



The Visitor

St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, OH

March 2026

From the Pastor

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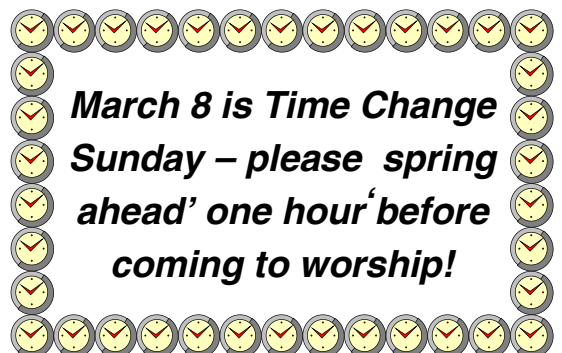


Welcome to Lent, and the 26 in 26 Visitor Challenge! Just to recap what was introduced last month: During Lent (February 18 to April 4), all St. John UCC members and friends are invited to invite a friend or family member to worship. When they attend a Sunday morning worship service, please pick up one of the '26 in 26' Visitor's form, fill in your name and their name, and then post it on the wall next to the Stained Glass

window just outside the sanctuary.

If we get 26 visitors in this time period, then everyone who brought a visitor will receive one pie pan of whipped cream – to be used on anyone in Church Leadership! Pastor, Church Council, perhaps even staff! We'll do this after worship on Holy Humor Sunday, May 3, which seems an appropriate day to do so!

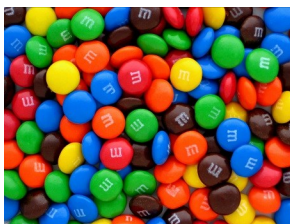
The "26 in 26" Visitor's Forms can be found in a basket on the red bench under the Stained Glass window in the narthex – if you have any questions, please ask your friendly ushers!



The Visitor

Ministry Board of Christian Nurture

The Ministry Board of Christian Nurture exists to encourage and nurture our members' faith by providing education and fellowship opportunities for all ages.



Start saving your quarters! Christian Nurture is having their annual **M&M Fundraiser!** It will start on April 12th and end on May 3rd. Thank you for your support!

Lunch Bunch in March will be on March 8, immediately after worship, at "Uncle Yip's" restaurant in Evendale. Their Chinese food is amazing, and there's plenty of seating – hope you can join us!



Line Dance with Teresa will host another **Line Dance Party** in the fellowship hall on Saturday, March 14, at 7:00pm. All are welcome – there will be plenty of dances being taught, so don't worry if you aren't familiar with line dancing – you'll pick it up pretty quickly! Teresa is a great teacher, and the dance party is a fun way to meet some nice people (and introduce them to our great church!). The cost is \$10/person, and all are asked to bring a snack to share and your



own non-alcoholic beverage.

Invite a friend and let's dance!

"Joy in the Journey" is the theme of this year's **Women's Retreat**, scheduled for Saturday, March 21, right here at St. John UCC. If you'd like to have a bit of the 'retreat' experience and stay at the Drury Inn on Friday, March 20, please sign up now. Rooms are \$153 apiece, split between two people isn't too bad, and there's a free breakfast the next morning! If staying overnight isn't your thing, that's fine – we hope you'll join us for the Joy in the Journey retreat on Saturday, March 21, at 10:00am. We'll be in the Cozy Corner, lunch is being catered by Raffel's, and all are welcome! The deadline to sign up is March 5, and the cost is only \$25/person – what a great deal! Invite a friend and join us!

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Ministry Board of Christian Nurture

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On Sunday, March 29, the Hospitality Team will be hosting a **Palm Sunday breakfast** in the Cozy Corner at 9:15 am. Please invite family and friends and plan on joining us!

Is someone in your family struggling with dementia? There is a new '**Dementia Guide**' now available – please contact the church office to get your free copy either emailed to you, or a hard copy printed out. This is a challenging time for any family, and your church family wants to help support you and your loved one as much as possible.

Upcoming Events from the Men's Group:

Ford's Garage Luncheon - Sunday, March 22. After worship, carpool to lunch at Ford's Garage in Rookwood. Men pay for their own food/drinks.

Duck Pin Bowling at Pins Mechanical - Weds., April 15 at 6:15 pm. Meet at Mason location for fun and fellowship time. You can bring in food. Pay for drinks/bowling on your own.

Fishing Outing - Sat., May 16. Meet at church at 9 am to carpool to private ponds (no fishing license required.) Bring lunch/drinks and fishing gear. Depending on how the fish are biting, we will return to church sometime in the afternoon.

