

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER  
PENTECOST

November 10, 2024

Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

Risk and Restoration

A seminary student was struggling to prepare a youth Bible study on how Ruth, a widowed Moabite gleaning fields in Bethlehem, cozies up one night to the owner of the land, Boaz, on the threshing room floor in the dark of night.

Yikes!

The pastor-in-training had no idea what to do with a text that seemed so racy for teens. And there lies the problem. Many times, ancient texts like this are read through modern lenses that sully a story pure with hope and redemption.

Ruth's and Boaz's story isn't R-rated. It's more H-rated. "H" for the Hebrew word "hesed," which is defined as a love that is merciful, steadfast, loyal and charitable. It is a story of love that transcends the physical. It is a story of love that illustrates God's love towards us.

When read through the lens of hesed, we see Boaz's charitable love that permitted Ruth to glean his fields. We see the caring love of Naomi when she tells her daughter-in-law to wash and anoint herself and then present herself to Boaz.

This isn't advice on how to snag a husband. Rather, the act of washing and anointing symbolized that the time of mourning was over. Out of love and concern, Naomi is telling Ruth it's time to live again. It's time to think about securing a more sustainable future. Remember, widows in the ancient times were vulnerable. Marriage was viewed as security.

Ruth listens to her mother-in-law and goes to the granary at night to see Boaz, thus, putting her reputation on the line. The granary was a man's place. Reputable women didn't go there alone nor at night. There on the threshing room floor, Boaz, who is a kinsman of Naomi's, gets past his initial shock of this young woman before him and looks upon her with eyes full of merciful love. Ruth's risk was worth taking. They marry and have a son, Obed.

It's amazing to think what a love that is merciful, steadfast, loyal and charitable can do in our lives. It is awe-inspiring to see just how a risk-taking love led to not only the restoration of Ruth's and Naomi's lives, but the restoration of all humankind. For in the genealogical opening of the Gospel of Matthew, among all the "begots," there is the name of Ruth and her son as the noteworthy ancestors of Jesus the Christ.

And that's the Bible study the seminary student presented to the teens that day, as together they explored the story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz, through the ancient lens of hesed — God's powerful and restoring love.

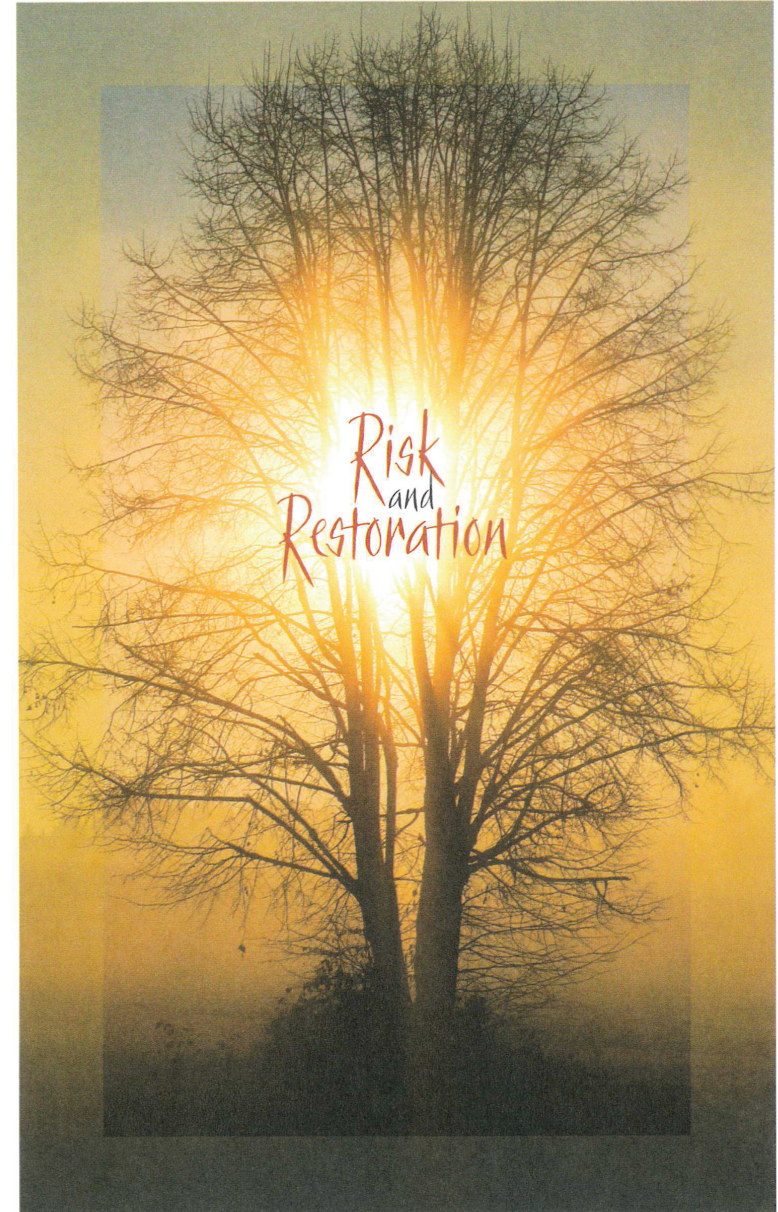
*Merciful God, may today we be open to the transformative power of Your love — love that is charitable, kind, loyal and steadfast. May this love restore Your world. Amen.*



