs dry and is amplified the more you draw from it. Let your love flow and the grace of God will sustain and strengthen you.

*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 heav-**

en. 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.**

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*Special Music* "God So Loved The World" -Shirley Hensel

*The Invitation to the Table*

You don't have to be perfect

You don't have to be pure

You don't have to be righteous

You don't have to be sure

You just need to be hungry

You just need to be fed

You just need heaven's manna

You need to need the bread.

*Communion Prayer*

One: The Creator be with you and all creation.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Open your hearts.

**All: We open them to our Creator**

One: Let us give thanks to our Creator.

**All: It is right to join in thanking God.**

One: It is right to give you thanks, loving Creator...  
and the whole company of creation,  
we proclaim your presence among us.

**All: Holy, holy, holy, God of all life,  
Earth and sea and sky  
are full of your presence  
and glorify your name. Amen**

## *Sharing of the Elements*

One: Come, for all things are now ready.  
Come to the table with all your brothers and sisters  
and share with those in need:  
the gift of healing for those in pain,  
the gift of forgiveness for those in need of forgiveness,  
the gift of assurance for those in doubt,  
and the gift of hope for those in tears.

**All: May we who share these gifts,  
share Christ with one another.**

One: The gifts of God for the People of God.  
Yes, come for all things are now ready.

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

## *Prayer of Thanksgiving*

One: Let us give thanks for this meal.

**All: We thank you Christ, for the meal we have celebrated  
with you and we pray that through your body and  
blood we may be healed and become agents of heal  
ing for the Earth. Amen**

## **SENT FORTH TO SERVE**

*\*Closing Hymn:* "For Beauty of Meadows" #28

### *\*Benediction*

Christ calls you to be his disciples,  
to serve him with love and compassion,  
to serve Earth by caring for creation.

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through  
all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth  
and the pulsing of Christ within you.

Go in peace! Walk in love!  
Serving Christ and loving Earth!

*\*Postlude:* "Wade in the Water" - Sinshack

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WELCOME BACK SUNDAY—SEPTEMBER 13:** Blessing of the Backpacks and Electronic Devices, Commissioning of our Faith Formation Leaders—Jamie Verbryke and Rachel Yurista. Bring friends and neighbors for this fun Sunday.

**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 first meeting of the Honor Workers will take place on Tuesday, September 8th at 7:00pm. Come learn about the Luckey Lavendar Farm!

**SAVE THE DATE: CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER—**The Annual Chicken and Biscuit Dinner will take place on Saturday, October 16th from 4:00-6:00pm . Info coming soon! Stay tuned!

**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. 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.

**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 NexTrex. The bags will be removed before Wednesday to have a space ready for the funeral lunch.

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

**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 –** 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. We will meet until the end of September unless it's too cold – I'll be here whatever the weather – unless it's snowing.

**BIBLE AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE COLLECTION:** Mission Cry out of Fowler, MI is sponsoring a Bible and Christian Literature collection. 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.

**A GRIEF REFLECTION GROUP** is beginning on Thursday, September 17th at 11:30am at St. John's UCC in Genoa. Rev. Dawn Balduf will facilitate the group. There are a few flyers on the back counter.

**MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY** We will resume Bible Study on the Monday after Labor Day, September 14th and we will be focusing on Acts.

**"OFFICE HOURS" at Christy's** Stop by and catch up with Pastor Margaret and enjoy some great pastries and coffee or tea or chai, 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



*(Graveside services for Steven Schneider will be on Wednesday, September 9th at 11:00 at the Harris Elmore Cemetery with a luncheon to follow at the church.)*

**Hospice:** Dolores Neeb

**Nursing Home/Rehab:** Mary Sue James, Al Amstutz, Nancy Weidner, Zoe Moore, Rev. Jim Garner

**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, 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)

**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.*