

Welcome Home!

to the Church you remember....Welcome home to....

St. John's

The 2025 January Chimes

United Church of Christ



Prayer List

General Prayers: Bill Carr, Charlie Bruah, Debbie Snow, Don Boldt & family & the family of Debra Jones

Homebound and Nursing Facility Residents: Mel Cunningham, Jeanette Morris, Bonita Farmer, Patricia Gilbert, Paula Hatfield, Rosalie Johnson, Faith Kelly, Delores and Harold McDonald, Esther Gillham, Helen McGaughy, Mary Lou Hostetler, Charles & Lois Meyers, Molly Sheets, & Lois Swonger.

Please contact Rev. Swisher if you know of any sick or hospitalized members. Remember, if you want someone on the Bea's Blessings prayer chain, you can email the office at stjohnsunited@windstream.net

Member News!



Debra Lynn Jones

Born: April 10, 1953

Died: December 1, 2024

A member of St. John's since 1966

New Address for Donald Boldt:
Donald Boldt
5512 Lawyers Road East
Wingate, NC 28174

Office Hours -Monday, Tuesday, & Friday: 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. For additional times, please call the office (740) 323-2407 and leave a message to make an appointment or call/text Anita at 740-973-8218. Thank you!

Financial Update

Monthly Faith Promise goal	\$ 4,840.42
Income as of December 15, 2024	4,216.50
Month to Date Balance	(\$ 623.92)
Boiler Cost	\$ 99,260.00
Boiler loan amount	\$ 26,654.19
Boiler Donations received	\$ 13,933.20
Donations still needed	\$ 12,720.99



January Sunday Worship Hours

8:30 a.m. Chapel Service

Traditional Sanctuary Service at 11:00 a.m.

Sundays at 9:30AM

Coffee, refreshments and good conversation in the Fellowship room.

Or enjoy time in the sanctuary for worship preparation or quiet prayer.





Starting the Year with Faith

Happy New Year....2025!! A new fresh opportunity is unfolding before us full of opportunity, expectation and hope. How can we make the most of it?

Secretary Alexander Hamilton, one of America's founders and our first Secretary of the Treasury, creator of the Coast Guard and founder of the Washington Post said more than 200 years ago; "Human beings are very much creatures of habit." If that is true and it most likely is, then it is incumbent on us to form good habits for the year ahead.

Recent statistics report that 28 million Americans are unsure where to start and grow their faith. Twenty-seven million reported not having time to read the Bible regularly and more than 21 million said the Bible's language is too difficult to relate to. This could be true of almost anything we do sparingly or not at all. That's why it's important to invest time in developing our faith and understanding of God's Word.

Here are some suggestions that will help us do just that:

1) Audit our habits

A great place to start is with being honest about our current habits. We should ask ourselves; What are my morning habits? What do I do in the first 15 minutes of the day? What is the sequence of what I do throughout the day? Do I have some time during my break or lunch time or before bed in the evening?

Experts in time management tell us; "the key lies not in breaking a habit through willpower but in replacing one habit with another. Maybe we ask ourselves; What needs to wait until later in the day or go away altogether to make space for what is more important like my eternal relationship with the Lord?

2) Create barriers to negativity

If we have habits that are not healthy or helpful or relationships that are negative and draining, we should take a break from those things. If emails or texts or websites or other media bring negativity and stress, we should edit them out of our lives and consciousness. We must take concrete steps to remove whatever is keeping us from our time developing our faith and commitment to God's plan for us.

3) Incentivize Positive Hope

Let's identify an inviting space, consider conducive sounds (whether silence or beloved soundtracks) to solidify our time with God. In so doing we solidify a palate that increasingly helps us enjoy God's goodness. By accentuating the positive aspects of life and connecting to deeper meaning, we bring hope, joy and faith to a front of mind experience...regularly. That sets into motion a self-fulfilling prophecy of positive experiences.

4) Grow in Grace

Starting or shifting our habits can be overwhelming at first. However, when we depend on God for help, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The bottom line is God wants to spend time with each of us. Let me put it more personally; God wants to spend time with You. Be open, be creative, be available.

Spending time with God doesn't have to be a chore. As a matter of fact, you don't have to do it the same way every day. God cares more about our heart than the method of relating to Him. As we read the Bible, listen to a message on Sunday morning, journal our prayers and Bible notes, talk with a friend about faith or simply sit and sip a cup of tea, coffee or hot chocolate and think about God...we are deepening our faith, strengthening our spirits and growing in the Grace and Knowledge of our God.

