



August 16, 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**

August 16, 2026

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Meditation

“I think the teaching profession contributes more to the future of our society than any other single profession.” John Wooden

Prelude *Andante Religioso*, by Edmund Sereno Ender

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **Opening Hymn #507** *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* (Verses 1,2 & 4)

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he,
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same,
And he must win the battle.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours thro' him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
he body they may kill: God's truth abideth still;
His kingdom is forever.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠ *All who are able shall stand*

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

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands!

Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!

Know that the Lord is God!

It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him, bless his name!

For the Lord is good;

His steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

(Psalm 100)

✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

✠ **Prayer of Confession**

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name.

Silent pause for reflection **Amen.**

✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and guide us in your way to love our neighbor as ourselves in the way of Christ. **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Message

Pastor Jeff

Bible Readings

1 Samuel 17:1, 4-11, 32-49

Curtis Welch

1 Samuel 17:1, 4-11, 32-49

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle;

⁴ And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was four cubits and a span. ⁵ He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶ He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. ⁷ The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron, and his shield-bearer went before him.

⁸ He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. ⁹ If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants, but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us."

¹⁰ And the Philistine said, "Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together." ¹¹ When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

³² David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." ³³ Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father, and whenever a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth, and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God."

³⁷ David said, "The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine." So Saul said to David, "Go, and may the Lord be with you!"

³⁸ Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. ³⁹ David strapped Saul's sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them.

Then David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I am not used to them.” So David removed them. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the wadi and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

⁴¹ The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. ⁴² When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance.

⁴³ The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.”

⁴⁵ But David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head, and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel ⁴⁷ and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give you into our hand.”

⁴⁸ When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

Pastor’s Message

“You Can Face Your Giant”

Pastor Jeff

Litany For Teachers *(read responsively)*

Today we recognize those who have now or in the past made it their life’s work to educate and to facilitate the education of our young people.

The call to be involved in education is a high calling. Those who play any part in the process are helping our children and young people shape the future.

We give thanks to a gracious God for the teachers, school and office administrators, our church Sunday school teachers, and all who serve in our schools.

We celebrate your calling. We support you and all those in our communities who are involved in the education of children and youth.

Prayer of Appreciation for Teachers

Gracious God, we lift up to you all those involved in education in this community and in all the communities in our nation and world. Guide us Lord, that we will know the best way to show our interest and support for students, teachers and all those involved in education.

We pray for those who serve in the field of education. May they have the wisdom and strength to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of those in school on a daily basis. We pray for courage to explore new ways of supporting those who teach our children and youth. We pray in the name of the great teacher, Jesus. Amen.

Time of Personal Prayer for All Educators

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

Come, Celebrate the Call of God

✠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 #726

We Praise You, O God

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring;
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
We bless your holy name: glad praises we sing.

We worship you, O God of our fathers and mothers;
Through life's storm and tempest our guide you have been;
When perils o'er take us, you never forsake us,
And with your help, O Lord, our battles we win.

With voices united our praises we offer,
Our songs of thanksgiving to you we now raise;
Your strong arm will guide us, our God is beside us,
To you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!

✠Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠Three-fold Amen

✠Chimes and Meditation

Postlude

Be Thou My Vision