



OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Pastor Rosemary Captain

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Faith,

I must confess, I am a worrier; Mostly about my children and grandchildren. Or I worry about how many typos I have in the bulletin, or what if I lost a page of my sermon!

One of the writers for the UCC recently submitted a “tongue in cheek” message for people like me.

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

by [John Edgerton](#) | published on Sep 22, 2024

In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah began to reign. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. – 2 Kings 14:1, 3-4 excerpted (NIV)

King Amaziah had a stressful job. He led an entire nation. If the people didn't follow the Laws of God, he had to answer to the Almighty. Their behavior was a reflection on his job performance. Talk about pressure!

Amaziah had reason to worry. There was one big, ongoing flaw in his reign. It came up at every “Monarch-Nation Relations Committee” meeting. Several responses on the Survey-Donkey feedback poll noted it was never a problem for the Monarch Emeritus.

The problem that kept Amaziah up at night was...people were burning incense on the high places. (Which meant they were worshipping idols, not Yahweh.) You were expecting something worse, maybe?

In the end, the verdict on Amaziah's leadership was clear: He did what was right in the eyes of God. He was faithful in the most important ways. And if the incense thing never quite got figured out, so be it. He wasn't perfect; he was faithful.

For church leaders in a numbers-obsessed, data-driven culture, it's tempting to focus on the myriad ways we fall short of perfect. Maybe Sunday attendance isn't what it used to be, or the social media numbers are low. It's tempting to mistake worry for vision.

Focus on making people's lives better in your local community. Social media numbers will follow. Focus on glorifying God and attendance numbers won't be a problem. Attendance numbers may or may not be high. But whoever tells you that God only works wonders when attendance is high is selling something—probably a church growth book.

Be faithful and you'll do right in God's eyes.

PRAYER Help me not sweat the small stuff.



About the Author

Rev. John Edgerton is Senior Minister and CEO of Old South Church in Boston. He is the 21st Senior minister in the congregations over 350-year history.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|
| 10/9 | Janice Petroff | 10/23 | Doris Stewart |
| 10/15 | Lew Thomasino | 10/27 | Terry Randle |
| 10/15 | Gemma Thomasino | 10/28 | Melinda Stidham |
| 10/18 | Pastor Rosemary | 10/29 | Russ Hartmann |
| 10/20 | John Arbeiter | 10/30 | Chuck Kistler |
| 10/20 | Cole Underwood | | |
| 10/21 | Silas Thomasino | | |



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES:

10/15 Melinda & Mike Stidham # 13
10/20 Becky & Larry Riess # 34
10/20 Chris & John Arbeiter # 23



REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS:

Becy Ballard
1211 Moreland Apt 12
Fairview Heights IL 62208

Ivy Schneider
213 Merriweather Ln
Belleville IL 62223



Jeanette Brown
5904 Perrin Rd
Fairview Heights IL 62208

Yvonne Weber
200 St Clair Dr
Fairview Heights IL 62208

Jacki Canterbury
105 W Julie St Apt C
Belleville, IL 62223

Rosemary Williams
201 S Belt W Apt 110
Belleville IL 62220

PRAYER LIST: Becky Ballard, Mary Lou Baum, Urban Baum, Ronald Bopp, Kim Campbell-Miller, Jackie Canterbury, Jeeney Captain, Luz Captain, Glen Case, Lindy Murray, Marilyn Paul, Syd Safriet, Terry Thorpe, Yvonne Weber.



USHERS

October 6 - Ginny Ganschietz, Sue Ganschietz
October 13– Tom Miller, Russ Hartmann
October 20 – Judy Schmitt & Sue Williams
October 27 – Tom and Jan Miller



CIRCLE

Fall has arrived and hopefully the cooler weather will stay.

Oct. 13th will be arriving soon. I hope to see many of you at our first Circle meeting after church.

It will be an organizational meeting for the coming year. Put on your thinking caps and bring any new ideas you may have for our group.

See you soon! Eileen Gammon Co-Chair

P.S. Please remember Carol has a craft for us to do after our meeting.

Thought to Remember:

The surest way to knock the chip off a fellow's shoulder
is to pat him on the back!

Carol Bulva

OCTOBER PENNIES FOR MISSION will go to: *OPEN AND AFFIRMING COALITION:*

With Jesus, we affirm that we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, that we are called to act as agents of reconciliation and wholeness.

CHOIR



It's time to welcome the choir back to Sunday worship services! We will be singing on Sunday, October 13. As always, you are welcome to join us! We rehearse at 9:00 am on the Sundays we sing (about once a month). We have a place for you!

CALLING FOR VOUNTEERS We need more people to volunteer to host Fellowship time after Communion Sundays. Coffee, other drinks, fruit, sweets, homemade or store bought, it doesn't matter. SURPRISE US!!



We all enjoy these special times to be together SO PLEASE HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN.

COUNCIL NOTES

We will have a church workday on Saturday, October 12, starting at 9:00, or whenever you can come. There is an assortment of jobs that need to be done. Outside: trim roses, clean the sign, prepare ground and plant grass seed where the shed used to be, clean out gutters, clean up planting areas. Inside: polish pews, lectern, pulpit, piano, furnishings in the narthex, and the doors in the hallway to the fellowship hall.

