



# ST. JOHN

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MAEYSTOWN, ILLINOIS

***The Visitor***  
**August 2023**

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## **The Summer 100 Challenge!**

**Thank you! The challenge is going great so far, keep it up for the last month of summer!**  
**“Help me, Help You!”**

*Help me, Help You* by keeping the church support strong through the summer. We are really doing great in our church! Leading up to summer the average attendance has been over 100 and headed to 120! Children participating in Sunday School and in church has been fantastic, 20+ children almost every Sunday! Thank you, parents, and kids! So far this summer we have been very close to the 100 Challenge!

**Let us not lose momentum over the last month of summer.**

**Going to Church Makes God Happy!**

**Church is important for each of us!**

**Church is important for our family!**

**You are important to church!**

**Help me keep our church strong over the summer!**

**“Help Me, Help You!”**

**By**

**Keeping the attendance above 100**

**Summer 100 Challenge**

**If you're in town, you're in church!**

## **The Parable of the Mustard Seed.**

### **Matthew 13:31-32**

<sup>31</sup>He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup>it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

The parable of the mustard seed was the gospel reading for this past Sunday. On its surface it makes a clear point that should not be lost.

The size of a mustard seed is so very small.



Yet it becomes such a large shrub/tree, “greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” In this parable Jesus is the one that sowed the seed. The tree is the gospel. The birds are you and in that find relief in the tree.

The first part of the message is clearly that something that starts out so small can grow exponentially. There was one, then twelve, and today billions of people following Christ. The Gospel has changed the world in countless ways and still transforms our lives today.

The second deeper look, not to take away from the overarching message of the first, is more challenging. The mustard plant consisted of two varieties. One, a vine and the other a shrub. Both were considered the worst of weeds at that time and would have been nearly impossible to get rid of as their root system joined together. No one would want this to grow in their field, no farmer would have planted the mustard seed in their field. The parable presents us with conundrums that force us to see what we cannot see otherwise. The un-welcomed shrub could be a reference to Jesus’ ministry in the midst Jewish tradition. Jesus is an interruption, very much a weed in the minds of the pharisees. He would have been an interruption to the political system of his day. His ministry was a weed to those holding on to the statuesque.

Those sick with leprosy were outcast, seen as inflicted for theirs or their fathers’ sins. Jesus healing them was crossing a line, they were to be untouchable. His healing them sent a powerful message that God heals even those as seen unworthy. Jesus fraternized the wicked tax collectors as well as prostitutes and brings them into salvation. Jesus through his messages called for the Jews to see their enemies as the good neighbor. As in the story of the Good Samaritan, the arch enemy of the Jews. Yes, Jesus would have most certainly been seen as a dangerous weed.

You can also take a more personal look, seeing the weeds in your life as new opportunities to see God working in your life. Seeing the weeds as challenges to be met in Christ. That even hardship can lead to a deeper walk with God. When a hardship meets the grace and power of being one in Christ, we become a reflection of Christ.

You see in few simple words Jesus takes us to a deep and rich place. The Kingdom of heaven is like of all things a mustard seed planted in the field that becomes a massive weed. What made no sense becomes the key to understanding and reimagining a new order, new life, new purpose, new power, new truth!

Can we see the manifestation of God in the most unlikely places and in the most unlikely faces? Can we see our enemies as family? Can we see the outcast as worthy of our time and care? Can we see our hardships as a part of life’s journey that instead of separating us from the love of God brings us closer? If we can authentically challenge ourselves to allow the deeper meaning of the parable to change the way we see the weeds in our life, we will continue to grow into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Peace and Grace  
Pastor

## **St. John's UCC Church Council Minutes - June 26, 2023**

Pastor Poole opened the meeting with a prayer. President Christy Muertz called the meeting to order at 6:31pm. Those in attendance were Drew Watts, Amy Rohlfing, Lisa Schwarze, Cheri Langsdorf, Susan Koesterer, Fay Ross and Mark Rey.

### REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 6, 2023 MEETING

The minutes from the May 6, 2023 meeting were viewed. There were no additions or corrections. Lisa Schwarze made a motion to accept the minutes and Amy Rohlfing seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### REVIEW/APPROVE TREASURER'S REPORT/BILLS/TIMECARD/PASTOR'S EXPENSES

The treasurer's report/ bills/timecard and Pastor's expenses were presented and reviewed. There were no additions or corrections. Cheri Langsdorf made a motion to approve the reports as presented and Mark Rey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor asked the council to be thinking of some ideas of keeping families involved in not only coming to church, but staying connected to other families as a church body. A couple of ideas were tossed around.

Pastor is happy with the attendance in church over the summer, so far. He understands how attendance changes due to summer activities, vacations, etc.

He discussed the upcoming confirmation classes and which families will be involved, reminding everyone that confirmation will change to a two-year commitment

Plans for St. John's Day were discussed.

### COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORTS:

The use of the AED and future unexpected emergencies were discussed and how we might better be prepared in an emergency. Pastor encouraged the council to form a committee as to the protocol on the use of the AED. Cheri Langsdorf, Lisa Schwarze and Drew Watts will head the committee on emergency protocol.

A motion was made by Cheri Langsdorf and seconded by Drew Watts to purchase new pads for the current AED.

### SOUND SYSTEM

Pastor is very happy with the new system. There have been a few bugs to work out, but overall he is happy with the system. The final bill from Alobars was presented. Linda Schmidt took time to review the final bill from Alobars. There was an additional cost for a new microphone, but other than that, all charges matched the estimate presented prior to the work being done. A motion was made by Amy Rohlfing and seconded by Cheri Langsdorf to pay the bill.

### GLENN/LINDA COATS BUILDINGS

The letter was given to the Coats' regarding the buildings currently being used by them, but is on church property. The letter has still not been returned to the council for notarization. It was noted that if the letter is not returned by the August council meeting, the church will not be responsible for any of the property stored in the buildings or injury to anyone using the buildings. The Coats would like to have their attorney look at the wording of the letter before signing and having it notarized. Sandy will encourage them to do so before the August council meeting.

A motion was made by Drew Watts and seconded by Lisa Schwarze to adjourn the meeting. The meeting closed with Pastor leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Sandy Tutka, Secretary

## *Announcements and Other News*

### Parent Appreciation Brunch... Date Change...

#### Mark your calendar!

Our Youth Group is hosting a **Parent Appreciation Brunch on October 22**, immediately following church services. Please make a note of this date change. Join them in the Church Hall for a delicious meal and dessert, all prepared with lots of love by our youth.



### Upcoming Events

- New member classes will be held on Sundays August 20, August 27, and September 10. New members will be welcomed into the congregation on September 17. Please contact Pastor Poole if you are interested in becoming a member at St. John.
- Pew Sisters will meet on Monday, June 17 at 6:30 p.m. Watch Facebook and the Sunday bulletin for meeting location.
- Uni-Pres Kindercottage Fundraiser: Laugh Out Loud, a Christian Comedy Night, is Saturday, August 26 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul UCC Belleville (115 W B St, Belleville). For more information call 618-874-6505 or email [aimee@unipreskindercottage.org](mailto:aimee@unipreskindercottage.org).

### Please keep the following in your prayers

- *Kaylee is getting stronger every day! Thank you for all your prayers!*
- *Debbie Barnes has heart concerns.*
- *7<sup>th</sup> grader Elsa Wiemerslage is receiving treatment for cancer.*
- *Bob Sales, Sr is on hospice. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.*
- *Tim Branson in his battle with cancer.*
- *Scott Stoeckel, as he battles cancer.*
- *Renesmae Brown, she is 3 yrs. old, has autism and now seizures.*
- *Aileen Neeley in your prayers as she battles cancer.*
- *Denise Farmer as she seeks answers for some neurological issues.*
- *Carol Bay is making good head way on her recovery. Please support Carol with a card if you would like.*

*Carol Bay*

*C/O Park Place at Wing Haven  
2002 Boardwalk Place Dr, MC room 158  
O'Fallon, MO 63368*

### Announcements

- July's 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering will support the **Back Pack Program**.
- **Special music on Sunday**, August 6. will be by Kaylee and Julia Muertz.
- **Back to School** - The area children and educators will be heading back to school this month. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin a new school year.

