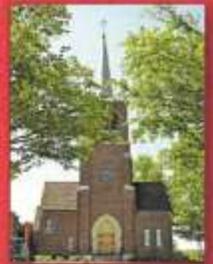


# The Friendly Call

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • MANCHESTER, MO



## Worship Schedule February 2026

### February 1 - Communion

9:30 am Pastor Kevin

### February 8

9:30 am Pastor Kevin

### February 15

9:30 am Pastor Kevin

### February 18 - Ash Wednesday/Communion

7:00 pm Pastor Kevin

### February 22

9:30 am Pastor Kevin

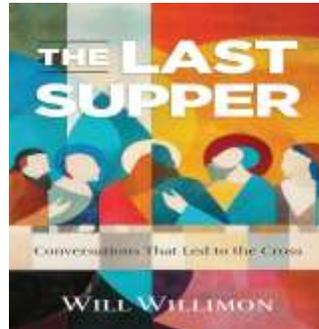
### OFFICE CLOSED

Monday, February 16  
for Presidents Day

Will re-open Tuesday at 9:00 am



February 2026



## ADULT EDUCATION The Last Supper

The Tuesday evening adult education class will begin again in February. We will follow the book The Last Supper by Will Willimon. This Lenten study will explore the parables and stories Jesus told at tables along the way to his final meal. Participants will

discuss the biblical stories about searching shepherds, welcoming hosts, prodigal sons, and rejected invitations illuminating the deeper significance of the Last Supper and Christ's sacrifice. These sessions will be on the first and third Tuesday nights of the month. Should you have questions, please speak with Pastor Kevin. Our schedule is below.

<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Class Theme</i>	<i>Scripture</i>
February 3	"Sowing, Seeking, Finding"	Luke 8:5-15, 10:25-37
February 17	"Opening Invitation"	Luke 14:16-24
March 3	"Feasting with the Found"	Luke 15:3-7, 15:8-10
March 17	"Crumbs from the Table"	Luke 16:19-21, 19:1-10
April 7	"Refusing the Host"	Luke 19:11-27, 20:9-19
April 21	"The Host Who Becomes the Meal"	Luke 22:9-21, 24:3-25

### TO JOIN VIA ZOOM

Time: Feb 3, 2026 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2267934041?omn=89414466626>

Meeting ID: 226 793 4041

### One tap mobile

+13052241968,,2267934041# US +13092053325,,2267934041# US

Instructions: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/2267934041?omn=89414466626>  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/2267934041?omn=89414466626>  
[signature=LTnB5xQR2ITidUoeDbJAKh8Ioz20fAuXm8GOFPLDOKk](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/2267934041?omn=89414466626)

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Wednesday,  
February 18, 2026  
7:00 pm

In-person and streamed  
Communion will be  
celebrated at this service.



Back in December, I had someone say to me, “This must be a busy time of year because of Christmas. You probably can’t wait until it’s over.” I nodded my head and replied, “Yeah, but then we move right into Lent.” They looked at me quite confused and asked, “What’s Lent?” At that moment, I was sorry that I said something.



I did my best to explain Lent in a few sentences. The person admitted that they didn’t grow up with religion, but they currently attend a non-denominational church. (For those wondering, non-denominational churches don’t typically follow Lent. They believe this season was created by the religious institution and is not biblical.) After my brief teaching moment, the person looked at me and said, “Oh, Easter!” I smiled and walked away.

This highlights a growing trend in our culture of “spiritual but not religious.” What does that mean? Is it talking about people who confess Jesus as Lord and Savior but are wary of organized religion and its baggage? Is it referring to unchurched people who believe in a higher power but lack understanding of church? Is it indicating a churchgoer who is more private about their faith and concentrates on developing their inner spirit? It’s tough to know in our current and ever-changing climate.

I think it’s important to understand a couple of things. First, the term “spiritual” refers to a privatized experience of the divine. When people talk about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, they are speaking about a spiritual connection that nurtures their faith. That doesn’t mean they don’t go to church, but the emphasis is placed on the individual experience of the holy. Many non-denominational, Evangelical communities focus on this aspect, which is often identified as being “born-again.”

The term “religious” generally implies a focus on organized tradition. Some equate religion to the institutional Church – the rituals that define Christianity. Some think this practice tends to favor right beliefs and good deeds over spirituality; it’s about the church structure (e.g. governance, policies, buildings, etc.) with a sprinkle of Jesus on top. This often encompasses many mainline churches, like our United Church of Christ, as well as the Catholic Church.

