

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 30, 2026

Romans 12:9-21

Spirit-Led Living

I've been told all my life to stop wearing my heart on my sleeve — a saying popularized in William Shakespeare's *Othello*, where the villain asks, "Shall I wear my heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at?" (By the way, a "daw" is a bird in the crow family.)

Shakespeare, though, can't take full credit for the saying. Its origin can be traced to medieval jousts when dashing knights would literally wear the affection of fair maidens in the way of ribbons and other trinkets tied to their armor sleeve.

Today, wearing one's heart is far from romantic. It's viewed as a negative trait of a sensitive soul that's weak. Yet saints like Catherine of Sienna and Thérèse of Lisieux saw sensitive souls as grace-filled gifts to the world.

So, for all you sensitive souls reading this, know that you are strong beyond measure and that the world needs such love and care on display. For that heart on your sleeve is beating with the heart of God, showing others what it truly means to live a spirit-led life.

Spirit-led living is something of a struggle these days as it is marked by authenticity and vulnerability. It also means doing that hardest thing we can ever do — love in all circumstances, especially when you are in the presence of your enemies.

Paul, the very apostle who told us to "rejoice in the Lord always," while imprisoned in Rome, was also the one who urged us to let love be genuine. If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink.

While I've always appreciated Paul's advice, very seldom have I followed it. It's more satisfying (albeit a short-lived satisfaction) to stoop down to the enemies' level. But overcoming evil with evil, is not a marker of a spirit-led life. Rather, vulnerable love is, and such love is disarming in today's world.

There is no preventive to take to ensure we never get hurt, betrayed or rejected in life. I wish there was. But allowing true feelings to be expressed and not buried, allowing tears to fall with those who are hurt, makes for an environment where God can come and transform the gunk into something beautiful. And when our sensitive souls are on display, what we are showing is that we know our worthiness comes from God alone.

I don't know about you, but my heart will always be on my sleeve for all to see. Where is your heart?

Loving God, in a world of raging hate and distrust, may our lives reflect Your goodness and grace. Help us to stop trying to protect our hearts from hurts, but to share them openly. May this day the heart on our sleeves that the world sees be not our own, but Yours. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

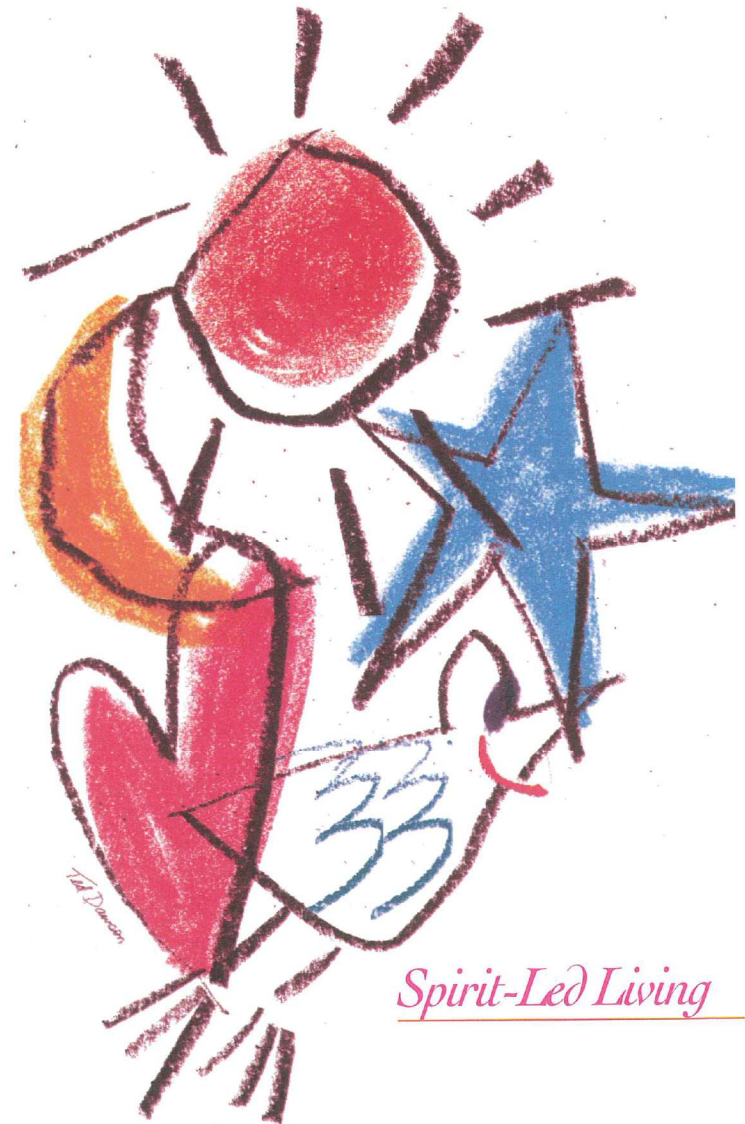
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



