



The Visitor

St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, OH

April 2024

Inside:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Heartland Conference | 2 |
| Christian Nurture | 3 |
| Grands & Family Camps | 3 |
| Deacons | 4 |
| Elders | 5 |
| Lectionary | 5 |
| Property & Finance | 6 |
| Birthdays | 7 |
| Schedule | 8 |
| Puzzle | 9 |

From the Pastor

Do you know that post-Christmas let-down that kids, and perhaps some adults, experience? All the gifts are unwrapped, the food is put away, the tree is taken down. And it seems like there is nothing to look forward to. For Christians, and especially pastors, I suggest that we experience a similar post-Easter let-down. The tomb is empty, the Easter candy is put away, and there is nothing to look forward to. All the worship services are over, the candles have been put away, and the lilies are



gone. And, perhaps, there is just a bit of relief that it is all behind us, and we survived!

But, we do have so much to look forward to. In April, we will take our Spring Bus trip – the one that didn't happen last year but due to popular demand has come back! We'll share in an exciting new and groundbreaking bilingual worship service with the Pohnpei United

Church of Christ on April 28. Bob and Virgie have invited us to celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on April 21. And, the Ministry Board of Christian Nurture will host their famous "M&M Fundraiser!" So much to look forward to!

And, on Monday, April 8, there will be a solar eclipse. A total solar eclipse will take place at the Moon's ascending node on Monday, April 8, 2024, visible across North America and dubbed the Great North

(Continued on page 2)

The Visitor

From the Pastor

(Continued from page 1)

American Eclipse by some of the media. According to the NASA website, the solar eclipse will start at 1:52pm in Reading, reach it's maximum coverage of 99.9% at 3:09pm, and be completed by 4:24pm. While total solar eclipses occur every 18 months or so, they don't always happen in this area! So, this is a special time.

In scripture, I think the most well-known passage about a solar eclipse shows up at the end of the Pentecost speech, when Peter says, quoting the prophet Joel: "The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord."

In the Crucifixion story in the gospel of Mark, we read these

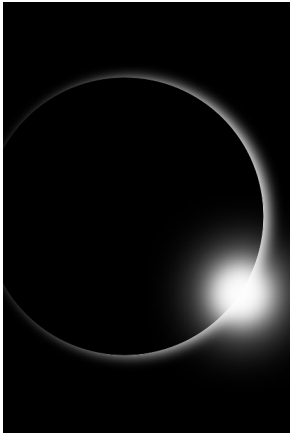
words: "At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon," which sounds like an eclipse.

One of the plagues in Exodus 10 was a plague of darkness for three days!

And, one of my favorite 'sun' stories in the Bible comes from Joshua 10, where the sun 'stands still' until Joshua's army wins. Cambridge researchers have figured out that this, the first recorded eclipse of the sun, occurred on October 30, 1207 BC!

April showers will bring May flowers, and April at St. John UCC will bring us a new worship experience, a new community outreach platform, and wonderful fellowship opportunities. Can't wait to be in ministry with you in April 2024!

-Rev. Torie



April showers will bring May flowers, and April at St. John UCC will bring us a new worship experience, a new community outreach platform, and wonderful fellowship opportunities.



THE HEARTLAND CONFERENCE'S
PORTAL TO MINISTRY RESOURCES!



SCAN ME

Want an easy way to connect with The Heartland Conference?

Scan this QR Code with your phone camera to access our website, newsletter, email our staff, register for camp, and more! Or visit linktr.ee/HeartlandUCC

Board of Christian Nurture

Christian Nurture will meet on Tuesday, April 2 at 11 am for a lunch meeting.

Our **2024 Bus Trip** will be held on Sunday, April 14, immediately following worship. There are plenty of seats available, so talk with your friends and get signed up. The trip to the Wright Patterson Air Force Museum will be very interesting, and of course, you can't go wrong with a quick stop at an outlet mall! The cost is only \$45/person and includes lunch!

Celebrate Bob and Virgie's **70th wedding anniversary** with them! There will be a special anniversary reception after worship on April 21.