Even though there may be some truth to the meaning behind “spiritual but not religious,” I feel as though this stereotype does both ‘spiritual’ and ‘religious’ a disservice. This brings me to the season of Lent. We will begin Lent this month with our Ash Wednesday service on February 18<sup>th</sup>. My genuine hope every year is that this journey will weave spiritual and religious together. By that I mean, the sacred traditions of the church (i.e. the religious) will nourish the individual’s personal relationship with Christ Jesus (i.e. the spiritual).

Should you need guidance, please reach out to me. I can certainly offer suggestions on spiritual practices to enhance your personal experience. The church will make available Lenten devotionals for daily use. I will be leading a Lenten bible study on Tuesday evenings. Feel free to browse online or talk with a friend about other ways to grow in your spiritual life this religious season. As for me, I will work on and do better at engaging people wherever they are in their faith journey, rather than eye rolls and heavy sighs. May God’s grace and goodness stir within us during this holy time.

Your fellow pilgrim,

*Kevin*



**Notes from the January 13, 2026 Council Meeting**

February 8, 2026 will be a Choir Exchange with St. John's, Chesterfield.

ATT will install a new phone system at the end of the month. Training will take place once that is complete.

Mandie Door who has handled maintenance on the ball field, collecting applications and scheduling is stepping down. Cindy will take application forms and money. Craig will ask the mowing teams to help with dragging the field. It was suggested to put up signage with schedules to show who is using the field. Council approved funds up to \$650 for a sign on the ball field.

There have been issues with the sound system and will have a professional evaluate the system.

Craig Lindquist is in the process of obtaining bids for the parking lot.

Jean O'Neil asked the Council if the boy scouts could have a fund raiser and open it up to the congregation. They will be collecting clothing and household items to be taken to Savers. Council approved with the understanding they will need to store the bags in the trailers or elsewhere, not in the Church or Brotherhood Building.

Respectfully submitted,

*Janice Jung*  
Recording Secretary

**Financial Report - December 31, 2025**

<u>Actual Receipts</u>	<u>Budget Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Actual Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Budget Receipts</u>
\$36,053.38	\$51,130.92	\$428,765.73	\$415,067.60
<u>Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>Budget Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Actual Expenditures</u>	<u>YTD Budget Expenditures</u>
\$41,706.81	\$43,345.19	\$385,444.39	\$415,067.60

Members of the Church Council of St. John United Church of Christ, Manchester, usually 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, February 10, 2026.**





## Christian Education

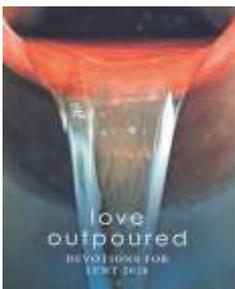
# Youth Christian Education & Sunday School



**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 and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** We will hear stories and lessons taught in the Old and New Testaments combined with worksheets, games, and crafts to 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.

**MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS** The Youth Group will meet at 9:30 am in the classroom – except on the first Sunday of each month when we will attend church service with our family and friends. A mix of formal lessons and open discussion increases understanding of our faith and how it relates to our church and the world around us. We strive to get youth involved in church groups and activities, as well as community service events. Friends are always welcome!!

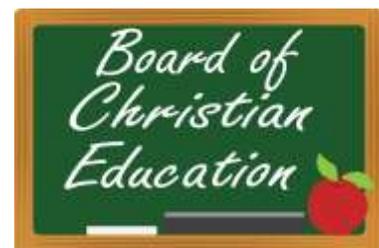


### **DEVOTIONS FOR LENT 2026**

Lent begins on *Ash Wednesday, February 18th*. There are a number of Devotional booklets available to members during this 2026 Season of Lent. This year's booklet is entitled: Love Outpoured. The reading for each day includes Scripture, a short devotion, and a brief prayer. Booklets are located on the information table in the Gathering Area and are on a "first come, first served" basis. When they run out, we don't plan on ordering additional copies. Pick up your copy beginning February 1st.

### **BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**BCE members** meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm via ZOOM. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, February 23, 2026**. We are always looking for new study ideas and help with upcoming projects with the adults and children. Contact Pam Boucher if you have any questions or would like to sign up to volunteer.



