

Beloved Church Family,

Breathing is a necessary function of life. As adults, we can go about one minute or so without air (or more if you've trained your body). That short timeframe doesn't give us much leeway when we find ourselves unable to breathe. Thankfully, God designed our bodies to breathe without even being aware of it most of the time, so it's one of those things we don't worry about until we need to. It could be an infection, panic attack, allergic reaction, asthma, sleep apnea, or other illness limiting your respiratory function, or it could be an accident, like choking on dinner, taking a rogue soccer ball to the stomach, or falling flat on your back off the monkey bars, that makes breathing difficult. No matter what causes it, when our bodies can't access enough oxygen, it can feel really scary.

I'm sure it wouldn't be difficult for any of us to call to mind a memory of a time when air was hard to come by, either for us or someone close to us. It will be hard to forget the terrified look on Cora's face after she had the wind knocked out of her on the bumper cars a few years ago, and just this week, a rebellious piece of hard taco shell tried to take me down during my lunch break. In both instances, the breathing difficulty didn't really last a long time, but when you're struggling to breathe, even seconds feel like they last forever.

In the second chapter of Genesis, we bear witness to the version of the creation story in which God formed the earth and needed someone to tend it. God formed the first human from the very dust of the earth and breathed into their nostrils the gift of life. The sacred air that the first human breathed was the exhalation of God, and I imagine that same breath continues to expand our lungs and fill us with life today. While we might not often remember to pay attention to our breathing, it is there, faithfully sustaining us, from our first moment to our last. Paying attention to that sacred breath within and around me was one of the things I was able to lean into during my sabbatical last summer.

Because our lungs are created to work without needing our attention, it's easy to forget what a miracle our breath really is. Therefore, we must be intentional about the time we wish to focus on the rhythmic inhale and exhale of air in our bodies. I was first introduced to the idea of focusing on my breath after I started to experience panic attacks in my late teens. When the panic would start, it became difficult to regulate my breathing, and I would soon find myself taking quick, shallow breaths. Focusing on my breathing helped slow down my body and my mind, and it also became a time of prayer for me, as I visualized God's spirit expanding within me on each inhale and surrounding me in a comforting embrace on each exhale.

I knew that the interweaving of breath and prayer had been a meaningful spiritual practice for me in the past, and so, I purchased a few books on breath prayer to read over my sabbatical months. Each prayer in these books was meant to be repeated in rhythm with slowed and intentional breaths, and while there are so many different ways to pray like this, I'd like to share a few of the breath prayers that I found especially calming and centering with the hope that they might be helpful for you, too.

- One of my favorites uses words of Psalm 46:10 to encourage trust in God.
 - o Inhale: “Be still and know...”
 - o Exhale: “...that I am God”
- Another uses the well-known words from beloved Psalm 23.
 - o Inhale: “The Lord is my shepherd...”
 - o Exhale: “...I shall not want”
- One pulls from St. Francis of Assisi’s prayer for peace.
 - o Inhale: “Let there be peace...”
 - o Exhale: “...and let it begin with me.”
- In times when you don’t know what choice is right...
 - o Inhale: “Grant me your wisdom...”
 - o Exhale: “...Show me the way”
- When sleep won’t come...
 - o Inhale: “Quiet my mind...”
 - o Exhale: “...give me rest”
- When panic or fear are on the rise...
 - o Inhale: “I breathe in your peace...”
 - o Exhale: “...I breathe out my worry”
- When you have made a mistake...
 - o “Forgive me, God...”
 - o “...help me to choose a better way.”

GRANT ME YOUR WISDOM...



...SHOW ME THE WAY

QUIET MY MIND...



...GIVE ME REST

These short, yet powerful prayers are a wonderful way to calm ourselves, connect with God, and remember the sacred breath we have within us. I encourage you to try breath prayer sometime this month. You can use one of the prayers above**, choose a favorite verse, or pray whatever is on your heart. I hope that this spiritual practice might bless you as it has blessed me, and just as the sacred breath of God fills your lungs, I pray that these prayers might fill your heart with comfort and your spirit with hope.

With Love and Hope, Pastor Christy Smith

***See page 8 of newsletter for Breathing Prayers to cut out and use*



Special Services in May

- **Sunday, May 12: Confirmation & Mother's Day** - Join us as we confirm Hannah Thompson and honor the women who nurture and look after us.
- **Sunday, May 19: Pentecost & Graduate Recognition** – We will be celebrating the birth of the Christian Church so we encourage you to **WEAR RED** on this day to signify the fire of the Holy Spirit. **Do you have someone in your family who is graduating this year from kindergarten, 8th grade, high school, college, university, graduate school, or trade school?** If so, send in their name, what school they’re graduating from, and where they’re planning to go next. We will also be taking the Strengthen the Church offering on this day.



