

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 10, 2026

John 14:15-21

Witness of Love

When asked to sum up the Christian faith, Karl Barth, the Swiss Reformed theologian who published his multi-volume theological summa and magnum opus known as *Church Dogmatics*, did not reply with an equally extensive, deep-dive answer. Rather Barth was uncharacteristically short in his summation, replying simply, “The most profound truth I have ever known is this: Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

Love. It is the heart of the Gospel, and it really is all we need in the world. Love is the very essence of God. So, when Jesus, before finally ending his post-resurrection Earthly tour to take his place at the right hand of God, tells his friends, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments,” he was pointing to the greatest commandment of all: To love one another.

Loving others as Jesus loved was the very mandate he gave to the 12 who were gathered in the Upper Room on what we now observe as Maundy Thursday. In Latin, maundy means “mandate.” So, Jesus wasn’t suggesting but mandating that we love even when friends hurt and deceive us, just as Judas did after hearing Jesus speak those “love” words. Love through the betrayals. Love through the tears. Love through the gunk in life.

How are we doing with being the great witnesses of love in the world these days? Is love just lip service or are our actions speaking louder than all-too empty sentiments? Are we loving with the unselfish and non-judgmental love of God? Are we letting the love of God infiltrate political camps, dismantle harmful ideologies and remove the hateful distrust of all those who look or think differently than us? For that, my friends, is the love Jesus speaks of. It’s a love he shows you and me — always. It’s time we start witnessing to that kind of love.

Holy and Ever-Present God, may this day we become the powerful witnesses to Your love, caring for others as Your Son taught us by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, befriending the lonely, tending the sick, and visiting those who are imprisoned. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

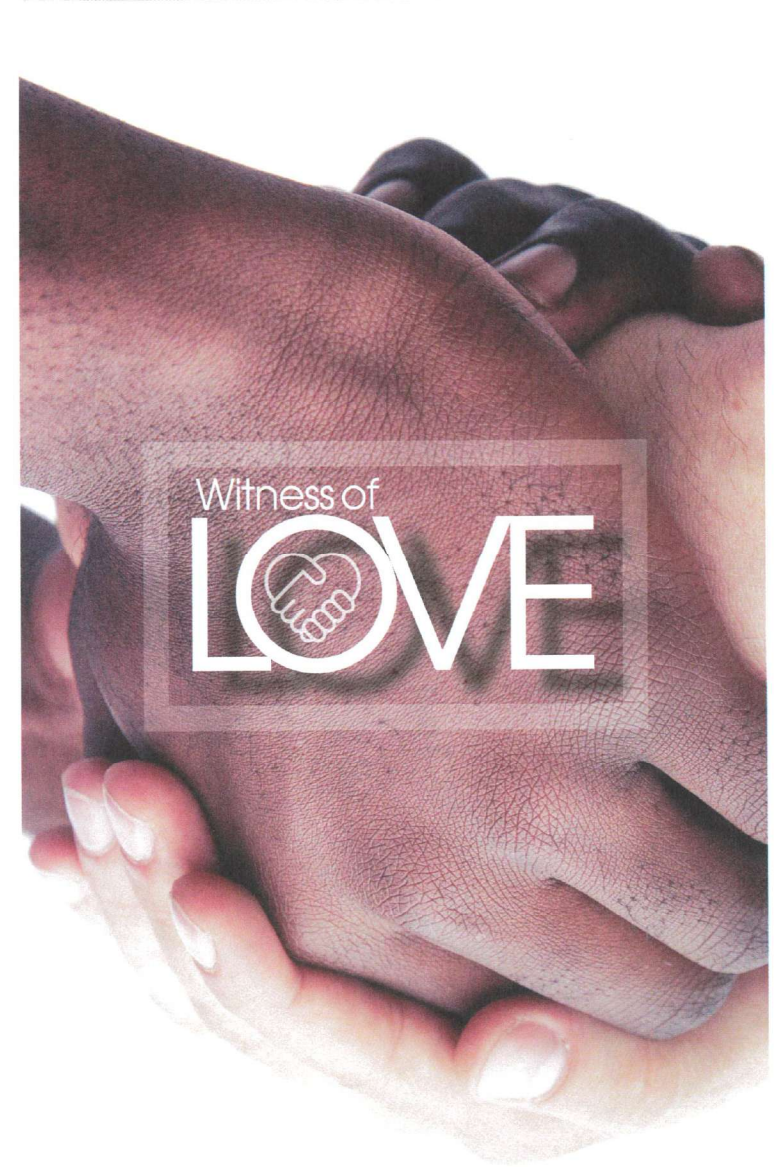
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today’s Sunday Bulletin.)



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

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BUL0311





St. John's United Church of Christ
Fourth Sunday of Easter
 May 11, 2026
 Mothers' Day



* 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)

PRELUDE

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

We gather together to worship our loving, nurturing God,
Who, like a mother, knows us intimately, loves us unconditionally,
 Teaches us the way we should go, and comforts us in times of need.
Praise God, the Source and Sustainer of life! Let us worship together.

