



AUGUST 2023 NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Pastor Rosemary Captain

Secretary Office Hours: Wednesday, Friday 9 am – 2 pm

Dear brothers and sisters of faith,

Yes, it's hot but I assure you, I'm not preaching fire and brimstone. Gentle persuasion is more my style.

Lately, in our Bible Study and Sunday discussions, we have found stories that perk our ears up. Our first reaction is **"That's not fair!"** When Jesus tells the parable concerning the land owner who hires workers throughout the day and pays them all the same whether they worked for an hour or all day. Our first reaction, **"That's not fair!"** In our Old Testament readings we have been following the saga of Jacob. He is known as a trickster. He does some shady things, yet God seems to reward him for them. **"That's not fair!"**

All games in sports have a distinct list of rules and regulations. The goal is to make the game **fair**. When an umpire makes a bad call (at least we think it was a bad call) we shout names at the umpire and say **"That's not fair!"**

Where did our sense of what's fair come from? I'm guessing that it came from what our parents taught us when we were toddlers. "Share your toys. It's not fair that only you get to play with them." We live in a democracy that is supposed to treat all of us the same. It's only fair.

I think we are looking at this in the wrong way; we are using our human ideas instead of God's. Recently there was an article in Christianity.com that discusses this issue.

"God is beyond our understanding. No one, not even the most intelligent person on earth can really grasp what God desires and what God's plans are. Imagine this scenario: Who would have thought, during the time of the Roman Empire, that God would bring forth God's only begotten son to revive the world against sin? If this was a movie in the theaters, everyone would have been shocked about the twist — God, our Creator, sending God's Son to die to save us." **"Is that fair?"**

"Now, is God fair? This is a tricky question because we think the term fair means equality. Yet, if God is truly fair, then, God would let us all spend eternity in hell paying for our sins, because that is what we all deserve. As it is written, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," ([Romans 3:23](#)).

“It is us who is unfair to God, while God remains to be fair to us? The term “fair” must be really different when we talk about God’s [grace](#). It is synonymous with “just” instead, “He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he” ([Deuteronomy 32:4](#)).

“As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.” Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know.” “There is no fear of God before their eyes ([Romans 3:10-18](#)).

God is so fair that God never shows favoritism. God treats all God’s creations the same. It is written in [Acts 10:34–35](#), “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears God and does what is right.”

These verses remind us that God loves us and gives us great comfort, but also stirs our emotions that we have truly been unfair to God because God is fair to all of us.

Something to think about whenever we yell at an umpire. Are we calling God unfair?

Peace and many blessings, Pastor Rosemary



PENNIES FOR MISSION for August will go to the Food Pantry here in Fairview Heights. Recently they have had an increase in clients. Perhaps it’s because the kids are home for the summer. Which leads to the next request, could you please donate sugary cereal. It’s the most requested item at the moment.

PENNIES FOR MISSION for September will go to the UCC Neighbors in Need fund.

USHERS FOR AUGUST

Aug.'23	6: Judy Schmitt, Chuck Kistler	13: Jan & Tom Miller	20: Sue Williams , Christina Hardin-Weiss	27: Nancy & Jim Eisenhauer	
Sept., '23	3:Jan & Tom Miller	10: Carol Bulva, Eileen Gammon	17: Jane Cohlmeyer, Nancy Eisenhauer	24:Jan & Tom Miller	

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE. I will be out of town on Labor Day weekend. Once again Angie Hausmann will lead worship for me on September 3. Usually, other people take this weekend off, so we will celebrate **Holy Communion** on the **second Sunday** in September instead, September 10.

And speaking of **Communion Sundays**, we usually have Fellowship time after worship including some snacks. We could use some more people to volunteer to host these Fellowship times. We have money in the kitty to help with expenses. There is a sign-up sheet in the L room on the bulletin board. Thank you in advance.



OUR FRIENDS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND WORSHIP

Jeanette Brown
5904 Perrin Road
Fairview Heights, IL 62208

Yvonne Weber
200 St. Clair Dr.
Fairview Heights, IL62208

Darlene Schaperkoetter
1258 Larkspur Dr.
Mascoutah, IL 62258

Becky Ballard
1211 Moreland Apt. 12
Belleville, IL 62223



Ivy Schneider
213 Merriweather Ln.
Fairview Heights, IL 62208



**CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF
Mariella Gianino and Nancy Smith.**

AMONG OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| 8/3 | Jeanette Brown | 8/12 | Joe Bulva |
| 8/4 | Bill Underwood | 8/13 | Donald Krieg |
| 8/5 | Eric Moayer | 8/23 | Amanda Hamilton |
| 8/7 | Brad Eisenhauer | 8/23 | Cindy Harris |
| 8/9 | Mike Stidham | 8/23 | Rebecca Kistler |



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES:

- | | |
|------|----------------------------|
| 8/6 | Gene & Sue Ganschietz # 46 |
| 8/26 | Gary & Carla Warning # 45 |

An Anniversary Thank You:

"Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for surprising Steve and me with the beautiful bouquet during worship for our 45th Wedding Anniversary. I love fresh flowers and the bouquet is beautiful. The flowers have a special place in our kitchen. Thank you for the cards and other greetings on Facebook. Each of you have made the day more special by thinking of us.

Sincerely,

Steve and Sharon

PRAYER LIST: Carson Edwards, Yvonne Weber, Marilyn Paul, Beth Sheldon, Mary Holcomb, Syd Safriet, Ronald Bopp, Rosemary Williams, Becky Ballard, David Seneczyn, Urban Baum, Luz Captain.



It will soon be September, and choir will once again be singing. It will be so good to have a group together again!

YOU are welcome to sing with the choir. My goal is to fill the sanctuary with sound! We sing once a month, so I'm not asking for a weekly commitment. We'd love to have you.

Nancy Eisenhower



ATTENTION LADIES!

The free dress giveaway is back for Homecoming in the Fall! We will be giving out beautiful dresses, long and short, one per student, on Saturday, August 26, 8am -noon. Goodwill donation is optional. If you are able to help, please contact Carol Bulva.

August

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am Fellowship time after worship	7	8	9	10 Hearts & Hands daytime Quilters 10-2 pm Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting	11	12
13 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am	14	15	16	17 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting	18	19
20 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am	21	22	23	24 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting	25	26 Dress giveaway 8am-Noon
27 Service of Word & Sacrament 10 am	28	29	30	31 Bible Study via Zoom at 6:30 pm AA Meeting		

