The Worship of God

at St. John Church

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026 | 10:30AM

THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE
ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome!

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

Assistive listening devices are available at the Welcome Table.
Nursery (Room 103) for children under 6 with parents/guardians only. No staff provided.
Offering plates are in the front and back of the Church.
Restrooms are through the single doors in the front.
The people rise in body or spirit at this sign:
The people's responses are in **bold print**.
Masks are optional.

Allen Fluent, preacher; Beth Palm, liturgist; Brandon Stroup, director of music, piano.

MUSIC AS WE GATHER AND LIGHT THE CANDLES — Adeline Palm, acolyte

How God Loves – arranged by Bethany K. Smith and Mary McDonald

WELCOME & CHURCH MATTERS — Allen Fluent

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.
Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.

You are invited to visit the Welcome Table in the back by the red banner.
Please fill out the INFORMATION CARD on the back of the pew in front of you and place it in an offering plate at the front or back as you leave.

MOMENT OF CENTERING

WE OPEN OURSELVES TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD — Allen Fluent

To you, O God, we lift up our souls. Our God, in you we trust. Show us your ways, God; teach us your paths.
Lead us in your truth and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation; for you we wait all day long.

HYMN OF ADORATION, 68 — *God Is Truly with Us*

WE MAKE OUR CONFESSION — Allen Fluent

Be mindful of your mercy, God, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Do not remember our sins of the past or our transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember us, for the sake of your goodness, O God!

For your name's sake, O God, pardon our guilt. Turn to us and be gracious. Relieve the troubles of our hearts and bring us out of our distress. Consider our affliction and our trouble, and forgive all our sins.

WE RECEIVE GOD'S ASSURANCE

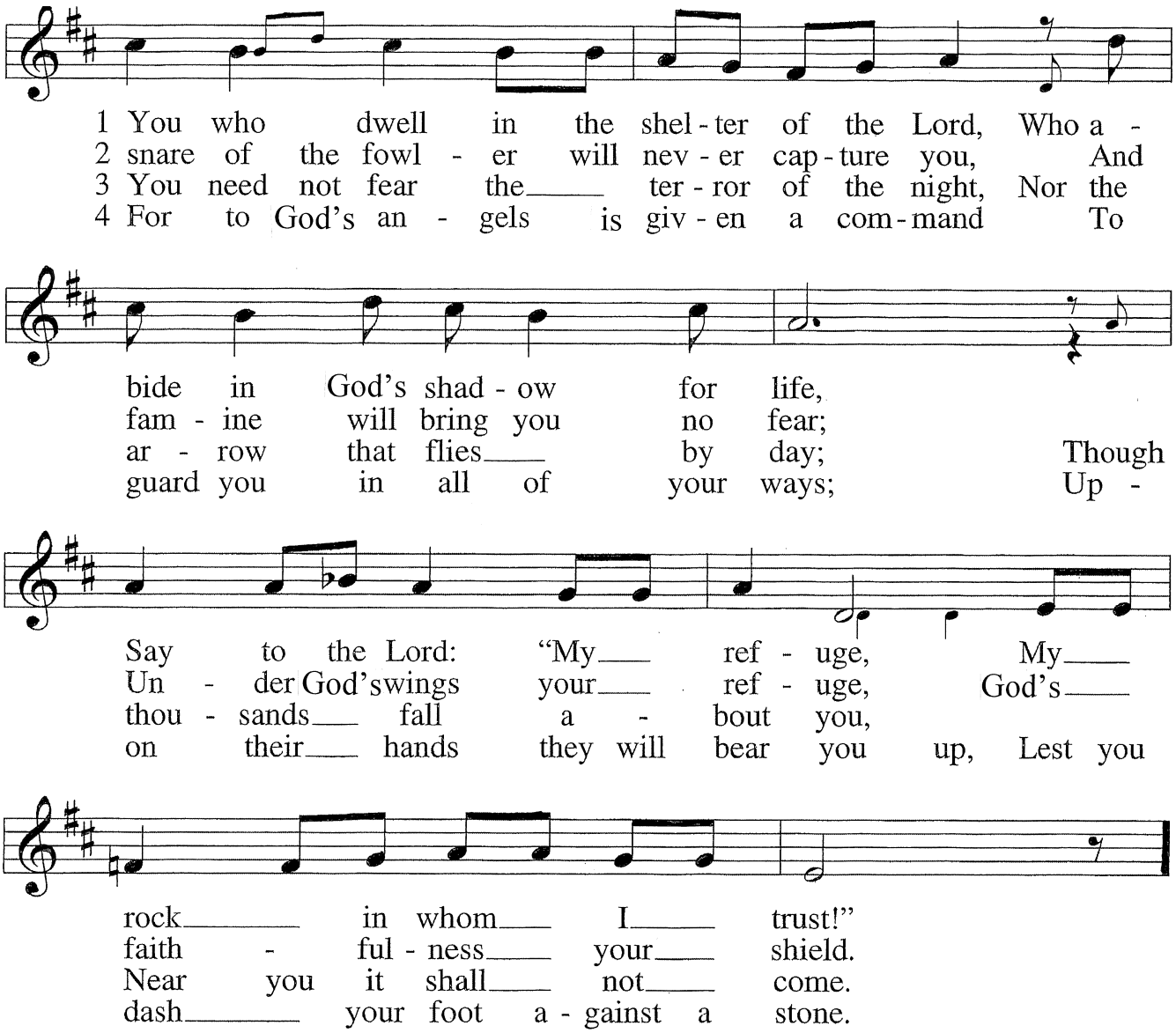
Allen Fluent

Good and upright are you, O God; therefore you instruct us in the way. You lead the humble in what is right and guide us in your way.

