

Welcome Home!

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



St. John's

The 2026 March Chimes

United Church of Christ



Prayer List

General Prayers: Charlie Bruah, Rev. Dr. Winfield Strout, Rev. Gunnar Cerda, Eli Taylor & Sally Penrose

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

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

Thank you for your continued support! In addition to your giving in person, by drop off, by mail, or by clicking on the donate button on the website, you can also scan this QR Code. We continue to find new ways to connect with our members and our community that are convenient, secure, helpful, and relevant to the ways in which some people prefer to donate. We thank God for our ability to offer these methods for those who may choose to use them.



Thank you!

Thank you to all who participated in the Soup-er Bowl of Caring. Through your generosity we collected 89.2 pounds of food and \$235 all to support the Licking County Food Pantry Network.

I am honored for the opportunity to serve as a Council Member for St John's with such an amazing group of people. Also, being Chairman of the Congregational Care Committee, I would like to ask for anyone who may be interested in joining the committee to please let me know! I would be very grateful for you! Feel free to reach out anytime. I take texts and calls at 740-877-3387.

God Bless you!
Your sister in Christ,
Rebecca Swartz

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



March Worship Hours
8:00 a.m. Chapel Service
10:30 a.m. Traditional Sanctuary Service

From the Pastor



Hello friends,

As March brings the arrival of Spring, we are reminded of the beautiful promise of new beginnings, fresh starts and the rejuvenation of life. Just as earth wakes from its winter slumber, this Season invites us to bloom and grow in our own spiritual journeys.

March is a perfect time to embrace growth, renew our commitment to faith and nurture our relationship with God and one another.

As we embrace the Season of Lent, we are reminded of Isaiah 43:19; "I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:19.

This verse reminds us that God is always working, bringing life to dormant places. Here are a few steps to help us:

***Renew our Faith

Lent is a time to focus on renewal and drawing close to God. Take time for daily prayer, Scripture reading and allowing God's word to take root in our hearts.

***Cultivate kindness

Like planting seeds, we can intentionally sow acts of love, generosity and compassion in the soil of others.

***Embrace new opportunities

Trust in God's plan as the time shifts and life's circumstances realizing God is leading us to a brighter more impactful future.

Let's welcome this new season with open hearts, ready to grow in love and grace.

See you in person and around the community.

Pastor Steve



Purple Strips of Cloth

Be sure to pick up a purple strip of cloth at the front or rear of the sanctuary. Purple is the color of Lent. It symbolizes pain, suffering, mourning and penitence. It signifies the feeling of sorrow for our sins in the light of Christ's passion and death. In Lent, purple is used beginning Ash Wednesday and extending through Maundy Thursday.

Use the strip of cloth in a way so that you see it every day as a reminder of Lent and in preparation of Easter. For example, tie it on your rearview mirror, on your purse, on a kitchen cabinet or lay it across your workspace.



Read the Bible in a Year

Q&A

March 1, 2026 at 9:00AM

Bring your questions. Bring your insights.
Bring your curiosity.

Enjoy the conversation.

*Be sure to drop your questions in the box
in the Fellowship Room*

Afternoon Circle -

- will meet for this month on Wednesday, March 4, at 1 o'clock.

All ladies of our Church Family are invited to attend.

2026 Church Council Officers, Members and Committee Assignments

Church Council President – Tim Powers, Special Events Chair

Church Vice President – Chuck Chirdon, Property Maintenance Committee Representative

Treasurer – Brian Lensink

Assistant Treasurer – Ken Kroah

Church Council Secretary – April Kinser, Mission & Outreach Committee Chair

Christian Education Committee Chair – Frances Hill

Church & Ministry Committee Chair – Jeff Conner

Congregational Care Committee Chair – Rebeca Swartz

Evangelism & Outreach Committee Chair – Greg Crowthers, Property Maintenance

Committee Member

Music Committee Chair – Julie Davis

Personnel Committee Chair – Terry Gano

Property Maintenance Committee Chair – Gary Kinser



St. John's Little Free Pantry

Take what you need. Give what you can.

To replenish our food pantry every day we need your help every week. There are collection boxes near each entrance to the Church. Keep in mind that many of the people using this pantry have limited cooking facilities. Ollie's, Dollar Tree, and Aldi's are good places to find foods at good prices. Cans with pull tabs when possible and no glass containers! Thanks for your support!