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

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BUL0413





St. John's United Church of Christ
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 30, 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)

O give thanks to the Lord, call on the Divine name, and make known the Lord's deeds among the peoples.

Sing to God, sing praises; tell of all the wonderful works.

Glory in God's holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

Seek the Lord and the Lord's strength; seek God's presence continually.

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

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

Lord, you are the One who calls. You call each one of us in a different way, naming us uniquely beloved in your eyes. Help us to follow you faithfully, that we may know your pleasure in us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

SPECIAL MUSIC Vera Mattingly

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)

God of all creation, we present these monetary gifts, as well as our very selves, to you. It is our prayer that all our gifts would be used to your glory. 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 3:1-15

New Testament: Romans 12:9-21

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

MESSAGE *Burning Possibilities*

***CLOSING HYMN** *All Life is Filled with Wonder*
 (tune: Love Divine, All Love Excelling)

***BLESSING** (responsively) Based on Romans 8:38-39

We stand firm in the conviction that neither death nor life, neither the present nor the future,

Not even anything the enemy might bring upon us, can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

* **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.

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.

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.*

CONFIRMATION CLASS will meet on September 13th & 27th at 5:00 p.m. If you haven't yet signed up for the class, please do so ASAP so books and Bibles can be ordered.

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 (BBQ pork by Brayton Cummins, mac & cheese, baked beans & cornbread), 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!

LABOR DAY: Wear your "work clothes" to church. If you normally wear scrubs to work, or a uniform, overalls, special equipment, wear them to worship on September 6th as we celebrate the importance of everyone's labor.

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!

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

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), Pumpkin Face Painting, Vincennes Firetruck and firefighters, Bounce House, free food, marshmallow toasting for S'mores, gift card raffle, carnival games, race car, pumpkin painting 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.**

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>

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.

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.

Angela Mueller and John Pieper (Ray Pieper's children) are hosting an Open House to celebrate Ray's 88th. Birthday! At Ray's Home: 1518 E. Locust Street, Vincennes, Saturday, September 5th. From 1-4pm. Light refreshments will be served.

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 - Aperia 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 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
Kelso @ 6pm

Friday, September 04

Pastor's Day Off

Saturday, September 05

Ray Pieper Open House 1-4pm

Looking Ahead In September 2026

Sunday, September 06

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship @ 10:30am
Labor Day—Wear work clothes
Choir Directed by Conway

Monday, September 07

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Office Closed for Labor Day

Tuesday, September 08

Pastor in Evansville for Mtg. @ 11:30am

Wednesday, September 09

Handbells @ 3pm
Choir @ 4pm

Thursday, September 10

Dinner & Conversation
Procopio's @ 6pm

Friday, September 11

Pastor's Day Off



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Secretary	Kim Butler
Church Board President:	Saundra Lange
Pianist:	Pat Sparks
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Head Usher:	Michelle Grube
Projection:	Jill Lopez
Sound:	Lonnie Vieck
Liturgist:	Eric Meyer

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.