

St. John's United Church of Christ

606 N Fifth Street
Vincennes, IN
47591

812-882-2720

stjohnsuccoffice
@gmail.com



JULY 2026 Newsletter

**St. John's United Church of Christ
606 North Fifth Street
Vincennes, IN 47591**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 9
VINCENNES, IN**

A NOTE FROM PASTOR DEBBIE JO...

From childhood, I was very familiar with the often-quoted statement from Scottish poet, Robert Burns: *The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men Gang aft agley*. Translated it is: *The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry*. We've all had times when no matter how much we planned and prepared, things don't turn out like we thought they would. Something goes awry.

Over my lifetime I have found this especially to be true when not being able to control the time frame or a situation. I want things to happen in MY time, when I want them to happen. I have learned **MY** timeline is nothing compared to **GOD'S**. When I try to rush God's time, I usually end up growing very impatient and anxious. Last year's quest to find new preschool staff and a new church secretary was overwhelming at times. We had very few qualified responses and the clock was ticking down to the beginning of the school year. It was a real nail-biter for sure.

Then, just as impatience and worry seemed to cast its gloomy pall over our very existence, the clouds parted and God brought us Laura, Hannah and Renessa. The sun shone brightly and we had a great school year. And then, shortly afterward, God brought Kim into our church life and the office is running beautifully. We have to trust God's time.

I say this while our anxiety is climbing ever higher as we search for a new choir director and organist. Thankfully, God sent us Pat to fill in as pianist for our worship, but, as the summer months rapidly move on, we grow more concerned and apprehensive to fill these positions before the program year begins. While we continue our search, we need to take a deep breath and remind ourselves that God hasn't yet failed us. We need to trust our quest will be fulfilled in God's time. So easy to say but so hard to do.

One thing we can all do, is pray for a successful search process and acknowledge our trust in God to bring us together with the right people who will help grow our music program and bring glory to God. Everybody breathe—and keep up the pursuit.



Scarlett Speaks!

SCARLETT SPEAKS! Woof! Woof! This past month has not been good for me. All these thunderstorms scare me and I've sought refuge in Mom's lap on many nights. Then there has been so much rain. I don't like going out when its wet. My furry feet get all soggy and my belly doesn't like the soaking grass. But my mom makes me go outside anyway. Yuck! We can't go on walks and I can't play in the yard. It's hard being a dog. Most of all, I have missed my preschool friends and coming to church on Sundays. And then, this weekend is the time of the year dogs fear most. While humans celebrate the birth of our nation, the fireworks scare the living daylights out of so many pets. Many get so scared, they run away. However, if I feel up to it on the day after, Mom says I can come to church in my star-spangled outfit made by my personal stylist, Jerri Johanningmeier. I hope to see everyone there and I'm looking forward to hearing Conway and Larry sing. Happy Semi quincentennial everybody! Woof! Woof!



Visioning

Visioning Group

As part of St. John's transition to a simpler and more sustainable ministry structure, **beginning in September 2026**, all current committee meetings will be moved to the **first Tuesday of each month from 5:00 pm on**. During this transition season, committees may meet at the same or different times in different spaces as needed. It is a practical first step that supports both our mission and the realities of a smaller congregation. The Visioning Group will be contacting the committee chairpersons to find out what time they want to schedule for their meetings. A flyer will be included in the August & September newsletter with all committees' new meeting times.

Reasons for this change:

- **Fewer meetings each month:** Members who serve in more than one area will have fewer nights away from home.
- **Better stewardship of energy and building costs:** Holding meetings on one evening reduces use of heat, air conditioning, lighting, and other utilities.
- **Less strain on volunteers:** Our new structure is designed to reduce burnout and make service more manageable.
- **Encourages collaboration:** Meeting on the same evening helps leaders communicate more easily and keeps ministry areas connected.
- **Respects the size of our congregation:** As a smaller church, we need systems that match our current people, energy, and resources.
- **Creates a clearer path forward:** This is a practical step toward fewer standing committees, more shared leadership, and more focused ministry.

Committees Affected

Evangelism & Membership
Music & Worship
Building & Grounds
Christian Education
Memorial
Congregational Life
Technology
Finance
Outreach & Benevolence
Pre-School
Messy Church

Committees Not Affected

Church Board
Personnel
Investment
Pastoral Relations

If you have questions concerning this transition, please talk to one of the Visioning Group: Eric Meyer, Allison Cummins, Kelly Alexander, Betsy Marchino, Sheri Stodghill or Pastor Debbie.