8.5" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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St. John's United Church of Christ  
 Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost  
 November 10, 2024



VETERANS RECOGNITION/STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

\* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold print** is everyone in unison

**WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER** (be seated)

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

PRELUDE

**GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP** (responsively)

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, so thank our God

**For joy in living and patience in trouble;**

For rainbows after clouds and moonlight on the darkest night;

**For wisdom to walk the right path and peace to calm anxious worry;**

For birthday surprises, and things in all sizes.

**All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, So let your song arise and give thanks for all God's love.**

\***OPENING HYMN** *Be Thou My Vision* (vs. 1-2) #595

\* **WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

Loving God, lead us to a deeper sense of gratitude, a growing sense of trust in your ability to provide. Teach us what treasures will last until heaven. Show us the blessings of giving with joy, loving without conditions, sharing from our abundance. Be present with us in worship as we join together. Amen.

\***RESPONSE** *O For a World* (v.1) #683

VETERANS RECOGNITION

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

*Jesus Loves Me*

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Larry Marchino

OFFERING INVITATION\*\*

Let us give back to God with gratitude for all blessings received.

\***RESPONSE** *The Doxology*

#46

\***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

**Our gifts, O Lord, are an expression of our undying gratitude for our salvation through Christ and for your boundless love that supports us even when we are unworthy servants. Accept then, these tokens of our stewardship and use them according to your will. Amen.**

**ANTHEM** *Love the Lord*

Hatton

**SCRIPTURE:** Old Testament: Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

New Testament: Mark 12: 38-44

L: The Word of God for the People of God **P: Thanks be to God**

**MESSAGE** *Survivor: Biblical Style*

\***CLOSING HYMN** *Take My Life and Let it Be* (vs.1-4) #609

\***BLESSING** (responsively)

As we go from this place, remember always that no matter where your week takes you, our God is a God of love and hope.

**We claim that love and hope are our own, going forth in faith, gratitude, and joy. Amen**

\* **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Go In Peace* #445

\* **POSTLUDE**

\*\*You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myucc.org and click on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

## ST. JOHN'S UCC STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

Pastor	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Liturgist	Terry Goodman
Head Usher	Hope Clausman
Organist	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist	Becky Brockman
Children /Family Ministry Coordinator	Will Meyer
Nursery Attendant	Darcie Bahr
Projection	Jill Doggett
Sound	Brian Fillingim
Church Secretary	Angie Robinson
Church Board President	Jana Vieck
Greeters	Kyle & Jill Doggett



## VETERAN'S RECOGNITION

### Currently Active Service Men & Woman

Mitchell Cooper	U.S. Navy
Dasny Cooper (Wife of Mitchell)	U.S. Navy
Aaron Lange	Lt. Colonel in the Army National Guard
on assignment in Indianapolis	

### Former Service Men

Steve Cooper	U.S. Navy
Marvin Covey	U.S. Navy & Army National Guard
Garry Hall	U.S. Marines
John Jackson (deceased)	U.S. Army
Charles Klein	U.S. Marines
Michael Lankford	U.S. Air force
Lonny Vieck	U.S. Army
Ray Pieper	Peace Corps.
Ed Cummings	U.S. Army National Guard



