December 2017

PREVUES

The Monthly e-newsletter of St. John United Church of Christ
Bellevue, Kentucky

Neighbors, Regular Attendees,
Friends, Members, everyone...

You are Invited to St. John Advent & Christmas Celebrations

The Christmas Shoppe

Friday, December 1 from 5p to 8p
Saturday, December 3 from 9a to 1p
(Christmas rummage sale – Fellowship Hall)

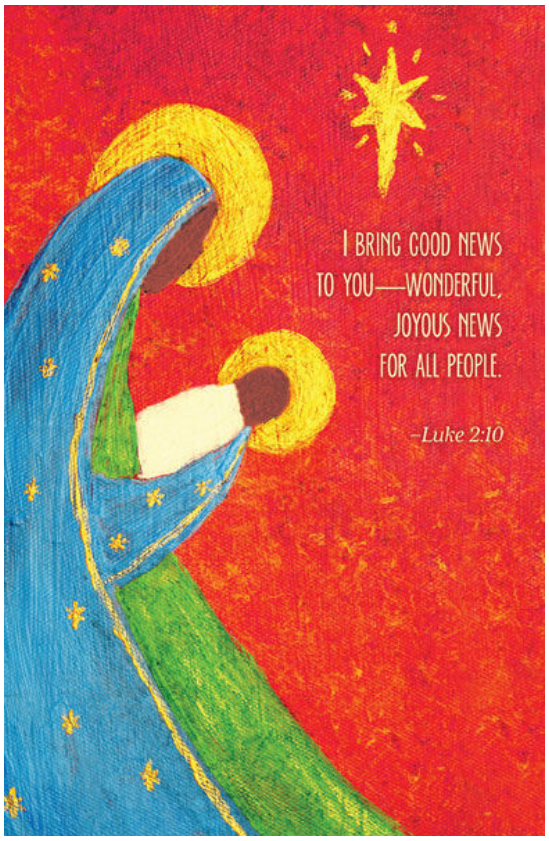
Bellevue Nativity Display

Daily, December 1 through January 6
St. John Church front lawn

Four Sundays of Advent 10:30a

Pre-service Music begins at 10:20a
Pastor Keith M. Haithcock, preaching
Featuring Chancel and Bell Choirs, and Soloists

First Sunday of Advent, December 3
"Where Are You, God" – Psalm 80.1-7, 17-19
Second Sunday of Advent, December 10
"Messengers of Hope" – Isaiah 40.1-11
Third Sunday of Advent, December 17
"Shouts of Joy" – Psalm 126
Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24
"Birthing a Promise" – Luke 1.26-38



The Season of Christmas

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24 at 9p
Pre-service Music begins at 8:45p
Pastor Keith M. Haithcock, preaching

A traditional Christmas Eve service in the beauty of the St. John Sanctuary. Invite your family, neighbors and friends to join you for a service full of carol singing, music led by the Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, piano, organ and soloists, a gift for children, and concluding with a heartwarming candlelight celebration and communion for all.

A nursery provided for infants through five years.

More Advent and Christmas St. John related events...

AIDS Memorial Quilt Display

Wednesday Nov. 29 thru Friday Dec. 1
11a to 2p and 4p to 8p each day
at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
14 W. 5th St., Covington, KY 41011

Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati sections of the internationally celebrated AIDS Memorial Quilt - the 54½ ton handmade tapestry that stands as a memorial to more than 96,000 individuals lost to AIDS – will be on view. This free Quilt display is being presented as part of the annual World AIDS Day observance.

Sections are continuously on display across the country in schools, places of worship, community centers, businesses, corporations and a variety of other institutional settings all in the hope of making the realities of HIV and AIDS real, human and immediate. To date, more than 18 million people have seen The AIDS Memorial Quilt at tens of thousands of displays throughout the world.

For more information on the upcoming display in Northern Kentucky call Mike Horn at 270.996.8611. For more information on The NAMES Project and The AIDS Memorial Quilt, please visit www.aidesquilt.org or call the national headquarters at 404.688.5500.

