

Life-giving Acts

In this season of Easter — where we journey 50 days to Pentecost — we continue to see how the power of Jesus, our Risen Lord, is now in the hands of his followers as they teach, preach and heal in his holy name. Today we have one such healing.

Peter is in the city of Joppa, a prosperous port on the west coast of Israel, where he learns of the death of a faithful widow named Tabitha (Dorcas in Greek). Her great acts of charity and kindness are spoken of by the number of mourners who come to her home. Many are widows themselves wearing dresses made by Tabitha, who was a skilled seamstress.

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, Peter revives the dead woman by calling out to her, extending his hand and commanding her to get up once again. And she does. There is celebration, and news of this incredible life-giving act spreads throughout the populous city, gaining a record number of Jesus believers.

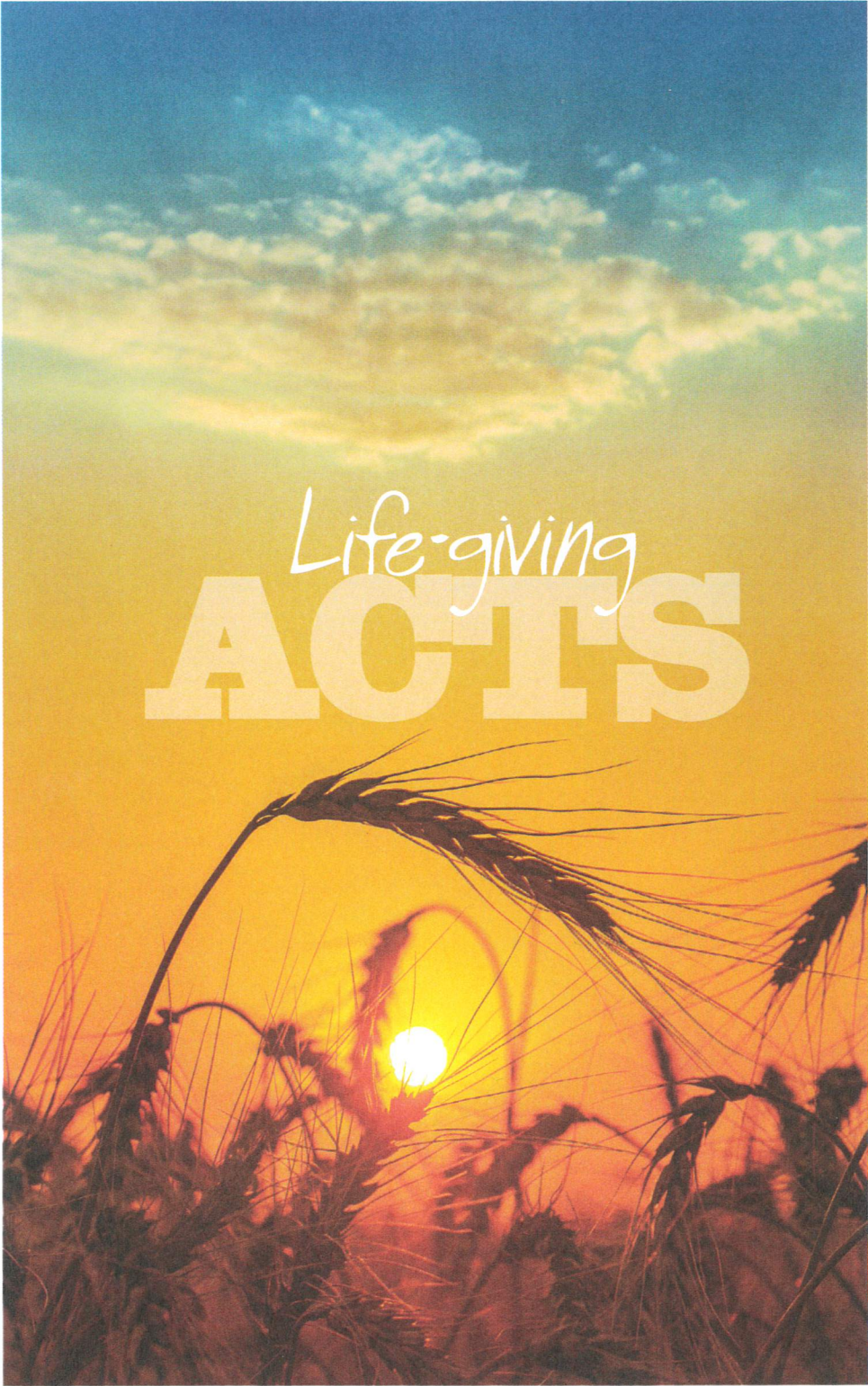
Bringing someone back from the dead is the ultimate life-giving act. But as Jesus followers in 2025, we need to remember that that life-giving act is still possible through each one of us. We might not be reviving the actual dead from their slumber, but we can bring life back to those who are among the walking dead — spiritually or emotionally. An inspiring word of encouragement reaching the ears of someone who has been belittled all their life is a life-giving act. A strong hand extended to lift the one who has been kicked to the gutter is a life-giving act.

