



SEPTEMBER 2026

THE LIGHT

**Monthly Newsletter of
St. John United Church of Christ
Strasburg, Ohio**

**ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
516 N. WOOSTER AVE.
STRASBURG, OH 44680**

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STJOHNUCCSTRASBURG@GMAIL.COM
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**WORSHIP SERVICE 9:30 AM
ONSITE AND ONLINE
FACEBOOK
YOUTUBE
@STJOHNSTRASBURG**

SUNDAY SCHOOL - 10:45 AM

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
TUESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY
9:00 AM - 5:00PM**

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK By Jason Rissler

We are preparing for the annual stewardship series. This four week series has become a highlight for me and the church. Often when we think of stewardship, we think of the church finding a new way to squeeze money out of its membership. It is often a very uncomfortable thing.

With the leadership of our Finance committee, we have shifted our thinking of stewardship beyond just that of finances. Yes, finances and generosity with our money is an important part of stewardship. It is however, so much more encompassing. We give of our limited time to serve. We give physical resources other than money. We give of our skills and abilities. Our church at St. John is so much stronger because YOU as a congregation are giving in all these areas.

We have been doing a lot of work on our church building, and rightly so as updates have been undone for many decades. However, the building is not the church. The people are the church. If there is a nice building and no people, there is no church. Our theme this year will reflect on how "We are the Church." The first church in Acts chapter two will provide a blueprint for us and we will hear stories of ways St. John has been the church to one other.

I hope you are able to join us these four weeks beginning on Sunday, September 13. It is truly a joy being the church together with you. We see God at work and look forward to ways God will meet us in the days ahead. Many blessings to each one of you!



Council Notes

Pastor's Report - Pastor Jason continues to make many home, nursing home and hospital visits, as well as holding services at Hennis and Park Village nursing centers. He assisted with FCA training and a concession stand and was actively involved in the Back to School Bash and Prayer time. He coordinated the Strasburg Pastors meeting. He worked with Derek Rissler and Grant Squires on the August 23 service. September 6 is Rally Sunday with a light meal for all classes following worship. Sunday School Classes and the Stewardship Campaign start on September 13.

BOCE - Sunday School classes will begin on September 13. Rally Sunday will be September 6. A new Fall 9-week Bible Study will begin September 17. The Men's monthly Bible Study will continue. GriefShare will begin on August 28. VBS will be at St. John next summer which will be the 100th year of VBS in Strasburg.

Congregational Care - Mums will be delivered to shut-ins. The committee has information for a tour of the Behalt Museum, school and barn, followed by lunch at an Amish home on Wednesday, October 28th.

Fellowship - The committee is seeking new members. Cookies are needed for September 13 and after. The Stewardship luncheon is being planned.

Finance - The final payment for the windows will be due soon. \$225 has been received for court ordered restitution. Stewardship campaign letters will go out August 28.

Missions/Outreach - The committee will begin quarterly meetings. The Pie Booth made \$600 at the Summer Festival.

Music and Worship - Becky Reymond is retiring from her role as handbell director effective December 20, 2026. The committee will be responsible for piano care in the absence of custodian, Gary Garber.

Property - The parking lot project has been completed. Windows are behind schedule due to rain. We may be subcontracting out some of the mowing. B&H Landscaping trimmed trees at the side of the church.

Sanctuary - Committee members are covering dusting duties.

Sound and Electronics - Nothing to report.

Old Business - The "Clean-Out Sale" netted \$4,723. The Stewardship Campaign is September 13 to October 4. GriefShare session is August 28 to November 20.

New Business - Maxx Electric estimate for LED lighting is on hold. Gary Garber is home. Custodian duties are being covered by volunteers. Rally Sunday is September 6, Sunday School begins September 13. Senior Luncheon and Speaker Series resume September 10. Council approved moving forward with plans to renovate the social hall.

Next Council Meeting - September 17, 2026, 6:00 pm.

****We communicate regularly through e-mail and text messages. If you are not receiving these and would like to, please let the church office know.**

Strasburg School

"The Little School That Could"



Did you know that we have an online giving option?

To give online, go to stjohnstrasburg.org or use the QR code.