Living Single Group Invites You!



noon to 2 pm. Bring your own lunch and

Living Single is a new group that meets on the second Wednesday of each month in the fellowship hall, from

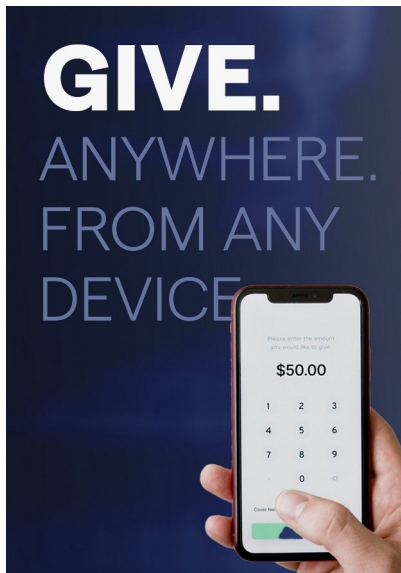
just enjoy having company with others who live by themselves.

Topics are open to almost anything. In January we discussed everything from historic Reading businesses, to traffic on Benson St., to television shows of years gone by.

This is an unstructured group and we would enjoy your company. Come join us!

Charlotte Bell

Online Giving Available Now through Tithely!



We are excited to announce that our new online giving option is up and running!

Tithely Giving is an easy-to-use platform that will allow you to give online and on your phone. You can make both

one-time and recurring gifts, give with a credit/debit card or ACH transaction, and even Cover the Fees (which will help your gift go even farther!)

You will never be forced to use online giving—we are always happy to accept cash or check. This is simply another option to make giving to St. John easier for those who don't carry cash or physical checks anymore, or for people out of state who would like to give a memorial donation or something similar. Tithely also allows us to collect payments for events like the Women's Retreat and German Heritage Dinner—we've already sold a couple GHD tickets online this week!

Here's how to get started with Tithely.

Option 1: Give on the Tithely Giving App

- Download the Tithely App from the [App Store](#) (iPhone) or [Google Play](#)

[Store](#) (Android). Once you've downloaded the app, select St. John UCC and follow the steps listed below (for using a Giving Form).

- Since this is your first time giving with Tithely, you will be prompted to create an account that you can use for all future gifts.
- The first time, you will also need to add your credit/debit card or ACH/banking info.
- Once your account has been created, you won't need to enter your personal or payment information. Just enter your PIN and give!

To make this process even easier, you can also set up a recurring gift that will automate your regular giving.

Option 2: Give on Our Website.

- Visit stjohnunitedchurchofchrist.com/online-giving/ to access a Giving Form on our church website.

Just like on the app, you can also set up a recurring gift that makes your regular giving automatic.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Jane in the office or Kathy Culver, and we'll be happy to walk you through the system.

Pop Up Praise Hosts “The Stirring” Revival at UC

This is from one of our Contemporary Praise & Worship leaders—contact her if you are interested! Detailed info sheets are also available from the church office/

My name is Ally Andrade, and I serve as the Executive Director of Pop Up Praise, a student-led worship and prayer ministry at the University of Cincinnati. For those I haven't met yet, I'm reaching out to invite you to save the date for a special gathering we're hosting this spring called The Stirring 2026.

The Stirring is our annual on campus 24-hour worship and prayer gathering, where we come together as the Body of Christ to reach, encounter, and unite college students—believing the Lord desires to make the University of Cincinnati His sanctuary.

Event Details:

When: 12:00 AM – 12:00 AM Saturday, March 28, 2026

Where: Sigma Sigma Commons, University of Cincinnati — Main Campus

Who: College students, campus ministries, churches, and ministry leaders from across the University of Cincinnati and the greater Cincinnati area.

What: The Stirring is a 24-hour worship and prayer gathering led by campus and city ministries with one unified goal: to

make the University of Cincinnati a sanctuary where students can encounter the presence of the Lord through worship, prayer, and evangelism.

Last spring, we hosted the first Stirring on UC's campus and partnered with 12 campus and city ministries, gathering hundreds of college students for worship and prayer. This year, our prayer and vision is to expand that partnership—making room for more ministries and laborers to link arms with us. As students, we are witnessing a genuine hunger for the Lord and an openness to the Gospel across our campus. With that in mind, we invite you to partner with us as we seek to reach the 50,000+ students at the University of Cincinnati.

If you are interested in learning more, getting connected, and exploring partnership, please fill out the Get Involved Form at the bottom of this page: popuppraise.net/stirring2026

You can also learn more about Pop Up Praise here:

Website: popuppraise.net

Instagram: [instagram.com/pop.up.praise/](https://www.instagram.com/pop.up.praise/)

If you have any immediate questions, feel free to email me at allyandrade@popuppraise.net.

