

St. John's United Church of Christ

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August 2025 Newsletter

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606 North Fifth Street
Vincennes, IN 47591**

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A Note From Pastor Debbie Jo...

Dear Friends:

Like the song says, *I got to Kansas City on a Friday. By Saturday, I learned a thing or two.* I always look forward to General Synod knowing I will be inspired by the speakers, uplifted by the worship and challenged by the many resolutions, workshops and discussions that take place. It is also a great time to meet with friends and colleagues I haven't seen in several years. The five days in Kansas City accomplished all that and more.

One of the workshops I attended concerned Small Town and Rural Churches (STAR). Did you know that 64% of all UCC churches are located in small towns and rural areas? This makes STAR churches essential to the health of our denomination. However, the STAR churches are often underrepresented on the Conference and National levels, even though they comprise the majority of our churches. A resolution was put forward for official recognition of the STAR Coalition thereby providing needed relational, resource, and representational support for our Small Town and Rural Churches. The resolution was adopted, and I am sure we will hear more about this group in the months ahead.

I encourage everyone to go to ucc.org and watch videos of the keynote speaker and worship leaders. Read the resolutions and listen to the discussions and votes. Remember, the General Synod may speak TO our churches, but never FOR them. Each individual congregation is autonomous, and we are bound together in a covenantal relationship.

At our 2023 General Synod in Indianapolis, it was voted to move the event from every two years to every three, so the next meeting will not be held until 2028 which will be the 70th anniversary of the UCC. It will take place in Cleveland, where we first came together as the United Church of Christ. I'm already planning to attend.

I returned from Synod on Thursday and on Saturday I spent two hours in a Zoom meeting for one third of my required Boundary Training. Now, I'm preparing for the Indiana-Kentucky Conference Annual Meeting in Ft. Wayne in three weeks. How exciting to be part of such a vital denomination!

Peace,
Pastor Debbie Jo



SCARLETT SPEAKS! Woof! Woof! It doesn't happen very often, but my Mom left town for a whole week, and I went to *doggie prison*. She left me, **all alone** in a private room with a raised bed and television, a guard who played with me each day and brought a special treat. And if that wasn't bad enough, every morning I was brought to the air-conditioned, indoor yard where I was forced to play with other dogs my size. There were cute steps to climb and tunnels to go through and a keeper who played with and cleaned up after us. Each night I crawled into bed with a blanket that smelled like my mom and my favorite *radish* toy (it both squeaks and crinkles). My bedtime cheese cube forgotten. It was just a living nightmare! After an eternity, Mom finally came to bail me out. I was so happy to see her, but I played it cool, sleeping all the way home. All I can say is that I hope we don't have a repeat of this abuse anytime soon. Woof! Woof!



July Church Happenings...



Scarlett dressing up and greeting members

Scarlett dressing up as Ms. Dolly Parton to help with the children's message



Avery Sanders gets help from Jana Vieck with bell ringing



Adults participating in the Children's Message



Jonathan Clark returned and shared his beautiful music



Vera Mattingly showed off her singing talents

Arlene Wilson was a guest organ player



We enjoyed Alan Pancake's Worship music





Preschool News



We are so excited to kick off a brand-new school year at the preschool! We had a wonderful turnout for our Open House and loved seeing so many smiling faces—both familiar and new. It was a joy to watch our little ones explore the classroom, meet their teachers, and begin building those important first connections. We're thankful for everyone who came and helped make the evening so special.

Our official first day of preschool is just around the corner, (August 7) and we've been busy getting our rooms ready and finalizing our plans for a fun, loving, and faith-filled year. We have two preschool classes again this year: our 3-year-old group and our 4-year-old Pre-K group. I'm thrilled to introduce our amazing assistant teachers—Ms. Hannah will be helping in the 4 year olds (Butterfly) class, and Ms. Bee will be assisting with our 3 year old (Caterpillar) students. They both bring warmth, creativity, and a heart for early childhood education.

If you or someone you know is still considering preschool this fall, we do have spots left! We'd love to welcome a few more little learners into our preschool family. Please reach out soon to reserve a place.

With joy,
Laura Arial
Preschool Director



Preschool Open House Pictures



Children And Family Ministry

2025 Children and Family Ministry In-Town Mission Activity, per Will Meyer

The week of June 30 was a busy one for the St. John's Children and Family Ministry.