Thanks for your generosity!





Upcoming Fall Events

September 2026

Men's Monthly Breakfast - September 11, 8:00 am

The group will meet at the church with a breakfast served. The group will begin a new study looking at the book of James. If you haven't yet joined, this is a great time!



Senior Luncheons

Senior luncheons will resume on September 10 at noon in the Social Hall. Ventriloquist, Ross Brown will be the luncheon entertainment for September and there will be a fun "Back to School Lunch Bag" for lunch. Reservations are requested by the Friday before the luncheon each month.

Speaker Series

The September Speaker Series speaker on September 10 will change your thinking and your quality of life for the better. Sherry Hosner will discuss how God gave our bodies an incredible ability to heal itself when given the right conditions. She will share information on natural medicine that is designed to heal root issues from chronic inflammation, pain and unnecessary treatments that cause negative side effects.

Logan Morehead of Pipes Insurance will provide information on things to consider when selecting a Medicare plan in October. And a follow-up Medicare topic is planned for November. These events are for educational purposes and no plan-specific benefits or details will be shared. For accommodations of persons with special needs at this meeting, call 330-878-5113.



- 2- Elaine Scatizzi
- 3 - Tom Patton
- 5 - Charlotte Ayers
- 12 - Linda Beck
- 12 - Nancy Goss
- 12 - Linda Reiger
- 18 - George Bitikofer
- 18 - Pat Pappas
- 23 - Ron "Nick" Haswell
- 26 - Larry Miller
- 27 - Ron Reiger



Strasburg American Legion Chicken BBQ

The Strasburg American Legion will have their chicken BBQ from 10:00 AM to noon in Malcuit's Parking lot on September 13.

Bible Quiz

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Which of the following are mentioned in the list that follows?

- A. a time to teach, and a time to learn
- B. a time to mourn, and a time to dance
- C. a time to fast, and a time to eat
- D. a time to work, and a time to rest



Answer: B (See Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.)

ACOLYTES

- Sept 6 - Hannah Rissler
- Sept 13 - Nora Sexton
- Sept 20 - Landon Dayton
- Sept 27 - Ty Palmer

LAY LEADERS

- Sept 6 - Art Lampe
- Sept 13 - Chris Pratt
- Sept 20 - Steve Chaney
- Sept 27 - Tom Patton

SPECIAL MUSIC

- Sept 6 - Denise Borter
- Sept 13 - Twila Lampe
- Sept 20 - Laura Smith
- Sept 27 - Handbell Choir



GREETERS

- Connie Chaney
- Kathy Lanzer

USHERS

- Steve Chaney
- Jim Rowe
- Connie Chaney
- Kathy Lanzer





Rally Sunday

Rally Sunday is September 6. We will have a light lunch after the worship service to launch the school year. Everyone is welcome to attend to learn more about the Fall Christian Education classes at St. John. Sunday School Classes resume September 13!



Tiger Paw Packing

Tiger Paw packing will start at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, September 8th, then we will pack the first Monday of each month with the exception of December when we will pack on the first Tuesday. Strasburg students will be helping to pack on a more regular basis.



Fall Christian Education Studies at St. John:

Monthly Men's Study:

- Led by Steve Chaney; 2nd Friday of each month for breakfast beginning at 8:00 am, then study from 8:30 am-9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.
- The men's Bible study will look at the book of James.

10 Week Book Study:

- Led by Heather Rissler, Thursdays 9:30 am-11:00 am beginning September 17 through November 19; Reading and studying the book: "A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23" by Phillip Keller. No cost for the book.
- Please sign up by September 10.

Grief Share:

- Led by Deb Burrier; Fridays 1:00 pm-3:00 pm beginning August 28 through November 20; This caring community will help you learn how to cope with the daily challenges of grief. Call Deb at 330-413-0685 or the church office to register.

Adult Sunday School:

- Led by Cheryl Feutz, Dan King and Steve Chaney; every Sunday following the morning worship service.
- This group will further discuss themes from the morning's sermon and also revisit foundational tenets of the faith as discussed in the Affirming Faith confirmation book.
- Start date is September 13, 10:45 am-11:30 am.

