the St. John UCC INFORMER

Extending God's Love & Grace | An Open & Affirming Congregation







Wednesday, October 15 11:00 am - 6:30 pm

\$15 Meal Includes:

1 pound Sausage Link, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Creamed Peas, Applesauce, Horseradish & Dessert

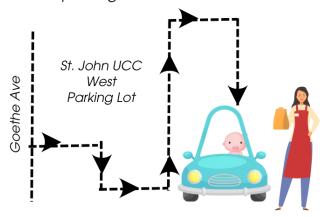
Uncooked Sausage Sales \$5.00 per 1 pound link

Order deadline 10/6
Pick Up 10/14 between
1:00-6:00 pm
To order, call church office
at 618-344-2526



DRIVE-THRU ONLY

Enter parking lot from Goethe Ave.



Proceeds support St. John UCC's Community Missions such as:

Homework Help & Hoops Tutoring
HHH Summer Camp
S.O.S. Soup Kitchen

To access the St. John UCC Collinsville YouTube channel, use the following link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDLL WhGXkkfbmGscZ-hallg

Look for: St. John United Church of Christ Collinsville, IL



Home Communion Available

Do you worship from home on livestream or YouTube? If you want to participate in communion at home, there are pre-filled cups available in the church office!

Do you have pictures of St. John UCC events, programs or one of our missions on your phone? We'd love to see them! Amy will use these photos to spread the word on how we help the community, and she will use some in the Annual Report. Please send photos to Amy by email, office@stjohnucc-collinsville.org or text 618-973-7771.



Sunday Attendance



	9:30 am	Digital	Sunday
August 2025	Worship	Views	School
		YouTube	
August 3 rd	84	36	n/a
August 10 th	121	46	n/a
August 17 th	108	39	n/a
August 24 th	88	27	n/a
August 31 st	90	36	n/a
Sunday Average	98	37	n/a



Have you remembered
St. John United Church of Christ,
Collinsville, in your
Will or Final Bequest?

Choir Practice on Wednesdays

C.O.P.s (Children of Praise) 5:30-6:00 pm in the choir roomHandbells 6:00-7:00 pm in the balconyAdult Choir 7:15-8:30 pm in the choir room

Altar Committee Needs Help!

Looking for volunteers for a 2-month commitment working with a partner.
Duties include:

- preparing communion
- changing the Altar cloths
- straightening the pew pockets
- dusting as needed
 If you are interested, please
 contact Karen Take
 at 618-288-7171.

Council Highlights

- Donated two historical items to be displayed at the Collinsville Library in collaboration with other churches in the area.
- 2020 Road project will begin the new phase at the cemetery beginning in October.
- Working on a grant for leadership training from March 2026-February 2027. Need another volunteer to be trained.
- Paying off solar loan in full using the proceeds from a matured CD.

*Please Note: Final Council and Special Congregational Meeting minutes are available from the church office upon request.

Financial update

In August, **envelope giving was \$24,899**, which is **\$3,500 below budget** and **\$3,200 less than last year.** Total income for the month was \$30,127, falling short of both budget and last year. Expenses totaled **\$45,715**, leaving a **monthly deficit of about \$15,600**, compared to a \$9,400 deficit last August.

Year-to-date, envelope giving is \$230,781, which is \$28,000 below budget and \$25,600 less than last year. Total income is \$337,158, while expenses are \$388,575, leaving us with a deficit of \$51,417. This compares to a \$24,066 deficit at this point last year, and it is more than \$41,000 worse than budget expectations.

We are grateful for **special events and investment income** that have boosted results, but the clear challenge remains in **regular weekly and monthly giving**, which provides the foundation for sustaining ministry.

Gifts to the Church

General Fund

- Devall, Vicki Donovan, Nancy Fischer, Bill & Lori Yanousek, Bill & Nancy Berry, Brian & Rae Brill, Mark & Marilyn Doty, Pam Gates & Tom Schnitzius, Sharon & David Hall, Barb, Scotty & Ashley Kusmierczak, Karen & Don Take, Jim & Judy Brickey, Jim & Patti Achenbach, Stu & Tammy Craig, and Bill Forsman
- In memory of Lloyd Worley from Vicki Donovan.

Dear St. John Friends,
Thank you for the prayers,
get well cards and phone
calls. They were all given with
your warmth and caring. It
was so very nice to be
remembered in this way. I
feel blessed to be a part of
the St. John Family & Friends
and look forward to being
normal and back to seeing all
of you.

Sincerely, Donna Graham

You're Invited to a night of fun & learning!



