

THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE



ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUNDAYS AFTER PENTECOST

*Baptized by your spirit into one body,
we testify to your faithfulness towards those
of every time, nation, people, and language,
and we give you thanks.*

July 3, 2022

Welcome!

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.

**Masks are required when you enter, move about, or sing in the Church house.
Masks are optional when you are seated in a pew and physically distanced.**

As a courtesy to others silence your phone.

Assistive listening devices are available in the back.

Sign Language interpretation is available in the front.

Offering plates are in the front and rear of the Church.

Visit the Welcome Table, located in the back, to learn more about St. John Church.

Gathering Music & Lighting Candles (10:20a)

Steve Milloy, piano; Bennett Draper, Acolyte

"Just As I Am" -William Bradbury arr. Victor Labenske

"If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee" -Georg Neumark, arr. Marianne Kim

"America" -Traditional, arr. Ruth Elaine Schram

Welcome, Call to Worship, & Opening Prayer (10:30a) Melissa Stephens

One: The Spirit descends like a dove, bringing peace to unite the world in a just and caring community.

All: The Spirit comes like a breath, bringing life to renew the people of God.

One: The Spirit spreads like fire, bringing energy for witnessing to the love of God.

All: Spirit of God, come to us and transform our lives by your power.

Opening Hymn, 39 (Rise in body or spirit.)

“Cantemos al Creador (Creator God We Sing)”

Opening Our Lives to God

Melissa Stephens

One: Let us confess our sin, trusting in God's grace.

All: We have promised to live as your people, God.

Yet, we confess that we fail you and one another.

We do not honor one another as we should.

As the body of Christ, we are often disjointed and clumsy.

We do not work together as one to your glory.

We refuse your cry for help in the voices of the poor and hungry.

We have not been faithful to the trust you have placed in us.

Silence is kept.

Merciful God, receive us as we are, and forgive us.

Encourage us with your love that we may commit ourselves anew to live as those who belong to you; through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

One: Hear the good news:

**All: In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus,
we learn that God's love has no bounds.**

One: In Christ we are forgiven and are empowered to begin anew.

All: Thanks be to God!

Song of New Life and Action

"I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me"

1) I'm gonna live so God can use me anytime and anywhere.

I'm gonna live so God can use me anytime and anywhere.

2) I'm gonna work...

3) I'm gonna pray...

4) I'm gonna sing...

Community Prayer

Melissa Stephens

2 Kings 5.1-14

Bobby Moreland

Now Naaman was commander of the army of the ruler of Aram. He was a great officer and highly esteemed. It was at Naaman's hand that God gave a victory to Aram. He was a mighty warrior. And he had leprosy.

On one of their raids the Arameans captured a young woman who was an Israelite. She served Naaman's wife. One day she said to her mistress, "If only Naaman would see the prophet who is in Samaria. He would cure Naaman's leprosy." Naaman went to the ruler and told him what the Israelite woman said. "By all means, go," the ruler replied. I will send a letter to the ruler of Israel." So Naaman left, taking ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. The letter that he took to the ruler of Israel read, "With this letter I am sending my attendant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of leprosy."

As soon as the ruler of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes, and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a fight with me!" When Elisha the prophet of God learned that the ruler of Israel tore his robes, he sent a message to the ruler, "Why do you tear your robes? Have Naaman come to me and he will learn that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to say to the warrior, "Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

But Naaman went away angry, and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand there before me, calling on the name YHWH and wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

Naaman's attendants went to him saying, "Sir, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'?" So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the prophet of God told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a youth. Then Naaman and his retinue went back to the prophet of God. He stood before him, and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept a gift from a grateful person."

One: Here ends the reading inspired by God.

May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Melissa Stephens

"Don't Let Ego Get in the Way"

Ministry of Music

Jennie Malone

“Come Down, Angels” -*Spiritual, arr. Undine Smith Moore*

An Invitation to the Offering

Bobby Moreland

Every time we come to the moment of offering, it's a defining moment. There is an inner struggle between self-interest and generosity, a pull between fear of the future and belief in God's providence.

Unison Offering Prayer

**We give our offering this morning, O God,
stepping out in faith down the road of grace.
We do this together, as your people,
called and sent to be a blessing for all the world.
In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Fred Hoeweler, officiating

Invitation

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome at Christ's table. If you are a member of this Church, another Church, or no Church at all, you are invited to come and learn the ways of Jesus and receive love and grace. And so, we pray and proclaim...

Communion Prayer and Statement of Faith

All: We are not alone, we live in your world, O God.

One: We live in your creation – in all its wonder, in all its life.

All: We believe in you, who has created and is creating!

One: In your love, with your word, by your Spirit,
you *brought* and *bring* all things into being.

With creation, you live, entangled and entwined,
with all people, all places, all things.

**All: We believe in you, who has come in Jesus, the word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new.**

One: In so many ways,
in so many times and places,
you spoke your words,
calling us into deeper covenant with you.

Calling us back into your love.
Through prophets and priests,
grandparents and children,
teachers and preachers
and voices in the wilderness,
you called us, again and again.

And then in Jesus, we encountered you in a new way.
Through his love, his life, his death, and his resurrection,
Jesus the Christ brought all creation, all of us, into relationship with you.