There was a recent social media post from a resident of a tiny rural community thanking an anonymous donor for paying her ailing cat’s veterinary bill. Some selfless soul, hearing of the woman’s financial situation, opened wide their wallet to ease the stress and burden. A life-giving act for a worried fur mom and her elderly cat.

Life-giving acts are still possible.

And perhaps the great act in our reading today is not Peter’s raising Tabitha from the dead. Perhaps the acts of life that we should applaud are the many ways Tabitha served others, performing life-giving acts daily without ever drawing attention to herself — a new dress, a listening ear, an understanding heart. Tabitha shows us this day that faithfulness is better than greatness. Tabitha showed that serving others is how we serve God. Who are the Tabithas among you this day?

God of new life, we praise you for the Tabithas who selflessly give to make this world better. We ask that you open wide our hearts and hands so that we may also perform life-giving acts to those in need who you place on our paths. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.





St. John's United Church of Christ
Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 11, 2024



WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER (be seated)

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

PRELUDE

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

Gathered here are the people of God who come to sing praise and seek guidance for the lives we live.

Gathered here are the people of God who come in joy and sorrow, in peace and despair.

Gathered here are the people of God who come in thanksgiving and regret, in hope and grief.

We are the people of God! We give gratitude for this day which will not dawn again. Let us lift our voices in praise and thanksgiving.

***OPENING HYMN** *Open My Eyes, That I May See* (vs. 1 & 2) #586

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

Almighty God, we sing praises to you. You are the One we worship, the One to whom our allegiance is due. We are your people. We belong to you, and you are our God. Help us feel the power of your presence in our worship today, emboldening us to follow you. Amen.

***RESPONSE** *Christ Arose* (chorus) #224

MOTHERS' DAY RECOGNITION

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children please come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

OFFERING INVITATION**

God is so good and we are richly blessed. Let us give back to God with gratitude and thanksgiving.

***RESPONSE** *In the Garden* (v.1) #227

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Open our eyes to see the beauty around us: Then, open them more to see the ever-present poverty. Open our ears to hear the laughter of our children: Then, open them more to hear the cries of the needy. Open our hearts to receive the joy of life: Then, open them more to share the pain of another. Open our hands to grasp the hand of a friend: Then, open them more to help a desperate stranger. Open our wallets widest of all to give generously through Christ our Lord. Amen.

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response: *He Lives* (chorus) #226

ANTHEM *My Shepherd*

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Psalm 23

New Testament: Acts 9:36-43

The Word of God for the People of God **Thanks be to God**

MESSAGE *Handcrafted Christians*

***CLOSING HYMN** *That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright* #229

***BLESSING** (responsively)

Return now to your dwellings in the peace of God. Go to your workplace in the strength of the Holy Spirit. Go now to your world with the love of Jesus Christ.

We go forward in the powerful presence of our God. 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 clicking on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

Announcements

Preschool Director Needed - If you know someone who would be a good fit for St. John's, or you would like more information, please contact one of the Preschool Committee members: Pastor Debbie Jo, Steve Cooper, Jill Lopez, Carolynn Stevenson, or Allison Cummins.

