



SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
10207 Lincoln Trail, Fairview Heights, IL
Church Office Phone: 618-397-6323

Website: www.stjohnfairview.org
Email address: stjohnuccfairview@gmail.com

Pastor Rosemary Captain

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Christ,

You may know that the United Church of Christ offers a Daily Devotion on its website ucc.org. Below is one I thought I would share with you, the subject of which is interpreting the Bible. Being human we have a tendency to interpret passages with a bias. We think the passage means **what we want them to mean**. Here's Pastor Mereschuk's take on that subject that all of us are guilty of.

WHAT I WISH THE BIBLE SAID

by [Chris Mereschuk](#) | published on Aug 7, 2024

"Next, God calls up the wicked: "What are you up to, quoting my laws, talking like we are good friends? You never answer the door when I call; you treat my words like garbage. If you find a thief, you make him your buddy; adulterers are your friends of choice. Your mouth drools filth; lying is a serious art form with you. – Psalm 50:16-19 (The Message)

"You ever read scripture and think you know exactly what it's talking about? I don't mean recognizing the scripture's historical context. I mean basking in the certainty that some scribe thousands of years ago could write so presciently about a specific thing today?

Informed by our biases and our hopes, we can't help but see through our personal lens, reading ourselves and our world into the Word, searching for both affirmation and condemnation. The mistake is convincing ourselves that our subjective interpretation is the only correct or even originally intended interpretation, producing a remix of the classic Sunday school song: "Scripture says it, this I know, for I told the Bible so!"

There's a difference between ancient wisdom speaking timeless truths and retrofitting a modern lens to claim the writer had our time in mind. Ours is a living faith, deepened when we read scripture both historically and devotionally, applying it to our lives today. Sacred texts help us make meaning of our world: informing, guiding, and inspiring us as we navigate life's journey. Keeping aware of the ways our modern lens tints our understanding of the Word helps us avoid rabbit holes and risky paths.

Prayer

Divine Author: Steady us as we walk the tightrope between making scripture relevant and making it say what we want it to say. Amen.



About the Author

Chris Mereschuk (he/him) is an Unsettled Pastor and the Founder of RevCJM, LLC, specializing in church vitality and Legacy consulting and coaching.

Something to ponder. Peace and blessings, Pastor Rosemary



PENNIES FOR MISSION for September will be going to the **Deaconess Parish Nurse Ministries**



Join the choir...

**You'll Be Glad
You Did!**

CHOIR WILL BEGIN OUR 2024-2025 SEASON IN OCTOBER

Everyone is welcome to join the choir. We practice at 9 am the Sunday we are singing. The choir sings once a month. I hope to see you in the group. Questions? Catch me at church or email me at neisenhauer3850@gmail.com

Nancy Eisenhauer

COUNCIL NOTES



Fall is coming, so...

- We had our heating/cooling system checked in August. It is now ready for whatever weather comes along!
- Doris Austin, a long-time member of St. John passed away this summer. She worked in Washington, D.C., but wanted to maintain her Illinois residency, so would spend a couple of months here each year. She left a bequest to St. John. Something to think about...
- Have you walked through the Sunday School wing of the church building lately? There has been a lot of cleaning, sorting, and reorganizing going on. Come on back! See you in church Sunday! Nancy Eisenhauer

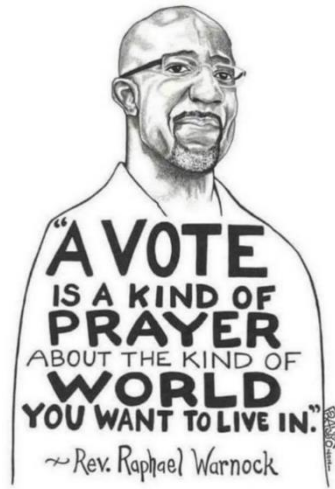


August is National Make-a-Will Month

The UCC National Ministries and The Pension Boards are partnering to make writing a will easier with <https://www.freewill.com/ucc> a new website where you can create a will (or draft one for your lawyer's review). The site prompts you to think about making a charitable gift but doesn't require it. However, you may want to consider your church, your conference, the UCC National Ministries, or other causes you want to be part of your legacy for years to come.

Along with making a will, think about what you would like concerning your service at the funeral home or at church. I have a form to help you. Just ask. Pastor Rosemary

Remember this in November...



Nancy Eisenhauer

CIRCLE SEPTEMBER NEWS:

Ladies, ladies, ladies!!!

Our first Circle meeting will be Oct. 13, 2024 in the L-Room after Church. As usual it will be an organizational meeting and Offering envelopes will be given out.

I hope everyone's summer has been going well. Our thoughts will soon turn to fall activities. Carol has a quick Halloween craft for everyone to make after our meeting. I will see your smiling faces Oct. 13th! Eileen Gammon, Co-Chair

Behold the turtle.

he makes progress only

when he sticks his neck out.