“90th” Birthday Party! The Ministry Board of Christian Nurture is hosting a 90th Birthday Party for ALL in our church WHO ARE IN THEIR 90'S! These 90+ years of life experience people will be our special guests - and we need them to sign up.

Everyone else is invited to attend the party - but you don't have to sign up - just walk across the hallway after worship on May 5!

So, if you are in your 90's, or you have a church member in your family who is in their 90's and you can get them to church on Sunday, May 5, please let us know so we can celebrate them!



Grands & Family Camps at Templed Hills Camp & Retreat Center

This half-week session gives you and your grandchild/child some extra time to explore your faith in Christian community in the natural beauty of our camp.

Share your faith through Bible lessons, songs, games, easy nature explorations, swimming, and campfires. We discover God's power and wonder and our own unique place in God's creation. Ensure

that a passionate faith continues in your family for generations to come!

Grands & Family 1 - June 12-15

Grands & Family 2 - June 30 - July 3

Grands & Family 3 - July 14-16

Visit heartlanducc.org/templed-hills/ for more information or to register online!

The Visitor

Board of Deacons



Starting in April, the **Feed My Sheep outreach** will move inside! The Ministry Board of Deacons will be setting up an indoor 'choice' pantry, where the community can shop for what they want, based on what we have! If having the pantry be a drive-by outside has prevented you from helping out on Thursdays, then talk to Susie Koehler and join this new initiative in the climate controlled Fellowship Hall! We'll still have some bags available for those who want to drive by and keep

moving, but we're excited to offer a choice pantry, and invite the community back inside.

The Board of Deacons needs donations of **plastic grocery bags and bar soap**. Please bring these to church if you have any to spare. Thank you.

CarPax are now available outside the Cozy Corner. These are brown bags of snacks and encouragement that you can give to someone you see as you are driving about town.

Summer Program Volunteers Needed



**WASHINGTON UCC
CINCINNATI OH
URBAN CORE**



JUNE & JULY

MISSION IMMERSION
FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

SPEND A WEEK - BE CHANGED FOR A LIFETIME
Work with children living in the urban core Mon-Thurs. as their 'buddies' for breakfast and lunch, daily worship, crafts, story time, and recreation. Go with them on fieldtrips to local attractions. Other opportunities include serving at the shelter, poverty education and local projects. Housing and board included.

washingtonucc@aol.com washingtonucc.org

Mission Immersion - Cincinnati

Youth, young adults and seniors are invited to participate in this life-changing volunteer opportunity!

Washington UCC provides summer enrichment for low-income children ages 6-12 living in the urban core. They especially need volunteers for the week of July 8-11, from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

Contact Melissa Stephens at melissa@washingtonucc.org or (859) 802-2745.

Board of Elders

On Sunday, April 28, St. John UCC and Pohnpei UCC will celebrate a **joint worship service together** at 11 am and share a potluck lunch afterward. Please sign up by the Cozy Corner to bring a main dish, side, salad, or dessert.



Welcome, new members! We are so glad to welcome Cindy, Maddie, Margie, Robert, Shayla, and Toni to the Family of Faith at St. John!

Lectionary

| Scripture | Bible Study | Sermon Date |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133 1 John 1:1-2:2 John 20:19-31 | April 2 | April 7 |
| Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4 1 John 3:1-7 Luke 24:36b-48 | April 9 | April 14 |
| Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23 1 John 3:16-24 John 10:11-18 | April 16 | April 21 |
| Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31 1 John 4:7-21 John 15:1-8 | April 23 | April 28 |

The Visitor

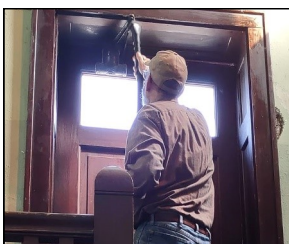
Board of Property and Finance



The flowers are blooming and the trees are leafing out. Our courtyard garden is ablaze with colors and scents as the warm spring weather has encouraged the rebirth of all. The garden is ever changing. We too are spending more time outdoors as temperatures warm and we feel the need to re-connect with nature and others. When you get a chance, take a leisurely stroll through our courtyard garden and enjoy the beauty and serenity that abounds there. Sit and reflect and praise our Lord for all these gifts.