All: We believe in you, who works in us, and others, by the Spirit.

One: Spirit of the Creator,
Spirit of the Christ,
Holy Spirit, Love Divine – you live in us and with us,
turning our lives and your world upside down –
with hope, with wonder, with challenge, with love!

All: We trust in you, O God!

One: Because life, even at the best of times, can be chaotic.
At the most difficult times,
in the moments when we can't understand what's around the corner,
when we don't know what to do, or where to go, or how to be,
we trust in your love.

All: You call us to be the Church.

One: And so, as disciples of Christ, we live with respect in creation.

All: Help us to live with even more respect, Creator of All.

One: We love and serve others.

All: Help us to love and serve with all we are, Christ Jesus.

One: We seek justice and resist evil.

**All: Help us to do more than stand and wait, but rather act rightly in the face
of wrong, Holy Spirit.**

One: We proclaim Jesus,

All: crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

One: On the night that he was taken to what would be his death on a cross,
Jesus gathered his disciples for a meal of remembrance, hope and challenge.
As the disciples gathered, he served them by washing their feet.
As the disciples ate, he taught them, helping them to understand
what would come.

As the disciples raged and disbelieved, he loved them,
even knowing he would be betrayed, even knowing he would be abandoned.

**All: And his judgment was to love them –
every single one, no matter what. This is our hope!**

One: He took bread, broke it, and gave thanks to you, God of all Creation.
Then he gave it to his disciples, saying,
“Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is my body, given for you.
Each time you eat bread, remember me.”

All: God is with us. We are not alone!

One: He took fruit of the vine, poured it, and gave thanks to you, God of all Creation.
Then he gave it to his disciples, saying,
“Take this, all of you, and drink it.
This is my promise, in my life’s blood, that sins are forgiven.
Each time you drink fruit of the vine, remember me.”

All: God is with us. We are not alone!

One: Send your Spirit upon this bread, and this fruit of the vine, and all who are
gathered, that we might be the body of Christ alive in your creation!

All: Thanks be to God!

Receiving Communion

One: In silence, with music; eyes opened, eyes closed; breathing deeply, letting go;
we receive your presence, O Christ: your body like bread, your spirit like fruit
of the vine; come into our lives and live within us, through us, and beyond us.
Come, O Christ, and guide us in the way of Jesus.

-Silence is kept as each one consumes the bread and then the fruit of the vine-

Prayer After Communion

One: Praying together we say...

**All: For this sacrament and life we have received, thank you God!
Help us to be your church in the days, weeks, and years to come,
filled and refreshed by your constant love. In Jesus’ name. Amen.**

Closing Song, 539 (Rise in body or spirit.) “Won’t You Let Me Be Your Servant?”

Send Out (Rise in body or spirit.)

Fred Hoeweler

A Singing Response "Trees of the Field" -Isaiah 55.12 (* * denotes claps)

everyone singing

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
There'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap will clap their hands.

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands, * *

The trees of the field will clap their hands, * *

The trees of the field will clap their hands. * * While you go out with joy.

Stay Connected at St. John Church!

For more information about St. John Church go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.

To receive *The e-Weekly* or Prayer List, email Office@StJohnChurch.net.

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, ext.202; email Pastor@StJohnChurch.net.

To make a prayer request for the Prayer List, email PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net.

No online connection? Call the office at 859.261.2066, ext. 201.

Office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00am to 4:00pm.

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Taking It to the Streets

It is a pleasure to serve on the Accessible to All Team (A2A) at St. John Church. This summer we are ready to “take it to the streets” by engaging with Fairfield Avenue shop owners in offering them the brochure, “A2A Disability Etiquette: What You Should know”.

Our goal is to visit each shop owner as we walk the avenue and offer an introductory letter and a copy of the A2A brochure. When we visit each shop owner, we will share with them what we have learned about accessibility at St. John Church, and if they would like, offer our assistance to help them create shops that encourage welcome and accessibility to all.

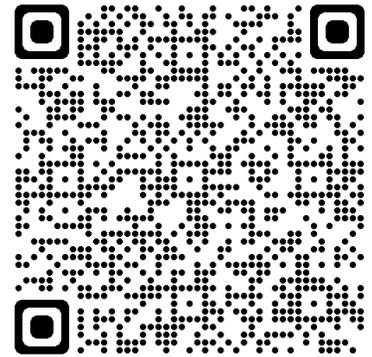
Each team will visit 10 to 11 shops or organizations. Dates and times to walk will be arranged by each group. Please help us engage with our neighbors and shop owners on The Avenue in Bellevue to raise awareness and participation for persons with disabilities in our community.

[Click here](#) or use the QR code to read or print the A2A brochure. Be sure to share it with others.

Signup on the sheet in the back of the Sanctuary at the Welcome Table, or email Office@StJohnChurch or call the office 859.261.2066, ext. 201. By signing up you will receive detailed information to participate in this effort to widen inclusion for all.

A2A Team:

Sandy Kerlin, Jan Hoeweler, Dale Sexton, Keith Haithcock



**A2A Disability Etiquette
Brochure**

St. John United Church of Christ, 520 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, KY is proud to be an A2A church recognized by the United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries.