



The Visitor

St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, OH

September 2025

UCC Daily Devotional: “Practice”

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Worship is the way we practice for living.

My daughter plays in a travel volleyball league. Several times a week, they gather for practice. Their coach guides them through drill after drill: bumping, spiking, serving. They work through various plays and review strategy.

In short, they practice so that these things become their default autopilot. When game time comes, they don't have to think about technique. They can play the game from the heart.

As followers of Jesus, worship is where we gather to practice and drill the spiritual fundamentals we need “for the living of these days.” The words of the songs we sing, the stories of the scriptures, and the prayers of one another fuel us for the week ahead.

Recently a friend of mine was out living her life when the events before her necessitated that she take what – in retrospect – appeared to be a very courageous action. But in the moment, she was operating on instinct, on muscle memory, taking the next right action.

How did she know what to do? She said she did what she learned in church.

Or, another take on this same subject – When asked what you had for dinner last night, many

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The Visitor

UCC Daily Devotional: "Practice"



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of us pause and have to think about it! Daily eating is just something we do, and we are blessed to be able to do so each and every day, with usually more than enough. But we may not remember every meal, all the time. Yet, the nourishment is there, even if we don't remember what we ate for breakfast this morning, or lunch a week ago Tuesday.

In the same way, time spent in worship, time spent in prayer, time spent reading the Bible, are all ways that we provide nourishment for our souls. The type of nourishment that strengthens our faith, just as pasta is eaten before a sporting event to 'carb-up!' We may not remember every sermon we've heard, or where we read something in the Bible, and

sometimes our prayers are just sighs and groans, but whenever we interact with the holy, we are indeed strengthening our faith and nourishing our souls. Galatians 6:9 says: Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

May your soul be refreshed daily through many different ways of worshipping our Triune God!

Prayer:

God, prepare us for the living of these days. Help us continue to practice your values so that we may love you and our neighbor. And may our souls be nourished through all ministries of St. John UCC, so that we may share your light and bring others to come to know your saving grace. Amen.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.



Scan here with your phone camera to see online resources from the Heartland Conference, including event registration, newsletters & social media, and prayers/devotions.

THE HEARTLAND CONFERENCE'S
PORTAL TO MINISTRY RESOURCES!



SCAN ME

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.

Next Board meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 2,
2:15 pm

Don't forget, our **Annual Outdoor Worship and Potluck Lunch** is set for Sunday, September 7 – worship starts at 10:30am, lunch to immediately follow. This is now a joint worship service and potluck with the ALMS church and St. Paul Lutheran, so there will be a plethora of food and fellow Christians! This year, we will have tables set up just outside the shelter to put the food on, so that all picnic tables are available for seating and eating!

The 2nd Annual **90+th birthday party** is scheduled for Sunday, September 14 immediately after worship. If you or a loved one is in their 90's, this party is for you! Please sign up our guests of honor by calling the church office or using the sign-up sheet posted outside the Cozy Corner – we look forward to celebrating with you!

September's **euchre game** is set for Tuesday, September 30. If you are interested in playing, or learning how to play, please see Rev. Torie. The start time is 2:30 pm, location TBD.

Save the Date: Fantastic **Fall Family Fun Fest** at the Front's Farm is set for Sunday, October 12, immediately after worship. This is a potluck – we'll be grilling out hotdogs and metts and/or brats – and there will be pony rides and hiking and a hay wagon ride, along with corn-hole and croquet, and a chance to hit the polo ball in the hitting cage! Come one, come all – bring your family and friends for this friendly get-together!

Rev. Torie, Board Chair



Ministry Board of Deacons

The Ministry Board of Deacons exists to serve our community in Christian love.

Thanksgiving! Christmas!

Yes, the Deacons are already thinking about the holidays. November and December are our busiest months of the year.

We can use your help. There are three bins in the upstairs hallway for:

1) Thanksgiving dinner items: canned veggies, canned fruit, instant mashed potatoes, gravy mixes, boxed desserts and holiday napkins.

2) Small toys for children's Christmas stockings.

3) Gifts for children to give to parents: lotions, socks, winter hats, gloves and scarves, etc. This is one of my favorite activities that Deacons provide. Watching children "shop" for their parents is quite touching.

Thank you in advance for helping us again this year. The generosity of our congregation is greatly appreciated.

Popcorn Committee Updates

The committee met twice - July 8 and August 11.

We met with Rev. Paul Forray of St Paul's United Church of Christ, Alexandria, KY, and Debbie (president of their council) in July. And we met with Rev. David Long Higgins after church on August 10. They all had good advice to share with us.

I took the revised sheet of the original results from the congregation's responses to the Council. I (we of the committee) now would like the boards and/or council to view it all and decide what falls under their board.

