**St. John United Church of Christ**

***“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”***

January 3, 2021 Second Sunday After Christmas/Epiphany

9:30 a.m. Worship (618) 877-6060

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WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN John 1:10-18

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory…(John 1:14a)

PRELUDE *Three Holy Kings* Gliere

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF CONFESSION

 From *“Arise, Your Light Is Come!”*

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Arise, your light is come! The Spirit’s call obey;

***Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.***

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;

***Proclaim the captive’s liberty, good tidings to the poor.***

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,

***Bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.***

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!

***Rise up like eagles on the wing, God’s power will make us strong.***

Let us pray together.

***Holy One, your love is great for all your people, and especially those in need of extra Good News. Yet at times we neglect our call to share the Good News. At times we close our eyes to the needs of others, and refuse to shine your light into the darkness. Forgive us, O Lord, and inspire us to share the wealth of your blessings with joy and praise in our hearts. Amen.***

-2-

RESPONSIVE PROPHETIC READING OF FORGIVENESS Isaiah 60:1-6

 The third prophet Isaiah spoke God’s word of mercy and the people’s response, saying: Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

 ***For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;***

 But the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

 ***Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.***

 Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you;

 ***Your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses’ arms.***

 Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,

 ***Because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.***

A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come.

 ***They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.***

HYMN ***“We Three Kings of Orient Are”*** Verses 1 & 2

***We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.***

***Refrain: O-o star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,***

***westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

***Born a king on Bethlehem’s plain, gold I bring to crown him again,***

***King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign.***

***Refrain:***

FIRST GOSPEL READING Matthew 1:1, 17-25

-3-

SOLO *One Ling’ring Star* Eliot

SECOND GOSPEL READING Matthew 2:1-12

HYMN ***“We Three Kings of Orient Are”*** Verses 3 & 4

***Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a deity night; prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high.***

***Refrain: O-o star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

***Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom: sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.***

***Refrain:***

THIRD GOSPEL READING Matthew 2:13-23

HYMN ***“We Three Kings of Orient Are”*** Verse 5

***Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice; Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.***

***Refrain: O-o star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

MEDITATION The Sock Drawer Challenge

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, LORD’S PRAYER & RESPONSE

 ***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.***

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION & BLESSING

 ***Bless the gifts we offer, O Lord, that your Light may shine everywhere. As we begin this new year, we re-commit ourselves to wise and generous stewardship of your gifts to us, offering our time, talent, and treasure with joy. Amen.***

-4-

INVITATION TO COMMUNE, AS INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT

As we prepare our tables for Christ’s supper, let us recall the words of Mary in responding to the angel’s announcement that she would bear a son and name him Jesus.

***Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord;***

***let it be with me according to your word.”***

May we, likewise, respond to our call to be servants of the Lord, and through this Sacrament be inspired to serve as God’s agents of love today.

 ***May our spirits be filled with hope and blessing.***

All are invited to receive the gifts of this Holy Meal shared with:

 ***“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace.”***

COMMUNION PRAYER

BLESSING AND PARTAKING

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

 ***In this Holy meal we have met you, the Holy One. And now we pray that your Light will shine through us as light for the world. Transform us into a people of hope, love, and justice; so that in this new year we speak and act as your faithful servants in all our days. Amen.***

HYMN ***“As with Gladness”***  Verses 1, 2 & 4

***As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;***

***as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,***

***so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore your splendor see.***

***As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed, there to bend the knee before him whom heaven and earth adore,***

***so, may we with willing feet ever seek the mercy seat.***

***Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;***

***and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last***

***where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.***

-5-

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *A Song for the Trumpet* Paxton

“Happy New Year! Welcome to worship, one and all. May the peace of Christ be with us as we greet the new year.

The bulletins are given in loving memory of the birthday of **Herb Bischoff** by Herb and Jeanie Bischoff, Jennifer, Britt, Alex and Nick.

If you would like to place flowers in the background of Zoom worship, and pick them up Monday, please call Donna Streid at 877-7767. If you would like to sponsor the bulletins please call the church office at 877-6060. Upcoming available dates are January 10 and 31, February 7 and 28.

In January our Mission of the Month is a **“Pick-a-Mission”** option. Everyone is asked to seriously think about all the mission projects we have supported in the past, as well as new ones or your personal favorites, and pick one, or more, for extra gifts. Send your donations directly to the organization, or, send them to the church office if we have directly supported them in the past, clearly identified so the counters can properly credit them and forward them in February. Here are some ideas, but the options are limitless. Illinois South Conference UCC programs like DuBois Center, Hunger Action Fund, Hoyleton Ministries, and Kindercottage. Granite City programs like Community Care, Good Samaritan House, APA, Bread of Life for when they begin serving again, Re-building Together, and TWIGS. National/International programs like Heifer Project, Souper Bowl of Caring, Habitat for Humanity, USO, Salvation Army, support and service organizations, and the many various medical support associations. Many of us have charitable organizations that are important to us. In January let us help them begin the new year with our extra donation of resources, or our time volunteered.

**Cemetery Committee** will meet on Thursday, January 7, at 5:00 p.m. at the Maryville Chapel.

**Next Sunday** please have a small bowl of water at your worship space.

**OUR PRAYERS**

We extend our Christian sympathy to the family of **Richard W. Buer** who died on Thursday, December 24, 2020. A funeral service was held on Tuesday, December 29, at Schrader Funeral Home in Ballwin, MO.

-6-

May the peace and comfort that comes from God sustain his loved ones during this time of grief.

**Nursing and Assisted Living**

Loretta Cook, JoAnn King, Karen Luddeke, Shirley Thompson, Mary Lee Krohne, and Ruth Buer.

**At Home**

Ritch Alexander, Isabella Boyer, Marlene Brokaw, Myra Cook, Randy Fischer, Bonnie Fornaszewski, Mary Franz, Norman Hente, Bill McAmish, Billie Meyer, Cliff Robertson, Valara Schorfheide, Merle Rose, June Stille, and Don Young.

**Illinois South Conference**

New Baden St. John UCC, Rev. Stephen (Molly) Stark; New Hanover Zoar UCC, Rev. R. J. (Lisa) Morgan; Retired Pastor Rev. Dr. Sheldon Culver.

**Sympathy**

Family of Olen Hermes

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**1**An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

**17**So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

**18**Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19**Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. **20**But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21**She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” **22**All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

**23**“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
    and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” **24**When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, **25**but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

-7-

**2**In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, **2**asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” **3**When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4**and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. **5**They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

**6**‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
    are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
    who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

**7**Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8**Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” **9**When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10**When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11**On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12**And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**13**Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” **14**Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, **15**and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

**16**When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to

-8-

the time that he had learned from the wise men. **17**Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

**18**“A voice was heard in Ramah,
    wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
    she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

**19**When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, **20**“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” **21**Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. **22**But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. **23**There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”