### Thank You Note

My family and I can't thank you enough for the generous 5th Sunday offering. Thank you to the church council and Pastor for thinking of us and thank you to all of you for donating. Thank you to all of those that donated or came and showed your support at the horse show. That is a true testament to how strong our church family really is. Without your prayers and support Kaylee wouldn't be as healthy as she is. She still has a long road ahead but we know with all of you standing behind us and the grace of God she is up for the challenge. Please don't ever forget the power of prayer, it's what truly gets people through the toughest of times. We do great things in and outside of this church! We are grateful and proud to say St. John UCC, Maeystown is our church.

Chris, Christy, Kaylee and Julia

### Acolyte Schedule

August

- 6 - Kaylee Muertz & Maddie Huddleston
- 13 - Rowan Schilling & Chloe Carron
- 20 - Cody Schmitz & Tanner Rosenkranz
- 27 - Lucas Blackwell & Evan Hill

September

- 3 - Evan Hill & Cody Schmitz
- 10 - Hudson Brandt & Jake Coats
- 17 - Ashlyn Crouch & Andrew Stafford
- 24 - Landon Johnson & Owen Carron



### Visitor Report

Beginning Balance	\$138.02
Income -	\$0.00
Expenses -	
U. S. Post Master -	\$54.57
Ending Balance -	\$83.45

I ask that if you are able to make any donations to our Visitor Account please do so. Our account only has enough for our August Visitor. Thanks for your consideration!!

Faye Birk, Treasurer

### Sunday School – Checking Account

Beginning Balance -	\$732.02
Income	
Offering -	\$55.00
Expenses -	\$0.00
Ending Balance -	\$787.02

### Sunday School – Savings Account

Beginning Balance -	\$7478.27
Income -	\$0.00
Expenses -	\$0.00
Ending Balance -	\$7478.27

Faye Birk, Treasurer

### Special Birthdays:

- Larita Mohl celebrates her 60th birthday August 4.
- Linda Green turns 71 on August 8.
- Barry Hoffmann celebrates his 67th birthday August 11.
- And on August 13, Paul Hoffmann turns 73 years old while Lynne Hicks celebrates her 60th birthday.
- Nancy Schilling turns 76 years young on August 15.
- Aileen Neely turns 76 two days later on August 17.
- Eric Pieper celebrates his 70th birthday on August 18.
- Sharon Glessner celebrates her 66th birthday on August 19.
- Ginny Borcharding joins Nancy and Aileen in turning 76 on August 20.
- BJ Henerfauth celebrates her 69th birthday on August 25.
- Brenda Johnson celebrates her 72nd birthday on September 2.
- Cathay Hoffmann celebrates her 65th birthday on September 3, while Laurie Manning and Jay Mueller will both turn 63 the same day, and Kristy Edler will turn the big 5-0 the same day.
- Wallace Altes will turn 82 years young on September 9.

- Ben Yancey will turn 95 years young on September 10, while Elaine Hoerr celebrates her 70th birthday the same day.
- Barb Wischmeyer celebrates her 77th birthday on September 13.
- Sue Taylor celebrates her 69th birthday on September 14.

### Special Anniversaries:

- Dwight & Kathy Asselmeier celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary on August 12.
- Victor & Aileen Neely celebrate their 42nd wedding anniversary on August 15.
- Lyle & ZoeAnn Schwarze celebrate their 41st anniversary on August 21.
- Freeman & Ginny Borcharding close out the month by celebrating their 54th anniversary on August 30.
- Happy 40th Anniversary to Dan & Rita Hoffmann!
- James & Connie Matzenbacher celebrate their 48th wedding anniversary on September 5, while David & Lauren Hesterberg celebrate their 42nd anniversary the same day.



