

The Friendly Call

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • MANCHESTER, MO



Worship Schedule May 2024

May 5 - Communion & Mental Health
9:30 am Pastor Kevin

May 12 - Mother's Day
9:30 am Pastor Kevin

May 19 - Pentecost & Confirmation Day
9:30 am Pastor Tracey

May 26 - Memorial Day Weekend
9:30 am Pastor Kevin



2024 ST. JOHN GRADUATES

Congratulations Graduates! We are very proud of you! Good luck and much success in your future endeavors. We will be honoring our High School graduates at our worship service on June 2. Graduate Bios are enclosed in this *Friendly Call*.

Jennifer Benton
Jillian Brennecke
Nicolas Picaud
Zach Swift

London Bielicke
Lauren Brennecke
Ariana Ruh
Payton White-Lenard

**Pentecost | May 19 | WEAR RED!
Sunday**



WEAR RED FOR
Pentecost

In celebration of **Pentecost** on Sunday, May 19, we are asking members of the congregation to wear red that day. Please show your Christian spirit by joining us and wearing **red!**

The United Church of Christ (UCC) is a progressive Christian church. That means we try to be a welcoming and accepting body of believers (an emphasis placed on the word 'try'). This comes from the foundation of our ancestors who strived for "the freedom of faith and practice." When we get down to it, that's easier said than done. I'd like to think, however, that St. John has grown in being an open and hospitable community towards all God's children.

People have recognized that, during the 'Welcome & Announcements,' the pastors have been sharing the tagline from our denomination: *"No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."* The hope is to create a supportive and encouraging environment for folk. It's important that people feel God's love and care in our congregation. I believe such an atmosphere is at the heart of Jesus' good news.

In March, Pastor Tracey and I presented to the Church Council about becoming a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) Congregation for Mental Health. This is one of the many purposeful identities that a community can claim in the UCC. It's an educational process that equips a congregation to be intentional about welcoming and helping one another with mental health concerns. As the UCC Mental Health Network reports, "Since one in four individuals lives with a diagnosable mental health condition, it's safe to say that members in our congregation are dealing with any variety of mental health conditions." The fact is we have a mental health crisis in our nation right now. It's not going away, either. Thus, I believe it's vital for us, as a congregation, to find faithful ways of addressing this situation and serving each other in a loving manner.

Some might be wondering: "Why are we doing this now?" First, we have recognized Mental Health Awareness in worship over the years. We've had a speaker come from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to share with our community. Second, we held a Mental Health First Aid training in our congregation where 20 people came to be more prepared in this area. Third, we have a NAMI support group in our congregation. Pastor Tracey leads trained facilitators, from our congregation, in guiding these sessions each month. Fourth, we host NAMI's 'Family to Family' training programs here at St. John.

I believe this is the moment to take that next step in our mental health ministry. It will require the congregations support as we build a WISE Team, provide educational opportunities, develop a written covenant, and build relationships that unite us in a deeper journey. There are several stages in making sure that a church understands the meaning and wants to participate. The goal is to embrace this as part of our mission; this certainly aligns with being a welcoming and hospitable church. We would need to vote on this resolution of being a WISE Congregation at an Annual Meeting. I think St. John is up to the task. I also feel that this is an area where we can make a difference. I believe God is calling us to serve Christ in this capacity.

There is so much to be said, but so little space in a newsletter article. Please be on the lookout for more information to come in the months ahead. Should you be interested in being a part of this process, feel free to contact myself or Pastor Tracey. May God bless us and those in our community as we endeavor to follow Christ.

Grace and Peace,





Notes from the **April 9, 2024** Council Meeting

We have filled the vacancy on the Church Council. Nicole Martin was nominated for a three-year term and the nomination was approved by Council. Jen Hughes has resigned from the Church Council.

Boy Scout Harrison Talley from Troop 310 gave a presentation on his Eagle Scout proposal to do landscaping around the WEB. After all approvals, work may begin in June.

The Council voted against allowing the Cub Scout Pack from using our Employee Identification Number to open up a bank account.

The St. Louis Association will have a non-business meeting at St. Lucas UCC in Sunset Hills on May 2, 2024 at 7:00 pm, with dinner provided by St. Lucas from 5:30-6:30 pm. Registration fee is \$20.00. The speaker will be Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President of UCC, Cleveland. The meeting is open to anyone who would like to attend. Contact Pastor Kevin if interested.

