

TRINITY SUNDAY

May 31, 2026

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

This Is Good

In the beginning, God created ... the heavens, the earth, the creatures of the land and sea, day and night, and then man and woman. After each phase of creation, we are told that God "saw that it was good."

Repeating the phrase "it was good" isn't some literary technique to make the story more poetic and profound. It is a theological statement of how carefully God thought through each phase of Creation, marking each finished phase as completed — and good. As God brought the ball of chaos into diverse, colorful life, God gave it a divine stamp of approval.

It's no wonder the early saints held God's act of creation in great reverence and awe — more so than we tend to do today.

St. Basil (329-379) wrote that he wanted "creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that wherever you go, the least plant may bring you clear remembrance of the Creator." While St. John Chrysostom (347-470) said, "From the creation, learn to admire the Lord!" And St. John of Damascus (675-749) simply and powerfully stated what was completely obvious to him: "The whole earth is a living icon of the face of God."

Let that last saintly observation linger in your heart for a bit. And as it does, ask yourself what your days would be like if you viewed all of Creation as a living icon of the face of God.

I can tell you that after lingering on St. John of Damascus' words, I went for my daily walk into the Vermont woods with fresh eyes. Every budding leaf, swaying grass blade and buzzing bee seemed different when viewing them as "a living icon of the face of God."

I began understanding more deeply God's assessment of each little thing created as being "good." But beyond the natural world, I continued my "it is good" quest to see all of Creation as the living icon of the face of God. And that meant looking into the eyes of each human I passed as I walked down the grocery store aisles getting my weekly shopping done. Rather than being focused on where I could find pinto beans, I focused on people. I noticed how some faces seemed tired, some seemed agitated, some seemed peaceful, others seemed radiant. Yet no matter what the expression, all the faces seen with my "it is good" lenses were all stunningly beautiful. It is amazing how different the world seems when seen as a living icon of the face of God.

In the beginning, God created ... you and me. May we remember that we each bear the imprint of the divine on our souls. And despite our flaws, God still deems that what has been made is indeed good.

Creating God, Your handiwork is perfection. Forgive us for all the times that we have taken Your beauty for granted. Forgive us for the times we might have marred Your pristine canvas with the blotches of sin. May this day we begin to see everything in this world as a living icon of Your face. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

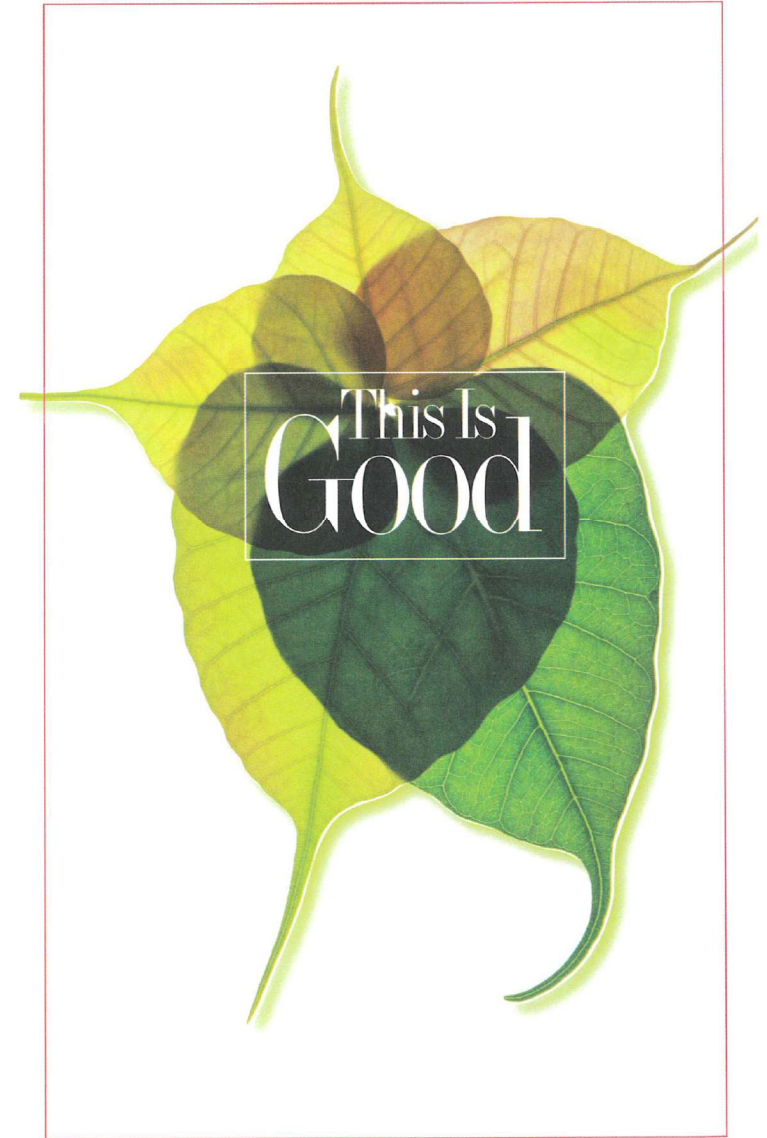
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



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St. John's United Church of Christ
Trinity Sunday
 May 31, 2026



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

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER (be seated)

PRELUDE

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP (responsively)

God, Creator, for your glory shining forth in sky and sea, in the changing light on the hills, in the flight of birds, in the plants of the field, for the gift of life in all its fullness, we thank you.