St. John Prayer List

Chris Bates	Jed Bates	Lois & Stan Clark	Greg Erdmann
Cathy Haller	Denise Hamilton	Leon Jones	Pauline Kraemer
Marian Nelson	Billie Rinderer	Orville Rinderer	Rogers Family
Mickey Williamson	Connie Zimmers		

Ken Erdmann	(Greg Erdmann's brother)
Ken Fritz	(Cathy Haller's brother)
Richard Haller	(Cathy Haller's brother-in-law)
Kurt Joseph	(Pastor Christy's friend)
Logan Miller	(Ron & Kimberly Tremmel's son)
Wendy Patterson	(Pastor Christy's cousin)
Tammy Press	(Marian Funk's niece)
Connie Shildt	(Marian Funk's sister)
Gary & Carol Weshinsky	(Laura Wesselmann's father & mother)
Craig Wheeler	(Kim Tremmel's friend)



Pastor Christy is usually in the office Tuesday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM but will make appointments if needed. Contact her by calling her cell phone at 618-973-3040. Bev Adams, office administrator, will usually be in the office 9 AM to 3 PM, Monday through Friday, but her schedule may vary. Please contact her at stjohntrenton@gmail.com or call 224-9828 .



Pauline Kraemer May 1
Sherman West May 1
Lynn Kunz May 1
Alex Von Bokel May 5
Ian Henderson May 13
Patrick Robison May 14

Dan Holloway May 14
Courtney Davis May 18
Max Wesselmann May 18
Jo-Allison Rogers May 21
Benjamin Lucas May 24
Jim Atwood May 25



Bryan & Nicole Wernle May 20
Barbara & Jeral Szpila May 21
Shelby & Jim Atwood May 24



**MAY COUNCIL
 MEMBER ON DUTY**



Mary Lou Lurtz

Virtual Worship Services

Virtual services continue for those wishing to attend. We want to make worship as convenient as possible for our members and the community. Please see our website or our Facebook page for the Zoom link.

- To call in with phone audio only, call
- **1-312-626-6799** and then the meeting ID:
- **8436488110** followed by the pound sign.
- Password, if needed, will be: **62293**



- *To everyone who helped with the rummage sale with donations, sorting, organizing, fixing signs, placing signs, getting flyers*

out, advertising and working at the three days of the rummage sale. It's a fundraiser that is labor intensive but low cost overall and we appreciate everyone's efforts. Special thanks to Mary Lou Lurtz, Pehg Zeller, Lonna Patton, Elaine Hoffmann, Susan Heiser, Laurie Henderson and Joyce & Gary Kniepkamp, Cathy Haller, Billie Rinderer and Marian Funk for spending multiple hours sorting, organizing and working on displays.

A preliminary accounting is that this fundraiser made \$5,097.10!

- *To Mike Williamson who continues to do maintenance work behind the scenes*
- *To Zach Bugger, Pastor Christy's fiancé, who has generously volunteered to mow the church lawn this mowing season.*



BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will be meeting on Wednesday, May 8, at 1 PM to discuss their newest pick, "Tom Lake" by Ann Patchet which is available for check out in the church library.

Trivia Corner

Questions this month will be about Pentecost, which is May 19th.



1. Ten days after Jesus ascended, all the apostles gathered in one place. What three extraordinary things happened then?
2. What was the explanation given by the people living in the town for what the apostles were saying?
3. Which apostle gave a speech to the townspeople about the history of Jesus being the Messiah?
4. What did this apostle say people needed to do?
5. About how many people did as he said?
6. What was life like for those people afterwards?

Answers are on page 5

GREETING CARDS



Don't forget to sign the greeting cards in the vestibule when you come to worship service on Sundays. The Sonshine Ministry appreciates your help in keeping connected

with members.

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The Fellowship Breakfast is the first Tuesday of the month at 8:00 AM at Good Ol'



Days in New Baden. Breakfast dates: May 7, June 4, July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5 & Dec. 3.

Come join us for an enjoyable breakfast with others. It's a time for great conversation, food and fellowship. Everyone is welcome!