All the paths of God are steadfast love and faithfulness for those who live in covenant with God.

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

On Eagle's Wings -ON EAGLE'S WINGS



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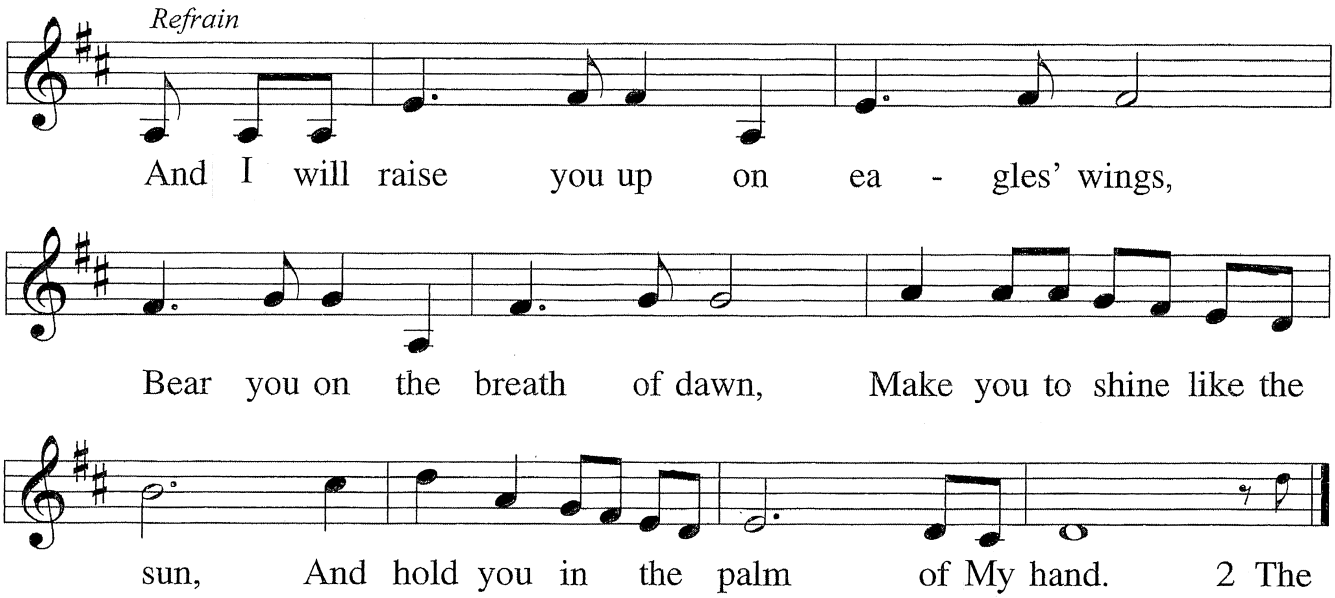
PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

(With a word, a smile, a handshake, an embrace, greet one another with the peace of Christ.)

MINISTRY OF MUSIC *Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone) - arranged by Joel Raney*

Stephanie Dalsfoist, Benjamin Kreml, Jennie Malone, Stephanie Specter, Brandon Stroup, and Megan Williams, vocalists; Steve Phillips, piano

EPISTLE READING: ROMANS 12:1-8

(Page 161 – New Testament section of the pew Bible) Beth Palm

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING: LUKE 18:9-14

(Page 81 – New Testament section of the pew Bible) Allen Fluent

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *"THE LAWYER AND THE TAX COLLECTOR"* Allen Fluent

HYMN, 510 *Grant Us Wisdom to Perceive You*

UCC Statement of Mission (approved by General Synod, 1987) — Beth Palm

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called and commit ourselves:
To praise God, confess our sin, and joyfully accept God's forgiveness;
To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our suffering world;
To embody God's love for all people;
To hear and give voice to creation's cry for justice and peace;
To name and confront the powers of evil within and among us;
To repent our silence and complicity with the forces of chaos and death;
To preach and teach with the power of the living Word;
To join oppressed and troubled people in the struggle for liberation;
To work for justice, healing, and wholeness of life;
To embrace the unity of Christ's church;
To discern and celebrate the present and coming reign of God.

