

Be Transformed

This is the day the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it! And let us have a pop quiz. I bet you never expected that in church, did you? But here we go.

What was the name of the baby found along the banks of the Nile? Moses. Correct.

That was easy. Now for one a bit harder. Name the two midwives who disregarded Pharaoh's edict to kill all Hebrew baby boys, and who delivered Moses.

Pharaoh gave this horrific order to curtail the rapid growth of the Hebrew population who were enslaved in Egypt. It didn't work. It just made God bless the community more.

But back to the question. What were their names?

They were Shiprah and Puah. Don't worry if you didn't know the answer. I didn't either when this question appeared on the Bible content part of my ordination exams. It had me stumped, and my friends as well.

It's noteworthy that the midwives' names live on in the ongoing story of salvation because women were often written out of the manuscripts by the male authors of the time.

But here in the story of Moses, all we have are women defying authority. We have the midwives as the heroines who prevented a genocide. We have Moses' mother who hid her baby the first few months of life, before putting him in a basket made of reeds and floating him in the Nile. We have Moses' sister watching the basket bobbing on the banks of the Nile to ensure her baby brother is safe. Then we have the daughter of Pharaoh who adopts the babe as her son and gives him the name "Moses," which means "drawn from the water."

Each decisive, risky and faithful act of these women builds upon the next, ultimately transforming the Israelites from the enslaved to desert wanderers to recipients of the Promised Land. And that is how a better tomorrow is created — in stages and with the help of people working together. Bringing about change isn't a solitary act.

The world, which is always in some stage of transformation because God is never done with us, needs your hands this day to deliver hope or weave a basket of safety or raise a child whose voice will say to a pharaoh, "Let my people go."

We all have a part to play in heralding in God's kingdom. May your name be one that is remembered in the who's who of God's children who dared, risked and spoke up.

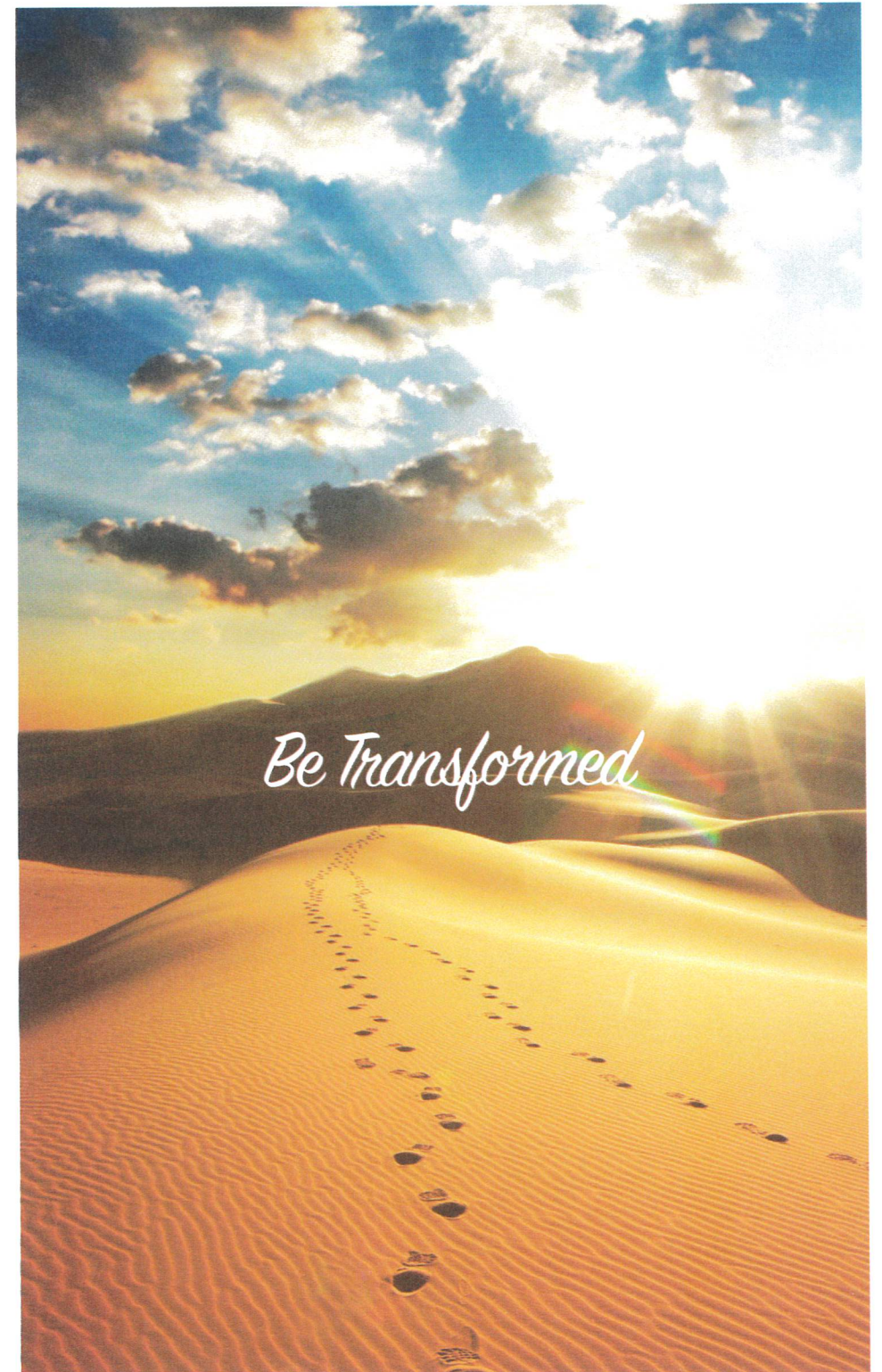
Gracious God, Your plans for a better tomorrow will never be thwarted. Peace will reign. Justice will prevail. The outcasts and forgotten will be welcomed. And so, Great God, here are our hands. Bless them and use them in transforming Your broken world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

(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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St. John's United Church of Christ
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 23, 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)

We gather for worship in this sacred space

Away from the noise and busyness and demands of our every day.

Open your heart to receive the peace of the Lord and let your soul be still.

With gratitude for this place of refuge and peace, we lift our voice to sing God's praise.

* **OPENING HYMN** *Rejoice, You Pure in Heart* #15

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

Gracious God, our help and our hope, be with us today. Bless our time together, as we seek your guidance and your love. May we grow in grace as we gather here as one people. May we know your love, and help us to build your kingdom of love upon all the earth. Amen.

* **RESPONSE** *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* (refrain) #557

SPECIAL MUSIC Jonathan Clark

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.

* **RESPONSE** *For the Beauty of the Earth* (v. 1) #56

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Lord God, your call to us is so very clear. You have invited us to bring our gifts, our resources and our love to you to serve on Christ's behalf. We give you thanks for all your gifts to us, and may our lives with you be a journey of hope and promise into the future. Amen.

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

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

Congregational Response: *Great is Thy Faithfulness* (refrain) #86

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Exodus 1:8-2:10

New Testament: Romans 12:1-8

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

MESSAGE *Ordinary Faithfulness*

* **CLOSING HYMN** *There Came a Time in Egypt*
(tune: *The Church's One Foundation*)

* **BLESSING** (responsively)

My friends, as you go from this place to live your busy lives, remember that God is with you. In the busyness of your days, breathe deeply of God's grace and love.

We will seek God in the stillness of our souls and find God there. We go forth therefore in joy! Amen.

* **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Go in Peace* #445

* **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

***You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myuc.org and clicking on the contribute button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.*

CHOIR & HANDBELLS rehearse with Jonathan Clark on Wednesdays with handbells at 3:00 pm and choir at 4:00 pm. All ringers and singers are invited to attend.

CONFIRMATION CLASS will have its first gathering tonight at 5:00-6:00 p.m. All students in Grades 6 & up are invited to participate. Even if you are not yet sure if you are ready to make a commitment to Christ and church membership, we encourage you to attend as an opportunity to explore your faith, ask questions, and hear the opinions of others in the class as together we continue our faith journey. This first class will be a time of getting to know one another, gain an understanding of Confirmation, and order our books and Bibles. PLEASE give it a chance and join us for this important exploration of our faith, history, mission and how we all belong together in God's family.

WANTED: FAITHFUL KIDS FOR GOD'S POSSE is the theme for our **MESSY CHURCH** rootin'-tootin' round-up on September 2nd from 5:30-7:00 pm. Grab your cowboy gear and giddy-up to our western theme night of fun for the whole family. Eat at the chuck wagon, interactive worship and lots of activities, crafts and games. Invite your friends and families and join us. YEE-HAW!

ITEMS NEEDED for September 2nd **Messy Church**: yarn, felt scraps, clean metal cans with labels removed. Please drop them by the church office. Thanks!