<https://www.littlefreepantry.org/>



Book Study Group

Come join us as we continue our discussion of the book, *STONEY THE ROAD WE'VE TROD* The Long Road to Freedom by Martin Luther Johnson. We meet on Thursdays at the River Road Coffee House on the square in Newark. This month, we will meet on the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th at 11am. The book is available through Thrift Books. Come join us.

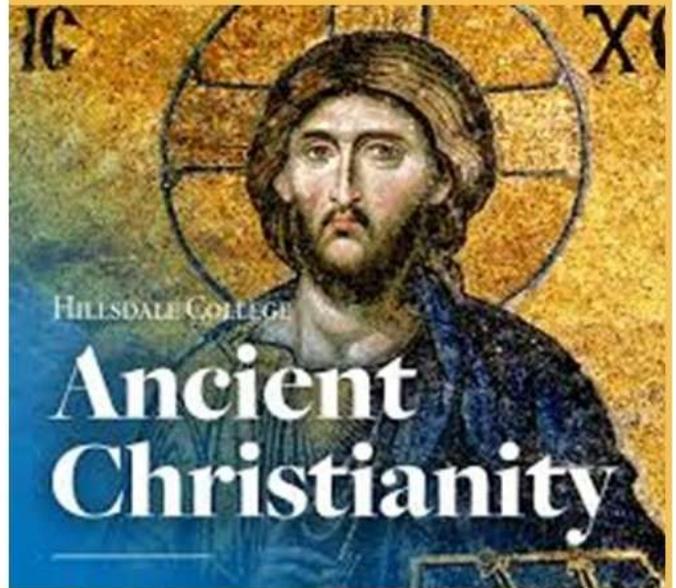
NEW ADULT CLASS

Starting Sunday March 8, 2026

at 9:00AM

Led by Tim Powers

The history of the Christian Church from its origins to its rise as the dominant religion in the Roman Empire. Focusing on primary texts and development in the first 400 years of Christian history.



Notes from St John's Council Meeting February 16, 2026

Attending: President Tim Powers, Chuck Chirdon, Greg Crowthers, Gary Kinser, April Kinser, Frances Hill, Brian Lensink, Terry Gano, Ken Kroah, Rebecca Swartz, Jeff Conner, Reverend Swisher, Anita Chirdon and Kim Workman

A devotional message was presented by B. Lensink, a testimony of faith and belief in everyday miracles. God is always talking to us, but are we listening. Brian shared his personal experience as he talked about feeling God's presence.

Reverend Swisher- has been asked to do a wedding for members on June 27, 2026. They would also like to use the church on April 25, 2026 for a bridal shower. Anita will see that they get the necessary sign-up papers to reserve the date.

The CSEO Association Spring meeting of the UCC will be held on May 2, 2026 here at St John's. The meeting will be from 9am to 3pm, and our church will provide a continental breakfast and lunch for participants.

Christian Education Committee: Reminds everyone to come and partake of the Easter Breakfast provided by the youth on Easter Sunday. Also, they will have a youth overnight on April 11, 2026 prior to their Youth Sunday presentation on April 12, 2026. Vacation Bible school will be June 22 to June 26, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

April Kinser, Secretary Tim Powers, President

Our next meeting will be on March 16, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. All members of St. John's are always welcome to attend.



2026 Meetings

11:30AM—1:00PM

March 8, 22 and April 12, 26

Camperships available for St. John's UCC Members

Although the Heartland Conference of the UCC has sold both camps previously used for outdoor ministries, camping and outdoor ministries continue through cooperation and sharing of resources with the Christian Church. Camp Christian, located in Marysville, Ohio, will be the site for UCC sponsored camps this year. A Grands and Family Camp from June 10-13, a Music, Mindfulness, Art, Dance, and Drama Camp from June 21 -27 (or a short camp from June 21-24) and Sports Camp for various ages from June 28- July 4. Also a UCC sponsored Family Camp in Dunkirk, New York, from July 5 - 11 of 2026. A scholarship fund has been donated for the purpose of assisting St John's members with the cost of camp. This is open to any member of St John's and is not based on financial need, with children and adults being eligible. These funds are not part of the church budget. No tithes or offerings are being used for this program. The funds are limited. YOU MUST REGISTER FIRST WITH THE CHURCH OFFICE BEFOR REGISTERING FOR CAMP TO BE APPROVED. The amount of funding provided would be 50-100 % based on the number of people participating. If a member takes a non-member to camp, the non-member will be covered at 100%. These funds may also be used for the Lantern Fellowship Women's retreats in the spring and fall. More information about the camp experiences may be found online through UCC Heartland Conference Outdoor Ministry or by contacting Jill Frey, Executive Director of Outdoor Ministries 740-901-0740 or jill@heartlanducc.org.