Jesus, Redeemer, for blessing children, healing the sick, raising up the lowly, suffering the brokenness of the world in your own body, that we might have fullness of life, we thank you.

Holy Spirit, Comforter, for breathing new hope and strength into our lives, breaking down barriers, drawing human beings together in love, resisting all that diminishes fullness of life, we thank you.

Holy Trinity, in all that we do and say and are, may we always choose life, for ourselves and for our neighbors. Amen.

* **OPENING HYMN** *Holy, Holy, Holy* #4

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

God, we truly want to hear from you. We believe that you do speak to us and we are ready to listen. Give us ears that will hear the truth you want to communicate to us today. Stretch our hearts as you challenge us through your Holy Word. Help us to understand clearly the message that you have for us and to respond in obedience and worship. Thank you that your voice was not just for the prophets of long ago, but that you also speak to us today. Help us not to miss it. In your holy name, Amen.

* **RESPONSE** *Spirit of the Living God* #259

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.

* **DOXOLOGY** #46

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Gracious God, the generosity of your Spirit is evident all around us in the diversity and pageantry of your creation. May our giving to your mission and ministry be cheerful, open-handed and gracious, as we give thanks for our blessings and recognize the needs of our neighbors, both near and around the world. Amen.

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

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

Congregational Response: *Spirit of God, Unseen as the Wind*

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Psalm 8

New Testament: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

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

MESSAGE The True Master of the Universe

* **CLOSING HYMN** *God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian* #450

* **BLESSING** (responsively)

May the one true God guide you and keep you. May the God of second chances grant you grace for the coming days.

May the Blessed Three-in-One enfold us in their joy. Amen.

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

* **POSTLUDE**

Announcements

****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.**

NURSERY SERVICES: Currently we do not have a nursery attendant, but small children are welcome (under parental supervision) to quietly utilize the *pryground* at the back of the sanctuary. The nursery is available if needed and an usher can take you there and turn on the speakers so you can hear the service.

UNITED STATES OF KINDNESS is a movement to complete 250 acts of kindness in celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States. We encourage everyone to perform one act of kindness per day for the rest of the year.

MAY FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT is May 31st featuring **Babe** at 5:00 p.m. A light supper will be served. *Babe is a little pig who doesn't quite know his place in the world. With a bunch of odd friends, like Ferdinand the duck who thinks he is a rooster and Fly, the sheep dog he calls Mom, he realizes that he has the makings to become the greatest sheep pig of all time, and Farmer Hoggett knows it. With Fly's help he learns that a pig can be anything that he wants to be.*

GALAXY: Launching Kids on a Mission of God's Love VBS will take place on June 29-July 2 from 5:30-7:30 each night. A light supper will be served and Pastor will lead a Bible Study for adults during the event. Watch for more announcements and details.

CALLING ALL CONFIRMANDS: If you have a young person entering 7th or 8th grade (or above) who is ready for Confirmation, please contact Pastor Debbie Jo ASAP. We would like to get the class organized and some of the requirements completed over the summer. Regular classes will begin in the fall with Confirmation taking place on May 2, 2027.

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT UPDATE: To date, we have doubled our enrollment for next year and currently have 17 students registered. We continue to add more students and hope to have another 9-10 before the new school year begins in August. Share a flyer with someone you know who has a 3 or 4 year old.

NEW MEMBERS will be welcomed into full church membership in late June or early July. If you would like to formally unite with the congregation, please see Pastor Debbie Jo.

CHURCH PARADE FLOAT: Will and the youth will be developing a float for the July 4th city parade promoting our various missions to the community. It will be built on July 2nd & 3rd if you would like to help. Please see Will for details.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. We will collect the offering on June 7th.

DINNER & CONVERSATION: This week's dinner will be at Coco's at 6:00 pm on Thursday night. Please sign the list in the back of the sanctuary so we can reserve a large enough table.

NOTICE IS GIVEN OF A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING following worship on June 14th for two items of business: 1. To decide which Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to covenant with now that the Wabash Valley Association has been dissolved and 2. Hear an update on Preschool Enrollment and possible shortfall for the 2026-27 academic year. More details will be sent to each member in the coming week as part of our two-week notification of a called meeting.

Prayers Posts

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), John Mineo, Cindi Gilmore, Kim Godare's daughter Mallory, Jeremy Carpenter, Dale Linneweber, Chris Sanders, Caden Utley and Kelsey Pepmeier Oladubu (Janet Daniels' niece), Lynn Simmons, Nina (Pastor Debbie's granddaughter) and Ruth (Pastor Debbie's sister) in the death of her husband, Luis.

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:

Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford

This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, May 31

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am

Monday, June 01

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Evang./Membership @ 5:30pm

Tuesday, June 02

Wednesday, June 03

Thursday, June 04

Dinner & Conversation
Coco's—6pm

Friday, June 05

Pastors Day Off
Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6pm

Looking Ahead In May 2026

Sunday, 07

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am
Strength In Church Offering

Monday, June 08

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

Tuesday, June 09

Visioning @ 5:30p,

Wednesday, June 10

Christian Ed. @ 6pm

Thursday, June 11

Tech. Meeting @ 10am
Dinner & Conversation
Dragon 2000—6pm
Outreach/Bene. @ 11am

Friday, June 12

Pastors Day Off
Office Closed



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Secretary	Kim Butler
Church Board President:	Sandra Lange
Pianist:	Pat Sparks
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Head Usher:	Allison Cummins
Projection:	Jill Doggett
Sound:	Lonny Vieck
Liturgist:	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.