***OPENING HYMN** *The Care the Eagle Gives Her Young* #76

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

O Wisdom Divine, just as you inspired the mothers of our faith, grant us your knowledge and discernment so that we can learn how to be clever in our compassion and courageous in our faith, through Christ and in the Spirit. Amen.

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

MOTHERS' DAY RECOGNITION

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

MEMORIAL MOMENT-Ellen Riggs

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)

O God, receive these gifts given as we seek to walk in your ways. Use them to bring the healing, kindness and justice of Christ's humble love to all those in need. Amen.

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)
 Congregational Response: *He Lives* (chorus) #226

ANTHEM *Hear Our Prayer*

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Isaiah 66:12-13

New Testament: John 14:15-21

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

MESSAGE *Comforting God*

***CLOSING HYMN** *Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth* #76

***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** *O For a World* (v.1) #683

* **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

UNITED STATES OF KINDNESS is a movement to complete 250 acts of kindness in celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States (it launched on April 24th) when there were 250 days remaining in 2026. The UCC has partnered with Values in Action for this special initiative and we encourage everyone to take part. One act of kindness per day for the rest of the year. Sounds like an achievable goal so join us in sharing kindness.

A RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION lunch honoring music retirees DeEtta Welte and Becky Brockman will be served after worship Sunday, May 17th, 12 noon! The menu includes a sampler plate of Procopio's lasagna, pasta rosa, and spinach ravioli in alfredo sauce, Italian bread, salad, plus cheesecake from Peafections. A signup sheet is in the back of the sanctuary with a deadline of May 8th. You may also call the church office with your reservation.

SANDY'S PANTRY is an important outreach ministry we provide for Vincennes University students who are food insecure. They may visit the pantry (open two days monthly from 11-12:30) and select needed food and toiletry items. For years, Brian & Brenda Fillingim have directed and maintained this vital program. They are needing assistance with maintaining inventory, procurement and stocking of supplies to prepare for each month's student visits. If you would like to help continue this outreach or learn more about what needs to be done, please contact Pastor Debbie Jo. We are praying for God to speak to someone's heart so this necessary program can continue. Won't you prayerfully consider?

LILACS WANTED: Pastor Debbie is looking for a gallon Ziploc bag of lilac blossoms for jelly making. When your lilac blooms, could you please share the harvest? Also looking for anyone with **mint** for the same purpose.

CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on May 24th for Memorial Day.

PENTECOST is May 24th and everyone is encouraged to wear **red**.

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.*

PRESCHOOL GRADUATION will take place on Thursday, May 21st at 6:00 pm in our sanctuary. Everyone is invited to attend and hear our preschool classes sing and exhibit some of the things they have learned. We have doubled our enrollment for next year as we rebuild our program and the staff is working hard to increase the number of students.

Never put a period where God has put a comma, God is still speaking!

TAX-WISE WAY TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH from Mackenzie B. Jones, CPA: If you are age 70.5 years or older, you can give directly from your IRA to our church through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). This type of gift can count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) and may help reduce your taxable income. It's a simple and tax-efficient way to support the ministry you care about. Please consult your financial advisor or IRA custodian to learn how to make a QCD.

DINNER & CONVERSATION: This week's dinner will be at Café Moonlight 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.

CATCH THE FEVER in action on Thursday, June 4th in Indianapolis. Join us for a bus trip to see the Indianapolis Fever play. Trip includes game ticket & motor coach transportation for \$110 per person. All food and souvenirs are on your own. Bus departs J.C. Penney's parking lot at 2:30 and will return at approximately 1:30 am. Reservations are due by May 20th. See Sheri Stodghill for more information or to make a reservation.

NURSERY SERVICES: Currently we do not have a nursery attendant, but small children are welcome (under parental supervision) to quietly utilize the *playground* 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.

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, and Chris Sanders.

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

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

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

This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, May 10

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Fellowship Worship @ 10am
Worship 10:30am
Mother's Day Recognition

Monday, May 11

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

Tuesday, May 12

Visioning Meeting. @ 5:30pm

Wednesday, May 13

Choir Practice @ 7pm
Christian Ed. @ 6pm

Thursday, May 14

Dinner & Conversation
Café Moonlight—6pm

Friday, May 15

Looking Ahead In May 2026

Sunday, May 17

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am
Celebration for Becky & De Etta

Monday, May 18

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
CCOP Mtg. 2-4pm
Music Worship @ 5pm
Board Mtg. @ 6pm

Tuesday, May 19

Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm

Wednesday, May 20

Thursday, May 21

Dinner & Conversation
Dogwood—6pm
Preschool Grad. @ 6pm

Friday, May 22



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:

Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins

Secretary

Kim Butler

Church Board President:

Sandra Lange

Organist:

DeEtta Welte

Music Director, Pianist:

Becky Brockman

Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:

Will Meyer

Head Usher:

John Riggs

Projection:

Sandra Lange

Sound:

Jonathan Lange

Liturgist:

David Culp

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.