World AIDS Day Gathering

Friday, December 1 at 7p
at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
14 W. 5th St., Covington, KY 41011
Featuring St. John Handbell Choir, musician Steve Milloy, the Cincinnati Men's Chorus and featured speaker, The Rev. Paula Jackson

The theme is Reflect, Renew, Reach Out. Looking back at the history of HIV/AIDS, remembering those we've lost, renewing our understanding of living with HIV/AIDS today, and reaching out to those in need through spiritual, medical and physical resources.

Handbell Ensemble, Queen City Bronze

In Concert Sunday, December 3 at 4p
at St. Paul United Church of Christ
1 North Jefferson St., Alexandria, KY 41001

Advent Meditation Services

Wednesday Evenings
November 29, December 6, December 13, December 20 from 7:15p to 8:15p
at Faith United Church of Christ
6886 Salem Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45230

Led by Revs. Ken Weidinger and Mel Humes

While Advent is intended to be a time of waiting and watching for God's Light to break anew, it can also be a busy time when we are consumed by other demands of the season that compete for our time and our attention. Join us in the sanctuary on Wednesday evenings from 7:15 – 8:15 for a time of quiet meditation and reflection. If you are new to meditation, these sessions, led by Rev. Mel Humes, will provide a helpful introduction to an ancient spiritual practice. Come, sit, breath, and watch.

"Gifts for the Manger"

All-Church Toy Collection for children at Christmas

The Outreach Missions Group (OMG) is coordinating the December collection of ***NEW*** Toys, unwrapped with some wrapping paper on the side. These toys will be going to Washington United Church of Christ to be sure that children in the Camp Washington area will receive something for Christmas.

We apologize for this last-minute notification, but we did not know the deadline for delivering the toys was December 9. If you are not able to bring your toy to St. John Church by Sunday, December 3 you will need to deliver the toy/s yourself no later than December 9 to:

Washington United Church of Christ
2950 Sidney Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45225.

Or you may mail a check before Dec. 9, payable to Washington United Church of Christ, MEMO: "Gifts for the Manger."

For more information Contact Bruce Horn 513.608.5331.

Senior Meal for the Holidays

Saturday, December 9 at 11:30a
at St. John United Church of Christ
520 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, KY 41073

Thanksgiving and Christmas meal for Seniors (and others) will be held in the Fellowship Hall. This is a free meal for all who want to attend. A free-will offing basket will be available if you would like to support this ministry. Following the meal is a short sing-along, raffle, and games to play. Contact Bruce Horn at 513.608.5331, if you can help with items for the raffle.

All-Church Christmas Caroling

with Illumination Youth
Sunday, December 10

We will meet at First Christian (1031 Alexandria Pike, Ft. Thomas, KY) at 2p, and will carpool over to Carmel Manor. Our group, young and old, will sing Christmas Carols to brighten the season for the folks living at Carmel Manor in Ft. Thomas.

Illumination Youth Ministries is the shared youth group of St John United Church of Christ (Bellevue), First Christian Church (Fort Thomas), and Christ Church United Church of Christ (Fort Thomas). All youth, Grades 6-12, are invited to participate.

Blue Christmas - A Service toward the Light

Wednesday, December 13 at 7p
at St. Paul United Church of Christ
1 North Jefferson St., Alexandria, KY 41001

A Blue Christmas service is typically held on the longest night of the year. It is a Service of Light, held on or around the eve of the winter solstice (December 21). This is a Christian service designed to temper the struggle with grief faced by those living with loss including: death of a loved one, divorce, separation due to military service, loss of a job, or serious illness. The service offers a time to share with those who struggle with the pain of loss during the holidays. All are welcome.

1st Sunday after Christmas, Dec. 31

Worship at 10:30a
Pre-service Music begins at 9:20p

Pastor Keith M. Haithcock, preaching
"Long-awaited Gift" – Luke 2.22-40
Featuring Bell Choir and soloist
An informal service of Music and Message - Bell Choir, special music, carols and Homily.

Prevues is published monthly. Submissions due on the 10th of the prior month. **(January items due Dec. 10th)**
All repeat submissions should be revised each month.
Please email your submissions to: Prevues@StJohnChurch.net.
Requests for the Prayer List are due on Mondays. Email to PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net.
Editor: Keith M. Haithcock; Publication Assistant: Debbie Cummings

The Christmas Fund

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through witness and gifts, both to family and distant neighbors.