DuBois Center News

Illinois South Conference has announced that Jason and Leah Petry have been hired as Co-Interim

Executive Directors of DuBois Center. They are former staff members who have served in various capacities at DuBois. Jason will start his ministry on May 10 to ensure a successful summer season and Leah will begin on August 5. A letter of the search process is in the narthex and on our website for those who wish to read it.

♥♥♥♥ Women's J.O.Y. Fellowship ♥♥♥♥



John Zeller made the run to Kindercottage this month. The request was for cleaning supplies and we sent two bottles of toilet bowl cleaner, a bottle of dish detergent, a gallon of bleach, 6 bottles of multi-purpose cleaner, two bottles of glass cleaner and a refill bottle, two packages of disinfectant wipes, and two bottles of liquid cleaner. In addition, some plastic utensils which didn't make it on time last month were included and a box of children's books from the rummage sale went to the Lending Library at Kindercottage. **We won't go to East St. Louis until the second week of August. That delivery is for school supplies.** You can drop off school supplies on Tuesdays when the vestibule is open or on Sundays. Any kind of school supply needed by your children or grandchildren is needed at Kindercottage.

Brown Bag Lunches

It is time again for packing lunches for children who might otherwise go without a lunch time meal. St. John's day is Tuesday, and we lead off the program on the day after Memorial Day. The lunch menu is set: a sandwich with meat and cheese, a bag of chips, a drink, a fruit or veggie, and a sweet treat. We always pack a little something as a reminder that the children are loved by Jesus and by our congregation. Our dates are May 28 through August 13 and we begin at 10:30 in the morning. It takes about 30 - 45 minutes to complete the lunches and then they are delivered to Base 215 for distribution. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Please indicate if you can supply a sweet treat the day you help pack lunches. It is not necessary but it is special to have homemade cookies or brownies. Please have them individually wrapped. You will be called the day before with the number of lunches we are packing the following morning. If you are not able to supply a sweet treat, don't worry, there will be treats on hand.



Trivia Corner Answers

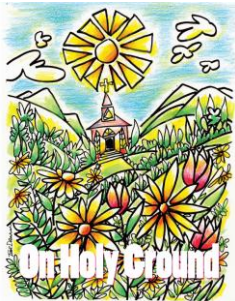
1. The three extraordinary events were:
 - A sound like the rush of a violent wind came into the house
 - Tongues of fire appeared and rested on the apostles
 - They spoke in other languages (Acts 2:1-4)
2. Some townspeople thought the apostles were drunk. (Acts 2:13)
3. Peter was the apostle who spoke words from the prophets Joel and David showing that Jesus, who the townspeople crucified, fulfilled the prophecy. (Acts 2:14-36)
4. Peter said the townspeople needed to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ so their sins could be forgiven and to receive the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:37-38)
5. About three thousand people were baptized.
6. The new believers spent time together, helped each other out with whatever was needed, ate together, praised God and loved each other as their numbers increased. (Acts 2:43-47)



Council Meeting Highlights – April 23, 2024

- .Discussion regarding a portable security fence for preschool use
- .Discussion about mutual ministry evaluation
- .Follow up discussion regarding the rummage sale and people to thank
- Next meeting date is Tuesday, May 21 at 6:00 PM.

Strengthen the Church



The Strengthen the Church Offering furthers the work of our conference and the national UCC as we work together to strengthen and renew existing congregations, fund leadership development, and provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults. You can send a donation to St. John UCC, 21 N. Walnut, Trenton, IL 62293 or go to our website, stjohnucctrenton.org and click on "Support Our Church." We will be accepting Strengthen the Church donations on Pentecost Sunday, May 19th.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School (sponsored by Trenton FUMC & St. John UCC)

Where? Trenton FUMC,

When? June 3, 4, 5, 6

What time? 6:00-8:00 pm June 3, 4, & 5 and 6:00-7:00 pm June 6

Who? Ages 4 through 5th grade (grade completed this year)



Plans for VBS are coming along very well. St. John needs to supply a few more workers. **We need one person to work Registration each night and two more "kid herders". And we need KIDS.**

Registration forms can be obtained in several ways for your convenience:

- Online at St. John's and First United Methodist's website at <https://stjohnucctrenton.org/> and <https://trentonfumc.com/> and on their Facebook pages
- Pick up in the Narthex (turn in to the office or hand to Pehg Zeller)
- Print last page from this newsletter to fill out and send to St. John, 21 N. Walnut, Trenton or First United Methodist, 3324 Old US Hwy 50, Trenton
- Contact either church to request forms – First United Methodist Church at 618-224-7364/email office@trentonfumc.com or St. John UCC at 618-224-9828/email stjohnrenton@gmail.com.