The restoration of our Christ Ascending stained glass window is scheduled to start on April 15. A small crew of workers from Blanck Studios will come and erect scaffolding up against the window in the sanctuary and begin the removal of the sections of the window, which should last for most of the week. All sections will be carefully transported to their shop in Piqua, Ohio, where they will delicately do the intricate and demanding process of restoration. While our window is away, cur-



tains will be hung on the lower portions of the window opening to reduce the amount of light coming into the sanctuary. The existing exterior protective glass will remain in place but will also be replaced when the restored window is re-installed. The entire process is expected to last up to 8 weeks. We look forward to its re-emergence sometime later this spring.

The other major project that will be happening soon will be the tuck pointing and sealing of the brick. We have met with the selected contractor, Anderson Building Restoration, and have reviewed the project scope. They understand our needs and are sure to provide the expertise and skills needed to perform the work. They have sent a sample of the existing mortar to a testing agency to determine the composition of the original mortar. Scaffolding will be erected around the building as the work progresses, which is expected to start just after Memorial Day

(Continued on page 7)

Board of Property and Finance

(Continued from page 6)

and last for much of the summer.

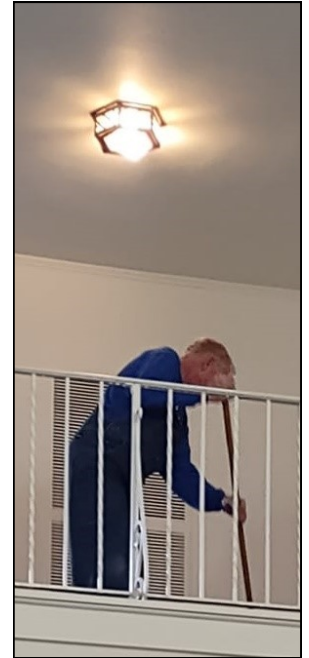
As of this time, the next Workshop Day is scheduled for Saturday May 4, from 8 am till about noon. There was soooo much accomplished at our last Workshop Day and we are so thankful for all who helped.

Again, our Fellowship Hall served as a voting location for the recent primaries. We are happy to serve our community in this way, and it brings in a bit of revenue for the church.

Let us know if you are interested in joining our board. In the meantime, we hope that your

Easter was joyous and that Jesus brings new life and energy to you each and every day.

Gary Kurtz



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

April 2 - Heidi Bothe

April 14 - Vince Front

April 15 - Rechelle Nicely

April 19 - BJ Bothe

April 19 - Ruthie Sanders

April 25 - Diane Forster

April 29 - Mary Sue Geis

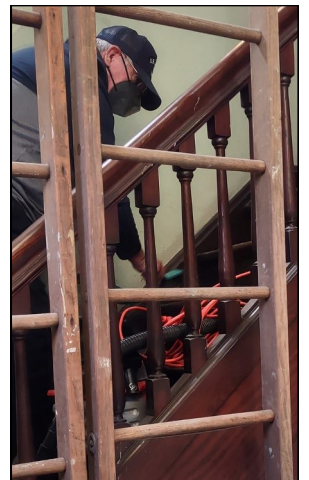
Anniversaries

April 1 - Carol & Dave Hall

April 11 - Jan & Paul Godwin

April 17 - Bob & Virgie Cutter

April 23 - Kathy & Steve Culver

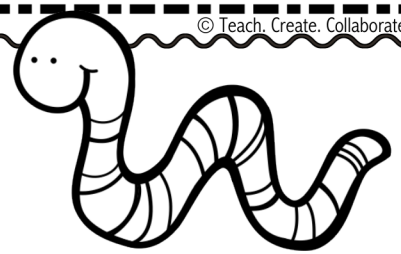


St. John UCC Regularly Scheduled Events

| Weekly | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|
| Event | Day | Time | Location |
| Handbell Choir | Sunday | 9 am | Sanctuary |
| 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 | 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 | Cozy Corner |
| Lunch Bunch | 2nd Sunday | After Worship | Various |
| Men's Group | Various Sundays | 11 am | Various |
| Missionary Sewing | 1st Wednesday | 10 am | Fellowship Hall |
| Property & Finance | 2nd Tuesday | 5 pm | Fellowship Hall |
| Christian Nurture | 1st Tuesday | 4:30 pm | Fellowship Hall |
| Elders | 2nd Thursday | 2:30 pm | Bible Study Room |
| Euchre | Last Thursday | 6 pm | Reads' home |
| Church Council | 3rd Thursday | 6 pm | Fellowship Hall |
| Work-ship Day | Last Saturday | 8 am | Church |