Family Night Faith 101

*Appropriate for Reading age children & above

Friday, October 3rd 6:00 pm Faith Hall

- +How to use your Bible.
- +What is Communion?
- +What it means to be Baptized.

Pizza, Games, Activities & Learning

Vendors

Wantedl



AARP Smart Driver Class

Are you (or are your parents) over 55?? Would you like to get a discount on your car insurance for the next 3 years? Take the AARP Driver Safety Class. Learn about new laws, new car features, road designs (roundabouts etc.) and *refresh your general driving knowledge*. You must attend both days. \$20 for AARP members, \$25 for non members. (Cash or Check ONLY)

Wednesday, November 12 & Thursday, November 13 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Call St John's Community Care to register - call 618-344-5008.

Faith Hall at St. John UCC | 307 W Clay St | Collinsville, IL

Winter Wonderland Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, December 6th

10:00 am - 4:00 pm Sunday, December 7th

10:30 am - 2:30 pm

Contact Amy in the Church Office

Christmas Decorations & Vendor Fair, Crafts, Handmade Gifts & Everything you need for Christmas!



October 2025

Faith Walking

August Mileage – 788 miles logged!
October Prayer Theme:
Grow in Grace 2 Peter 3:18
7:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Greeters help you log your progress!
Free-Will Offering

<u>Pickleball</u>

Put Your Game Face On!

Mondays from 5:30-8:00 P.M.



Learn the game while you play!

A free-will offering will be accepted.

Questions: Contact Norb Kneipp at 345-7270 or Dana at 344-2526



Faith Walkers will celebrate September and October Birthdays on Friday, October 3 at 12:00 p.m. Come out and enjoy some awesome fellowship and yummy treats with us!

Mark Your Calendar! 20th Anniversary Faith Walking Celebration

We will celebrate 20 years of the Faith Walking ministry in a couple different ways! The first way will be a worship service on **Sunday, November 2nd at 9:30 a.m.** with special emphasis on the Faith Walking ministry. Worship will be followed by a coffee hour honoring our Faith Walkers and recognizing Dana's retirement. All are welcome to attend! On **Monday, November 3rd**, we will celebrate with a Potluck Luncheon beginning at 11:00 a.m., a group photo at 11:45, Award Presentations at 12:00 and Bingo from 12:15-1:00. Bring your friends!

In addition to celebrating the accomplishments of the Faith Walkers during the last year, we would also like to recognize our dedicated greeters, some who have been volunteering since the beginning! The success and longevity of the Faith Walking program is due in large part to the friendly greeters who welcome the walkers, provide moral support, and track the mileage walked by each participant. Thank you all for your service!

A HUGE Rummage Sale Thank You from HHH!

Thank you to the congregation for toting your rummage to church for the fall rummage sale in September. An especially big thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who transform a gym into a re-sell-it store in record time! For those who helped check-out and bag, watch doors, set-up tables, haul things away, and clean up afterwards, thank you profusely! Because you gave of your time to make this happen, we made a whopping \$3,721!



HHH Tutors/Mentors are Needed!

HHH has provided an outlet to help students complete their homework and sharpen their academic skills since January 2007. To continue this program this fall, we need St. John volunteers willing to give 1 to 6 hours a week to help these kids.

The fall HHH program starts back up on Tuesday, September 23. We badly need adults to mentor/tutor from 3:00 until 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays. If you only have an hour a week to spare, we will make that work!

If you can help with this vital ministry to our neighborhood children, please call Dana at 618-344-2526.

Spirit of Sharing (S.O.S.) Soup Kitchen

St. John Church will be serving S.O.S. on Thursday, October 2 at St. John. Please look in the Narthex for the sign-up sheets to bring food and to volunteer on Sunday, September 28 or call the Church Office. Please continue to pray for this vital ministry as so many in our community are in need. Please help if you are able.

S.O.S. Kicks off their M&M Fundraiser

Sunday, October 26 after worship pick up a tube of M&M's for a Halloween treat. The trick is to fill it up with a donation and bring it back the following week. A tube can hold around \$13 in Quarters, but rest assured, Cash or Check will also fit!