Please bring whatever tools and supplies you think you may need to work in your chosen area. Let's make St. John shine! Thanks! Nancy

MISSION MOMENT

In 2009, another General Synod Resolution of Witness was entitled “**An Economic Justice Covenant.**” In summary it stated that the UCC has long been an advocate for the poor and a witness for justice in all areas of life. And now all conferences commit to a **covenant** of study, witness and action in pursuit of economic justice in our world.

We commit to STUDY ABOUT ECONOMIC JUSTICE. In other words, **learn** about **injustices** past and current. There are all kinds, but one has to do with indigenous populations, in our case, native Americans. Here is some food for thought.

Have you heard of the “Document of Discovery?” It is denounced now, but has done its damage. To review, The Doctrine of Discovery originated in a papal announcement issued by the Church in 1493. Likewise, it was adopted into law in the United States in 1823 by our Supreme Court. The Doctrine was based on the idea that European powers had exclusive rights to newly discovered lands. If Europeans discovered it, it was theirs. It justified the right for white European Christian settlers to seize and colonize lands previously occupied by indigenous peoples.

As I was writing this, I happened to have on my kitchen table, a St. John UCC history written by Dr. Paul in 1979. He innocently began with two sentences, “OUR RICH HERITAGE is the story of thrifty German immigrants who came to America to find a new life. Little did they know that **the area they chose** would someday be the main route to nearby towns”. New immigrants did struggle and there were hardships.

But, the area **we chose**. We did have a sense of privilege and rightfulness! We could choose wherever! We Europeans discovered it. It’s ours! We came for religious freedom and new life!

Now, as I think about it, I am fairly certain the native Americans did not agree. Now as we look back in time, how do we feel? Is there any way we can amend for damage? Maybe we can support a native American cause.

Judy Schmitt



Affirming Dignity
Creating Inclusion
Building a Just World for ALL

Learn more
and join the campaign at
<https://openandaffirming.org/justice100/>

Will you join the Open and Affirming (ONA) Coalition's Justice 100 Team?

The Justice 100 Team is people, churches, and organizations who join the mission of the ONA Coalition of the United Church of Christ and will commit to raising at least \$1,000 (give or get) in new funds for the Coalition.

We are working for a just future: The landscape for LGBTQ+ rights has grown increasingly complex. Trans youth face targeted legislation, healthcare access is under threat, and the fight for full inclusion continues.

In the face of such adversity, the ONA Coalition remains a beacon of hope.

Expanding the ONA Movement: We'll continue to guide and accompany more churches through the process of becoming inclusive, affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals and families.

Strengthening Our Network: We'll continue to support existing Open and Affirming churches in renewing or updating their covenants, ensuring a continuous commitment to extravagant welcome, dignity, and inclusion.

Building Bridges for Change: We'll continue to work with our denomination, ecumenical partners, and local churches to create coalitions and partnerships with LGBTQ+ organizations, fostering unity for the multiple fronts for justice and advocacy work.

Empowering Advocates: We'll continue to develop resources, training programs, and best practices to equip churches and develop leaders to champion LGBTQ+ rights, safety, and inclusion beyond their walls.

Creating Circles of Support: We'll continue to provide support networks and resources for LGBTQ+ people within and outside the church, as well as for LGBTQ+ clergy (and other leaders) navigating their leadership roles.

Fostering Safe and Affirming Spaces: We'll continue to work with churches and other organizations in their ongoing work to create environments where LGBTQ+ individuals can feel welcomed, protected, celebrated, and fully affirmed in their identities.

Together, we are creating a world where love truly knows no bounds and LGBTQ+ individuals can thrive, not only within church walls, but also in their communities.

Learn more at <https://openandaffirming.org/justice100/>





Dear St John Members,

Thank you so much for thinking of the needy in our area by providing donations and food to our pantry. **The Food Pantry** board is overwhelmed with the generosity of your congregation. We can never adequately thank you for all you do for us. You are making the lives of many less desperate. Please accept our thanks and gratitude to each and every person in your congregation.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann L. Nadler

Fairview Heights Area Food Pantry Board

Dear Members of St John UCC Fairview Heights,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful gift of \$80.66 for our Mission Funds. You are making a tremendous difference in the lives of the youth and families we serve on a daily basis.

We appreciate the faith you have in **Hoyleton Youth and Family Services** and again, thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Chris L. Cox

Hoyleton Youth and Family Services

October

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	11	12 Church workday 9:00 am
13 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am Fellowship time after worship	14	15	16	17 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	18	19 Annual So Conference Meeting – 60 th Anniversary
20 Service of Word 10 am Choir sings at service Circle meeting after service	21	22 Quilt Show meeting 7 pm	23	24 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	25	26 Sewing Day 9 am – 3 pm
27 Service of Word 10 am	28	29	30	31 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm 		

Do you know how to make a Witch itch.....?

Take away the W!  Happy Halloween!