Virtual Worship Service is still available on the church website, [myucc.org](http://myucc.org). Worship Services are also "Live Streamed" on the Church's FACEBOOK page



### THIS WEEK in the Life of St. John's

**SUNDAY, November 10**  
 Adult Sunday School 9:15 am  
 Worship 10:30 am / **Stewardship Sunday / Veterans Honored**  
 Children's Church  
**MONDAY, October 11**  
**Veterans Day Office Closed**  
 Friends 5-6:15 pm Dinner St. Francis Xavier Parish Center  
**TUESDAY, November 12**  
 Bible Study 10:30 am & 6:30 pm  
**WEDNESDAY, November 13**  
 Christian Education 6 pm  
 Choir 7pm  
**THURSDAY, November 14**  
 Dinner & Conversation 6 pm CO-CO's  
**SATURDAY, November 16**  
 Paul & Allison Goodman Baby Shower—Memorial Hall

### LOOKING AHEAD

**SUNDAY, November 17**  
 Adult Sunday School 9:15 a  
 Worship 10:30 am  
 Put greenery up after church  
**Stewardship Sunday/Chili Cook off**  
 Children's Church  
**MONDAY, October 18**  
 BABE Store 12-5:30  
 Friends 5-6:15 pm Bowling VU  
 Worship Comm. 6pm  
 Church Board 7pm  
**TUESDAY, November 19**  
 BABE Board Meeting 6pm  
**WEDNESDAY, November 20**  
 Choir 7pm  
**THURSDAY, November 21**  
 Girl Scouts 4 pm  
 Dinner & Conversation 6 pm Old Chicago  
**FRIDAY, November 22**  
 KFC Lock-in Friday 7pm– Saturday 8:30 am  
**SUNDAY, November 24**  
 Adult Sunday School 9:15 a  
 Worship 10:30 am  
 Decorate Church After worship  
 Children's Church



## ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

**Continuing Prayer Requests: Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr., Carole Klein's family, Franklyn Schroeder's family, and Luis Prada (pastor Debbie's brother-in-law).**

**Let's include everyone in our prayers for the silent trials and struggles everyone is carrying.**

- Please keep Breda Fillingim in your prayers. She had a fall Wednesday and cracked a vertebra. Good Samaritan transferred her to Deaconess Midtown, the closest neurosurgeon for evaluation, she was released with no surgery and is recovering at home.

### Addresses for Shut-ins and Others

**Norma Meyer, Colonial Assisted Living**, - Room 142, 1622 Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Susie Milligan, Colonial Assisted Living**, - Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

**Leona Conway, Aperion Care** - (Willow Manor under new ownership) C Wing Room 3, Vincennes, IN 47591 (Please send all church correspondence to this address going forward).

**Marge Beamon, The Villages at Oak Ridge**, -1694 Troy Rd. Washington, IN 47501

### Home

**Bruce Deckard**

**Gary Meyer**

**Michael Lankford**

**Gayle Huffer**

**Ellen Riggs**

**If you have a caregiving need such as a hospital stay, a visit or desire communion, please contact the church office, Janet Goodman (co-chair of Caregivers) or any caregiver listed below. We would appreciate your help and want to make sure everyone is blessed by St. John's when you need it! St. John's UCC Caregivers- Ed and Brenda Cummings, Cindy Deckard (co-chair), Connie and Dan Coulter, Peggy Meyer, Ray Pieper, Terry and Janet Goodman, Lonny Vieck, Larry and Betsy Marchino.**

**C****HILI-COOKOFF:** Our Stewardship Campaign will take place during worship on November 10 & 17 as we *Imagine Together* our church's future. Following worship on the 17<sup>th</sup> we will gather for a chili cook-off meal in Memorial Hall as we make our 2025 commitments. The winner will receive a trophy and bragging rights. The challenge has been thrown down so make up a crockpot of your favorite chili recipe and join us for food and fellowship. A sign-up sheet will be in the back of the sanctuary, so be sure to get your name on the list. We are also asking for a few platters of sandwiches and desserts as well.

**B****IBLE STUDY:** Tuesday, November 12, will be the final week of our current Bible Study, "What Does the Bible Say About Hell?" It will take place at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. A new Bible Study will begin in January.