Staff & Leadership

Rev. Jennifer Sowell, Senior Pastor, 618-250-7983

pastorjenn@stjohnucc-collinsville.org

Amy Rhymer, Pastoral

Assistant/Communications

Jenny King, Music Director

music@stjohnucc-collinsville.org

office@stjohnucc-collinsville.org

Laurie Voss, Accompanist

Dana Callahan, Outreach Director

faithhall@stjohnucc-collinsville.org

Leslie Musallam, Christian Education

Mike Liljegren, Council President

churchcouncil@stjohnucc-collinsville.org

Paul Ham, VP, Trustee Chair

Jon Hester, Treasurer, Deacons Chair

Ginger Schantz, Secretary

Nancy Berry, Elders Chair

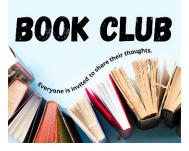
The Learning Tree Preschool,

618-344-2562

St. John Cemetery, 618-344-0749

St. John's Community Care,

618-344-5008



Our book club has chosen the next book we will be reviewing **Sea of Tranquility** by Emily St. John Mandel.

Edwin St. Andrew is eighteen years old when he crosses the Atlantic by steamship, exiled from polite society following an ill-conceived diatribe at a dinner party. He enters the forest, spellbound by the beauty of the Canadian wilderness, and suddenly hears the notes of a violin echoing in an airship terminal—an experience that shocks him to his core. Two centuries later a

famous writer named Olive Llewellyn is on a book tour. She's traveling all over Earth, but her home is the second moon colony, a place of white stone, spired towers, and artificial beauty. Within the text of Olive's best-selling pandemic novel lies a strange passage: a man plays his violin for change in the echoing corridor of an airship terminal as the trees of a forest rise around him. When Gaspery-Jacques Roberts, a detective in the black-skied Night City, is hired to investigate an anomaly in the North American wilderness, he uncovers a series of lives upended: The exiled son of an earl driven to madness, a writer trapped far from home as a pandemic ravages Earth, and a childhood friend from the Night City who, like Gaspery himself, has glimpsed the chance to do something extraordinary that will disrupt the timeline of the universe. A virtuoso performance that is as human and tender as it is intellectually playful, Sea of Tranquility is a novel of time travel and metaphysics that precisely captures the reality of our current moment.

Everyone is welcome. Plan on reading the book prior to attending the book review. Bring your thoughts and come share in the discussion. We plan on meeting on Tuesday afternoon **October 21st at 1:00 p.m.** We are meeting in the Parlor (note the change in location). We hope you will join us.

Volunteer Opportunity Help Spread the St. John Welcome

The congregation is invited to participate as volunteers at the St. John booth at the Metro East Pride Fest on Main Street in Belleville on Saturday, October 4th. We will be sharing information about our church and our church activities with the attendees at the event. Volunteers are asked to fill a 2-hour time slot between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. There will be at least 2 persons at the booth for each time period, and the St. John Community Care booth will be right next to ours. If you are interested in helping spread the St. John welcome at the Pride event, please sign-up on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or call the church office at (618) 344-2526.



Cub Scout Pack 30 will be hosting a **Pancake Breakfast** in Faith Hall at St. John UCC on Saturday, October 25th from 7:00-11:00 am. Tickets – Adults: \$10 in advance/\$12 at the door, Children 6 & under: \$5 in advance/\$6 at the door.

For Tickets Call/Text: Sarah Wilson 618-741-3842 or Jimmy Wilson 618-792-0754.



St. John UCC: Three Pillars that Define Us as a Church in the..

So... What's this Church ABOUT?

Creative Worship & Music

We value excellent preaching, a variety of music styles and instruments, and creativity in our worship! Please share your interests and gifts- all are welcome to be a part of praising God!

Multi-Generational Care

We always strive to widen our welcome and care so all people in the community feel engaged, valued and connected, whether you are a newcomer or longtimer- we love that you are a part of us!

Youth & Community Outreach

We recognize children and youth are the future of the church and they are the heart of our community. Our programs help kids and their families, and people of all ages in need. Our outreach allows us to share Christ with actions and love as well as words!

Do you have one day a week to check on our Blessing Box? Brenda Baum has been checking in twice a week, however the need for food is so great that we realize it should be checked more often Most days, as soon as items are put on the shelves, someone in need is right there to pick them up. St. John UCC does have a small overstock of food that can be put out if someone has the time to stop in to take it out.

Please see Brenda or Amy if you are interested in helping with this very necessary ministry.





Neighbors in Need

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Advocacy is essential to participating in God's mission in the world.

ifts to the Neighbors in Need offering support ministries of justice and compassion in the United Church of Christ, including the UCC Office of Public Policy & Advocacy in Washington D.C.



The UCC Washington D.C. Office was called into being by a resolution at General Synod 10 in 1975. The office was assigned to identify, analyze, and forecast social issues which called for the attention of the church. The work has always been guided by the discernment of the UCC through General Synod gatherings and resolutions that collectively witness to God's call.