A total of 24 kids participated throughout the week, serving at various nonprofits and outreach programs across Knox County.

Monday, June 30: St. John's Work Day

On the first day of mission week, the group focused on various projects around the church. For the first day the group worked on some of the outreach programs that the church provides. One major task was cleaning and restocking the shelves for Phoebe's Mission. For Sandy's Pantry, the youth checked for expired food items and completed an inventory count. The group also cleared out all the decorations from the closet near the family restroom. The group

wiped down the shelves in closets and vacuumed to prepare for future use. In the afternoon the youth assisted the preschool by cleaning toys, tables, windows, and floors to help create a fresh and welcoming environment for the children. Throughout the day, several other small jobs were also completed.



Tuesday, July 1: Wabash Trails

On the second day of mission week, the group assisted Wabash Trails. The youth painted all the picnic tables, giving them a fresh new look in the Houchins Shelter House. During the day the youth also removed old staples from the tables and posts from past decorations and table coverings.



Children And Family Ministry



Wednesday, July 2: Helping His Hands

On day three of mission week, the group served at Helping His Hands, helped with several important tasks, including separating large boxes of biscuits into smaller portions, assembling food boxes for distribution, stocking shelves, breaking down empty boxes, and assisting with other small projects as needed. For a mid-week treat the group traveled to Rainbow Beach that afternoon.



Thursday, July 3: Animal Shelter/Isaiah House/ Family Dinner

For the final day of mission week, the group



traveled to the animal shelter in the morning. At the shelter, the youth donated much-needed supplies, played with the cats and walked dogs. After lunch the group did an outreach effort for the Isaiah House when they made cookie dough for the children at the house to bake at the house. The youth also made lemonade for the upcoming lemonade stand and wrote letters to

children at the house to provide support. To finish the week the youth helped make an Italian dinner for their family. Great job to everyone who took part in this mission week!



Sunday, August 31st the youth will share their experiences during their Work Week at Worship

Children & Family Ministry Age Groups

M & M (Mini-Marvels) Age 4-2nd Grade
KFC (Kids For Christ) 3rd - 6th Grade
Youth 7th Grade - High School



Isaiah 117
changing the way foster care begins

Children And Family Ministry (continued)

Thank You for Supporting the Lemonade Stand!

A big thank you to the families, church members, and the Vincennes community for stopping by the CFM lemonade stand—both on the rainy Saturday, July 19, and at church on Sunday, July 20. The St. John's stand proceeds were one of the highest for the weekend. Your support means so much! All proceeds from the stand go to benefit the Isaiah 117 House, an organization that provides physical and emotional support in a safe, loving home for children awaiting foster care placement.

Exciting Things Ahead – 2025–2026 Program Year!

With August here, the 2025–2026 Children and Family Ministry program year is right around the corner! The new year will be filled with new fun activities, meaningful lessons, and some returning favorites. Final planning is currently underway, and details about upcoming events and programs will be shared soon. Be sure to watch for announcements in the church bulletin, on Facebook, and in the CFM mailboxes.

Prayer & Post



We ask for continuing prayer requests for:

Bruce Deckard Carol Graham Pat Hutchinson Katrina Memering Gary Meyer
Don Osborne, Jr. Mark Schutter Lynne Simmons The Family Gayle Huffer
The Family of Laura Sanders

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Gayle Huffer, who passed away on July 4th.

Shut-in Addresses:

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Leona Conway - Aperia Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Carol Graham - BridgePointe Health Campus, Room 310, 1900 College Avenue, Vincennes, IN 47591



At Home:

Bruce Deckard
Huffer Family
Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford

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Prayer Requests

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.

Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School 2025 is ready for our pre K through 5th graders. Come and join us as we hear Bible stories, make crafts, eat fun snacks, learn new songs, play games and enjoy learning with one another.

Middle and high school youth will be involved assisting this year, as well! We hope to see all our preschool and elementary age students and friends, along with all our helpers for the first session on August 3rd!

Join us for Vacation Bible School at St. John's UCC!

First Four Sundays
in August:
3, 10, 17 & 24
9:30 - 11:30 am

INSIDE OUT & UPSIDE DOWN ON MAIN STREET™
Where Jesus makes a difference every day!