Oh Death, Where is Your Victory?

April 12, 2026

8:00am and 10:30am

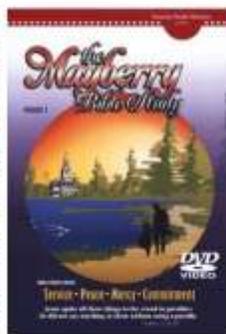
Join us as we celebrate Jesus' victory over death!



Bible Discovery Zone



9:00 AM Youth and Children's Classes

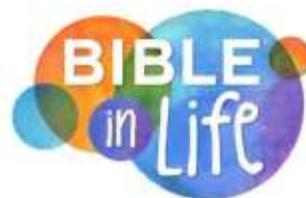


led by Elaine Gard
In the Small Meeting Room

Truth
for
kids

Devotions and crafts
ages 5 to 12
In the Thou Art Room
Lower Level

10:30 AM Children's Church



ages 5 to 12
Bible Lessons and Crafts
In the Thou Art Room
Lower Level



Easter Lilies

This Easter, we will again beautify our sanctuary and our lobby window with an array of Easter lilies to be displayed at both services, which will be purchased from a local nursery. If you would like to participate in this celebration of Easter, please fill out the form below or contact the church office.

6" pot traditional white - \$15.00



THE DEADLINE for placing orders is **Sunday, March 8, 2026.**

There is a limited supply this year, so early ordering is recommended.

I desire the office to purchase a lily for me to keep.

I desire the office to purchase a lily to be donated to a shut-in.

Be sure to complete the following to be printed in the bulletin: (i.e.: In honor of or in memory of..... by) for lily purchases, Abiding Memorials and/or Foundation Fund Contributions.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

You may also choose to remember a loved one with a gift to the Abiding Memorial Fund or the Foundation Fund. All such gifts noted and received **by March 29, 2026,** will be listed in the bulletin on **April 5, 2026, Easter Sunday.** Abiding Memorial and Foundation Fund Cards and Envelopes are available in the literature rack in the Narthex or in the office or you can use this form and place in the offering plate with your contribution. Thank you!

Foundation Fund Abiding Memorial Fund



Journey Together: Our Year of Bible Discovery
Reading the Bible in a Year as a Congregation

Fruitful Vines: 7 Reasons to Read the Bible in a Year (Excerpt 7)
by Melissa Kruger

**Reading the Bible through in a year helps you:
Create A Healthy Habit of Daily Bible Reading**

One of the best things about reading the Bible through in a year is that it builds a regular habit of daily Bible reading. Having a certain amount apportioned for the day makes it easier to pick it up and read. Following a yearly plan also acts as a built-in accountability marker. Many of us overestimate our faithfulness to read the word daily. However, as we follow a daily plan, we notice if it's been four days since we last read, because we'll be that far behind. Having a daily reading plan helps to make it a habit of our life.

Bible Reading Plans are available in the Fellowship room or on our website at www.stjohnsnewark.org.



**Read the Bible in a Year
Discussion Q&A**

March 1, 2026 at 9:00AM

Bring your questions. Bring your curiosity
Enjoy the conversation
*Be sure to drop your questions in the box
in the Fellowship Room*

ASK THE
Pastor

If you have questions as you read the Bible this year, submit your questions to Rev. Swisher and he will answer them at the Q&A March 1.

Jesus Opened the Door

by Beth Fellingner

February 11, 2023 todaydevotional.com



No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

One of our latest adventures in the past year has been to invite about 10 people at random to our home for dinner—a mix of neighbors, church people, and anyone else whom Jesus invites us to meet.

