



THE REMINDER

April 12, 2024

Why does CHURCH HURT sometimes?

Why Does Church Hurt Sometimes?

"To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken." - C.S. Lewis

In its many different expressions, we know that the church is somehow supposed to be about love. We have this image of a group of people who have presumably formed community around the cause of celebrating a gracious God made known to us in Jesus, the Savior who helps broken and hurting people become whole, generous, service oriented citizens of an eternal, divine kingdom. What we can often find, though, is the pain that happens when the reality of broken and hurting people in the process of healing encountering one another in a setting that we thought was supposed to be nurturing and safe. Sometimes the love we invest in the community that we hope will function as family for us encounters the reality of other fallible and wounded people, those hurting people who occasionally hurt people. Sometimes this occurs within something that can feel like an institution focused more on self-preservation than a relationship that nurtures people to grow in health. All of these things can contribute to a deep hurt - the kind that doesn't just shake our relationship with a church, but the God the church is meant to represent.

Over the month of April, we're going to examine a couple of the major causes that contribute to church hurt. Those of us within the church have probably both been the recipients and inadvertent causes for some of the hurt, and my hope is that we'll reflect in healing ways. Those who are not aligned with the church may find that our struggles are nothing new, and Jesus was facing these same concerns 2000 years ago when He was drawing people together through faith.

April 14 WDCS? - Hypocrisy Matthew 23:1-12

April 21 WDCS? - Infighting Acts 15:36-41

April 28 WDCS? - Restoration Matthew 21:12-16

Join us through the remainder of this month as we ask "Why does church hurt sometimes?" As we do, we'll search together for healing and hope. You're invited!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Grant



Why does **CHURCH** HURT sometimes?

SERMON NOTES

- I. Hypocrisy in faith communities gives heavy religious demands, but no hint of grace.
- II. We practice a form of hypocrisy when we desire to elevate ourselves above others.
- III. Our hypocrisy paints a false picture where we put on a show to appear better than we truly are.

FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

- Have you ever done any acting in a show or play? If so, what show and role? If not, is there a role you'd like to play?
- Most of Matthew 23 involves Jesus calling out the religious elite for their hypocrisy. Why do you believe that was so important to Jesus?
- What is it about legalism that has often proven so appealing to religious communities? Why do you suppose that is?
- What are some examples of things Jesus did to show His humility? How did people respond to that aspect of Jesus?
- Are there any good reasons why church people may put on a false face in the community of the church? How can we as a community counter that temptation?
- If Jesus were in front of you right now, where might He encourage you to humbly be more honest about who you are? With whom could you safely share that truth?
- What is God saying to you through today's scripture?





Why does **CHURCH HURT** sometimes?

Scripture of the Week

Matthew 23:1-12

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach. They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden. "Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi.' "Don't let anyone call you 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters. And don't address anyone here on earth as 'Father,' for only God in heaven is your Father. And don't let anyone call you 'Teacher,' for you have only one teacher, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.



YouVersion Download the [YouVersion](#) Bible app.



Spring Quilt Retreat at St John's UMC

April 12, 2024

9am – 9pm

AND

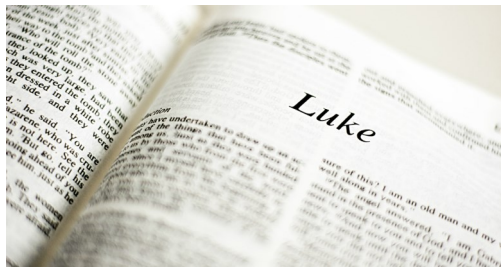
April 13, 2024

9am – 4pm

*See Jan Denby for a flyer or
more information.*

New Bible Study, April 14

April 14 a new Bible study will begin using the book of Luke with video by Adam Hamilton! Everyone is welcome!