Dave thanked everyone who helped with work day. The HVAC project has been pushed out to May. Chicken Dinner on Sunday, May 19, 2024 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm by the Pavilion.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Jung, Recording Secretary

Financial Report - March 31, 2024

<u>Actual Receipts</u>	<u>Budget Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Actual Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Budget Receipts</u>
\$56,151.34	\$39,137.00	\$146,541.26	\$108,736.00
<u>Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>Budget Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Budget Expenditures</u>
\$45,195.06	\$45,166.45	\$112,680.80	\$112,629.35

Members of the Church Council of St. John United Church of Christ, Manchester, meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Hospitality Room of the church (or via Zoom). The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 14, 2024.**





Anniversaries

NAME	DATE	YEARS
Marcella & Lance Armstrong	5/7	47
Mary Ellen & Thomas Berg	5/8	53
Warner & Mary Lou Minnis	5/8	53
John & Jennifer Forbis	5/10	16
Jason & Kimberly Derucki	5/13	24
Gary & Linda Kalin	5/14	41
Tim & Tonya Osiek	5/16	15
Rick & Patricia Siefert	5/17	49
Diane & Joseph Beckerle	5/19	34
Chris & Natalie Morton	5/20	18
Paul & Stephanie Allen	5/23	32

ATTENDANCE

Worship Attendance			
Date	In Person	Streaming	TOTAL
March 31 Easter Sunrise	45	N/A	45
March 31 Easter 9:30 am	162	61	223
April 7	123	38	161
April 14	94	0*	94
April 21	114	0*	114

NOTE: Streaming count is household so it could include more than one person; count is taken during LIVE streaming.

*Technical Difficulties



The Church Office will be closed on
**Memorial Day
Monday, May 27**

The Office will reopen
May 28 at 9:00

Sanctuary Clock

Many thanks to the **Archive Team** (Lisa Karl, Janice Jung, and Leslee Soebbing) for keeping “**the old church clock**” safe the past several years. The clock was recently restored and the photo and brief explanation beautifully framed. You can see them each Sunday at the top of the stairs on your way to the Sanctuary via the Gathering Area. Years ago the clock hung in the sanctuary allowing the pastor to keep



track of the length of the church service! A special thanks to Jeff Karl (under Lisa’s supervision) for hanging both items securely. The clock will be wound each Sunday by a dedicated team. Please enjoy this historic addition...but we ask that you do not touch or remove it from the premises.



**THE 73rd ANNUAL
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER**

**Thursday, May 2, 2024
Noon - 1:00 pm**

Manchester Police Station

“LIFT UP THE WORD - LIGHT UP THE WORLD”



“For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God—His way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him”

2 Samuel 22:29-31

This text is a powerful proclamation of our trust in the Lord’s protection, the reliability of God’s word, and the assurance of God’s presence. Let the Lord’s people join together on May 2nd, and call upon the Lord as we pray for our nation.

Other local events can be found at www.gatewayndp.net

St. John Men's Brotherhood - Chicken Dinner



**SUNDAY
May 19, 2024**

11:00 am to 1:00 pm

TICKETS:

Adults - \$15.00
Children - 6-12 - \$7.50
Children under 6 - Free

Tickets are on sale
until May 5.

*All proceeds will go toward
the new HVAC System*



OUTREACH TEAM MEETING

The **Outreach Team** will meet on **Thursday, May 2, 2024** at 6:30 pm in the Hospitality Room. Please join us!

Outreach Challenge for May - Condiments

The Outreach challenge for May will be condiments. The list includes (but not limited to): Ketchup, BBQ Sauce, Salad Dressings, Mayonnaise, Mustard, Pickles, Relish, and Salsa. Let's load up our Outreach counter with these items for the month of May! All items will go to **Circle of Concern**.



MAY - Helping Hands Envelopes

All donations received through the Helping Hands envelopes for the month of May will be sent to **Shannondale**. Questions? Please contact Lynn Sabina or a member of the Outreach Team.

Lunch at Sunshine Ministries

St. John Outreach continues to provide and share a meal each month with the men at the residence center for **Sunshine Ministries**. We will carpool from church at 11:15 am (lunch at noon) and return by 1:15 pm. We need one or two people to help each month. If you are interested in joining us on **May 9**, please see Judy Lindquist.

To learn more about the men's outreach of Sunshine Ministries go to: <https://www.sunshineministries.org/men-s-outreach>



A Mission Moment: Shannondale

Shannondale is a mission partnership near and dear to St. John. This mission center that serves the community of Shannon County was founded by Rev. Wobus and St. John Church in 1929 as the Shannondale Tree Farm and Community Center. It is a beloved mission project of the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ, continuing to serve rural Missouri's spiritual and economic needs. Through a carbon offset credit program, the 4,000 acre forest near Salem, Missouri is now positioned to be a reoccurring source of revenue that generates income that partially supports the mission of Shannondale, while also helping to protect God's creation. A group from St. John goes every year to work at Shannondale and to touch lives with the love of Christ.