Middle School/High School Sunday School:

- Led by Vickki Hinebaugh and Cole Hutchison; every Sunday following the morning worship service.
- This group will be using the book "Growing Spiritual Grit."
- Start date is September 13, 10:45 am-11:30 am.

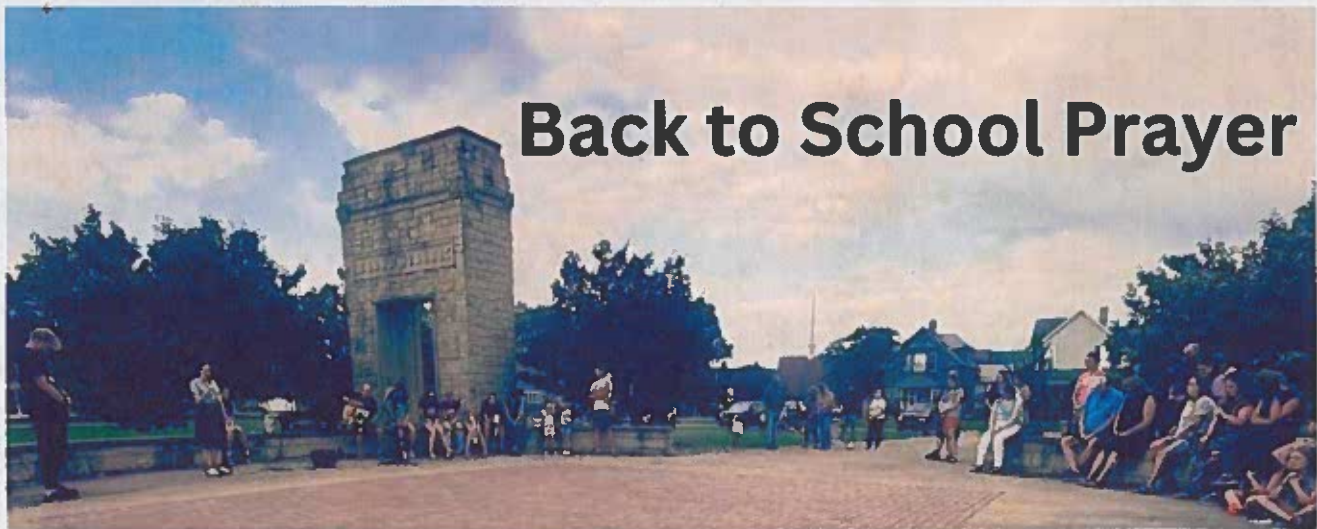
Elementary Sunday School:

- For grades 1-5; Led by Heather Rissler, every Sunday following the morning worship service.
- This class is continuing through: The Wonder of the Greatest Gift by Ann Voscamp.
- This book is a collection of stories called the Jesse Tree (Jesus's family tree).
- These stories will lead us through the Advent season in preparation for Christmas.
- Start date is September 13, 10:45 am-11:30 am.

Nursery Class:

- For all preschool and kindergarten;
- A staffed nursery with a short lesson will be available each Sunday during our morning worship, following the Children's sermon.
- Start date is September 13, 10:45 am-11:30 am.





Back to School Prayer



FCA Leadership Training



Thank You Becky!

Becky Reymond has plans to retire at the end of December so we are seeking a handbell director. We thank Becky for her 28 years of service and appreciate the music we have enjoyed under her direction for many years!



Handbell Choir Director

St. John United Church of Christ in Strasburg is looking for a part-time Handbell Choir Director to direct their choir of 10-12 people. The job involves practice once a week plus a monthly Sunday morning performance. You can submit your resume to stjohnuccstrasburg@gmail.com