Our next **Messy Church Event** will be on June 4th from 5-7:00 pm and will celebrate: Fiery Power - The Story of Pentecost, with activities, crafts and more!

WAYS TO SCHEDULE A ST. JOHN'S UCC DIRECTORY PHOTO SITTING *from Jerri Johanningsmeier*

SUNDAY, MAY 10. 11:30-12:30. 2:00-4:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 18. 9:00 -10:00 11:30-12:30. 2:00-4:00 p.m.

1. Scan the QR code on an emailed or postal mail letter. Schedule your time through the online step directives. (Copies in the back of the church.)
2. Call our photographer, Cassy, The Ascended Photography, 812-887-3120
Schedule a time through her guidance.
3. Visit the Sunshine room today and schedule or have a photo sitting on the spot.
- 5, Walk-ins accepted each Sunday.
6. See Kim Godare, Natasha Coomes, or Jerri Johanningsmeier.



Joys and Concerns

The **rosebud on the alter** this morning welcomes Colsen Max Atkins-Harris, born on May 4th, 2025 to Nicholas and Addison Atkins-Harris. Colsen weighed 8 lbs, 1 oz. and measured 22 inches long. Pastor Debbie Jo is the proud grandmother.

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr. Pat Hutchinson and Family, Gayle Huffer, Brian Fillingim, Carol Graham, Vern Houchins and Katrina Memering.

Please keep Shirley Black and her family in your prayers. Shirley had a bad fall, resulting in several head stitches and a slight brain bleed. She is currently on a ventilator and is sedated. Shirley is at Deaconess Midtown Hospital, but it has been requested for no visitors at this time. Cards can be sent to her home address.

Shut-in Addresses:

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Leona Conway - Aperion Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501
Mike Lankford - Bridgepoint Health Center, 1900 College Ave., Vincennes, IN 47591

At Home:

Shirley Black
Bruce Deckard
Gayle Huffer
Gary Meyer

**Until further notice, all prayer requests or updates should be relayed to Janet Goodman instead of the church office. Email: terrybaseball@gmail.com
Text or phone call: 812-887-2797.**

This Week in the Life of St. John’s

Sunday, May 11th

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship/Mother’s Day 10:30 am
Children’s Church
Church Directory Photographs Taken Today

Wednesday, May 14th

Christian Education Mtg 6:00 pm
Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm

Monday, May 12th

BABE Store Open 12 noon-5:00 pm
Friends Group Mtg. 5-6:15 pm

Thursday, May 15th

Dinner & Conversation Group @
Café Moonlight, 6:00 pm

Looking Ahead In The Month

Sunday, May 18th

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am
Graduation Recognition Sunday
Children’s Church
Church Directory Photographs Taken Today
Graduation Recognition Reception Following Worship

Thursday, May 22nd

Dinner @ McAlister’s 6:00 pm

Sunday, May 25th

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am
Children’s Church

Wednesday, May 28th

Laundry Love Mission 6-8:00 pm

Monday, May 19th

BABE Store Open 12 noon-5:00 pm
Friends Group Mtg. 5-6:15 pm
Worship Committee Mtg. 6:00 pm
Church Board Mtg. 7:00 pm

Friday, May 23rd

Newsletter Items Due

Monday, May 26th

Memorial Day, Office Closed

Thursday, May 29th

Dinner & Conversation Group @
Mi Pueblo’s in Washington, 6:00 pm



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Liturgist:	Elaine Workman
Head Usher:	Michelle Grube
Organist:	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist:	Becky Brockman
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Nursery Attendant:	Darcie Bahr
Projection:	Jana Vieck
Sound:	Jonathan Lange
Church Board President:	Ed Cummings

Did You Know?

St. John’s Sunday Morning Worship Services are streamed **LIVE** on our church’s Facebook page, “**St. John’s United Church of Christ Vincennes.**”

Or, you can watch the Worship Service at your convenience by going on the church website, “**myucc.org**” and clicking on “Worship Service” for a particular date.

You can also download a copy of each monthly **church newsletter** from our church website to keep up with all the activities.