Spring Word Search



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | Z | H | B | X | T | H | A | N | W | O | B | N | I | A | R | L | M | E | X |
| P | K | A | L | J | I | F | E | B | J | X | E | F | R | E | W | Q | A | T | Z |
| R | A | I | N | C | O | A | T | N | A | T | Y | R | I | P | S | E | P | U | R |
| I | N | B | A | T | C | K | L | K | R | E | T | C | H | I | C | K | I | X | B |
| N | J | A | Z | F | M | S | E | U | G | R | I | W | A | D | W | O | B | U | A |
| G | A | D | X | U | E | L | M | R | C | W | Z | Y | K | R | V | S | T | O | F |
| A | P | G | R | O | W | K | P | A | E | A | N | M | P | U | I | T | R | E | R |
| N | U | V | N | E | S | R | B | I | M | R | E | S | X | J | E | O | E | A | H |
| S | T | R | E | B | L | O | S | S | O | M | T | V | U | R | P | R | I | M | E |
| D | O | Q | Z | G | O | Z | W | L | T | H | U | R | F | C | X | N | L | C | A |
| R | I | A | P | R | I | L | I | B | S | A | B | L | M | T | A | T | K | O | L |
| I | G | R | E | B | T | S | M | E | L | V | Y | D | A | F | F | O | D | I | L |
| B | A | X | C | F | L | I | N | B | F | G | A | M | O | Q | M | P | R | S | E |
| I | M | K | L | O | N | I | T | S | W | N | I | E | S | B | P | V | I | A | R |
| S | L | I | E | G | H | K | J | E | A | I | K | T | I | R | A | Z | K | T | B |
| P | N | Y | P | S | C | S | A | L | V | N | J | I | M | O | E | B | F | I | M |
| D | S | E | N | J | R | E | L | D | P | A | O | B | K | L | Q | W | I | R | U |
| R | I | U | N | R | A | E | C | D | Q | E | M | B | F | A | X | L | O | R | B |
| E | S | K | O | X | M | R | Y | U | S | L | M | A | Q | X | S | T | P | L | J |
| A | L | M | A | Y | I | T | A | P | L | C | E | R | S | M | R | O | W | I | F |

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> April | <input type="checkbox"/> daffodil | <input type="checkbox"/> puddles | <input type="checkbox"/> sunshine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> birds | <input type="checkbox"/> flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> rabbit | <input type="checkbox"/> umbrella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blossom | <input type="checkbox"/> grow | <input type="checkbox"/> rain | <input type="checkbox"/> warm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> butterfly | <input type="checkbox"/> March | <input type="checkbox"/> rainbow | <input type="checkbox"/> worms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chick | <input type="checkbox"/> May | <input type="checkbox"/> raincoat | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> melt | <input type="checkbox"/> spring | |





**St. John United
Church of Christ**

729 Jefferson Ave.
Reading, OH 45215

Phone:

513-821-1740

E-mail:

stjohnuccreading49@gmail.com

United in Christ's love, we seek justice for all.



**St. John UCC &
Mermaids Bus Trip**

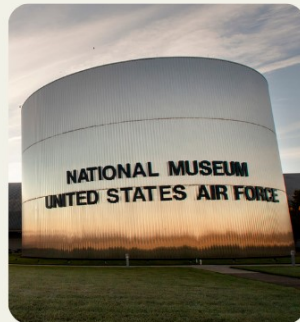
- ✓ Worship at St. John UCC
- ✓ Box lunches on bus
- ✓ National Museum of the US Air Force
- ✓ Cincinnati Premium Outlets



COST

\$45 PER PERSON

*bring extra money if you plan to visit the Movie Ride or Tank Commander VR Transporter



Sunday, April 14
10 AM - 6 PM