"It wasn't easy picking up the telephone to share with you my present situation. In fact, it was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life although it reminded me that grace still happens. Sometimes we as clergy persons lose sight of God's grace when the negative stuff comes into our lives. Thanks so much for sharing your time and ministry with me. Your most gracious gift is appreciated more than words can say as I continue to live in this meantime."

These eloquent words are from a pastor who is the recipient of the caring and concern of those who contribute to the Christmas Fund Offering.

You have the opportunity to be a part of this nation-wide ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in The Christmas Fund Offering (TCF).

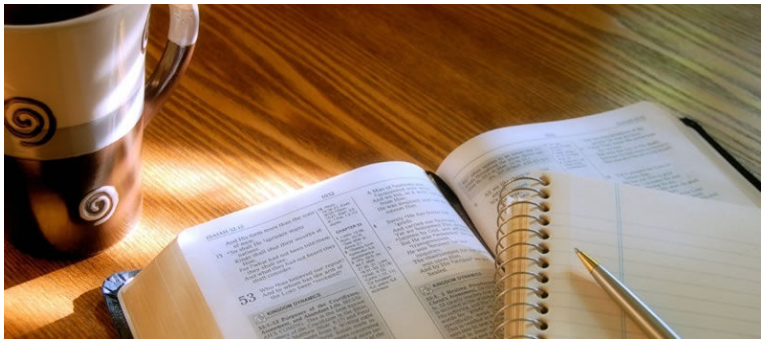
Your gift to TCF will not only assist pastors like the one quoted above, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to lower-income retirees.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retires whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. Our own pastor emeritus, Otto Artopoeus, benefited from this assistance in his later years. This is your opportunity to enable this ministry of compassion and care.

Our goal at St. John Church this year is to raise $1,000. 00 towards this offering, increasing our offering from last year ($698) by $301. St. John Church has a membership of 101, if each member gave $10 to TCF our goal could be reached. Please give generously. Thank You!

UCC Mission Offerings coordinators
Melissa Artopoeus and Pastor Keith M. Haithcock

Color in the advent poster above. When we gather for worship on Sundays children and adults are invited to color in the Advent scene on The Christmas Fund poster displayed in the back of the worship space.



WEEKLY BIBLE ENCOUNTER

For Youth & Adults

Sundays at 9a - Room 102

NOTE: No class on Sundays December 24 and 31.
The purpose of the Weekly Bible Encounter is
to encounter the Bible through prayer, reading, study, scholarship and inquisitive community.

Led by a team of clergy on a rotating schedule.
Invite a friend to come with you!
Previous Bible knowledge or experience is not required.

2%

Raise the Percentage!

Only 2% of Church members invite someone to Church each year. Eighty-two percent of the unchurched are likely to attend Church, if invited.
Every invitation counts.

INVITE SOMEONE to attend Church with you this Advent.

Photo by Melissa Stephens

Cub Scouts at St. John – Pack #17

Our new Cub Scout Pack is up and going, meeting approximately every other Thursday evening from 6:30p to 7:30p in the Fellowship Hall. Check their Lonnie Fields and Melissa Stephens are our representatives on the Pack Council. The Pack will be presenting the Strategic Leadership Council our official charter in worship on Sunday, January 14. Be sure to be here for this special day.
Welcome Cub Scouts!!

Please Let Us Know:

If you are a Liturgist, Acolyte, Welcome Table Host, Usher, Congregational Care Team member, please let the office know if you are still willing and able to serve for 2018. We are currently updating schedules and your response will help greatly. Email or call: office@StJohnChurch.net or 859.261.2066, ext. 201.

Thank You...to everyone for your thoughts, prayers and cards following my surgery. Everything is going well! *Debbie Cummings*

From the Corner – *Baby or No Baby*

It never fails, every Advent someone asks me, should we wait until Christmas Eve to put the baby Jesus in the manger or is it okay to include him with the rest of the decorations?