☞ Registration deadline is May 31 ☛

Participants are asked to bring a non-perishable item for the Green Bean Food Pantry.

Rainbow Preschool News

Greetings everyone!! I cannot believe another month has quickly buzzed by us. It's hard to believe in just a few short weeks our school year will be coming to an end and summer vacation will start. This is both exciting and scary at the same time as we prepare our students in the M/W/F for the next chapter in their life, Kindergarten.



By the time you read this we will have completed our alphabet box and homework. Our students did a great job listening and saying the letters, bringing in items each week for the letters we were learning about, and completing homework and turning it in.

Pastor Christy stopped in and read the books “The Empty Pot” and “Room on Our Rock”. Both classes enjoyed both books and look forward to having Pastor Christy stopping by in May to read.

Our younger class have completed many alphabet, coloring, cutting, counting, and a few craft projects this month. They have been working hard on writing their name on their own and some have started to learn to write their last name. It is an amazing feeling to see them writing their names on their own with little to no help from us.

Our older students have been busy as well as they have been working hard on their addresses and telephone number and preparing for kindergarten screenings. They have completed numerous projects this month ranging from writing letters of the alphabet, adding and subtraction, writing words, and a few craft projects. Both classes have had a busy month of learning.

Happy April birthdays to Jemma S. on the 10th, Brody D. on the 13th, Piper R. on the 16th, Ms. Lisa on the 17th, and Ashton P. on the 28th. Thank you all for bringing in delicious treats to share with your classmates. We would like to thank the Preschool Board for purchasing the book “Maybe God Is Like That Too” for our students.

Please mark your calendars for our end of the year program. The program will be held on Wednesday May 15th at 7 pm. Students need to be in the classroom by 6:30 pm. If your child will not be attending the program, please let me know. Tuesday/Thursday students will need to attend on Wednesday May 15th and will need to be at school by 8:30 and we will dismiss students at 11:30.

We are still enrolling students for the MWF and TU/TH classes for the 2024/2025 school year. If you know anyone that is interested in our program, please have them email us at rainbowpreschooltrentonil@gmail.com, message us on our facebook page, or by calling the office at 618-224-9828.



Just a few reminders for the month of May

- -Tuition is due by Thursday May 2nd and Friday May 3rd
- -Last day of school will be Thursday May 16th and Friday May 17th.
- -If anyone would like a summer workbook they are \$10. If you would like one please let me know.
- I will be holding summer class on Tuesday's starting June 4th.

Summer class is open to children ages 3-5 and cost is \$20. Class time is 8-10 and 10:30-12:30. If you would like to enroll your child please send me a message on our facebook page or by emailing me at rainbowpreschooltrentonil@gmail.com. I am putting together summer workbooks and selling them for \$10. If you would like to purchase one please let me know.



Breathing Prayers

BE STILL AND KNOW...



...THAT I AM GOD

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD...



...I SHALL NOT WANT

LET THERE BE PEACE...



...AND LET IT BEGIN WITH ME

GRANT ME YOUR WISDOM...



...SHOW ME THE WAY

QUIET MY MIND...



...GIVE ME REST

I BREATHE IN YOUR PEACE...



...I BREATHE OUT MY WORRY

FORGIVE ME GOD...



...HELP ME TO CHOOSE A BETTER WAY

Print and cut out prayers to put in a place to remind you to BREATHE!

Camp Firelight VBS Registration 2024

(One form per child) Registration deadline: May 31, 2024

Child's name _____

Date of birth _____ Age _____ Last School Grade completed _____

Parent/Guardian name(s) _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Phone numbers: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Home church (if any) _____

HEALTH/EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

Allergies/Special needs/Medical conditions/Other:

Emergency contacts:

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Name(s) of person(s) who may pick up this child from VBS

Photo Release: Trenton First United Methodist Church/St. John United Church of Christ VBS has my permission to use my child's photograph publicly in VBS materials. I understand the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee, or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Parent/Guardian's signature

Return completed form to one of the following:

St. John UCC, 21 N. Walnut Street, Trenton, IL 62293

Trenton First United Methodist Church, 3324 Old US Highway 50, Trenton, IL 62293

Email to vschoene@gmail.com