April 21
Noon
Fellowship Hall

**The UWF CINNAMON ROLL Sale is
Sunday, April 21, at a cost of \$3.00 each!!!**

Get in line immediately following the 9:00am
worship service. They sell out quickly!!! All
proceeds support our mission work!!!



United Methodist General Conference Updates

Delegates from around the world representing the United Methodist Church will come together for the gathering known as General Conference that typically occurs once every four years. This General Conference is taking place in Charlotte, North Carolina from April 23 to May 3. This group of delegates will reflect on the theology, governance and practices of the United Methodist Church in ways that will impact United Methodist people all around the globe. Please pray for this gathering and the future of the denomination of which St. John's is a part. If you would like more information about General Conference, please visit: <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020>



Book Group, April 28



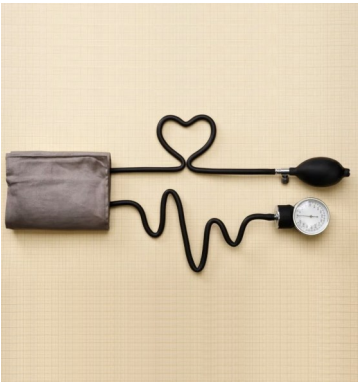
April 28th is the date for the next Book Group discussion. Lois Green will lead the discussion of *The Guncle* by Rowley, a novel about a single gay uncle who has been given temporary custody of his niece and nephew while their Dad is trying to put his life back together after the death of his wife. While this book does show handling grief can take many forms, there are many delightful events as the former TV star tries to find ways to navigate the new way of life with a six and nine year old. Anyone who wishes to join us is welcome at 6:30PM at Jeri Lampman's house. Participants read the book before the meeting, but that is not a requirement for anyone wanting to come and enjoy the company of the group.

Youth Sunday
SAVE THE DATE!

May 5,
2024

YOUTH GROUP @
6:30 P.M.

Youth Group meets every Sunday evening for all students in sixth through 12th grades and focuses on growing each student's faith through community and discipleship activities.



Monthly Blood Pressure Screenings

First Sunday of Every Month
Next Screening: May 5, 10-11am
in or near the Fellowship Hall

♦HEARTLAND CAMPS♦

ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Day Camp

June 10th-14th, 2024

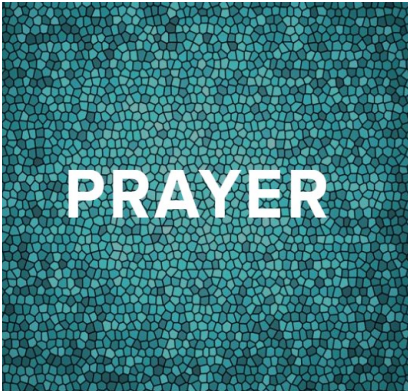
HeartlandCamps.org/St-Johns-UMC



JOIN THE ST. JOHN'S UMC TEAM!

PART TIME DIRECTOR OF CONNECTION AND DISCIPLESHIP:

Responsible for facilitating healthy and helpful first steps into the life of the church, following up with guests and visitors, and promoting discipleship through internal and invitational communication. View full job description and apply: [Director of Connections and Discipleship](#)



Prayer & Care

How can we pray for you? Submit a request at thenewstjohns.com/prayer

Prayers and Praises:

- All unspoken prayers and praises of our congregation.

Call (618) 792-0171 for Pastoral Care.

ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONNECT with us:

The church office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday through Thursday.

7372 Marine Road - Edwardsville, IL
62025 (618) 656-1853 thenewstjohns.com



/thenewstjohns



St. Johns UMC

Access all happenings @ thenewstjohns.com/calendar



St. John's United Methodist Church

WORSHIP WITH US!

9:00 a.m. Traditional | 11:00 a.m. Contemporary

in-person & online at thenewstjohns.com/worship

Our Vision

to be a beacon of faith and service, focusing our passions and gifts to reflect Christ's love to the world.

Our Purpose

to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Our Values

knowing, loving and serving God.