### **TEA WITH FRIENDS**

Enjoy coffee, tea, or your favorite beverage, as you take some time to visit with friends on Wednesdays, at the Panera at 14646 Manchester Road, Ballwin, between 3 and 5 pm to share conversations that lead to community. Kathy Hoadley or Joan James will be the host. **All generations are invited to stop in!**



**The Annual Congregational Meeting of St. John UCC** was held on Sunday, February 1st. A copy of our **2025 Annual Report** was distributed to those present. If you were unable to attend and would like a “hard copy” (one copy per household, please) of the report, they are available in the church office. If you have any questions about the Annual Report, please see Pastor Kevin.

### LAY LITURGIST

The **Worship & Music Team** is once again asking for lay liturgists for Sunday morning giving people the opportunity to be part of worship leadership. Those who participate will share the Call to Worship, Unison Prayer, and Scripture reading. As in the last few months of 2025, we would like to encourage people to sign-up for a month. That means people would be in worship leadership for all the Sundays. The hope is that people might feel more comfortable as we move throughout the month. Should you have to miss a Sunday because of a conflict, then please don't let that deter you from signing up. We can certainly work around that with people. A new sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board across from the church office. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Pastor Kevin.

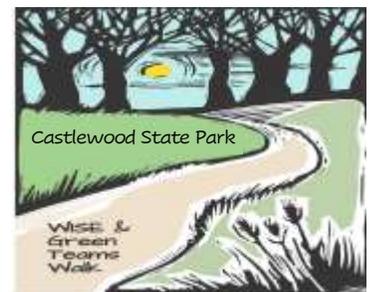


### SOUPER BOWL OF CARING Sunday February 8, 2026

The Youth Group (Middle & High School) will be collecting for the Souper Bowl of Caring **next Sunday** (February 8th) at all exits of the church after the morning's worship service. This is a great way for our youth to collect donations for **Shannondale**, one of our long-time Mission Partners. Thank you for your support of this special collection!

### WALK AT CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK

The WISE/Green Team nature walk will be on Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. This mental health walk will be held in Castlewood State Park (1401 Kiefer Creek Road). When you enter the park, stay to your left and follow that around to the parking lot. The trail is fairly flat and manageable, so bring a friend and nurture your spirit. If you are interested, please sign up on the sheet across from the church office. Should you have questions, feel free to talk with Carol Ruh or Pastor Kevin.



### GREEN TEAM NEWS

The Green Team's Sewing Workshop was a fun and busy day. We donated 30 dog and cat pads and 47 dog chew toys to the Open Door Animal Sanctuary. Thank you to all who participated. Honeysuckle Removal has been scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 10 am - noon. Please join us as we continue to eradicate the honeysuckle on our property.

Our next **Green Team** meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 12, 2026** at 7:00 pm in the Gathering Area.

**Come Join Us!**





## 2026 COMMUNION SCHEDULE

- Sunday, January 4
- Sunday, February 1
- Wednesday, February 18 (Ash Wednesday)
- Sunday, March 1
- Thursday, April 2 (Maundy Thursday)
- Sunday, April 5 (Easter)
- Sunday, May 3
- Sunday, June 7
- Sunday, July 5
- Sunday, August 2
- Sunday, September 6
- Sunday, October 4 (World Communion)
- Sunday, November 1
- Sunday, December 6
- Thursday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)



### INCLEMENT WEATHER

If the weather is hazardous on a Sunday morning, please check the following:

- Church website: [www.stjohnmanchester.org](http://www.stjohnmanchester.org)
- FOX 2 website: <http://fox2now.com> or
- KSDK 5 website: [www.ksdk.com](http://www.ksdk.com)



<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Years</b>
Steven & Amanda Door	2/9	18
Derald & Donna Forbis	2/14	28
Howard & Betty Anton	2/16	52
William & Susan Young	2/22	51

## ATTENDANCE

<b>Worship Attendance</b>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>In Person</i>	<i>Streaming</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>November 23</b>	119	58	177
<b>November 30</b>	43	73	116
<b>December 7 Communion</b>	140	45	185
<b>December 14 Pageant</b>	75	51	126
<b>December 21 Cantata</b>	160	81	241
<b>December 28 Carol Sing</b>	85	44	129
<b>January 4 Communion</b>	102	62	164
<b>January 11</b>	94	65	159
<b>January 18</b>	85	84	169
<b>January 25</b>	N/A	121	121

