

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER  
PENTECOST

September 28, 2025

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

### Surprising Investment

When my husband and I moved to our 18th-century Vermont home, complete with a charming old stone well, I couldn't resist doing what generations of farmers have done before me. I named our humble abode, "Old Stone Well Farm."

My husband, though, gently pointed out that two chickens and a small garden does not make a farm. Furthermore, he inquired, why would I even want the farming life?

His question comes from seeing the struggles — and closures — of the farms in the area. He has driven a feed truck long enough to have heard the stories of families barely making ends meet.

He is a local, rooted in reality. I, on the other hand, am an outsider who still romanticizes early morning milkings. Yes, our little village used to boast more cows than people, but I haven't given up on the dream of going beyond two chickens and adding some goats and perhaps an apple orchard.

The prophet Jeremiah bought a farm many years ago despite the warnings from all the naysayers. It wasn't really an opportune time to invest in land. There were great political conflicts between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. And to top it all off, Jeremiah was in prison for warning people what was about to befall them. It is then, Jeremiah's cousin asks the prophet to buy his farm. And so, he does.

This land deal had nothing to do with buying low and selling high. It had everything to do with hope. Jeremiah proclaimed that he is doing it because God promises that the people will come home from exile and houses and fields and vineyards will be theirs once again.

How many times have we let reality cloud the vision of hope that God still has for us? Where are the dreamers who can see the goodness of God in the most desperate of situations?

Three months before his execution by the Nazis, theologian and pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote to his fiancée Maria, "When Jeremiah said, in his people's hour of direst need, that 'houses and fields and [vineyards] shall again be bought in this land,' it was a token of confidence in the future. That requires faith, and may God grant us it daily."

Yes, may God grant us such faith each day of our lives. Faith to buy the farm and live into the hope of a better tomorrow.

Old Stone Well Farm has yet to become a real working farm, but that doesn't mean I have given up on the dream. If anything, I am only just beginning to envision the amazing things that can be.

*God of beautiful tomorrows, help us to invest in your Kingdom. Where others see dead ends, let our eyes see the possibilities. Increase our faith and help us always to hold on to hope. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



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## Surprising Investment





St. John's United Church of Christ  
**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
 September 28, 2025  
 Church Picnic



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

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

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

We yearn to be in the presence of the Holy One,  
**To linger in the house of prayer,**  
 To walk beside still streams,  
**To behold the radiance of creation,**  
 To sing as matches our joy,  
**To offer our sacrifice of service,**  
 To dwell all our days enfolded in the love of God,  
**To praise God with our deeds and melodies.**

\***OPENING HYMN** *He's Got the Whole World*  
*He's got the whole world in His Hands (4x)*  
 2. Little bitty baby 3. Sisters & the brothers 4. All of us here

\***WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)  
**We are not alone; we live in God's world. We believe in God who has created and is creating; who has come to us in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new; who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church, to celebrate God's presence; to live with respect in creation; to love and serve others; to seek justice and resist evil; to proclaim Jesus' message of hope, inclusion and grace. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Join us now in worship, O Loving God of us all. Amen.**

\***RESPONSE** *Seek Ye First (v. 1)* #354  
*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Al-le-lu, Al-le-lu-ia!*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** *Jesus Loves Me* Eric Meyer #113

**WE GATHER IN PRAYER**

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)  
**Congregational Response: Seek Ye First (v. 2)** #354  
*Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek and you shall find, knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Al-le-lu, Al-le-lu-ia!*

**SCRIPTURE:**

Old Testament: Psalm 104:1-9, 24  
 New Testament: John 1:1-5  
 The Word of God for the People of God **Thanks be to God**

**MESSAGE** *God's Awesome Creation*

\***CLOSING HYMN** *Creator God, Creating Still (v. 1)* #62  
*Creator God creating still, By will and word and deed. Create a new humanity, To meet the present need.*

\***BLESSING** (responsively)  
 Go forth, go into the world. Go into these cooling days of Fall. Enjoy God's creation and all that God provides. Celebrate the autumn time of the earth where life is enhanced by the glorious colors of God's world..  
**We go forth sharing, witnessing and living the Good News. Amen.**

\***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Kum Ba Ya (Come by Here)* #590  
 Kum ba yah, My Lord, Kum ba yah (3x) O lord, Kum ba yah!

\***POSTLUDE**

## Announcements

**Messy Church** on October 1st from 5:30-7:00 pm features the theme of *Prayer*. Our Scripture will be Romans 12:12 and we will have lots of prayer related games, crafts and activities. Dinner will be sloppy Joes, chips & raw veggies. Plan now to participate and join us for a great evening of Food, Fun and Fellowship. Invite your friends!