Each week the Washington D.C. Office creates an action alert to help give church members the opportunity to contact legislators simply and easily. In 2025 these weekly alerts have encouraged church members to fight for disability housing accommodations, to stop the gun violence epidemic, and to support environmental justice for all.

Extra Step Offering Sunday, October 5, 2025

This special offering goes to the UCC's Neighbors in Need and locally, Hoyleton Youth and Family Services.

Hoyleton is a faith-based, trauma-informed social services agency that has grown to become on of Southern Illinois' leaders in providing emotional and mental health services for every stage of youth and family development. They strive each day to build stronger communities by restoring families, preparing young adults to make positive life decisions, helping parents & guardians be better parents, and providing wellness education to



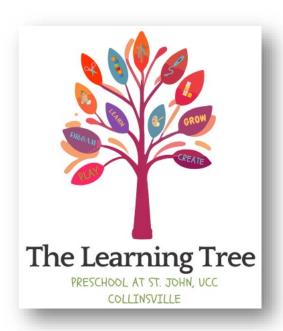
members of our community.

Rarely have I seen a church without some form of ministry that helps feed people. From community meals to food pantries, churches across the country make sure people have enough to eat. But I always wondered, wouldn't it be better if none of these services had to exist. What if everyone simply had enough to eat?

Our churches share compassion by not only providing for the basic needs of our neighbors but also asking deeper questions of why these inequalities exist in the first place. Our immediate call to alleviate the suffering of those around us is paired with a prophetic witness calling for systemic reform.

All congregations in the United Church of Christ are invited to take part in the Neighbors in Need offering to address just this. Two thirds of the offering support justice and witness ministries of the United Church of Christ with one third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Your gifts directly fund the Neighbors in Need grant program. This grant, for UCC congregations and partners, offers funding for both direct service and advocacy projects.

Thank you for your generosity! Rev. Rachel McDonald



We have been very busy welcoming our Learning Tree friends and their families back to school in September! The children and their teacher are learning about each other, flooring class routines and making new friends. Each class has enjoyed several apple themed activities that helped them learn all about apples this month. We also have been talking about our families and working on self-portraits for each child's portfolio.

Turning Point Dance Academy is back offering dance and movement classes to our students after our regular school day. We are happy to have them back with this fun extracurricular activity.

October will be very busy! The Collinsville Fire
Department will be here to talk about the importance of fire safety and let the children
explore the fire trucks and squirt the fire hose. This is always a favorite with the children. We
will enjoy an all-school trip to Relleke Pumpkin patch this month, begin Children's Moments with
Pastor Jenn and have a Halloween parade to show off our costumes. The parades will take place
in Faith Hall on October 29 and 30 at 8:45 a.m. We welcome church
members to join us!

We are looking for volunteers from our church family to help with door duty. If you are interested in helping greet our families at arrival and pick up time, please let us know. Door duty slots are 8:20 - 8:45 and 10:50 - 11:15 a.m.

The classrooms are also seeking toy cash registers for our dramatic play units. If you have one your children or grandchildren have outgrown, please send it our way. Be on the look out at garage sales too!

It is such a blessing to watch each child grow and learn new things!

Gigi Liljegren, (Miss Gigi)
The Learning Tree Preschool Director



2025-2025 Learning Tree Staff:

Heather Freeman Taylor Fuhrmann Julie Cheatham Sarah Wilson

October 2025



COLLINSVILLE FAITH IN ACTION

233 North Seminary Street, Collinsville, IL 62234 Volunteer Caregivers: 618-344-8080

Answers on Aging: 618-344-7788 The Elder Connection: 618-799-9085

Fax: 618-344-3227

"Serve one another in love." Galatians 5:13

The mission of Collinsville Faith in Action is to provide services and information to community members ages 60 and up to promote dignity and independence.

The Collinsville Faith in Action monthly social and lunch takes place the first Wednesday of each month from 11A-1P. Join us for a delicious meal and the opportunity to meet other seniors from the community. Each month we enjoy an activity that's fun and engaging, and there is no charge! Please call to reserve your spot no later than the last Friday of the month. Limited seating so don't delay! 618-344-8080.

Are you ready for Medicare Open Enrollment? Collinsville Faith in Action offers free Medicare counseling from a certified Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) to help you understand your choices. Justin can also help you find assistance to pay for monthly premiums and drug plans. Annual Open Enrollment begins in October and ends in December. Call Justin at 618-344-7788 to set up your appointment today.