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



## JOY (Just Older Youth)

Date: Saturday, February 14

Time: Noon to 3 pm

Bring your favorite valentine and enjoy an afternoon of St. John fellowship on Valentine's Day. We'll have lunch first at Noon (vegetable beef and chicken noodle soups provided - sign up for salad/appetizers or dessert) followed by a Sight 'N Sound Theater production of "Daniel". Taken from his people, Daniel is exiled far from home in the perilous kingdom of Babylon. Now this faithful servant must navigate his new life inside a palace filled with golden statues and shifting empires. As royal pressures mount, Daniel is faced with a dangerous choice. Will his trust in God remain steadfast through every test of faith?

The JOY signup for this event is on the bulletin board across from the Pastor's office. **We hope you'll join us!**

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP Tuesday, February 17 - 11:30 am

Lisa Karl has been to many fascinating places and has agreed to share her exciting travels! Bring a sandwich, dessert and beverages will be provided. All ladies invited. I will be in the hospital, however, if you have any questions I'm sure Cindy Boddy or Janice Jung can help. *Marty Boucher*



## Secret Pals SECRET PAL PROGRAM



Thanks to all the adults and youth who are participating in our Secret Pal program this year. Because of the winter storm in late January, everything has been moved by a week. Adults received the names of the "Pals" on February 1st and are asked to keep your identity a secret. We are excited to offer this program again and look forward to the "reveal" at the party on February 22nd. A basket for notes, etc. to be left for your Pal will be on the information table in the Gathering Area. If you have any questions, please see Cindy Boddy!



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. Our next meeting is scheduled for **February 19, 2026**. 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!

NAMI contact at St. John is Angela Kern, [akern@sbcglobal.net](mailto:akern@sbcglobal.net).

Website: <https://www.namistl.org>



**OUTREACH TEAM MEETING**

The **Outreach Team** will meet on **Thursday, February 5, 2026** at 6:30 pm in the Hospitality Room. Please join us!

**FEBRUARY OUTREACH CHALLENGE**

In the deep mid-winter, doesn't a bowl of **steaming hot soup** or **stew** sound **great**? In the cold month of **February**, we are collecting cans of soup and stew to help our partners at **Circle of Concern** provide warm, nutritious meals for the families they serve. So, when you do your grocery shopping, please pick up a few extra cans and help us keep the red carts full in the month of February. **Thanks so much for thinking of others, as you always do!**



**CURRENT NEEDS:** The most needed items for **Circle of Concern** currently are:

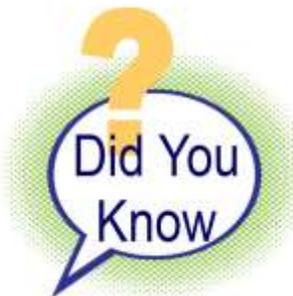
You can also order items for **Circle** online at:

- ◆ Amazon Wish List
- ◆ Walmart
- ◆ Target

and they will be delivered directly to **Circle of Concern**

**OR**

by buying Dierberg gift cards (denominations of \$50 or \$100) through our own Shop N Support program. See Harry Gaehle on a Sunday morning.



- ♥ Dinner Helpers
- ♥ Pasta Sauce
- ♥ Condiments
- ♥ Lotion
- ♥ Kids Pull-ups
- ♥ Size 6 diapers
- ♥ Women's incontinence briefs size L & XL
- ♥ Tampons
- ♥ Mouthwash
- ♥ Razors



**Thanks for your help keeping our red shopping carts full!**

## VALENTINE CARDS FOR FONTANA FRIENDS

Our Fontana Friends: **Gloria, Amanda, & Lois** love to receive cards from their friends at St. John. If at all possible, it would be best for each of the ladies to receive individual cards. You can place your cards in the mailbox on the Outreach counter in the Gathering Area by **Sunday, February 8th** (we will take them on February 12th for our scheduled visit to their home). Or if you prefer to mail the cards directly, (all cards can be mailed together in one envelope), their address is: **c/o Fontana, 1511 Fontana Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146**. Thanks for making their Valentine's Day a little brighter!



## 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 **February 12, 2026**, please see Judy Lindquist. To learn more about the men's outreach of Sunshine Ministries go to: <https://www.sunshineministries.org/men-s-outreach>.