Revival Night

330 ministries

WORSHIP | FOOD TRUCKS | WORD

10.3.26 | 802 WARDELL DR SW STRASBURG
DOORS OPEN @ 4:00 | EVENT STARTS AT 6:00



For more details follow us

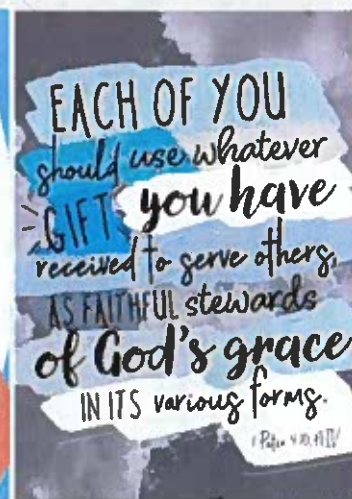


Stewardship Series 2026

September 13th—October 4th

Members of the finance committee have been developing a plan for the annual Stewardship Series working on a theme based on the hymn "We Are the Church" which describes the importance of total participation from all of us. The refrain from this hymn tells us the following: "I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together! All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes, we're the church together!" A single person or group does not achieve our mission as a church. What we accomplish takes commitment from all of us. The numerous committees support important services and programs such as Senior Luncheons, Live Nativity, Bible Studies, Men's Breakfast Meetings, Youth Mission Trips, GriefShare, Tiger Paw Packs, Dress-a-Child, Camp Washington and benevolent callings as well as other community programs. Some of the presentations during the stewardship series will highlight Christian education, current church activities or programs, and potential possibilities for our legacy to the church. You will receive a letter, a time and talent survey, and a commitment card with more explanation regarding the Stewardship Series. We look forward to learning more about how "we are the church together!"

There will be a celebration luncheon following the October 4th worship service.



Give Thanks with Music



What you need:

- 3 small coffee cans with lids
- 1/2 cup dry pinto beans
- 1/2 cup unpopped popcorn
- 1/2 cup uncooked rice
- Heavy-duty tape
- Construction paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons for decorating



What you do:

1. Put the beans in one can, the popcorn in another, and the rice in the third.
2. Secure the lids and tape around the rims.
3. Cover the cans with construction paper and glue it in place.
4. Decorate the cans with markers or crayons.
5. Shake the cans to hear the different sounds, then use them to make joyful music for the Lord!



Message from Heather Rissler

Sometimes we forget the merits of holding a book in our hand in our modern technological age. If reading one from start to finish seems daunting, perhaps you can follow my ninety-nine-year-old grandmother into the realm of audiobooks, which she cruises through in remarkable time.

Recently, I have been thinking about certain books that have been formative for me—those that I refer to when my own thoughts get tangled, and I need someone else to articulate what I can't.

Here are my top 5 with a short breakdown of what was meaningful as I read them:

1. **“Mere Christianity” by C.S. Lewis**- I got my hands on this when I was fresh out of high school and trying to deepen my understanding of God and my relationship to Him. This is for those who relate to God intellectually and want to understand Christianity by building from a logical thought process.
2. **“Interrupted” by Jen Hatmaker**- I read this book shortly after we moved to Ohio and were in the throes of church planting. It helped me to understand that ministry requires surrender to God's will and how it leads us to be involved in the movements of our culture.
3. **“Searching For Sunday” by Rachel Held Evans**-I also read this book during a season of church-planting. The author had a breakup with her church, but gradually, through a season of doubt and grief, began to find a church home again.
4. **“Liturgy of the Ordinary” by Tish Harrison Warren**- This book takes the elements of a traditional worship service liturgy and aligns them to the unique moments throughout her own day. She shows, practically, how we can worship even in the most basic aspects of our own day-to-day lives.
5. **“Learning to Walk in the Dark” by Barbara Brown Taylor**-The best for last! This one has particularly been formative in seasons of grief and loneliness, when the path becomes unclear and dimly lit.

This is my shortlist, but I highly recommend other books by the noted authors. Even if you are not a reader, so to speak, these are well worth your time and consideration. I have thought of re-reading each of them, so if you are interested, I welcome the accountability.



I have hidden
your word
in
my heart
that I might not
sin against you.

PSALM 119:11, NIV



GriefShare

GriefShare started on Friday, August 28th and will continue every Friday from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm through November 20. Your GriefShare group will help you learn how to cope with the daily challenges of grief. You can register for this session by calling the church office or see or call Deb Burrier at 330-413-0685 for more information.



Puzzle!