Once a month, after sending out invitations, I set the table, and people show up. And as food is shared and conversation happens in a random way, Jesus shows up.

That can happen when a question or a concern about life comes up, or when someone shares a thought they have been wondering about. Somehow, the table talk eventually moves from what we might have in common to where God is in the story. For some people at the table, the idea of bringing God into the conversation can be a totally new thing, and for others it can be quite familiar. It doesn't matter. Somewhere in the midst of conversation and sharing, the good news of Jesus is shared. It doesn't always look the same or sound the same, but the underlying message is there, whether the topic is lighthearted or weighing heavy with concerns.

Think that must have been what happened when Jesus came “and made his dwelling among us” ([John 1:14](#))—or, as we read in [The Message](#), when Jesus “moved into the neighborhood.” His presence made it possible for people to encounter God in a new way.

Thank you Lord, for fun ideas and for showing up in the neighborhood for us. Thank you for your presence and for giving us a chance to introduce you to others. Amen.

Finances for the Month and Year to Date

<u>General Fund Income - Incomplete</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Congregation giving (Faith Promise)	7,926.00	15,350.46
Income from Foundation Fund	11,500.00	23,000.00
Monthly Income from Emerson Miller Fund	3,758.33	7,516.66
Month & YTD Income	24,131.33	48,242.63
General Fund Expenses	27,371.00	52,665.06
Month & YTD	(\$ 3,239.67)	(4,422.43)



Over/Under
() = Negative



Adult Sunday school class will be studying "Ancient Christianity" led by Tim Powers beginning March 8. Join Tim Sunday mornings at 9:00AM in the large meeting room for this informative study.



Read the Bible in a Year: Our Journey Together. We're starting month 7 of our year-long journey together. Plan to join us for the 2nd Question and Answer Session on March 1 at 9:00AM.



At 9:00AM Easter devotions and crafts and at 10:30AM a special Easter lesson and an outdoor (weather permitting) egg hunt!

Lenten Devotionals are now available in the Chapel and Sanctuary. The devotionals are a great resource to help guide you through the season of Lent.



Youth Sunday is April 12. The Youth will have a message about how Jesus defeated death for all believers. Be sure to join us for this fun, energetic Sunday morning.



Thank you to all who participated. Through your generosity we collected 47.2 pounds of food for the Patriots and 42 pounds of food and \$235 for the Seahawks. The Youth declare the Seahawks the winner of the St. John's Soup-er Bowl of Caring. All donations benefit the local food pantry.



Sunday School Classes

Adult class – Sundays at 9:00AM

Youth Class – Sundays at 9:00AM

Bible Discovery Zone – ages 5 to 14 at 11AM

Cradle Roll – Available during the 11AM service

March Worship Service Duties

Ushers: Frank Davis, Jeff Conner, Terry Gano, Barry Dooley, Gary Kinser

Cradle Roll

- 1 Volunteer
- 8 Volunteer
- 15 Volunteer
- 22 Volunteer
- 29 Volunteer

Cantors

- 1 Charles Dudley
- 8 April Kinser
- 15 Julie Davis
- 22 Diane Reef
- 29 Todd Baldosser

Bible Discovery Zone 10:30 a.m.

- 1 Brian Lensink & Rebekkah Crowthers
- 8 Marla Crowthers & Pat Farley
- 15 Elaine Gard & Rebecca Crowthers
- 22 Frances Hill & Youth if needed
- 29 Julie Kroah & Youth if needed

Bible Discovery Zone 9:00 a.m.

- 1 Rebecca Swartz
- 8 Julie Kroah
- 15 Jeremy/Kayla Hill
- 22 Julie Kroah
- 29 Rebecca Swartz

Sunday Sound Worship Team

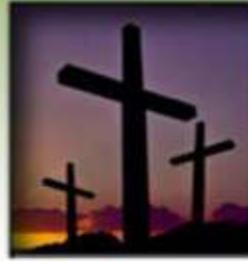
- 1 Karson Ewing
- 8 Ken Kroah
- 15 Karson Ewing
- 22 Ken Kroah
- 29 Karson Ewing

Sunday Video Worship Team

- 1 Tom Lawyer
- 8 Julie Kroah
- 15 Tom Lawyer
- 22 Julie Kroah
- 29 Tom Lawyer



Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday - March 29 at 8:00AM & 10:30AM.