I think it was eighteen years ago, my first Christmas living in Bellevue, that I heard on the news that the baby Jesus, from the Bellevue Nativity Scene, had been stolen. Everyone wondered, who would do such a thing, and asked, where could Jesus be (Good question)? Sure enough he showed up. And, if I heard the story correctly, the powers that be made certain that Jesus was not going to be stolen again. They put a chain around him and padlocked him to the manger. The image of baby Jesus chained and padlocked, offered lots of fodder for preaching. One sermon titled I used was, "Let the Baby Go!"

This year as we set up the Bellevue Nativity, the 46th year of this tradition, once again the baby Jesus is not to be found. We are not sure what happened to him. We thought he was safely stored in the Church house, but as of print time for this article his location is unknown. I have a magnet on my refrigerator that says, "I found Jesus! He was behind the sofa the whole time." I'm sure there are some who would say it is not appropriate to joke about Jesus in such a way. Although the magnet conjures up a laugh, there is a deeper emotion to be thought of about Jesus than just a joke – Jesus is always with us. When I lived in California (the state) a congregant in the Church I served gave me a T-shirt that said, "Jesus is coming! Look busy." Again, funny, but with some deeper thought, significant for how we live.

Just a few weeks ago a member of our choir walked into my office and said, "I saw this and thought of you." It was a bell with "Ring for Jesus!" printed on it. We laughed. But within a few minutes I picked up that bell and started ringing because a situation had taken place and I needed to pray (ring) for Jesus to be close and give me insight and guidance for this urgent concern that came out of nowhere.

Left on the surface, these humorous statements about Jesus can bring a smile to our face. However, with some thought they offer a deeper insight to the presence and guidance of the Anointed One – Jesus, Emmanuel – God with us.

Does it really matter when we put the baby in the manger? I don't think so. What does matter is that we stay awake, keep looking and waiting for the Anointed One who is coming and yet already with us. We will find the Christ in unexpected places. Perhaps, even behind the sofa.

Blessed Advent & Merry Christmas!

From the Corner
is written by the
Rev. Keith M. Haithcock,
Pastor & Teacher

YOU ARE INVITED TO

Kids Connection

Kids Connection is an interactive class for grades 1 thru 5. Classes help children learn about God's love and the Bible lessons about Jesus.

Sundays at 10:30a on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of each month.

Neighbors, Members, Regular Attendees, Friends, and All

Register your child to attend Kids Connection TODAY!

For registration and other information contact Pastor@StJohnChurch.net or call 859.261.2066, ext. 202.

St. John United Church of Christ 520 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, KY StJohnChurch.net

A criminal background check for leaders is required and two adults are always present in the class room.

The Pastor's Discretionary Assistance Fund

-Helping those in need-

Your over-and-above gift to the PDAF will go to those in our congregation and community who are in need of food, housing, utilities and amenities.

NOVEMBER UPDATE

The Rev. Keith M. Haithcock, M.Div.

10 Kroger Cards for food were distributed. 40 individual-meal bag (Blessing Bag) were distributed. 9 people were served through the PDAF.

Blessing Bags

On Communion Sundays (the first Sunday of each month) Blessing Bags are available in the large round baskets in the Accessible Lounge and the Vestibule at the Fairfield Avenue entrance. Take a bag, or more, and offer it to someone you encounter at the curb on your way to work or on the sidewalk, during your lunch hour or someplace else you see a need. The bags are provided by the Pastor's Discretionary Assistance Fund (PDAF) by way of your generous gifts to PDAF – special yellow envelopes are available at the Welcome Table. On the third Sunday of each month you will have the opportunity to help our Blessing Bag team to stuff bags for the upcoming First Sunday. Thank You!

Partnering Opportunity for Service coming in January – HEARTS

Tutoring is coming back to St. John's United Church of Christ, 415 Park Ave., Newport, Kentucky! Register now to be a volunteer with H.E.A.R.T.S– Helping Empower All Readers To Succeed!

This new tutoring ministry will take place in Fellowship Hall on Tuesdays each week from 3:45-5pm. We will be helping students in grades 1-5 from Newport Primary and Newport Intermediate schools to improve their reading and with general homework help. H.E.A.R.T.S. is seeking volunteers to:

· Work one-on-one with a student each week in reading or general homework;
· Read stories to the group before tutors arrive;
· Help sign students out;
· Help with special events monthly.