NAMES OF GOD

Every name of God tells us something about his power, love and care for his people. Use the Scripture clues to uncover just some of these special names.



F _____ (Matthew 6:9)

A _____ and O _____ (Revelation 1:8)

I A _____ (Exodus 3:14)

Y _____ (Exodus 6:2-3)

G _____ M _____ H _____ (Genesis 14:19)

G _____ A _____ (Genesis 17:1)

R _____ (Psalm 18:2)

J _____ (Psalm 75:7)

F _____ (Psalm 18:2)

H _____ O _____ (Isaiah 40:25)

Answer key: Father, Alpha and Omega, I AM, Yahweh, God Most High
God Almighty, Rock, Judge, Fortress, Holy One

August 31, 2026

Dear St. John Family,

It has been my joy, honor, and privilege to serve as director of your handbell choir through the years since we began. While it has not been an easy decision, I believe the time has come for me to retire from this role, effective at the end of December (2026), and make way for new leadership to guide the group into its next chapter.

I am deeply grateful to all our handbell ringers for your dedication, and for generously giving your time and talent, from those who started with us some 28 years ago and still ring with enthusiasm to those who joined more recently. A special word of gratitude goes to those who helped guide us through the challenges of COVID, when we rang in two separate groups and adapted to music arranged very differently from what we were used to, frustrating as that music was at times!

I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to Council and the Music & Worship Committee for your support and encouragement over the years, and to the church family for always greeting our work with enthusiasm -- our music grows in meaning when we can share it with others.

St. John's music ministry has been blessed with all our handbell musicians, who have consistently done outstanding work, meeting challenging music with perseverance and a positive spirit. I am truly grateful for our friendships and for the bond we share through God's gift of music, and I am confident the group has a bright future going forward.

Peace,
Becky Reymond



Dear Pastor Rissler & Members of
St. John United Church of Christ,
Thank you so much for your generous
monetary donation toward my medical
expenses and for the \$100.00 in The Village
Garden Bulk Food Store gift cards. Your kindness
and generosity have been such a blessing
during this difficult time.
Your thoughtfulness has eased some of my
worries & reminded me how much compassion and
caring there is in the heart of others. I truly
appreciate your support, your prayers, and the
love you have shown me.
Thank you again for your generosity. May
God richly bless each of you for the kindness
you have shared with me.
With heartfelt gratitude,
Atera Cox

Dear Jason and St. John UCC Staff,
A huge THANK YOU for the support and
partnership you've already provided as we begin
this school year! Thank you for being a part of
our Back to School Bash with PW Packs and FCA.
Our staff is also immensely grateful for the
generous breakfast you provided us. We are
lucky to have you as community supporters
and friends of our district. Sincerely,
Strasburg Franklin Admin Team

Thank You

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:30am - Worship 30	31	6:30pm - Faith and Family 1	7:30am - Business Leader 5pm - BOCE 5:30pm - Handbell 2	2:30pm - Action Now 6pm - Music & Worship 3	1pm - GriefShare 4	5
9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sunday School 6	Labor Day 7	1pm - Tiger Paw Packing 8	7:30am - Business Leader 2pm - Park Village Service 5:30pm - Handbell 9	12pm - Senior Luncheon 6pm - Life Knowledge 10	8am - Men's Breakfast 11am - Machele Miller 1pm - GriefShare 11	12
9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sunday School 13	14	9am - Congregational 6:30pm - Faith and Family 15	7:30am - Business Leader 9:30am - Finance Mtg. 1:30pm - Hennis Service 5:30pm - Handbell 16	9:30am - A Shepherd 5pm - Missions/Outreach 6pm - Church Council 17	1pm - GriefShare 18	19
9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sunday School 20	21	11am - Machele Miller 22	7:30am - Business Leader 1pm - Elijah - Prophet of 5:30pm - Handbell 23	9:30am - A Shepherd 24	1pm - GriefShare 25	26
9:30am - Worship 10:45am - Sunday School 27	28	6:30pm - Faith and Family 29	7:30am - Business Leader 5:30pm - Handbell 30	9:30am - A Shepherd 2:30pm - Action Now 6pm - Music & Worship 1	1pm - GriefShare 2	3