SESSION 1
Parable of the winny workers
Matthew 20:1-16
GRATITUDE AVE

SESSION 2
Parable of the roadside rescue
Luke 10:25-37
COMPASSION DR

SESSION 3
Parable of the shocking servant
Matthew 18:21-35
FORGIVENESS LN

SESSION 4
Parable of the warmest welcome
Luke 15:11-32
GRACE PKWY

SESSION 5
Parable of the master's money
Luke 19:12-26
FAITHFULNESS RD

BIBLE MEMORY PSALM 26:4, 5

Age: Preschool through 5th grade
Volunteers Needed: Middle school & high school age especially!
Contact: Jill Lopez to sign up or volunteer!

On **Main Street**, kids will explore stories that Jesus told about everyday people in everyday situations. Of course crafts, stories, snacks, songs and games will all be included as well.

Join us to see how you can make a difference right where we live!

Middle school and high school youth are needed to help with story dramatizing, crafts, songs and games. (You can help eat the snacks too!)

August 24th the VBS participants will share their talents during morning worship.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING...

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Evangelism and Membership Committee at St. John's UCC has focused on an updated new Church Directory. In-church pictures were taken in May. Following the scheduled sittings, members were notified to send a family photo if unable to schedule a photo set. All photos taken and submitted will be organized into a directory by Brian Fillingim. It will be available online through our church website or members can obtain a handheld copy. A target date has not been set, but hopefully this fall.

We invite members to design the cover of our new publication. Send or drop off entries to the church office by mid August. A huge thank you to all who participated in the directory photo update.

An important note to all: Our committee is in immediate need of a chairman and additional committee members. If you would like that call to join the team, please let us know through Pastor Debbie Jo or Jerri Johanningsmeier for more details.

If you would like to **reserve Memorial Hall** for any activity, please contact the Church office and they will check the schedule and put down your reservation.

On Sunday, September 7th a special breakfast will be provided for ALL ages. Serving will begin at 9:45 am. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this SS kick-off event!

Congratulations to Elaine and Jim Workman on the birth of their newest great-granddaughter! Bexley Ann Kirchoff was born to Cole and Mallory on July 8, 2025.

Fellowship Time will resume August 24th.

The Music and Worship committee has a busy calendar, which includes planning and preparation for both the piano and the organ professional tuners to come in the very near future.

Adult choir practice resumes **August 27th, 7 PM**, with the choir singing in the **September 14th** service. The choir continues to welcome and encourage new participants.

Upcoming religious Sundays include World Wide Communion **October 5th**. **October 19th** our congregation will celebrate Harvest Home, with emphasis on the congregation bringing donations for the Blessing Box. Reformation Sunday is **October 26th**.

November 2nd is All Saints Day with communion, Stewardship Sunday, and Memorial Sunday. And Sunday, **November 30th** is the first Sunday of Advent!

As always, the committee welcomes additional members, and remain thankful for those who volunteer to enhance our worship services!

Thanks to Arlene Wilson for playing the organ during worship, Sunday, July 27th. We appreciate you!



Christian Education Information...

Our children and youth Sunday School is evolving! "Sunday School" will no longer occur before worship service. Instead, beginning on **September 7**, Faith Formation for our elementary children in **Kindergarten thru grade 6** will be provided in place of what has been known as Children's Church with older youth staying in church. Children will attend 10:30 worship service with their families and may leave the sanctuary immediately after the Children's Message. A lesson will be taught, and related activities will be led under the leadership of Sarah Lowe and Will Meyer.

- **Darcie Bahr** will continue to be available in the nursery before worship for young ones belonging to those attending adult Sunday School or choir practice, and also during worship service.
- **Older Youth** will have opportunities for Faith Formation at least twice a month during times to be announced at a later date.
- **The Adult Sunday School class** will continue to meet each Sunday beginning at 9:30 before worship service. All are invited to join in this discussion format each and every Sunday. Let Jill Lopez know if you would like the lesson emailed to you each week in advance.

The **Tech Committee** needs additional volunteers to assist with Sunday Worship. Let Sandra Lange know of your interest at 812-887-1628.

Sunday August 31st the youth will share their experiences during their Work Week

Pastor Debbie Jo will be in Indianapolis on August 31st to baptize her grandson, Colsen Max Atkins-Harris, at St. John's UCC Southport, her family home congregation.

Messy Church Returns on September 3rd from 5:30-7:00 pm.

Family Movie Night: On August 3rd we will present *Angels in the Outfield* starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Danny Glover, Tony Danza and Christopher Lloyd. It is family-friendly and everyone is invited.

