

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

January 5, 2025

John 1: (1-9), 10-18

Another Road

Today is Twelfth Night, an oft-overlooked celebration bringing an end to the 12 days of Christmas. In olden days, it was the last holiday hoorah marked with feasting and merriment. It was also believed to be bad luck if the holly and the ivy were taken down before Jan. 5.

Twelfth Night, also known as Epiphany Eve, is an important transitional time, shifting our focus from the birth to the life of Christ. The word “epiphany” comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning “appearance” or “manifestation.”

In many cultures, Epiphany is a feast day celebrated with great fanfare on Jan. 6, with gifts exchanged commemorating the ones the Magi presented to Jesus.

They were among the first to recognize the appearance of the Promised One as foretold in Hebrew scriptures. And after paying homage to the Christ Child, they returned to their homelands via another road. (The Magi were warned in a dream to do so, as Herod, the jealous and dangerous earthly ruler wanted to know the whereabouts of this new king.)

Christ’s appearance in our lives often does that — puts us on another road that we never could have imagined being on.

It is an uncertain road that requires faith. But it is on this road where we discover “darkness cannot overcome” the light of Christ that shines on our paths. For, as John’s Gospel proclaims for us today, “his is the life that was the light of all people.”

This road, too, calls us to testify to that light. Just as John did.

No, not John from our gospel lesson, but another man named John who died in an accident in the prime of his life. At his funeral, the minister opened her homily with the words from John’s Gospel.

*There was a man sent by God whose name was John. He was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.*

The minister then spoke how this young man led many to the light of Christ — inviting people to church, always making time to be there for a friend in need, even mentoring a child who had lost his way.

No, John was not the light, but he did his best to testify to it in the days he was given. He chose to walk on another road, always looking for Christ among us.

It’s time for us now to step onto another road this year. It’s time to see, embrace and testify to that light in our world.

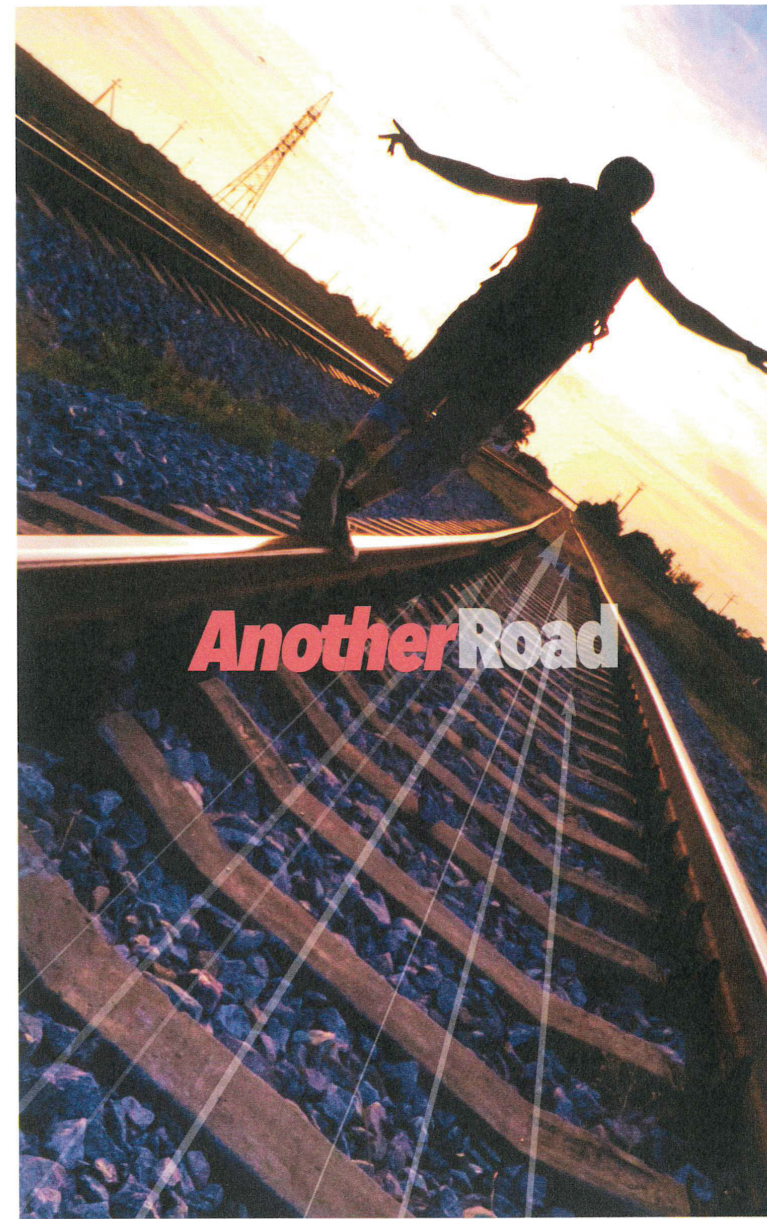
For there was a person sent by God whose name was ...