If there is something that a board feels they want to pursue, keeping in mind that what you do complements our Mission Statement and Vision Statement and that you have prayed about your plans, please get back to the Popcorn Committee.

This is not a sprint but a marathon. Let's take time to implement — nothing happens quickly. The world has changed, so we can't go back to the same thinking of the 60's and 70's.

After we've heard from the boards and Council, the committee will meet again to see how we can support any new ideas.

Charlotte Bell, Committee Chair


SENIORS ROCK-'N'-ROLL WITH AN ELVIS IMPERSONATOR



FRIDAY, SEPT. 26
4-6 PM

ADMISSION IS FREE OF CHARGE -
WE WELCOME DONATIONS OF CANNED GOODS
TO OUR "FEED MY SHEEP" FOOD PANTRY



 ST. JOHN UCC
729 JEFFERSON AVE.
READING, OH 45215
513-821-1740

Scripture Readings This Month

Scripture	Bible Study	Sermon Date
<i>Through the Bible in a Year</i> Readings for August 26-September 1	September 2	<i>Picnic</i>
<i>Through the Bible in a Year</i> Readings for September 2-8	September 9	September 14
<i>Through the Bible in a Year</i> Readings for September 9-15	September 16	September 21
<i>Through the Bible in a Year</i> Readings for September 16-22	September 23	September 28

The Visitor

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.



We expect that the sign will be operational very soon, after passing both a city and an electrical inspection.

Summer is nearly over and we have accomplished a lot and will continue to do more before the end of the year. School has started and Serendipity Early Learning Center is again in operation at the church, so please be alert and hospitable to the young children and the teaching staff. They bring such joy and aliveness to the church.

The new digital sign has been installed but still needs to be connected to an electric supply. We were finally told that we needed two electric circuits to operate the sign so we needed to run a new underground conduit and wiring, which wasn't an easy task. Ed Campbell has been working diligently on this project and we expect that the sign will be operational very soon, after passing both a city and an electrical inspection. We are anxious to see the new sign fully operational and informing the neighborhood of activities and opportunities for all at good ol' St. John church.

We have terminated our janitorial contract with Grippa Janitorial Services and have hired one of our church members, Ed Campbell, to take over these duties. Ed has been so very helpful around the church with volunteering his time and talents. We are happy that we could offer this position to Ed and know that he will do a great job after some initial training and guidance. We will also be paying Ed to do much needed maintenance and repair tasks around the church, as he is a man of many talents. We are thankful and appreciative of Tony Grippa's many years of janitorial service to the church and we wish him well.

Our next Workshop Day is September 6th, and it might even be cool enough to enjoy working outside. Look for an email announcing all the fun details about the upcoming Workshop Day.

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Ministry Board of Property and Finance

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The new speaker has been installed in the sanctuary and it sounds great! It was a task getting it installed which involved ramps, two different lifts, and some reinforcing of the support structure in the attic. Many thanks go to Tom and crew from Worship Resources and to Steve Culver for making all the arrangements.

We are seriously looking again at online giving. We think it would be quite beneficial to the church, our members, and anyone who wishes to contribute to the church and its missions. We will keep you posted.

We have looked over the “Popcorn Session” ideas that seem to fall under our guidance and will be reviewing those to see what we might pursue in the coming months. Thanks for your input.

As always, give us your thoughts and prayers, and let us know how we are doing.

Peace and blessings from P&F.

Gary Kurtz, Board Chair



Celebrations in September

Birthdays:

September 18 - Virginia Gilbert

September 18 -

Rev. Steve Cummins

September 29 - Tammy Rohne

September 30 -

Debbie Hogeback

Anniversaries:

September 2 -

Phil & Julie Hauenstein

September 17 -

Rev. Torie & Vince Front

September 18 -

Linda & Bruce Read

September 19 -

Ann & Jess Feldman



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	2:30 pm	Church
Church Council	3rd Thursday	6 pm	Bible Study Room
Work-ship Day	First Saturday	8 am	Church

Labor Day Word Search Puzzle

Find the hidden words related to Labor Day in the grid below



- Work
- Jobs
- Wage
- Union
- Fair
- March
- Labor
- Rights
- Solid
- Peace
- Toast
- Grill
- Relax
- Lunch
- Picnic
- Crowd
- Flags
- Brave
- Share
- Rally



Reading Church Council **WORSHIP & PICNIC**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025
WORSHIP AT 10:30 AM,
PICNIC & SERVICE PROJECT TO FOLLOW

VORHEES PARK
348 SOUTHERN AVE., READING, OH

Please bring your own drinks and a side dish, dessert, or salad to share.

Hot dogs, fried chicken, brats & metts will be provided.



READING COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- ALMS Christian Church
- Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church
- St. John United Church of Christ
- St. Paul Lutheran Church



St. John United Church of Christ

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