Our Shannondale Mission Moment is scheduled to take place during worship on Sunday, June 2.



Fontana Friends

The Outreach Team continues monthly visits to our Fontana Friends in their home. We visit on the **second Thursday of the month from about 3:00 to 4:00 pm**. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the offices. We meet at church at 2:40 pm and carpool to Fontana. Our May visit will be on **Thursday, May 9, 2024**. If you need additional information, please contact Mary Ellen Berg or Lynn Sabina.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

This year's **Shannondale Weekend** is scheduled for **June 14 - 16, 2024.**

Please join us for outstanding fellowship, food, and fun as we complete some work projects at **Shannondale!**

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the church offices.

Questions? Please see Dave Gaehele.





2024 Church Directory

If you would like to have a church directory, you will need to make arrangements with the church office (Jane or Cindy) at 636-391-6655 to stop by and get your copy. The church office is open Monday thru Friday from 9 am to 3 pm. Thanks again to all who provided updated info and picked up your directory.



Habitat for Humanity work day is scheduled for **July 27th 7:45 am - 3:30 pm.** Information on how to sign up for this fun volunteer opportunity will be posted closer to the date! Questions? Please see Jan Meckfessel.

THANK YOU FROM THE ST. JOHN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION



The Cemetery Association sends a special thank you and appreciation to Marilyn O'Donnell, Roy Sander, and Nancy Miller. They have each purchased new flags for the flagpole memorial area in the cemetery. If anyone is interested in purchasing a flag and donating it to the Cemetery Association for future use, please see Bob Ruh. A new flag costs \$55.00 and will last approximately six months since it is being flown 24 hours a day in the wind, rain, sun, etc.

Thank you!

Articles and information for the **June/July 2024** issue of the **'Friendly Call'** are due on **Wednesday, May 15.** Please place a hard copy of the article in the church office mail slot or email to: jane@stjohnmanchester.org

The Friendly Call



FROM THE ST. JOHN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

We are compiling a book of biographies of the people buried in our cemetery and would like to include photographs, especially of people from the early years of the church. If you have anything you would like to share of your family history at St. John, we would appreciate it. If you have questions, please contact Judy Lindquist.

Thank you for considering.



GREEN TEAM NEWS

THE GREEN TEAM'S May meeting will be **Thursday, May 9 at 6:00 pm** in the Gathering Area. All are welcome!!



On Saturday, April 20, **THE GREEN TEAM** planted a London plane tree to the front of the church. They also filled and prepared the recently constructed raised garden beds for planting. Pastor Tracey blessed both projects.

The next event for **THE GREEN TEAM** is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 7**, when there will be a cleaning of the headstones in the 1860 cemetery. More info to follow.

Finally, a fundraising opportunity is planned for the late summer/early fall. **THE GREEN TEAM** will pre-sell **MUMS** for distribution in September.



2024



ST. JOHN GRADUATES



Jennifer Benton

Jennifer Benton, daughter of Karen Benton and granddaughter of Floyd and Rosemary Krickhahn will graduate cum laude from Rhodes College this May with a degree in International Studies and French. Jennifer is a member of honor societies: phi delta pi and sigma iota rho, a Bonner Scholar and a recipient of the Mertie Buckman summer fellowship.

London Bielicke

London Bielicke, granddaughter of Diane and Al Todd, graduates this year from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee with dual majors in Computer Sciences and German. She is graduating with highest honors, having maintained a 4.0 GPA, and is nominated for the Rhodes Prize, awarded to one senior during Commencement as well as top honors in both of her major study areas. After graduation, she has accepted an internship at Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, NM for the summer, and will then pursue her doctorate in Computer Sciences at UCLA. As an undergraduate, she attended a computer sciences semester in Germany at University of Tubingen, founded in 1477. Interestingly, this university has a history of innovative thought, particularly in theology. It was the home of some chief figures in establishing the direction of education during the Protestant Reformation. In all, her life is filled with interesting challenges, and we are very proud of her.



Jillian Brennecke

Jillian Brennecke is a LOVER. As a soon to be graduate from Rockwood Summit High School and South Technical High School where she studied early childhood development, Jillian will continue her studies at a local community college. Her passion is to provide a safe loving ethical rich place for growth to children. This special love for children is truly a gift from God. Jillian currently has earned an internship at Primrose Schools and is at the Ballwin Missouri location. Her love for Christ will continue to grow. Jillian is the daughter of Adam Brennecke and her paternal grandparents are Bob and Joy Brennecke.