Dr. Swisher's message "Enduring Hardship"

Maundy Thursday - April 2 at 7:00PM

Dr. Swisher's message "The Table and the Garden"

Good Friday Service - April 3 at 7:00PM

Dr. Swisher's message "The Via Dolorosa"

Easter Sunday - April 5

At 7:00AM Outdoor Drive-In Sunrise Service

At 10:30AM Sanctuary Service

Dr. Swisher's Easter message "Standing Firm"

Easter Breakfast Served 7:30AM to 10:00AM
Donations accepted for Youth Ministry Programs





Easter

You're invited to come and worship with us this Easter season

Sunday, April 5

7:00AM Outdoor Drive-In Sunrise Service

10:30AM Sanctuary Service

Easter Breakfast served 7:30AM—10:00AM

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

(740) 323-2407

www.stjohnsnewark.org



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 8:00am Chapel Service 9:00am Bible Discovery Zone Elementary Class in BDZ Classroom 9:00am READ THE BIBLE IN A YEAR - Q & A Session 9:00am Youth Class 10:30am Bible Discovery Zone Children's Church 10:30am Sanctuary Service</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 1:00pm The Afternoon Circle of the Women's Guild Meeting 6:00pm Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 World Day of Prayer</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 Daylight-Saving Time Begins 8:00am Chapel Service 9:00am Bible Discovery Zone Elementary Class in BDZ Classroom 9:00am Youth Class 10:30am Bible Discovery Zone Children's Church 10:30am Sanctuary Service 11:30am Youth Group Meeting</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 7:00pm Finance & Stewardship Meeting</p>	<p>11 10:00am Christian Education Meeting 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 2:00pm Music Committee Meeting</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 8:00am Chapel Service 9:00am Bible Discovery Zone Elementary Class in BDZ Classroom 9:00am Youth Class 10:30am Bible Discovery Zone Children's Church 10:30am Sanctuary Service</p>	<p>16 6:30pm Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice</p>	<p>19 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>20 First Day of Spring</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 8:00am Chapel Service 9:00am Bible Discovery Zone Elementary Class in BDZ Classroom 9:00am Youth Class 10:30am Bible Discovery Zone Children's Church 10:30am Sanctuary Service 11:30am Youth Group Meeting</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice</p>	<p>26 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 Palm Sunday 8:00am Chapel Service 9:00am Bible Discovery Zone Elementary Class in BDZ Classroom 9:00am Youth Class 10:30am Bible Discovery Zone Children's Church 10:30am Sanctuary Service</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1 1:00pm The Afternoon Circle of the Women's Guild Meeting 6:00pm Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting 6:00pm Private Use-Chorus Practice</p>	<p>2 Maundy Thursday 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service</p>	<p>3 Good Friday 7:00pm Good Friday Service 7:00pm Good Friday Service</p>	<p>4</p>



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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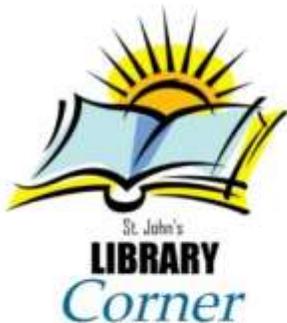
Worship Services!

8:00 a.m. Chapel Service
 10:30 a.m. – Sanctuary Service
 Volume 26 Number 3

Address Service Requested



<p>Main Office Phone 740-323-2407 www.stjohnsnewark.org</p>	<p>Rev. Dr. Stephen Swisher Our Minister Office 740-323-2854 stjohns.pastorstephen@gmail.com</p>	<p>Todd Baldosser Organist/Choir Director scarlatti35@hotmail.com</p>
<p>Anita Chirdon/Office Administrator Kim Workman/Office Assistant stjohnsunity@windstream.net</p>	<p>Mike Dooley Church Sexton 740-398-5863</p>	<p>Julie Kroah Christian Education Director Direct Number 740-323-2408 stjohnsucc.ce@windstream.net</p>



We are looking to purchase some new books for the library.
 Is there a book you're interested in reading that would make a good addition to the Church Library?
 Write the name and author on the **NEW white board** in the Church Library.

If you have any questions, see our librarian Catherine Lim or email stjohnsucc.ce@windstream.net.