Have questions about Medicare, Medicaid, or applying for a discounted license plate or free bus pass? Collinsville Faith in Action's Answers-on-Aging Specialist has answers! Justin makes monthly visits to offer his free services, so you can find him at the Caseyville Library on the second Thursday of each month (2-4P), the Granite City Senior Center on the fourth Tuesday (10A-12P), and Friedens UCC in Troy on the fourth Thursday (1-2P). He also works from his CFiA office located at 233 N. Seminary during standard business hours, so call Justin for your answers on aging! 618-344-7788.

In faith and gratitude, Lisa Ciszczon Brennen, Executive Director

Collinsville Faith in Action is a 501c3 organization funded by donations and grants. Faith traditions and churches within our community support us by referring volunteers. The interfaith volunteers provide services to older community members.





222 Goethe Ave. Collinsville, IL 62234 618-344-5008 www.stjohnscc.org

Caring compassionately for aging and disabled people since 1985

September was our 40th Anniversary celebration and it was SO FUN! Thank you to everyone who came and helped us honor this legacy of community support. We truly enjoyed hearing from past and present and hearing what a blessing St. John's Community Care has been to so many people for so many years.

We do have a new partnership with Senior Services Plus out of Alton! We have worked together for many years, but they are now bringing two programs to us. They will be providing a support group for caregivers providing care for someone with Parkinson's Disease. This group will meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month beginning in October at our 222 Goethe Ave office. They will also be hosting a Tai Chi class every Thursday in the church Atrium at 9am, starting on October 16th.

Becky McNeil is also now coordinating volunteers for many activities. This is a great way to help cover costs at SJCC without sacrificing your own budget. We are looking for people to assist in the Adult Day Program, visiting with participants and doing crafts and activities. We also can use people in a reception capacity or anyone with social media or fundraising skills.

I pray that you have the most wonderful fall season. Thank you all for your continued support of this ministry.

Christine Thurber (she/her)
Executive Director, St. John's Community Care

New Tai Chi Chasses on Thursdays at 9:00 am

Starting October 16, 2025 we will meet in the Atrium of St. John UCC. These classes are designed to support: balance and mobility, improving relaxation, and decreasing pain and falls. A suggested donation of \$6 is appreciated.

Senior Services Plus | 618-465-3298 ext. 109 seniorservicesplus.org/wellness-center







Don't forget about the Free medical equipment load program to help those in need. This program is available at the Collinsville location and is open to anyone who requires equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, bath chairs, crutches, canes, and more. For more information, call 618-344-5008 or visit our website at www.stjohnscc.org.







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Thank You!







Join us for this family-friendly event on Sunday, October 5th, 2025, from 11 am to 5 pm.

We have crafters, live music, delicious food, and more. This is a family-friendly event, so all ages are welcome. Younger guests can enjoy our Kids Korner with many crafts & games, and activities around the grounds. Ride a horse, view the scenic lake, or take a seat and tour our grounds via hay wagon.

We host a Sweet Treat Shop bake sale each year. Help send a child to summer camp! All proceeds from this sale are added to the DuBois Center Scholarship Fund, allowing us to provide summer camp scholarships to children and youth from families with financial challenges.

Fall Events



at DuBois Center

Join us at one of our fall events or retreats! Registration opens July 20. For info or to register, visit duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats.

September 6

Ride Day

Sign up for a ride time that fits your schedule best! 10:30am: Arena Ride for ages 3–7 with parent walking alongside. \$18 per child. 1:00, 2:30, 4:00: Trail Ride for ages 8+. \$30 per rider.

September **26-27**

Men's Retreat

Fishing, boating, and being in fellowship. Come enjoy the Great Outdoors with other men. Friday at 6:30pm – Saturday at 4:00pm.

September **28**

Mother-Son Day

Moms, bring your boys for a day of camp fun! Splash in the creek, row a canoe, shoot archery, and spend time together outdoors!

October **5**

Fall Festival

Join us for our annual Fall Festival on Sunday, Oct. 5, from 11am to 5pm. This family-friendly event features crafters, live music, delicious food, and more!

October **10-12**

Mother-Daughter Retreat

This retreat brings the generations together to celebrate and build relationships for our weekend of relaxing and connecting with the women in your life!



Messy Church Family Retreat

Discover the joy and creativity of Messy Church as we explore interactive worship, hands-on activities, and meaningful conversations designed for **all** ages.

Our Fall Festival is free to enter – parking is free as well. Activities and food are available for an affordable price. This event is great for families, church groups, and friends to get outside and enjoy a beautiful fall day at DuBois!

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October



307 West Clay Street Collinsville, IL 62234 618-344-2526 www.stjohnucc-collinsville.org

the Informer

Address Service Requested Time-sensitive information: Please expedite delivery.