*Loving and gracious God may the light of Your Son, Jesus, shine brightly on the paths You are calling us to step onto this year. May our words and actions testify to Your glory that is all around. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.*



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE  
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BUL0206





St. John's United Church of Christ  
**Epiphany Sunday**  
**January 5, 2024**



\* 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)

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

Arise, shine, for your light has come.

**A new day is dawning, a new year is born, fresh and clean.**

Arise, shine for your light has come.

**Emmanuel, God is with us on every path we take, no matter where we go.**

Arise, shine for your light has come.

**And the stars still shine where Christ is present and voices sing in praise!**

\***OPENING HYMN** *We Three Kings* #172

\***WE CONFESS OUR SIN** (unison)

**Divine Light, illuminating our shadows and darkness, we turn to you in hope and fear. We long to be freed from times of bewildering darkness, when depression and despair haunt our days and perplex our nights. We hope for clear answers and readily marked paths. Healing Light, remind us that you desire not our punishment but our salvation. Your light is gracious and brings insight and renewal, hope and blessing. Restore our courage and make us your light for others. Amen.**

\***GOD FORGIVES US** (responsively)

As Mary, Joseph and Jesus settled in Nazareth, help us, God, to let you take up residence in each one of our hearts. Forgive us our failures, our weaknesses, our fears and our doubts.

**In the name of the babe of Bethlehem, the Prince of Peace, we are now made new and whole.**

\***RESPONSE** *The First Noel* (v.1 & 2) #151

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** *Jesus Loves Me*

**OFFERING INVITATION\*\***

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

\***RESPONSE** *As With Gladness* (v. 1) #173

\***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** *Do You Know the Way to Bethlehem* Wagner

**SCRIPTURE:** Old Testament: Jeremiah 31:7-14

New Testament: Matthew 2:1-23

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

**MESSAGE** *Star Trek*

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Invitation

Communion Prayer

God be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution; Consecration and Sharing of the Elements

Thanksgiving Prayer (unison)

**We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

\***CLOSING HYMN** *I Am the Light of the World* #469

\***BLESSING** (responsively)

Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? He is in us and among us—our risen and reigning Lord.

**Let us follow his star and serve him always in all our words and deeds.**

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

\* **POSTLUDE**

## ST. JOHN'S UCC STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

<b>Pastor</b>	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
<b>Liturgist</b>	Eric Meyer
<b>Head Usher</b>	Sandra Lange
<b>Organist</b>	DeEtta Welte
<b>Music Director, Pianist</b>	Becky Brockman
<b>Children /Family Ministry Coordinator</b>	Will Meyer
<b>Nursery Attendant</b>	Darcie Bahr
<b>Projection</b>	Jana Vieck
<b>Sound</b>	Brian Fillingim
<b>Church Secretary</b>	Angie Robinson
<b>Church Board President</b>	Jana Vieck
<b>Greeters</b>	Tony & Ann Riley



The annual Congregation Meeting is scheduled immediately following Church on January 19, 2025 ! Please plan to attend.