Mission Spotlights...

The Outreach and Benevolence Committee met on Thursday June 11th and made recommendations for the following expenditures of totaling \$6100.00:

OCWM (Our Church World Mission) \$2000.00, CUE (our UCC theological seminaries) \$500.00, Vincennes Food Pantry \$500.00, LAM (Life After Meth) \$500.00, Backpacks of Love \$500.00, Salvation Army \$500.00, Local Needy Families \$1500, Wabash Valley Progressives \$100.

It was noted that the current higher prices on everything was apparently at least a partial cause in the number of Phoebe's participants increasing. There was a new high of 103 this time, 23 were totally new to Phoebe's.

If you are looking for a way to help others and make a difference for those in need here are two opportunities:

Sandy's Pantry is in need of assistance. Sandy's provides food items and some hygiene items to assist food insecure VU students. If you'd like to assist with this ministry please contact Brian or Brenda Fillingim or the church office. It is a rewarding way to help others right here in our own community.

The committee was sorry to receive notice that Jerri Johanningsmeier plans to retire as Kid's Hope Director next spring at the end of the 2026-27 school year. Jerri has done a great Job and we are certainly sorry to see her retire but we are grateful for her years of service to Kid's Hope. In order for Kid's Hope to continue we will need a new director/coordinator. Anyone interested in this position please contact the church office or the church board. Kid's Hope is a mentoring program for elementary school aged children. Kid's Hope pairs one school with one church. St John's UCC is paired with Riley school. If you are interested I am sure that Jerri would be willing to speak with anyone about what is involved in coordinating this worthwhile program.

Larry Marchino
Outreach and Benevolence Committee

Children & Family Ministries



The Children and Family Ministry (CFM) Mission Week is returning for its 9th year this summer! After carefully coordinating with other community events and activities, the dates of June 29–July 3, were announced early this year. This year will feature a refreshed format that combines exciting new opportunities with many favorite Mission Week traditions. Designed for all ages, the week offers flexible ways for families and children to serve our community while accommodating busy summer schedules. The week is packed with meaningful service projects, and depending on the day's projects, participants may work both indoors and outdoors. Each day, youth participants may either be dropped off at the church or meet the group directly at the day's work site. Following each workday, youth can be picked up at the church or are welcome to stay and help prepare for Vacation Bible School.



KFC (grades 3-6) and Youth (grades 7-12th)

Tuesday, July 7 @ 9:30am---Please RSVP by Sunday, July 5

St. John's participants: \$35 ticket. Friends/family: \$45 ticket. Please send each child with \$25–\$30 for food and a return-trip supper stop. Holiday World is cashless; purchases must be made with a card or a "ReadyCARD," which children may load with cash and use anywhere credit cards are accepted.

RSVP by Sunday, July 5, by signing up on the nursery bulletin board or texting Will at (812) 887-5303. Ticket money may be turned in the day of the trip. A current 2026–2027 medical form is required for all children attending and is available on the nursery bulletin board and Facebook group page.

The group may also stay for Holiday World's 15-minute drone and fireworks show featuring 500 LED-lit drones. If the group stays, return time will be about 11:45 p.m.; otherwise, about 10:45 p.m. Contact Will with any questions.

Children & Family Ministry Age Groups

M & M (Mini-Marvels) Age 4-2nd Grade



Children & Family Ministries



The Children and Family Ministry group will be participating in the Isaiah House Lemonade Challenge for Knox County on:

Friday, July 17: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 18: 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. during the Red Skelton Parade

The stand will be located by the church parking lot along Hart Street.

If any of the CFM families are available to help with the lemonade challenge, please let Will know. We would also love for everyone to stop by, enjoy some lemonade, and support Isaiah House and its mission in our community. Thank you for your support!

Will Meyer

Children and Family Ministry Coordinator

812-887-5303

stjuccfamilyministry@yahoo.com

Stay Connected:

Be sure to check the church bulletin, our CFM Facebook group, and the Children and Family Ministry mailboxes for upcoming announcements and schedules.

