



August 31, 2025

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 31, 2025
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Meditation

Whatever God's dream about us may be, it seems certain it cannot come true
unless we cooperate. Stella Terrill Mann

Prelude *Steal Away to Jesus* - arranged by John Carter

Welcome and Announcements

✠ Opening Hymn #552 *We All Are One in Mission*

We all are one in mission,
We all are one in call,
Our varied gifts united
By Christ, the Lord of all.
A single, great commission
Compels us from above
To plan and work together
That all may know Christ's love.

We all are called for service
To witness in God's name.
Our ministries are different,
Our purpose is the same;
To touch the lives of others
By God's surprising grace,
So ev'ry folk and nation
May feel God's warm embrace.

We all behold one vision,
a stark reality;
The author of salvation
Was nailed upon a tree.
Yet resurrected Justice
Gives rise that we may share
Free reconciliation
And hope amid despair.

Now let us be united
And let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel
for God's redeeming Word.
We all are one in mission,
We all are one in call,
Our varied gifts united
By Christ, the Lord of all.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

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

With all your strength, sing aloud to the Lord, who has brought you here and blessed you.

Our voices shall shout forth praise and thanksgiving to God.

With all your heart, reach out in service to those in need, remembering God's mercy in your own life.

Our lives shall be witnesses to the love of God which has been lavished upon us.

Come, let us worship the Lord with Great joy!

Let us bring all that we have and all that we are to God in gratitude.

✠Opening Prayer

Pastor Jeff

✠Prayer of Confession

Dear God, we are thankful that you love us beyond all understanding. We know that you want us to live the powerful life of faith, hope, and love based on the teachings and the life of Jesus. We admit that we fall far short of the mark. Forgive us O God. Forgive us for looking inward to meeting our needs ahead of the needs of others. We wish to experience joy and enthusiasm through a renewed relationship with you.

Silent pause for reflection **Amen.**

✠Assurance of Forgiveness

The Lord is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down. In Christ's name, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!** --Psalm 145:13-14

Children's Message

Pastor Jeff

Bible Readings

Psalm 112; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Tracey Holler

Psalm 112

¹ Praise the Lord! Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments. ² Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.

⁴ They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

⁵ It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice. ⁶ For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.

⁷ They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord. ⁸ Their hearts are steady; they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

⁹ They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor. ¹⁰ The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

Luke 14:1, 7-14

On one occasion when Jesus^[a] was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely.

⁷ When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ⁸ “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, ⁹ and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place.

¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

¹² He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid.

¹³ But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Pastor’s Message *“Being Recognized by Mickey Mouse”*

Pastor Jeff

✠ The United Church of Christ Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.

— taken from the UCC Book of Worship

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory *Offertory on "Salvationist" - by Tom Bichwood*

✠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

Pastor Jeff

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 #383

If My People's Hearts Are Humbled

If my people's hearts are humbled,
If they pray and seek my face,
If they turn away from evil,
I will not withhold my grace.
I will hear their prayers from heaven;
I will pardon every sin.
If my people's hearts are humbled,
I will surely heal their land.

Then my eyes will see their sorrow,
Then my ears will hear their plea;
If my people's hearts are humbled,
I will set their nation free.
If my people's hearts are humbled,
If they pray and seek my face;
If they turn away from evil,
I will not withhold my grace.

Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠ Three-fold Amen

✠ Chimes/Meditation

Postlude *Sing a New Church*