Applications for volunteers are available on the Welcome Table.
For more information please call (859)431-1818 or email jennifer.henry@stjohnsuccnewport.org

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THANKS TO YOU…

Our Church's Wider Mission is deeply grateful for the gift from St. John congregation. Our gift permits the OCWM to provide for operating expenses, equip leaders, support clergy in ministry, foster healthy and vital congregations, advocate and witness for justice, respond to disasters and tragedies, send help around the world and preach a welcoming and open understanding of Christian faith.

"Thank you for your vital support and faithful partnership."

Mary A. Paxton, Director, Office of Philanthropy and Stewardship

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Baby Announcement

Finn Kingsley Robbins
born November 17, 3017, 3:00p. 7lbs 8oz. 20"
to parents: Evan & Grace Robbins,
and grandpas Richard Robbins and Chris Smith.

December Birthdays and Anniversaries

December Birthdays

6 Jenny Loerich
9 Sandy Kerlin
11 Daniel Hoffman
12 Esther Ries
15 Melissa Artopoeus
19 Stephanie Dalsfoist
20 Richard Robbins
21 Dean Griffith

December Anniversaries

5 Jenny & David Loerich
9 Doreen & Ron Johnson
13 Kris Dickinson & Gwen McGrady
20 Kat Casteel & Chelsea Clemons
28 Jeff & Cherie Draper

Picture by Loraine Author

St. John
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CELEBRATING 130 YEARS

Welcoming strangers, aliens, refugees, immigrants and everyone since 1887.

CHANCEL CHOIR

Lift up your Voice and Sing!

Music is a central part of the worship life at St. John Church. The sacred scriptures call us to lift our voice in songs of praise to the Creator.

Are you looking for a way to serve at St. John Church? Do you keep thinking, I should sing in the Choir? Do you enjoy singing? Would you like to be part of a fun and loving group? Join the Chancel Choir!

Contact Keyboard Musician and Choir Director, Steve Milloy, by email or phone: smilloy738@aol.com - 513.373.2352. Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings with the call time at 8:45a and rehearsal starting at 9a. Steve is waiting for your call!

November Financials & Attendance (thru November 26)

Offering Total: $10,763 Worship Attendance Average: 65

December Calendar

Friday, December 1
9:00a Christmas Rummage Sale prep Rm LL100
5:00p Christmas Rummage Sale 'til 8p Rm LL100

Saturday, December 2
9:00a Christmas Rummage Sale 'til 1p Rm LL100
2:00p Christmas Rummage Clean up Rm LL100

Sunday, December 3
8:45a Choir Rehearsal, Rm 203
9:00a Weekly Bible Encounter Class, Rm 102
10:30a Sunday Worship, with Communion & sign interpretation, Sanctuary
"Where Are You, God" – Psalm 80.1-7, 17-19
2:00p Christmas Rummage Clean up Rm LL100

Tuesday, December 5
1:30p Staff Meeting, Rm 101
6:30p Handbell Rehearsal, Rm 202

Wednesday, December 6
7:47a Morning Prayer, Sanctuary
2:00p Friendship Center, Rm LL100S
5:30p Illumination Youth Ministries, First Christian 1031 Alexandria Pike

Thursday, December 7
10:00a UCC Clergy Group Christ Church, 15 S. Ft. Thomas
2:00p Outreach Mission Group, Rm 102

Friday, December 8
10:40a Kids Connection, Rm 202

Saturday, December 9
11:30a Thanksgiving/Christmas Senior meal, LL100

Sunday, December 10
➔DEADLINE FOR JANUARY *PREVUES*
8:45a Choir Rehearsal, Rm 203
9:00a Weekly Bible Encounter Class, Rm 102
10:30a Sunday Worship, Sanctuary
"Messengers of Hope" – Isaiah 40.1-11
Kids Connection, Rm 202
2:00p Illumination Youth Ministries, Caroling at Carmel Manor, meet for carpool at First Christian 1031 Alexandria Pike