Lauren Brennecke

Lauren Brennecke, daughter of Adam Brennecke, is scheduled to graduate from Webster University in May. After receiving a B.A. in Communications, she will work as a reporter for St. Louis Public Radio. She hopes to provide a platform to people from all backgrounds, working towards an open-minded and inclusive community. Lauren’s paternal grandparents are Bob and Joy Brennecke.

Nicolas Picaud



Nicolas Picaud will graduate May 18th from Parkway West. He is graduating as a varsity Wrestler and Football player. He will be attending the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg. He is going to pursue a degree in construction management. His parents are Ann & Patrice Picaud.



Ariana Ruh

Ariana Ruh will graduate from Rockwood Summit High School on May 11, 2024. Her activities include working with special education high school students with acting out short stories, Special Olympics, Forensic Club, and AP Art. Ariana will attend Meramec Community College to begin a degree in Criminology. Andrea Ruh Blumeyer is her mother and Michael Blumeyer her step-dad, maternal grandparents are Bob & Carol Ruh.

Zach Swift



Zach Swift is the youngest son of Robert and Lisa Swift and the younger brother of William, Benjamin, and Jeffrey Swift. Zach is graduating from Marquette High School. Zach has enjoyed playing club and Legion baseball throughout his youth. He enjoys traveling and looks forward to a trip to Yellowstone at the end of the summer before he begins college. Zach has interest in business and sports management and is still deciding his next steps for the fall.



Payton White-Lenard

Payton White-Lenard will graduate with honors from Rockwood Summit High School on May 11, 2024. She’s a Member of the National Honors Society and the A+ Program. Payton will attend Meramec Community College in the Fall. She hasn’t yet selected a major but wants to transfer to University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL) after her two years at Meramec. Payton’s father is Mike Lenard.



**CHILDREN'S EASTER
EGG HUNT
March 30, 2024**

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

“CAMP FIRELIGHT”

Monday - Thursday

July 22 - 25

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

This year's Vacation Bible School is **“Camp Firelight”**. A light meal will be served during our time together. Any one who would like to volunteer to help, please contact Pastor Tracey or Chris Morton. Please register students on the church website at www.stjohnmanchester.org Thank You.



Easter Sunday - March 31, 2024



I am so excited to announce that eight young people will be blessed to be confirmed on May 19 at the 9:30 AM worship service. Come and support our newest members. Their parents and mentors will also be invited to our practice and brunch on May 18 at 9:30 AM. I am proud of the work the students have done to get ready for this beautiful service.

Please note our high school and college graduates are listed in this issue of the Friendly Call. Please send any that we missed. There will be a reception to honor our graduates on June 2 in the Gathering Area following worship.

Summer Camp will start soon at Camp MoVal. There are many camps listed so check the Camp article in this issue and see me if you need information about camp or scholarships. Our spirit grows and connects with others in the outdoor setting of church camp. I will be a shepard at Family Camp in July so come join us!

Many Thanks to all of the adults who take a turn teaching Sunday School. Your time volunteering touches many lives.

We continue to encourage each of you to look for places you can volunteer at St John Manchester. Be sure and check Pastor Kevin's article and learn about becoming a WISE congregation. Pastor Kevin and I are available to answer your questions about the program.

God's Blessings,



NAMI St. Louis
1810 Craig Road, Suite 124
St. Louis, MO 63146
info@namistl.org
HelpLine: 314-962-4670

St. John UCC Manchester holds a NAMI Support group meeting the third Thursday of each month. The group meets in the Hospitality Room at 6:30 pm. Please note that you must go to the NAMI website to sign up to attend the meeting prior to arrival. Everyone is welcome to join us !

PRAYER REQUESTS

You will find **PRAYER REQUEST** cards in the pews. A box is located on the table in the Gathering Area for completed cards to be deposited. There are times when we all need an extra prayer said for us and where better than from our friends at St John !



KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Willie Mertz at Garden View in Chesterfield
Landon Weber - Houston, Texas
Barb Cooper at St. Andrew's Francis Place, Eureka
Mary Jane Belsher - Friendship Village, Sunset Hills

AT HOME

Betty Fox
Rufus Sticker
Tommy Theiss
Jennifer Weber
The Kaempfe Family
Chris Albrecht



Commander Andrew Brennecke, Coast Guard, Norfolk, VA, son of Bob & Joy Brennecke
Sgt. Codey Burnham, U.S. Marine Corps, Camp Lejeune, NC, grandson of Betty & Howard Anton
Sgt. First Class Douglas Krohn, United States Army Recruiting Command, Quincy, IL
Staff Sgt. Michael Kargauer, Eielson AFB, Alaska, grandson of Jack Martin
E Sgt. Bryan Milberg, Fort Campbell, KY, grandson of Derald & Donna Forbis
4PO Richard Livingstone, Navy, Camp Gordon, GA, grandson of Ken & Marty Boucher
Sgt. Matt Starck, Marines, Camp Pendleton, CA, son of Walter & Marcia Starck

Board of Christian Education

BCE members meet on the first Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm. The **next meeting will be on Thursday, May 2, 2024.** We are always looking for new study ideas and help with upcoming projects with the adults and children. Contact Pastor Tracey if you have any questions or would like to sign up to volunteer.