Children and Family Ministry Age Groups

CFM: Children from age 4 to high school and their family

M&M (Mini-Marvels): Age 4-2nd Grade

KFC (Kids for Christ): 3rd-6th Grade

Youth: 7th – 12th Grade

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



Prayer & Post

We ask for continuing prayer requests for friends and family:

Marilyn Houchins, Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), John Mineo, Cindi Gilmore, Kim Godare's daughter Mallory, Jeremy Carpenter, Caden Utley and Kelsey Pepmeier Oladubu (Janet Daniels' niece), Lynn Simmons, Ray Pieper, Suzi Evans (friend of Brian Fillingim) and Lee (12 year old grandson of Brian Fillingim friend), Dayton Piper (18yrs. Old, Lincoln High School graduate – cancer), Danny Archer and family of Dale Linneweber

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

At Home:

Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford



Note of Sympathy:

We extend our Christian love and prayers to the family and friends of Marge Beamon following her passing Wednesday, June 10. This includes her daughter, Laura Holscher, and son, Andy Beamon, along with their families, plus her two sisters.

Cards may be sent to Marge's children

Andy Beamon - 204 S. Railroad Lane,
P.O. Box 141, Oaktown, IN 47561

Laura Holscher - 5294 E.
Wheatland Rd., Vincennes, IN 47591



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 pm.

Email Pastor Debbie: revdjatkins@gmail.com

Text or phone call: 812-760-2226

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Music and Worship Committee** discussed the current challenges with the sound system in the sanctuary, and recommends the Church Board hire a qualified professional to evaluate our present equipment and to make recommendations for improvement. The committee also discussed the environment in the sanctuary, and the need for a constant temperature in order to maintain the inner workings of the piano and pipe organ. The search for a new organist and choir director continues. Thank you to our interim pianist, Pat Stark, whose musical elements add to our worship service.

Thank you to **Larry Marchino** and **Jonathan Clark** for sharing special music, and to Isabella Lange for her lyrical dance!

Upcoming special music includes **Alan Pancake** on July 12, **Vera Mattingly** on July 19, **Jonathan Clark** on July 26, and a “**special mystery performance**” on August 2. We hope to see more at worship to support these performers who share their time, talents, and treasures to enhance our worship experience!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

JULY MOVIE NIGHT is July 19th at 5:00 pm, featuring *Sheep Detectives* starring Hugh Jackman. George Hardy is a shepherd who loves to read murder mysteries to his sheep, never suspecting that they can understand him. When George is found dead under mysterious circumstances, the sheep decide to solve the crime themselves, even if it means leaving their meadow for the first time and facing the fact that the human world isn't as simple as it appears in books. A light supper will be served and everyone is invited.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY: Join us in worship on July 26th for *Christmas in July*. We will sing Christmas carols and celebrate that its only five months till Christmas!

THANKS TO ABOSLUTELY EVERYONE who helped make our *GALAXY: Launching Kids on a Mission of God's Love* a great experience. We are already looking forward to next year's VBS: *Crave: Stirring Up a Hunger for Jesus!*

CATCH THE MEROM SPIRIT: All Ages Church Camp July 12-18. This non-denominational camp is being led by retired UCC minister, Rev. Bev Kahle and provides an excellent opportunity for your kids to have the Merom Experience. Last year, the Board voted to cover the expenses of any church young person who wished to attend a session at Merom. Registration is online and Pastor or Will can give you the link.

PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER: Come dine at Procopio's on Tuesday, July 21st for either lunch (11-1:30) or dinner (4:00-9:00) or BOTH and help raise funds for our preschool. Procopio's will donate 20% of their sales that day (dine-in or carryout and even gift cards) to our preschool. This is a great way to help support this vital community mission so plan now to participate!

WE OFFER OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS to the family of Rev. Al Wilhouse who entered eternal life on June 18th. Rev. Al served our congregation from 1974-1990. Cards may be sent to his wife, Leta, at 1662 Cloister Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46260. VISITATION: July 11th, 10 am - 12 pm (Eastern time). Matthews Mortuary at 690 E 56th St. Brownsburg, IN 46112. MEMORIAL SERVICE: July 11th at Noon (EST) at Matthews Mortuary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY to Pastor Debbie Jo who was ordained on June 29, 1997 at St. John's UCC in Southport, IN. At her installation as our pastor two years ago, the Search Committee set up a Scotland fund to aid her on her pilgrimage to the Iona Community, Rosslyn Chapel and other churches in Scotland. She will be making that journey this fall, in case you would like to make a donation towards her trip as a thank you for being our pastor.

SUMMER MUSIC IN JULY

July 5 th	Conway Wilson & Larry Marchino
July 12 th	Alan Pancake in concert
July 19 th	Vera Mattingly
July 26 th	Jonathan Clark

PASTOR DEBBIE will be on vacation from July 12-18th, visiting with her daughter, Noah and attending the Hallmark Ornament Premiere Weekend in Edwardsville, IL.