5) Begin now. Start today. My mentor always used to say "Beginning is half done." Make a start, give it a try and rely on God to help.

May 2025 be our best year yet and on December 31, 2025, may we truly feel closer to Jesus and more enriched by our meaningful relationship with him. If so, we will know it's been a year well lived.



December 9, 2024 Church Council Meeting

Attending: Rev. Dr. Swisher, President Jeff Conner, Tim Powers, Frank Davis, Charles Dudley, Brian Lensink, Gary Kinser, April Kinser, Greg Crowthers, Julie Davis, Mike Dooley and office staff Anita Chirdon and Kim Workman.

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm and F. Davis led the group in devotions with a focus on John 1:14 and Revelations 3. God took on the form of Jesus so people could know God better. God knocks on the door of our hearts and is asking for a relationship with us.

Approximately 40 poinsettias have been donated for the beauty of the church this Christmas season.

A use of facility request was approved for Saturday, December 21, 2024, from 4pm to 6pm.

Three students at C-tec (Adult program) have been awarded the St John's UCC Cloud of Witnesses Memorial Scholarship for the 2024-2025 school year. (This is funded by private donations and is not part of the church budget.)

A new church year will be starting soon and two positions are open. Please advise any council member if you are interested.

Respectfully submitted

April Kinser, Secretary

The next meeting is on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. All members of St. John's are always welcome to attend.



The Ladies Afternoon Circle is Hosting a Hat, Glove, Scarf & Sock

DRIVE

JANUARY 1 - 19

to benefit Ben Franklin Elementary school

Donations can be dropped off in the Fellowship room.

Afternoon Circle Winter Mission Project

By the middle of January, children's mittens, hats, scarves, socks start to get lost or go missing in the snow. There will be a basket in the Fellowship Room for you to put your gifts of mittens, hats, scarves, and socks for Ben Franklin Elementary School children. We will collect these from [January 1](#) through January 19. Thank you for your warm hearts to keep little extremities protected from the cold through the winter.

Afternoon Circle -

will not be meeting in January since our meeting date falls on [January 1](#). We will also not be going out for lunch together that day.

Watch the bulletins and Chimes for news about our February Lunch together on February 5 at the Longhorn restaurant (if the weather is good).

Regular meetings will begin again in March - first Wednesdays of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the Large Meeting Room. All ladies of the St. John's Church Family are always invited to attend.

Confirmation Class

During January and February, the Confirmation Class will be studying general church history, UCC history, and the history of St. John's. Classes will meet on Sundays, [January 12](#) and 19, and [February 9](#) and 16, at 9:30 a.m. in the Small Meeting Room.

We will also be scheduling an extra [Sunday](#) to visit the Sanctuary and study the meanings behind our stained glass windows. Please watch bulletins and The Chimes for information on that.

All youth 6th grade and above are invited to attend this class in preparation for Church Membership. We also have several adults sitting in renewing their knowledge of what makes for a good church member. All are welcome.

Visit Our New Reception Area

Come in and rest a spell in the New Reception Area outside the Church Offices. The Afternoon Circle has provided furniture and decorative items so that folks meeting with one of our staff members will have a pleasant and comfortable place to wait. It makes for a more welcoming entrance to the Office Area.

Thank you Afternoon Circle ladies for your generosity in beautifying our church.

Inclement Weather – Stay Informed for Church Cancellations & Other important Information

It's that time of year when the weather can cause road conditions to be dangerous. Our church policy is to close the church if the Newark area or Licking County is under a level 2 weather advisory. Please add your name and phone number to our ONE CALL NOW list to get important information and updates from St. John's if you **are not** already on this list. Then put this in the offering plate or notify the office. Thank you!

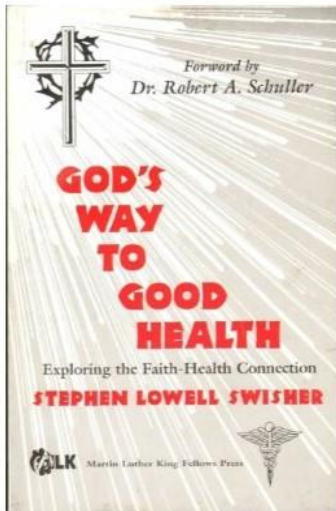
New Addition: Name _____ Phone number _____

Congregational Meeting



Annual Congregation Meeting

Please plan on attending our Annual Congregational meeting on February 16, 2025 to vote on new and returning Council members for another three-year term. More information will be forthcoming.