Women's Fellowship

will meet on

Tuesday, May 21

10:30 a.m.

All ladies are invited to our final meeting until September. Lunch at the St Louis Art Museum! We will

carpool, lunch is at 11:30, we will meet at church at 10:30. Reservations are required, so please sign up on the sheet across from pastors' office. After lunch we will enjoy a leisurely walk through the beautiful museum. Free parking is available on the north side of Fine Arts Drive across from the museum. Any questions see Marty Boucher.



SHOP 'N SUPPORT GIFT CARDS

Gift cards are available for purchase on Sunday before and after the 9:30 am worship service. Cards may be purchased in denominations of \$50 and \$100. You can also give to Circle of Concern by buying gift cards and they will be delivered to Circle from Church.

Youth Christian Education & Sunday School



CHILDCARE FOR NURSERY and TODDLERS

is available at the 9:30 am service. Also, for your convenience, a Family Assistance Room is located at the rear of the sanctuary.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Our youngest group introduces kids to Sunday School in an age-appropriate classroom setting. We will incorporate Bible story time with games, arts and crafts, and free play. Students should come to the sanctuary for the 9:30 am service with their families and will be dismissed to their classes.

ELEMENTARY SUNDAY SCHOOL - GRADES K-5

We are using the One Room Sunday School curriculum to explore the stories and lessons taught in the Old and New Testaments. Incorporating games and worksheets, we focus on getting the children acquainted with the Bible and understanding how our families and church are part of a greater community in God's world. Students should come to the sanctuary for the 9:30 am service with their families and will be dismissed to their classes.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation Class started meeting in September. The class meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month beginning at 6:00 pm in the Hospitality Room. Meeting dates for May are: **Wednesday, May 1 and May 15**. We will have a practice for the Rite of Confirmation at 9:30 am on **Saturday, May 18**, with a brunch following.



MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS & FRIENDS

The Youth Group (Middle & High School Sunday School) class will meet at 9:30 am in the classroom. A mix of formal lessons and open discussion is focused on understanding our faith and how it relates to our church and God's creation around us. We strive to get youth involved in church groups and activities, as well as community service events. We invite you to tell your friends to join us. Be part of this group of young people making a difference!

Tea with Pastor Tracey



TEA TEA TEA TEA TEA
With Pastor Tracey

Enjoy coffee, tea, or your favorite beverage, as you take some time to visit with Pastor Tracey Harris. You can find Pastor Tracey hanging out on Wednesdays, at the Panera at 14646 Manchester Road, Ballwin, between 3 and 5 pm to share conversations that lead to community.

Questions? Call or email Pastor Tracey at tharris@stjohnmanchester.org

All generations are invited to stop in!

Summer Camp Programs at MoVal

Camp MoVal has been welcoming all ages to participate in a wide variety of programs and activities since 1962. We ensure an amazing and unique camp experience in a safe and fun atmosphere for everyone, no matter their age.



2024 SUMMER CAMPS

May 29 - June 2	Young Adult Camp	ages 18 - 30
June 9 - June 12	Mini Camp Session	ages 7 - 9
June 9 - June 14	Leadership Camp	ages 14 - 17
June 16 - June 21	All Ages Camp	ages 8 - 15
June 23 - June 28	All Ages Camp	ages 8 - 15
June 23 - June 28	PRIDE Summer Camp	ages 8 - 17
June 30 - July 4	Family Camp	all ages
July 7 - July 12	All Ages Camp	ages 8 - 15
July 7 - July 12	M.A.D.D. Camp	ages 8 - 17
July 14 - July 19	All Ages Camp	ages 8 - 15
July 14 - July 19	S.T.E.M. Summer Camp	ages 8 - 17
August 4 - August 9	Adventures in Community	ages 18+

Go online at: <https://missourimidsouth.org/camp-moval> to register.

Questions? Please speak with Pastor Tracey.

JOIN THE FUN – REGISTER TODAY!



Confirmation Class
MoVal Work Day
April 6, 2024