Thanks, Carol

HOMECOMING DRESSES \$10 Homecoming Dresses will be available to try on and purchase (CASH) on Sept 21st 1 – 3 pm. Many of the dresses were never worn or worn once. There will be a place to try on a dress with a large mirror. Come in through the back door & see our pretty selections. Please pass this on to all your friends, neighbors and anyone who might benefit from this event! **Reach out to Carol Bulva with questions.**

RESOLUTION OF WITNESS

A *Resolution of Witness* from the 2023 General Synod was to affirm a program, *Guns to Gardens* and other Gun Violence prevention ministries. *Guns to Gardens* seems to be an awesome and promisingly hopeful movement of the UCC, with the simple premise that less guns will reduce death and injury from guns.

I listened to a UCC Webinar of September 2022, called “Shared Learning from Gun Violence Ministries” It was mainly about the *Guns to Gardens* movement. The *Guns to Gardens* program began at Community UCC church in Boulder, CO, after a grocery store shooting very near their church killing 10 people on March 22, 2021.

Community UCC was traumatized and motivated to act. It was a God moment. After conducting focus groups they overwhelmingly decided to put **into action** the scripture from Isaiah 2:4 “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” They partnered with a Mennonite ministry **RAWtools**, founded in 2013, after the Sandy Hook mass shooting in February 2013. The founder and current executive director of RAWtools is Mike Martin, a blacksmith and a licensed Mennonite minister.

Community UCC in Boulder, held their first *Guns to Gardens* event June 13, 2021, less than 3 months after their local shooting. Thirty-one unloaded guns from their Boulder CO community were safely surrendered. Gift cards of at least \$50 were given as thank you’s for each donation. The guns were dismantled by trained volunteers and the leftover metal pieces were transformed into garden tools, artwork, and other life-giving materials.

Since then, the program has been duplicated not only in metro Denver Colorado, but in other states, as Connecticut, Kentucky, California, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania.

Praise God for peacemaking efforts!

Judy Schmitt

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

9/7 Sue Sharp
9/9 Wayne Schlosser
9/14 Louise Cohlmeier
9/18 Dorothy Ovelgoenner
9/18 Julie Captain
9/23 Carol Randle
9/23 Jennifer Hackbarth



SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

9/10 Sharon & Chuck Kistler #41
9/17 Cindy & Clay Harris # 47
9/25 Carol & Joe Bulva # 48



REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS:

Becky Ballard
1211 Moreland Apt 12
Belleville IL 62223

Ivy Schneider
213 Merriweather Ln
Fairview Heights IL 62208



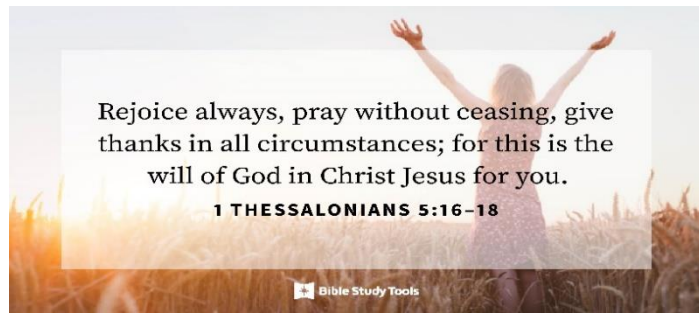
Jeanette Brown
5904 Perrin Rd
Fairview Heights, IL 62208

Yvonne Weber
200 St Clair Dr
Fairview Heights IL 62208

Jackie Canterbury
105 W Julie St Apt C
Shiloh IL 62269

Rosemary Williams
201 S Belt W Apt 110
Belleville IL 62220

PRAYER LIST: Becky Ballard,
Mary Lou Baum, Urban Baum,
Ronald Bopp, Jackie Canterbury,
Luz Captain, Glen Case, Marilyn
Paul, Syd Safriet, Yvonne Weber



WITH SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to Jim and Beth Sheldon; our church's web developers, on the passing of Beth's mother.



USHERS

- 9/1 Tom and Jan Miller
- 9/8 Lew & Tiffany Baldwin Thomasino
- 9/15 Nancy Eisenhauer, Chuck Kistler
- 9/22 Ginny Ganschinietz, Sue Ganschinietz
- 9/29 Judy Schmidt, Chuck Kistler



Dear Members of St John UCC Fairview Heights

Thank you so much for your thoughtful gift of **Back-to-School Supplies**. You are making a tremendous difference in the lives of the youth and families we serve on a daily basis.

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

Sincerely, Christy Schult, Special Event and Volunteer Coordinator
Hoyleton Youth and Family Services

September

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am Fellowship time after worship	2 Happy Labor Day!	3	4	5 NO Bible Study this week AA Meeting 7 pm	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	13	14
15 Service of Word 10 am	16	17	18	19 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	20	21 \$10 Prom Short Dress Sale 1:00 – 3:00 pm
22 Service of Word 10 am AUTUMN BEGINS	23	24	25	26 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting 7 pm	27	28
29 Service of Word 10 am	30					