## FONTANA FRIENDS

The Outreach Team continues monthly visits to our **Fontana Friends** in their home. Visits are on the **second Thursday of the month from about 2:00 to 3:00 pm**. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the offices. We meet at church at 1:40 pm and carpool to Fontana. Our next visit will be on **Thursday, February 12, 2026**. If you need additional information, please contact Mary Ellen Berg.



## WISH GLORIA A HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Gloria, one of our Emmaus Fontana friends, is celebrating her birthday on **February 24th**. She enjoys receiving birthday cards. If you would like to wish Gloria a happy birthday, her address at Fontana is: 1511 Fontana, St. Louis 63146. Thanks for your help with this!

## This year's TRIVIA NIGHT AND SILENT AUCTION

to benefit Habitat for Humanity will take place on **Saturday, March 7, 2026**. The cost per ticket is \$15.00 (\$120.00 for a table of 8); doors will open at 6:30 pm and play will begin promptly at 7:00 pm. Tickets will go on sale the first Sunday in February (February 1st). If you would like to donate an attendance prize or help with the event, please contact a member of the Outreach Team or contact Mark Engelhardt at 636-227-7821. If you would like to donate an item for the Silent Auction or help with the auction, please contact Harry Gaele at 314-303-8464. Thank you!





Our sympathies to the family of **Mary Jane Belsher** who passed from this life to new life on December 16, 2025. Please keep her family and friends in your prayers.



In memory of **Jeanette Puettmann Memorial Fund**  
Greg Sonderman

In memory of **Mary Jane Belsher Memorial Fund**  
Mark Engelhardt  
Greg Sonderman  
**Technology Fund**  
Keith Gaertner

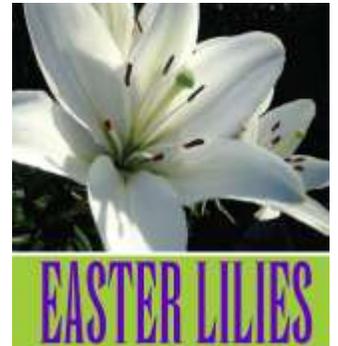
A gift in memory of all loved ones to the **Memorial Fund** was received from LaVerne Schnarr.

Gifts were received to the **Memorial & Music Funds** from Donna Osiek.

A gift to the **Cemetery Association** was received from Donna Osiek.

**Time to Order Easter Lilies**

Easter is coming (Sunday, April 5), and that means it's time to order lilies to decorate our Sanctuary. To order a plant in **Honor** or in **Memory** of loved ones, please fill out the form below, enclose your payment, and either place it in the offering plate or return it to the finance office. Plants may be taken home after the 9:30 am service on Easter Sunday. If you have questions, please call Cindy Boddy.



The **DEADLINE** for ordering is **Sunday, March 15th**.

Please make checks payable to **St. John UCC** and write "Lilies" in the memo field.

Number of Lilies \_\_\_\_\_ (\$11.00 each)

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am purchasing this/these flower(s) in **Honor** or **Memory** (please circle one)

Of: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

## 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

Landon Weber - Houston, Texas  
Nancee Miller - Clarendale Clayton  
Carol Matthews - Brooking Park  
Elaine Van Gels - Lake St. Charles Senior Center  
Harry Taub - Dolan Memory Care (Lyon Manor)  
Annette Owings - St. Mary's Hospital  
Don Dahlem - Missouri Baptist Hospital  
Michelle Dahlem - Van Well Home  
People in the Middle East  
People in Ukraine

### AT HOME

Ron Carr	Betty Fox
Frank & Lois Leahy	Laura Waller
Jennifer Weber	Bruce Carvell
Gloria (Fontana Friend)	



**Commander Andrew Brennecke**, Coast Guard, Norfolk, VA, son of Bob & Joy Brennecke  
**Sgt. Codey Burnham**, U.S. Marine Corps, Indian Head, MD, grandson of Betty & Howard Anton  
**Sgt. First Class Douglas Krohn**, United States Army Recruiting Command, Quincy, IL  
**Technical Sgt. Michael Kargauer**, Eielson AFB, Alaska, son of Dawn (Martin) Dorris  
**E Sgt. Bryan Milberg**, Fort Campbell, KY, grandson of Derald & Donna Forbis  
**Sgt. Matt Starck**, Marines, Camp Lejeune, NC, son of Walter & Marcia Starck