THANK YOU so much for the lovely flowers in the sanctuary in honor of the 29th Anniversary of my Ordination. I feel so blessed to be serving this church. Thanks again. Pastor Debbie Jo.

NEW MEMBERS: If you would like to formally unite with the congregation, please see Pastor Debbie Jo.

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.

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. The parade will take place on July 4th at 6:00 pm.

Preschool Activities

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Someone presented a superb idea, and we're all set to do it! This is just one way to help in support of our St. John's UCC Preschool. Plan to dine in or carry out - or even purchase gift cards-from Procopio's Pizza and Pasta on Tuesday, July 21, 2026. Our preschool will receive 20% of ALL sales on that date during lunch from 11:00 - 1:30 and dinner 4:00 - 9:00. The preschool will have a table inside the entrance to welcome interest, share information, and accept any further donations.

An event flyer advertising this fundraiser will be available. Procopio's, our church, and maybe even some of you will post that on Facebook. You may also pick up one or more flyers to share personally.

In the meantime, let's keep growing the number of persons who register their children for the 2026-'27 preschool year (or add a younger one's name to its waiting list.) Sharing the information from the visual shown here with parents you know or meet can help.

We are grateful to Procopio's for providing this event at their popular restaurant. Be sure to mark your calendar for July 21st!



St John's
United Church of Christ

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT!

Learn. Grow. Play. Belong.

5th and Hart Street

3 YEARS OLD
by August 1st

CATERPILLAR CLASS

Tuesday & Thursday Mornings
9:00 - 11:30

\$135 MONTHLY

4 YEARS OLD
by August 1st

BUTTERFLY CLASS

Monday - Wednesday - Friday
9:00 - 3:00

\$215 MONTHLY

A loving, faith-based environment

Nurturing hearts & curious minds

Hands-on learning & creative play

Building friendships that last a lifetime!

SPACES ARE LIMITED!
Call today to learn more or schedule a tour!

St John's
United Church of Christ
5th and Hart Street

812-899-1731

JULY 2026

Birthdays

Sandee Covey
Carole Culp
Cora Schlag
Korbin Alexander
Chrissy Lange
Amy Schotter
Ren Simmons
Elyse Schotter
Elliott Schotter
Donna Gerhardt
Jay Cole
Nancy Stultz
Brad Summers
Pam Summers
Mark Welte
Janet Daniels

Anniversaries

David & Carole Culp
Tom & Becky Nowaskie
Adam & Amy Schotter
Brayton & Allison Cummins
Eric & Cheryl Meyer
Ren & Lynne Simmons
Jim & Elaine Workman
Lonny & Jana Vieck
Jeremy & Natasha Coomes
Dan & Connie Coulter

Dinner & Conversation



Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm. For *Dinner & Conversation*. 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 each week or you can call the church office to add your name. We'd love to see you there. Our schedule is as follows:

July	2	Ponderosa
July	9	Cowtown
July	16	Kelso's
July	23	Off the Square
July	30	Café Moonlight

Church Board Highlights



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Vacation Bible School From 5:30-7pm	2 Dinner & Conversation - Ponderosa @ 6pm Vacation Bible School From 5:30-7pm	3 Work on Float @ 1:30 Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6:30pm Pastor's Day Off	4 Parade 6-7 pm
5 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am	6 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Evangelism/Membership @ 6:30pm	7	8 Christian Education @ 6pm	9 Dinner & Conversation - Cowtown @ 6pm Technology Mtg. @10am	10 Pastor's Day Off Pastor Debbie on vacation from 7/12-7/18	11
12 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Fellowship 10am Worship 10:30 am Alan Pancake—special	13 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Outreach/Benevolence @ 6:30pm		15	16 Dinner & Conversation - Kelso's @ 6pm	17 Pastor's Day Off	18
19 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Vera Mattingly—special Movie Sheep Detectives @ 5pm	20 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Music & Worship @ 5pm Board Meeting @ 6pm	21 Procopio's Fund Raiser For Preschool	22 August Newsletter Items Due In Office Today Visioning Mtg. @ 5:15pm	23 Dinner & Conversation - Off the Square @ 6pm	24 Pastor's Day Off	25
26 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Fellowship Time @ 10 am Worship 10:30 am Jonathan Clark—Special	27 Babe Store 12-5:30pm	28	29 Laundry Love 6-8pm	30 Dinner & Conversation - Café Moonlight @ 6pm	31 Pastor's Day Off	