An Invitation to the Offering — Beth Palm

The offering in the church is a thanksgiving for the gifts of grace received. If you have brought an offering this morning, you may place it in the offering plate in the front or rear of the sanctuary, or use the QR code printed in the bulletin.

Prayer of Dedication

With hearts made thankful by your gracious gifts of love, we bring our offerings to you, our God, and pray that the works accomplished through their use will bring joy and hope to many in your name. Amen.

Prayers of the People — Allen Fluent

God of abundant grace, **hear our prayer**

The Lord's Prayer

Loving and beloved One, eternally present in our midst, may we know your sacred truth, and seek the goodness you desire for all the creatures of the earth. We ask for what we need to sustain us each day, and we pray that we may learn to share the rest. Teach us to forgive, so that we may learn to accept your forgiveness. And let us not be tempted by the anxious days to come. For the power of your love will rule our hearts forever. Amen

CLOSING SONG/HYMN, 575 — *O for a World*

BENEDICTION — Allen Fluent

PARTING MUSIC — Handbell Choir

God Be With You Till We Meet Again – arranged by Samuel Stokes

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Except as noted here, this worship service was created by Allen Fluent. **We Open Ourselves to the Presence of God, We Make Our Confession** and **We Receive God's Assurance** based on Psalm 25, selected verses adapted by Allen Fluent; **Hymn of Thanksgiving**, *On Eagle's Wings*, words and music: Michael Joncas 1979, ©1979, OCP Publications & ©1979, 1991, New Dawn Music from *Chalice Hymnal* p. 77; **Romans 12:1-8** and **Luke 18:9-14** from *New Revised Standard Version Bible* © 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; **UCC Statement of Mission** reprinted from *Book of Worship* ©2006 by United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries, Worship and Education Ministry Team, Cleveland, Ohio, pg 514B; **An Invitation to the Offering**, **Prayer of Dedication,** and **The Lord's Prayer** by Allen Fluent;

TODAY! Please join us after worship in the Fellowship Hall as we honor Pastor Allen Fluent with grateful thanks for his service to St. John Church as our interim minister for the past two years.

Next Sunday – (August 30, 2026) Rev. Dr. David Long-Higgins, Conference Minister of the Heartland Conference will be guest preacher at St. John Church.

Sunday, September 6, 2026 – Rev. Amy Oblinger will begin her ministry at St. John Church. Join us after worship to welcome her. Light refreshments are planned.

Stay Connected at St. John Church*!*

Contact the Pastor: 859.261.2066 or Pastor@StJohnChurch.net.
Receive the newsletter, Prayer List, etc.: Office@StJohnChurch.net.
Facebook: facebook.com/stjohnucc/.
For more information go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.

No online connection? Call the office at 859.261.2066.
Typical office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00am to 4:00pm.

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

520 Fairfield Avenue • Bellevue, KY 41073 • StJohnChurch.net • 859.261.2066

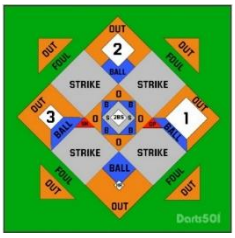
Coming Events – Mark your calendars!

Engage with your church and the greater community! Enrich your Life and live out God's extravagant welcome!

August 25, 2026 (Tuesday) 6:00 pm - Handbell Choir rehearsal begins at St. John Church. Meet in the choir/music room (room 203). Contact Stephanie Dalsfoist to volunteer (sdalsfoist@gmail.com).

August 26, 2026 (Wednesday) Gather Cincinnati Hiking Bible Study - 6:30 pm
For more information about this event use the QR code to access The e-Weekly.

August 30, 2026 (Sunday) **Dart Baseball Tournament.**
Join other UCC congregations for food and fellowship – St. John to bring dessert. *If you are planning to attend, with or without a team, please use the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Table to facilitate lunch planning.* At St. John's UCC, 415 Park Ave, Newport KY 41071. Or RSVP to Rachel Wirrig at rachelswirrig@gmail.com.



September 6, 2026 (Sunday) 10:30 am - Pastor Amy Oblinger's first official worship service at St. John Church. We will celebrate with a reception after worship.

September 6, 2026 (Sunday) Gather Cincinnati Mending Party - 4:00 pm
For more information about this event use the QR code to access The e-Weekly.

September 11, 2026 (Friday) Pride Night at Kings Island, 5:30 to midnight. Tickets must be purchased in advance. use the QR code to access The e-Weekly.

September 13, 2026 (Sunday) Illumination Northern Kentucky Youth Fall kick off 5:30 pm at Lakeside Presbyterian Church Carriage House, 2690 Dixie HWY, Lakeside Park, KY. use QR code to access The e-Weekly.

Mark your NOVEMBER calendar:
November 6 & 7, 2026 (Friday & Saturday) - Rummage Sale and Christmas Shoppe at St. John Church. Steve Phillips at stephen.phillips2014@icloud.com or 859.803.3830.

Mark your DECEMBER calendar:
December 12, 2026 (Saturday) – 6:30 pm Voices of Appalachia concert at St. John Church. More info soon.