German Heritage Dinner

Traditional sauerkraut dinner with German sausage, mashed potatoes, green beans, German rye, rolls, drinks & dessert. All included for one low price!

Saturday, March 7th, 2026
5:00 – 7:00 PM



Featuring the
Enzian German Dancers

St. John United Church of Christ
729 Jefferson Ave.
Reading, Ohio 45215
(513) 821-1740

www.stjohnunitedchurchofchrist.com

Check us out on Facebook

**Great Food and
Entertainment!**

Tickets are Limited – Purchase in

Adults: \$15

Children age 12 and under: \$10

Tickets can be bought online this year! Scan the QR code below with your phone camera, or visit bit.ly/2026GHD

Win raffle prizes and Split-the-Pot!

Tickets are limited, so please contact the church office at 513-821-1740 to purchase tickets in a



Hosted by the St. John UCC Men's Group with proceeds going to the Bob Christopel Memorial Scholarship Fund supporting a Reading High School student.

Ministry Board of Elders

The Ministry Board of Elders exists to spiritually support the body of the church by creating meaningful worship.

During Lent, the Ministry Board of Elders has recommended that we use gluten free wafers for Communion. We will still come forward and do ‘intinction’ by dipping the wafer into the chalice of grape juice, so nothing has changed there. But for our gluten-sensitive members, using these wafers will make a big difference!

A “Neutral Pulpit” is a UCC church allowing a candidate for the call to ministry at another UCC church to come and preach. In this ‘neutral’ setting, members of the Search and Call Committee come and mix in with the neutral pulpit church and

observe their candidate in action. St. John UCC has been asked to be a neutral pulpit on March 8. The Lakeview UCC church in Maineville is ready to see their candidate in action, and he has been invited to preach on March 8 (and lead the Children’s Chat). So, if you see someone you don’t know in your regular spot – don’t panic, they are one of our UCC brothers and sisters from Lakeview UCC! Please welcome them as you would any other visitor, and help them blend in. The candidate is not supposed to know which people are their potential members!

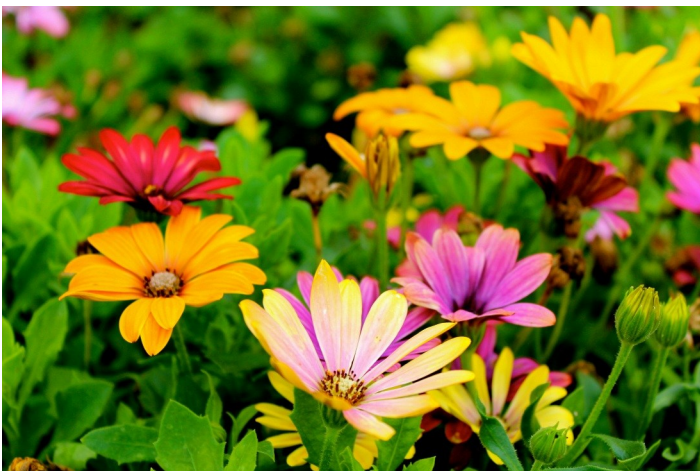
Scripture Readings

Scripture	Bible Study	Sermon Date
Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42	<i>**No Bible study this week**</i>	March 8
Psalm 121; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 19:28-29	March 10	March 15
Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; Mark 15:33-36	March 17 (afternoon only)	March 22
Psalm 118; Philippians 2:5-11; John 19:30-37	March 24	March 29
Psalm 116; John 13:1-11; John 13:31b-35	March 31 (afternoon only)	April 5

Ministry Board of Property and Finance

The Ministry Board of Property and Finance exists to be stewards of the building and finances of the church.

It was so pleasant to have a blast of warm weather in February and the month of March always brings us both winter and spring moments. We can usually count on a week's worth of spring weather sometime around the middle of the month, and it always comes with the urge to get the gardens and yards ready for the coming year.



And hopefully we will be ready to do some work and new plantings to the church landscape and gardens this spring. Carol Nieman has been working on incorporating more colorful plantings and adding more to those that have biblical connections. Overall, there may be some drastic changes to the gardens as we remove tired plantings and declining trees and shrubs and replace them with new and colorful selections. There are al-

so thoughts about expanded paving, lighting and a focal feature of some sort. Stay tuned.

The new main entry doors are now scheduled for installation the week of April 27th. The old doors and glass panels will be removed, and depending on the progress, there may be some temporary plywood walls and doors installed for a day or two. The new doors are all dark bronze (which is nearly black) aluminum with clear glass panes. They will be a bit wider than the current doors. There will be an attempt to save the current glass panes with the Gospel etchings but it is feared that they may shatter during the removal.