**MESSY CHURCH** will be held on January 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm. The theme is *There's Snow-body Like You*. Lots of activities, Boomwhackers, with a Taco Bar and Nachos for dinner. Join us!

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** on The Gnostic Gospels will be held at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm on Tuesdays, January 21, 28, and February 4, 11. The Gnostic Gospels are 52 texts discovered in 1945 in Nag Hammadi, Egypt. They include 'secret' gospels, poems, and myths attributing to Jesus' sayings and beliefs, which are very different from the New Testament. We will be focusing on the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Phillip.

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



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, January 5—EPIPHANY**

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am  
Worship, Communion 10:30 am  
Children's Church  
Confirmation Class 5pm

### **MONDAY, January 6**

BABE Store 12-5:30 pm  
Friends 5-6:15 pm

Evangelism & Membership  
**WEDNESDAY, January 8**

Messy Church 5:30-7 pm  
Christian Ed 6:30 pm  
Choir 7pm

### **THURSDAY, January 9**

Technology Comm. 10 am  
Dinner at Applebee's 6 pm

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

#### **SUNDAY, January 12**

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am  
Worship 10:30 am  
Children's Church  
Undecorating Church After Worship

#### **MONDAY, January 13**

BABE Store 12-5:30 pm

#### **WEDNESDAY, January 15**

Choir 7pm

#### **THURSDAY, January 16**

Dinner at Senior Tequila 6 pm

#### **FRIDAY, January 17**

Newsletter Deadline

#### **SUNDAY, January 19**

Annual Congregational Meeting Following Service  
CFM Soup Sale





Continuing Prayer Requests: Laura Sanders, Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr., the families of Carole Klein and Franklyn Schroeder, plus Norma Phegley.

- **Vern Houchins** is anticipating a surgery date as he consults his physicians. Please continue praying for Vern and Marilyn.
- **Norma Meyer**, Gary Meyer's mother, is undergoing rehab at GentleCare following her recent fall and subsequent surgery. Cards may be sent to Norma at GentleCare, Room 8, 1202 S. 16th, Vincennes IN 47591.
- **Patrick Gott** continues to recover and gain strength at home. Prayers are appreciated.

**Addresses for Shut-ins and Others**

- Norma Meyer**, Gentle Care, - Room 8, 1202 S 16th, Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Susie Milligan**, Colonial Assisted Living, - Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Leona Conway**, Aperion Care, - C Wing Room 3, 3801 Old Bruceville Rd , Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Marge Beamon**, The Villages at Oak Ridge, - Room 303, 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.

# BABE Store



## What Is The BABE Store Mission?

This unique "store" provides incentives encouraging families to nurture healthy babies. Serving pregnant women and their children up to age three with no income restrictions to be able to participate in this program. Clients earn vouchers by keeping prenatal appointments, taking their children for immunizations and other activities, then redeeming the coupons at the BABE Store located in St. John's for merchandise from diapers to cribs and everything in between.



## How Can I Help?

**BABE relies on the support of individuals and organizations in Knox County. Tax deductible donations are accepted for new:**

- High Chairs & Strollers
- Diapers & Wipes
- Baby Clothing
- Bottles & Pacifiers
- Bathing Supplies
- Potty Chairs
- Bedding
- Teething Rings & Rattles
- Financial Gifts
- Host a "Baby Shower" For BABE
- Volunteer At The Store
- Serve As A Board Member

### HOURS OF OPERATION

12 noon - 4:30 pm  
 Monday's Only  
 Closed on Holidays

### Contact

Peggy Meyer  
 812-886-9723  
 Cindy Deckard  
 812-887-2999

**St. John's United Church of Christ**  
 812-882-2720 [www.myucc.org](http://www.myucc.org)