**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. top continue our outreach into the community.

**The Blessings Box** needs donations. Suggestions are: cereal, peanut butter, jelly, Velveeta mac & cheese (doesn't require milk or butter), canned pastas, soups, crackers. Cans with pop top lids are best.

**Meet our New Church Secretary:** Kimber (Kim) Butler has begun as our church secretary. She has lived in Vincennes for 32 years. After 25 years as Office Manager, she retired from Gentle Care Nursing Home. She has 3 adult children, 7 grandchildren and 3 great grandkids. She has been widowed for seven years and likes to quilt and crochet. She is a great addition to our staff and will be in the office Monday-Friday from 9:00 am-1:00 p.m. Stop by and introduce yourself!

**Harvest Home** worship will take place on October 19<sup>th</sup> and everyone is invited to bring in canned goods for the Blessings Box.

**World Communion** will be celebrated on October 5<sup>th</sup> during worship. We will also collect our *Neighbors in Need* Offering.

**Conference Youth Retreat** for Grades 6-12 will take place on on November 14-16, beginning at 7 pm Friday and ending at 11 am Sunday morning at Camp Cedar Ridge in Louisville, KY. The church will pay the \$125 fee for any young person from our church family who wishes to attend. You may register online at by going to the IKC website weekly newsletter, *Roots and Shoots* at ikc@ikcucc.org. The church will send one check to cover everyone attending. Contact Will or Pastor Debbie for more details.

**Blessing of the Costumes** will take place during the Children's Moment on Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> and all children are asked to wear their Halloween costumes to worship.

**Family Movie Night:** On October 21st at 5:00 pm we will gather to watch *Clue* (rated PG) starring Tim Curry, Madeline Kahn, Leslie Warren, Christopher Lloyd, Eileen Brennan, Michael McKeon and Martin Mull. Synopsis: *Six blackmail victims are invited to an isolated mansion by a man who knows a dark secret from each of their pasts. On arrival, each is given a pseudonym drawn from the Clue game before being introduced to the blackmailer. Each is handed a weapon, at which point the lights are switched off and the blackmailer is killed. Can the guests uncover the murderer before they all become victims?* The movie has three endings and we will see who can decide the murderer in advance. Everyone is invited.

## Prayers and Posts

**We ask for continuing prayer requests for friends and family:** Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr., Mark Schutter, Kelvin Strange, Lynne Simmons, Katrina Memering, Jasmine Zeller, Ted Lowe, Cindy Utley, Jessica Conner, and Vern Houchins.

### **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  
Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501

### **At Home:**

Bruce Deckard  
Gary Meyer  
Mike Lankford  
Vern Houchins



**Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Janet Goodman during the evening/weekend.**

**Email: st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1 pm**

**For Janet: terrybaseball@gmail.com Text or phone call: 812-887-2797.**

### This Week in the Life of St. John's

#### Sunday, September 28th

Church Picnic @ Gregg Park  
Worship 10:30 am

#### Tuesday, September 30th

Vision Session has been cancelled

#### Thursday, October 2nd

Dinner & Conversation - Kelso's @ 6 pm

#### Monday, September 29th

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

#### Wednesday, October 1st

Choir Practice 7 pm  
Messy Church 5:30 - 7 pm

#### Friday, October 3rd

Phoebe's Mission 4:30 - 6 pm

### Looking Ahead In October

#### Sunday, October 5th

World Communion  
Worship 10:30 am  
Neighbors In Need Offering

#### Tuesday, October 7th

Vision Session with Supper 5:30 - 7 pm  
Girl Scouts 4:30 - 6:30 pm

#### Thursday, October 9th

Dinner & Conversation - Cafe Moonlight @ 6 pm  
Tech Committee Mtg 10 am

#### Monday, October 6th

BABE Store 12 - 5:30 pm  
Friends 5-6:30 pm  
Evangelism & Membership 6 pm

#### Wednesday, October 8th

Choir Practice 7 pm  
Christian Ed Mtg. 6 pm



### Staff and Volunteers

<b>Pastor:</b>	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
<b>Liturgist:</b>	
<b>Head Usher:</b>	Krisi Mattingly
<b>Organist:</b>	DeEtta Welte
<b>Music Director, Pianist:</b>	Becky Brockman
<b>Children &amp; Family Ministry Coordinator:</b>	Will Meyer
<b>Nursery Attendant:</b>	Darcie Bahr
<b>Projection:</b>	Jana Vieck
<b>Sound:</b>	Lonny Vieck
<b>Church Board President:</b>	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.