We continue to monitor the moisture problems on the sanctuary walls and hope that after the rains in spring and the determination that there are no more leaks, we can repair and paint.

Tom Pfennig, woodworker and cabinet maker, has been working with Haven on the remodeling and updating of the kitchenette outside the sanctuary. We have approved the final plans, materials and colors and will be anticipating its installa-

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Ministry Board of Property and Finance

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tion in the coming month. Electrical and plumbing updates will also be completed. We appreciate Haven’s management of this project.

Online giving is now available to all. You will begin to see QR codes in bulletins and flyers, which, when scanned, will take you to the appropriate website to make an offering, or to sign up and pay for an event or item. You may also simply go to the church website and click “Online Giving” to navigate to the online payment page. Any questions can be answered by our secretary, Jane or treasurer, Kathy. Thanks for all their work in getting this up and running.

A WorkShip Day is scheduled for Saturday, March 28th. Hopefully you can attend and help with some tasks. Look for an email with more information. Please feel free to come and do any fix-up or clean-up work at church at any time. We would like

to be looking our best when Easter arrives.

We have an opportunity to consider the purchase of the Cutter Insurance property which may come up for sale late this year. Based on a Popcorn idea, we are thinking about the possibility of expanding our base and outreach into the community.

What that would look like and how the insurance building, parsonage and church could be used, needs to be determined if we are to proceed, along with all the financial, governmental and feasibility aspects of this plan. We anticipate the creation of a committee to create and develop the necessary ideas and plans. Board chairs, council members and interested church members are encouraged to join this group when the time comes.

Have a prayerful and introspective season of Lent...and also enjoy the coming of spring, daylight savings time, the German Heritage Dinner, and St Patrick’s Day.

Thanks and many blessings.....P&F.

Celebrations in March

Birthdays:

March 11 - Judi Hiatt

March 11 - Donna Ring

March 12 – Bill Gorman

March 14 - Martha Christophel

Are we missing your birthday or anniversary? Please contact the office and let Jane know!



St. John UCC Regularly Scheduled Events

Weekly			
Event	Day	Time	Location
Handbell Choir (Sept.-May)	Sunday	9 am	Sanctuary
Fellowship Time	Sunday	9:15 am	Cozy Corner
Worship	Sunday	10 am	Sanctuary
Bible Study (Afternoon)	Tuesday	1 pm	Bible Study Room
Bible Study (Evening)	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Mt. View Terrace
Chancel Choir (Sept-May)	Wednesday	6:15 pm	Choir Room
Feed My Sheep	Thursday	4:30 pm	Fellowship Hall

Monthly			
Event	Day	Time	Location
Communion	1st Sunday	10 am	Sanctuary
Deacons	Last Thursday	2:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
Lunch Bunch	2nd Sunday	After Worship	Various
Men's Group	Various Sundays	11 am	Various
Property & Finance	2nd Tuesday	5 pm	Bible Study Room
Christian Nurture	1st Tuesday	5 pm	Bible Study Room
Elders	2nd Thursday	2:30 pm	Bible Study Room
Euchre	3rd Tuesday	2:45 pm	Church
Living Single	2nd Wednesday	12:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Church Council	3rd Thursday	6 pm	Bible Study Room
Work-ship Day	First Saturday	8 am	Church

A St. John UCC word search, created by our own Anita Glass!

V E M O H T A S T N I A S R E D L E I
S N I U T R O C O M M U N I T Y R R T
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C P R O C P I C P O C T S U R R R T E
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O R B E I N E S L C B H L A E T E S G
H T P U R F D S D A V I S I T O R Y Y

property
Christian
scripture
popcorn
deacons
hospitality
Reading

men's group
saints at home
chancel choir
communion
children's chat
feed my sheep
German heritage

amen
elders
visitor
Sunday
finance
nurture

bible study
prayers
workshop
community
cozy corner
holy humor
handbells

joy in the Journey

St. John United Church of Christ - Reading, OH

A Journaling-Based, Joy-Filled Women's Retreat
Saturday, March 21, 2026 | 10 am-4:30 pm
St. John United Church of Christ
729 Jefferson Ave., Reading, OH

*Optional Friday night
fellowship & overnight at
the Drury Inn & Suites in
Sharonville, OH*



Gatherings:

- Discussion groups
- Worship with Communion
- Service projects
- Optional overnight stay

Cost: \$25/person
RSVP by Thurs., March 5



Scan here to register online, or visit
tithe.ly/event-registration/#/10824049
More info: 513-821-1740



St. John United Church of Christ

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Phone: 513-821-1740

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stjohnunitedchurchofchrist.com

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