GRANDPARENTS DAY will be celebrated during worship on September 13th with special recognitions of all grandparents and the role they play in our faith formation.

SEPTEMBER MOVIE NIGHT is September 20th at 5:00 featuring Ryan Gosling in the recent mega box-office hit, *Project Hail Mary*. Science teacher Rylan Grace wakes up on a spaceship with no recollection of who he is or how he got there. As his memory returns, he begins to uncover his mission: solve the riddle of the mysterious substance causing the sun to die out. He must call on his scientific knowledge to save everything on Earth from extinction but an unexpected friendship means he may not have to do it alone.

A NIGHT AT THE RACES on Saturday, September 12th to watch our own Delaynee Coomes compete in Dirt Track racing at Red Hill Raceway in Sumner, IL Sign up to attend on the sheet in the back of the sanctuary. The entrance fee is \$25 (cash only facility) and hot laps begin at 7:30 pm. More details to come. If we have enough people, we may take the church van. Let's turn out and support Delaynee!

CHURCH PICNIC DATE is September 27th at the Open Air Pavillion in Gregg Park. Mark your calendars!

OUR KIDS HOPE USA program in partnership with Riley Elementary School is entering its **25th year** of service this fall 2026. New mentors are continually needed to mentor children at Riley School. A mentor's role includes: one day a week contact, available 11:00 -12:00 OR. 12:00-1:00, and a passion to be a significant person in the life of a child. Training is available. Contact the church office for referral information. 812-882-2720.

FALL FESTIVAL sponsored by The Membership & Evangelism Committee will take place on Sunday, October 4th from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in the church parking lot, featuring: Pet Blessing, Lincoln Trail Mobile Farm (petting zoo), Vincennes Firetruck and firefighters, Bounce House, free food, marshmallow toasting for s'mores, gift card raffle, carnival games, and MORE! Plan now to participate and volunteer to help! Invite your friends and families. **WE NEED THE LOAN OF SEVERAL POP-UP TENTS. PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW IF YOU HAVE ONE WE CAN USE.**

Committee Opportunities at St. John's. We are looking for members who are willing to share their gifts through service on one of our church committees. Whether your strengths are in worship, teaching, hospitality, outreach, fellowship, finance, buildings, technology, or public relations, there is a place for you to help.

With the new restructuring, all committees are considered new. If you have participated in a committee in the past, you will need to sign up again to either participate in the committee or perhaps try a new committee for a year.

Sign up sheets are located in the church and office. Simply fill out and place it in the offering plate or return it to the church office.

AUGUST is National Make-a-Will Month: Create a free and legal will with Freewill for National Make-a-Will Month. The Pension Boards and Rev. Dr. Paul Leon Ramsey, Director Church Relations and Philanthropy, is pleased to partner with the United Church of Christ in its Together for Tomorrow shared legacy campaign, which offers FreeWill, an estate planning tool to create your, free and legal will. Observe National Make-A-Will Month and secure your legacy today at FreeWill. Visit <https://freewill.com/pbucc>

Prayers Posts

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Marilyn Houchins, John Mineo, Cindi Gilmore, Kim Godare's daughter Mallory, Marvin Covey, Colten Kirchoff and Jane Ann Marchino.

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



This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, August 23

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Fellowship @ 10am
Worship @ 10:30am
Jonathan Clark —Special Music
Confirmation from 5-6pm

Monday, August 24

Finance Comm. Mtg. @ 11:00am
BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Messy Core Team @ 5:30pm

Tuesday, August 25

Wednesday, August 26

Handbells @ 3pm
Choir @ 4pm
Laundry Love 6-8pm

Thursday, August 27

Dinner & Conversation
El Corral @ 6pm

Friday, August 28

Pastor's Day Off

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:

Michelle Grube

Projection:

Jana Vieck

Sound:

Jonathan Lange

Liturgist:

Kristi Mattingly

Looking Ahead In August/September 2026

Sunday, August 30

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship @ 10:30am
Vera Mattingly —Special Music

Monday, August 31

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

Tuesday, September 01

Worship Comm. @ 4:30pm
Christian Ed. @ 6:00pm
Membership Dev. @ 5:00pm

Wednesday, September 02

Handbells @ 3pm
Choir @ 4pm
Messy Church 5:30-7:00pm

Thursday, September 03

Dinner & Conversation
Coco's @ 6pm

Friday, September 04

Pastor's Day Off

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.