**M****ESSY CHURCH:** THANK YOU to EVERYONE who helped with our Messy Church launch. We couldn't do it without you. **Messy Church** will continue on the first Wednesday of each month. Our next session will be December 4<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm as we go on an *Advent-ure!*

**CHURCH OFFICE** will be closed tomorrow for Veteran's Day.

### BABY SHOWER

You are invited to attend a baby shower on Saturday, November 16 at 11:30 am in honor of Allison and Paul Goodman in Memorial Hall. A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the hallway by the nursery if you are planning to attend. You can see their wish list on [my.babylist.com/goodman2025](http://my.babylist.com/goodman2025). (It's a boy!)

### Advent Festival!!!!

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, Dec. 1** immediately following worship service for our annual Advent Festival. A lunch will be served; followed by crafts, games and other Christmas preparation fun. Plan now to attend. This is an event for all church, friends, neighbors, and families. If you would like to help with food, a craft, a game, or offer other ideas, please contact Jill Lopez.



an expectation one will give back to God regularly and in line with the expectations of the religious order of his day. This is one way to think about money and how we give. There are others.

A theology of money continues with a clear-eyed understanding of how much money we have. If I am giving a portion of what I have, then I should be knowledgeable about what my financial obligations are, including my desire to give in supporting the mission and ministries of the church. Whether investing, spending, or giving we should pay attention to what we have, in order to give from what we have whether a tenth, or another fraction, or amount of our choosing. When we give value and meaning to what we have, we give from abundance rather than from scarcity, from knowledge rather than fear.

### CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.

**Imagine**  
Together



## Imagine Together: What Might Generosity Look Like for You?

By Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson

**W**hen I was a first-year student at Union Theological Seminary in New York, I had world renowned theologian Dr. James Cone as my professor for Systematic Theology. In our first class I remember him saying: "We all do theology. Theology is God-talk." A theology of money is God-talk about money.

Conversations about money are taboo in our society. We reluctantly talk about the cost of items we purchase; we are hushed in our conversations about money; and silent in discussing our investments or what we earn. Money is a topic which creates discomfort for many, with most not knowing how to ask for what is needed or what is owed. If our conversations about money are challenging, then finding our way to God-talk on the subject could be even more challenging.

Such a theology starts with how we understand God present and with us in our lives and in the world around us. The prophet Malachi puts before us a theology of money that says God will bless what is given. The blessing is on the giver and on what is given. The tithe in this case is the expectation of giving. God is present blessing what is given back to God for use in the house of God. Malachi resonates



The 2024 Neighbors in Need theme

**“Mental Health Justice for All:**

**Mental Health is a Universal Human Right”**

provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to build a more justice world for all, dismantling the shame and stigma of mental health challenges.

We invite you to be part of God’s work of mental health justice, join the WISE movement for mental health in your congregation, and support the Neighbors in Need offering.



**October 10th is World Mental Health Day.**

For more information visit:

<https://wmhdoofficial.com/>

**In a Just World, Mental Health is a Universal Human Right!**

Please join us in supporting the

**2024 Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering.**



**Two-thirds of your donations to NIN support advocacy, programming, and grants. One-third of your generous gifts directly support CAIM.**

[www.ucc.org/nin](http://www.ucc.org/nin).



MENTAL HEALTH JUSTICE FOR ALL

Mental  
health  
is a  
Universal  
Human  
Right



*“God will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth.”*  
(Isaiah 42:4)

**A World with Mental Health Justice for all  
is God’s Dream for Us**

**T**his year’s Neighbors in Need theme **“Mental Health Justice for All: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right”** highlights our God-given right to mental health.

**Everyone is created in God’s image, and everybody should receive quality mental health care.**

In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become **WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged)** for mental health.

A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life’s mental health journey.

We believe we all have a God-given right to the following to support mental health:

- 1.** The right to be protected from known harms to mental health; a universal right which applies to the entire population, but especially the vulnerable including children and oppressed peoples.
- 2.** The right to access quality and affordable care when a person is experiencing mental health challenges.
- 3.** The right to freedom and dignity, including the right of choice for mental health care.

Visit [www.mhn-ucc.org](http://www.mhn-ucc.org) to learn more about these mental health principles.