Tuesday, December 12
1:30p Staff Meeting, Rm 101
6:30p Handbell Rehearsal, Rm 202

Wednesday, December 13
7:47a Morning Prayer, Sanctuary
2:00p Friendship Center, Rm LL100S
5:00p Pastor Relations Committee, Rm 101

Thursday, December 14
10:00a UCC Clergy Group Christ Church, 15 S. Ft. Thomas
3:00p Riverside Prayer Group, Rm 102
6:30p Cub Scouts Meeting, Rm LL100

Sunday, December 17
8:45a Choir Rehearsal, Rm 203
9:00a Weekly Bible Encounter Class, Rm 102
10:30a Sunday Worship, Sanctuary
"Shouts of Joy" – Psalm 126
Kids Connection, Rm 202

Tuesday, December 19
1:30p Staff Meeting, Rm 101
No Illumination Youth Ministries,
6:30p Handbell Rehearsal, Rm 202

Wednesday, December 20
7:47a Morning Prayer, Sanctuary
2:00p Friendship Center, Rm LL100S

Thursday, December 21
8:30a Staff Meeting, Rm 101
10:00a UCC Clergy Group Christ Church, 15 S. Ft. Thomas
4:30p Youth Advisory Board, Christ Church

Sunday, December 24
8:45a Choir Rehearsal, Rm 203
NO Bible Encounter Class
10:30a Sunday Worship, Sanctuary
"Birthing a Promise" – Luke 1.26-38
Kids Connection, Rm 202
9:00p Christmas Eve Worship, Sanctuary

Monday, December 25 - *Merry Christmas*

Tuesday, December 26
6:30p Handbell Rehearsal, Rm 202

Wednesday, December 27
7:47a Morning Prayer, Sanctuary
2:00p Friendship Center, Rm LL100S

Thursday, December 28
10:00a UCC Clergy Group
5:30p Strategic Leadership Council, Rm 102
6:30p Cub Scouts, Rm LL100

Saturday, December 30
NO Free Senior Meal

Sunday, December 31
9:00a NO Bible Encounter Class
10:30a Sunday Worship, Sanctuary
"Long-awaited Gift" – Luke 2.22-40
NO Kids Connection

St. John
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

520 Fairfield Ave. Bellevue, Kentucky 41073
859.261.2066 | www.StJohnChurch.net
Facebook.com/StJohnUCC

Church office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 8a to 4p

Ministers

The whole congregation

Clergy

Pastor & Teacher.....The Reverend Keith M. Haithcock
Pastor@StJohnChurch.net - 859.261.2066, ext. 202
Always available by appointment
Volunteer Chaplain in Residence.....The Reverend Sue Jelinek
sue.jelinek@cchmc.org

Staff

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Office@StJohnChurch.net - 859.261.2066, ext. 201
Data Coordinator.....Linda Schuster
Data@StJohnChurch.net
House Keeper..... Luis Hernandez
Illumination Youth Ministry Directors.....Nancy Bardgett | Melanie Sorrell
Nancy.Bardgett@gmail.com - 859.466.6946
melaniemcb@gmail.com - 859.468.8076
Keyboard Musician and Choir Director..... Steve Milloy
smilloy738@aol.com - 513.373.2352

Strategic Leadership Council (SLC)

President.....Steve Howes, howesfam5@aol.com - 513.460.6774
President Elect..... Alan Imberg, alan@alanimberg.com - 859.689.4540
Recording Secretary.....Theo Baldwin, TheoBaldwin@aol.com - 859.581.0493
Interim Treasurer.....Dale Sexton, treasurer@stjohnchurch.net - 859.581.0493
Member-at-Large..... Lonnie Fields, FLDS7@aol.com - 513.324.9303
Member-at-Large.....Ginnie Kelley, virginia.m.kelley3546@gmail.com - 859.801.4951

St. John United Church of Christ is proud to provide outreach to the following organizations:

Illumination Youth Group

BRIGHTON CENTER
A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

Washington
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
Cincinnati, Ohio

Our Church's Wider Mission
God is still speaking,
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Durban, South Africa

Rubate Hospital - Kenya Africa