### **August**

DOWN the lanes of August, and the bees upon the wing,  
All the world's in color now, and all the song birds sing;  
Never reds will redder be, more golden be the gold,  
Down the lanes of August, and the summer getting old.

Mother Nature's brushes with paints are dripping wet,  
Gorgeous is her canvas with the tints we can't forget;  
Here's a yellow wheat field—purple asters there,  
Riotous the colors that she's splashing everywhere.

Red the cheeks of apples and pink the peaches' bloom,  
Redolent the breezes with the sweetness of perfume;  
Everything is beauty crowned by skies of clearest blue,  
Mother Earth is at her best once more for me and you.

Down the lanes of August with her blossoms at our feet,  
Rich with gold and scarlet, dripping with honey sweet.  
Rich or poor, no matter, here are splendors spread  
Down the lanes of August, for all who wish to tread.

(Edgar Albert Guest)

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY to**

Christina Faye Rippelmeyer Aug. 1  
 Karen Schwarze Aug. 2  
 Tate Steibel Aug. 3  
 Larita Mohl Aug. 4  
 Leah Hill Aug. 4  
 Konner Stellhorn Aug. 4  
 Robin Evans Aug. 5  
 Blaklee Schwarze Aug. 5  
 Julie Rusteberg Aug. 5  
 Kelli Monroe Aug. 5  
 Grant Coats Aug. 6  
 LilyAnne Poole Aug. 7  
 Caroline Krebel Aug. 7  
 Linda Green Aug. 8  
 Justin Schmitz Aug. 10  
 Amy Roever Aug. 10  
 Barry Hoffmann Aug. 11  
 Layne Prange Aug. 11  
 Jessica Hicks Aug. 12  
 Paul Hoffmann Aug. 13  
 Lynne Hicks Aug. 13  
 Jay Leber Aug. 13  
 Laurie Knoll Aug. 13  
 Robert Mathews Aug. 13  
 Grady Asselmeier Aug. 13  
 Maxwell Schaefer Aug. 13  
 Adam Tyberendt Aug. 14  
 Randy Hicks Aug. 14  
 Jackson Klinkhardt Aug. 14  
 Nancy Schilling Aug. 15  
 Debbie Wischmeyer Aug. 15  
 Rachel Russell Aug. 15  
 Travis Busch Aug. 15  
 Blake Wild Aug. 16  
 Hunter Floarke Aug. 15  
 Aileen Neeley Aug. 17  
 Eric Pieper Aug. 18  
 LJ Rosenkranz Aug. 18  
 Victoria Rippelmeyer Aug. 18  
 Sharon Glessner Aug. 19  
 Jenny Prange Aug. 19  
 Monroe Lillian Vogt Aug. 19  
 Ginny Borcharding Aug. 20  
 Caine Hoeffft Aug. 20  
 Becky Matzenbacher Aug. 21  
 Jenny Krebel Aug. 21  
 Dr. Jennifer Goessling Aug. 22  
 Erik Floarke Aug. 24  
 Jayce Rusteberg Aug. 24  
 Alyssa Andres Aug. 24  
 BJ Henerfauth Aug. 25  
 Chloe LaFollette Aug. 25  
 Camille Hesterberg Aug. 26  
 Harris Stirnaman Aug. 26

Ryan Richeson Aug. 27  
 Laurie Brown Aug. 27  
 Luke Thomas Andres Aug. 27  
 Joy Hines Aug. 28  
 Lauren Hesterberg Aug. 28  
 Stephen Braun Aug. 28  
 Michael Datema Aug. 28  
 Samantha Datema Aug. 29  
 Danny Mueller Aug. 29  
 Betty Levin Aug. 29  
 Lisa Koester Aug. 30  
 Timothy Burns, Jr. Aug. 31  
 Floyd Niebruegge Aug. 31  
 Natalie Rohlfing Aug. 31