Annual Gathering of the Indiana Kentucky Conference will take place at Plymouth Congregational UCC in Ft. Wayne, IN on August 22-23. The theme is *Curiosity, Courage and Christ* and we are invited to send two delegates to participate. If you would like to be a delegate, please let Pastor Debbie know ASAP. Thanks!

Save The Date #1: The Church picnic will take place on September 28th under the pavilion at Gregg Park at 10:30 am. The Church Board will be providing pulled pork and everyone is asked to bring a side dish. More details to come.

Save The Date #2: On October 26th we will host the Conference Minister on the Covenant Tour and a fellowship meal will follow.

Church Board meeting highlights for July were not received for the newsletter.





LAM: New Location & Program Offering

One recipient of our church's benevolent giving and additional support since its inception in 2005 has been Life After Meth (LAM), Inc. On July 21st I attended its Open House following the ribbon cutting for this nonprofit organization's new location at 707 Busseron St., Suite D near the Knox County Courthouse. While speaking with Marsha Bishop, Executive Director, I learned of a new offering to "LAM's mission of healing, aiding recovery, and transforming lives."

Two "Grief Recovery Method" (GRM) Groups - each limited to 10 people - will be offered at the organization's new location beginning in August, each meeting 8 weeks. The Wednesday group will meet mornings while the Thursday group will meet afternoons. To cover the book and materials, the cost is \$25. Of note: the GRM groups are open to ANYONE.

To quote what was printed on a handout there:

"Because 100% of people suffer from over 40 different kinds of loss...

Because grieving in a healthy way is essential for mental & emotional health and well-being...

Because we care about our community...

This is NOT therapy --but it is therapeutic!"

To sign up or for more information, contact Marsha Bishop: 812-830-8238.

(submitted by Brenda Roark)

Dinner & Conversation



Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm. Each week we visit a different restaurant and enjoy an evening of food and conversation. It's a great way to get to know our fellow church members better. A reservation sheet is in the back of the sanctuary weekly or you can call the church office to add your name. The August schedule is as follows:

August 7th - Luigi's

August 14th - Coco's

August 21st - Dragon 2000

August 28th - Kelso's



- Stephen Cole
- Cameron Mattingly
- Isabella Lange
- Saundra Lange
- Arlene Wilson
- Brian Spangle
- Matthew Vieck
- Leah Lankford
- Ellis Jones
- Kennedy Alexander
- Madalynn Grube
- Bob Klein
- John Riggs
- Jill Lopez
- Larry Marchino
- Jessica Bennett
- Kyle Brown

August Anniversaries

- Jeff & Janet Newell
- Gary & Peggy Meyer
- Jeff & Krisi Mattingly
- David & Michelle Grube
- Brad & Pam Summers
- Tony & Ann Riley
- Ed & Brenda Cummings
- Fred & Donna Klein
- Larry & Betsy Marchino
- Mark & Susan Schutz
- Mark & Janice Strange
- Kyle & Jill Doggett
- Vernon & Marilyn Houchins

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Phoebe's Mission 4:30 - 6 pm	2
3 Adult SS Classes 9:15 am VBS 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am Communion Movie Night 5 pm	4 BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm Friends 5 - 6:15 pm Evangelism & Membership Mtg - 6 pm	5	6	7 Dinner & Conversation - Luigi's 6 pm	8	9
10 Adult SS Classes 9:15 am VBS 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am	11 BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm Friends 5 - 6:15 pm Outreach & Benevolence Mtg - 6:30 pm	12	13 Christian Education Mtg - 6 pm	14 Tech Mtg - 10 am Dinner & Conversation - Coco's 6 pm	15	16
17 Adult SS Classes 9:15 am VBS 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am	18 BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm Friends 5 - 6:15 pm Music & Worship - 6 pm Church Board - 7 pm	19	20 September Newsletter Items Due Today	21 Dinner & Conversation - Dragon 2000 6 pm	22 Indiana Kentucky Conference	23 Indiana Kentucky Conference
24 Adult SS Classes 9:15 am VBS 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am VBS Presentation During Worship Fellowship	25 BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm Friends 5 - 6:15 pm	26	27 Laundry Love 6 - 8 pm Choir Practice 7 pm	28 Dinner & Conversation - Kelso's 6pm	29	30
31 Adult SS Classes 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am Youth Work Camp Presentation During Worship Pastor Debbie Gone	 <h1>August 2025</h1>					