ADULT Sunday School

God's Way to Good Health explores the concept of maintaining good health through a Christian perspective; often emphasizing the idea that the body is a "temple of the Holy Spirit" and should be cared for accordingly; essentially suggesting that living a healthy lifestyle aligns with biblical teachings.

Lead by Rev. Stephen Swisher.

A great way to start the new year!

Join us starting January 5, 2025, at 9:30AM

(In the large meeting room)

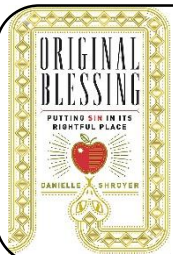
PLANNING MEETING

JANUARY 5, 2024 12:00PM

IN THE LARGE MEETING ROOM



Everyone is welcome. Bring your questions and curiosity. Come if you're just interested in learning more about the mission trip or how you can get involved.



The Book Study Group will meet starting on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 11am at the River Road Coffee House on the Square in downtown Newark. We are starting a new book titled "Original Blessing, Putting Sin In Its Rightful Place" by Danielle Shroyer. The book is available online and all are welcome.

From Your Evangelism & Outreach Committee

Chosen, Now What?

By Fiorelle Montoya

Excerpt from October 2024 cbn.com devotions



Do you love surprises as much as I do? I think that Jesus is an expert on that since every day He does something different in my life. A little over a year ago, Jesus introduced Himself to me, a 23-year-old journalist with a desire to learn who was working on a recording set surrounded by lights, microphones, and people with enormous hearts, not only for their work but for their work for Jesus. My job title could have been “God’s production assistant.”

God can also do something surprising—wherever He has chosen to place you. God chose us and gave us a name and a life for His service. He sits down and takes control he describes in the prophecy about Ethiopia.

This is what the LORD says to me: "I will remain quiet and will look on from my dwelling place, like shimmering heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest" (Isaiah 18:4 NIV).

Imagine Someone with His gaze fixed on our day-to-day life. Sometimes it seems strange, although it is beautiful to know that there is such a great covering over us. And yet, our role simply begins when we first open our eyes to Him. As with an edited piece of video, opening our eyes is only the first scene, followed by the acts that God wants to perform in our lives.

As human beings, we carry fears and sometimes those fears are magnified when we forget who walks in front of us. If you still don't know your purpose, I recommend that you start by accepting that you are chosen by God, then abandon your fears, and start the movie of your own life.

In Isaiah, the people of Egypt were warned that they would be struck down and their strength would be exhausted, but when they cried out to God, He would be there to defend them. The same thing happens when you or I give in to fear.

It will be a sign and witness to the LORD Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the LORD because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them (Isaiah 19:20).

The world offers us temptations and there are hundreds of voices around waiting for us to deviate from our divine purpose. Perhaps thoughts like, I can't, I'm not qualified, I'm too young, or I'm too old are part of the fears that can knock on your door but recognizing that God walks hand in hand with you is the key to defeating doubts and overcoming fears.

Now, your job is to create the rest of the scenes that God planned for your life. Ask Him to help you do that today. He chose you; now what? He will watch over you to fulfill the beautiful purpose He has for your life. Know with confidence that He walks before you and will be a shield against any fear



ADULT Sunday School

Adult Sunday school class will start the new year off by studying God’s Way to Good Health by our very own Rev. Dr. Stephen L. Swisher. Explore the concept of maintaining good health through a Christian perspective; often emphasizing the idea that the body is a “temple of the Holy Spirit” and should be cared for accordingly; essentially suggesting that living a healthy lifestyle aligns with biblical teachings.

Youth Group will be baking cookies to take to the Salvation Army January 26. Future Youth meetings are January 12, 26, February 9 and 23 following the 11am Sunday service. We will also begin preparing for Youth Sunday.



January 5, 2025, at 12:00pm. Mission trip planning meeting. Bring your curiosity, questions and helping spirit.

Sunday School Classes

Adult class – 9:30AM every Sunday.

Confirmation Class – 2nd & 4th Sundays at 9:30AM

Bible Discovery Zone – ages 5 to 14 at 11AM.

Cradle Role – Available during the 11AM service.