Brenda Johnson Sept. 2  
 Madisyn Huddleston Sept. 2  
 Jonathan Wolf Sept. 2  
 Dominic Richeson Sept. 2  
 Sherry Stitzel Sept. 2  
 Kristy Edler Sept. 3  
 Cathy Hoffmann Sept. 3  
 Laurie Manning Sept. 3  
 Jay Mueller Sept. 3  
 Ally Coats Sept. 3  
 Kayla Adkins Sept. 5  
 Noah Rusteberg Sept. 6  
 Jenna Keindenreich Sept. 7  
 Levi Edler Sept. 7  
 Amber Branson Sept. 8  
 Tristan Steibel Sept. 8  
 Teagan Rohlfing Sept. 8  
 Wallace Altes Sept. 9  
 Nolan Finch Sept. 9  
 Mason Hicks Sept. 9  
 William Niebruegge Sept. 9  
 Ben Yancy Sept. 10  
 Elaine Hoerr Sept. 10  
 Susan Roseman Sept. 10  
 Guy Tyberendt Sept. 11  
 Peg Johner Sept. 12  
 Pam Muertz Sept. 12  
 Barbara Wischmeyer Sept. 13  
 Julia Muertz Sept. 13  
 Mallory Meyer Sept. 13  
 Sue Taylor Sept. 14  
 Kadence Keller Sept. 14  
 Adleigh Wilson Sept. 15

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to**

Adam & Stefanie Tyberendt August 2  
 Brent & Lisa Carron August 4  
 John & Robin Evans August 10

Dwight & Kathy Asselmeier August 12  
 Tom & Susan Koesterer August 13  
 Justin & Julie Schmitz August 14  
 Victor & Aileen Neeley August 15  
 Glenn & Linda Coats August 18  
 Lyle & Zoe Ann Schwarze August 21  
 Michael & Laurie Brown August 21  
 Clinton & Amanda Hicks August 22  
 Stephen & Amanda Braun August 28  
 Dan & Sandy Mueller August 30  
 Freeman & Ginny Borcharding August 30

Danny & Rita Hoffmann Sept. 3  
 Tim & Tina Buchanan Sept. 3  
 James & Connie Matzenbacher Sept. 5  
 David & Lauren Hesterberg Sept. 5  
 Nathan & Stephanie Keller Sept. 8  
 Robert & Kelly Mathews Sept. 10  
 Brett & Kate Mueller Sept. 12  
 Scott & Kate Larson Sept. 13  
 Joel & Michelle Vogt Sept. 13  
 David & Sandra Berg Sept. 13  
 John & Juanita Roland Sept. 14  
 Christopher & Christina Muertz Sept. 15

**Friendly Reminder...**

**Shoe Collection ends August 13<sup>th</sup>. There are still a few days left to donate those shoes taking up space in your closet. Bring them to church.**



**Church Financial Report:**

June 2023

Beginning balance:	\$25,410.73
income	\$11,096.34
expenses	\$22,794.32
ending balance 6/30/23	\$13,712.75





# Save the Date!

st. John's Day  
September 17, 2023

MAEYSTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION PARK   
More information to come

THE WHOLE CHURCH IS  
INVITED TO ATTEND!

*Live Music by Terry & Tim*  
*Softball Game*  
*Great Food*







**St. John United Church of Christ**  
1208 Franklin Street  
PO Box 95  
Maestown, IL 62256

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization  
U. S. Postage Paid  
Permit #1  
Maestown, IL 62256

Send email updates, photos & group descriptions to [maestownucc@gmail.com](mailto:maestownucc@gmail.com)

Church: 618-458-6940

Pastor's Cell Phone: 618-340-2372

Website: [www.maestownucc.org](http://www.maestownucc.org)

[pastorpoole123@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpoole123@gmail.com)

“Like” us on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/maestownucc>

***Thought for the day***

*If birds can sing after a storm, so can I!*  
(anonymous)