



July 12, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

July 12, 2026
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Meditation

“The way to happiness: Keep your heart free from hate, your mind from worry.
Live simply, expect little, give much. Scatter sunshine, forget self, think of others.
Try this for a week and you will be surprised.” Norman Vincent Peale

Prelude *Thee We Adore, O Hidden Savior*, arranged by John Leavitt

Welcome and Announcements

✝ Opening Hymn #502 *Be Thou My Vision*

Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art-
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my Wisdom, and thou my true Word,
I may ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord;
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠ **Call to Worship** (Congregation reads **bold** print)

Something awakened us this morning—perhaps day’s dawning, the smell of brewing coffee, the sounds of the alarm on the shelf or a newspaper thudding at the door.

And now we gather with awakened spirits to worship with others the creator of this day.

Something moved us this morning—we left behind a sufficiency of sleep or a restless night, we engaged in eating and dressing, we left our homes for here.

And now we gather in this place to worship the Christ who moves among us and to follow the Spirit which leads us into deeds of love.

May ours be a faith that is both awake and moving as we serve our God.

✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

✠ **Prayer of Confession**

In humility and faith, let us confess our sin to God.

Gracious God, we acknowledge that we too often take for granted your gifts to us: our lives, this world, and your word to us. When we receive your word, may we nurture it so that it grows roots within us. May we not be distracted by the lure of wealth or the cares of the world. Let us be good soil, receiving your word, understanding it, and acting upon it.

Silent pause for reflection Amen.

✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

People of God, all of us together have received God’s mercy in Christ. In Christ we are forgiven, redeemed, and made to be a community united in faith. **Thanks be to God!**

Children’s Message

Pastor Jeff

Bible Readings

Isaiah 55:10-13, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹² For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up.

⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away.

⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!”

¹⁸ “Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.

²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing.

²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Pastor’s Message

“Measuring Your Faith”

Pastor Jeff

✠The Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

Prelude No. 1 in C Major
by Johann Sebastian Bach

✠Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

The Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.**

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

✠Closing Hymn #712

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Sent forth by God's blessing our true faith confessing,
The people of God from this dwelling take leave.
The service is ended, O now be extended
The fruits of our worship in all who believe.
The seed of the teaching, receptive souls reaching,
Shall blossom in action for God and for all.
God's grace did invite us, and love shall unite us
To work for God's kingdom and answer the call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,
The tasks of our everyday life we will face.
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
Embracing God's children of each tribe and race.
With your grace you feed, with your light now lead us:
Unite us as one in this life that we share.
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving
Give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

✠Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠Three-fold Amen

✠Chimes and Meditation

Postlude

For the Music of Creation



***The Altar Flowers are given to
the Glory of God, and in honor
of all Veterans, whose service
has allowed the United States
of America to celebrate it's
250th Anniversary.
Presented by Mike Nye.***