January Worship Service Duties

Ushers: Frank Davis, Jeff Conner, Larry Jones, Terry Gano, Mike Dooley, Barry Dooley

Cradle Roll

- 5 Avery Nagel/Volunteer
- 12 Avery Nagel/Volunteer
- 19 Avery Nagel/Volunteer
- 26 Avery Nagel/Volunteer

Cantors

- 5 Todd Baldosser
- 12 Julie Davis
- 19 Diane Reef
- 26 Todd Baldosser

Bible Discovery Zone

- 5 Brian Lensink & Youth if needed
- 12 Marla Crowthers & Youth if needed
- 19 Elaine Gard & Youth if needed
- 26 Frances Hill & Pat Farley

Sunday Sound Worship Team

- 5 Ken Kroah
- 12 Ken Kroah
- 19 Mike Dooley
- 26 Ken Kroah

Sunday Video Worship Team

- 5 Julie Kroah
- 12 Julie Kroah
- 19 Tom Lawyer
- 26 Julie Kroah



JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 8:30am Early Indoor Service in the Chapel 9:30am Adult Advent Study 11:00am Bible Discovery Zone 11:00am Sanctuary Service	30	31	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5 8:30am Early Indoor Service in the Chapel 9:30am Adult Sunday School - God's Way to Good Health 11:00am Bible Discovery Zone 11:00am Sanctuary Service 12:00pm Mission Trip Planning Meeting	6 Epiphany	7	8 10:00am Christian Education Meeting 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice	9 11:00am Thursday Book Study Group - "Original Blessing, Putting Sin In Its Rightful Place" Shroyer - at River Road Coffee on the Square 7:15pm Choir Practice	10	11
12 8:30am Early Indoor Service in the Chapel 9:30am Adult Sunday School - God's Way to Good Health 9:30am Confirmation Class 11:00am Bible Discovery Zone 11:00am Sanctuary Service - Choir Sings 12:00pm Youth Group Meeting	13	14 7:00pm Finance & Stewardship Meeting	15 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice	16 11:00am Thursday Book Study Group - "Original Blessing, Putting Sin In Its Rightful Place" Shroyer - at River Road Coffee on the Square	17	18
19 8:30am Early Indoor Service in the Chapel 9:30am Adult Sunday School - God's Way to Good Health 11:00am Bible Discovery Zone 11:00am Sanctuary Service	20 Martin L. King, Jr. Day	21	22 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice	23 11:00am Thursday Book Study Group - "Original Blessing, Putting Sin In Its Rightful Place" Shroyer - at River Road Coffee on the Square	24	25
26 8:30am Early Indoor Service in the Chapel 9:30am Adult Sunday School - God's Way to Good Health 9:30am Confirmation Class 11:00am Bible Discovery Zone 11:00am Sanctuary Service 12:00pm Youth Group Meeting Baking Cookies for the Salvation Army	27	28	29 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice	30 11:00am Thursday Book Study Group - "Original Blessing, Putting Sin In Its Rightful Place" Shroyer - at River Road Coffee on the Square	31	1



St. John's United Church of Christ
285 W. National Drive
Newark, Ohio 43055

*Rooted in the Evangelical and Reformed Traditions
We are Sowing Seeds of Hope in a Time of Chaos
So We May All Be One*

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Worship Services!

8:30 a.m. Chapel Service
11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary Service
Volume 25 Number 1

Address Service Requested



Main Office Phone

740-323-2407
www.stjohnsnewark.org

Our New Minister

Rev. Dr. Stephen Swisher
Office 740-323-2854
stjohns.pastorstephen@gmail.com

Todd Baldosser

Organist/Choir Director
scarlatti35@hotmail.com

Anita Chiridon/Office Administrator

Kim Workman/Office Assistant
stjohnsunited@windstream.net

Charles Bruah

Church Sexton
740-975-2699

Julie Kroah

Christian Education Director
Direct Number 740-323-2408
stjohnsucc.ce@windstream.net



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LIBRARY FOCUS FOR JANUARY

While You Wait for Your Prodigal Prayer Challenge by Revive Our Hearts Ministries edited by M. Kroesche and M. Sterns. Scripture passages and tools to persevere in prayer.

Bonhoeffer: The Life and Writings of D. Bonhoeffer. DVD Bible study in 4 sessions with spiritual truths that can inspire and challenge.

For Children

Lydia by Young Christian Library Readers. A Philippian business woman in Bible times who meets Paul.

***** These featured books and DVD's can be found in the church library on the center shelves*****