**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

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| --- | --- |
| December 26, 2021 |  First Sunday after Christmas (C) |
| Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor | Ritch Alexander, Organist |
| 9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship | 9:30 Sunday School for Children |
| 2901 Nameoki Road | Granite City, IL 62040 |
| E-stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com |  (618) 877-6060 |

Web-stjohnuccgranitecity.com

**Currently face masks are REQUIRED for all.**

Large print bulletins are available from the Ushers.

***Bold italic denotes congregation reads or sings.***

\*Denotes all who are able, please stand.

**WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD**

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC, WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* Lani Smith, Arr.

**CHRIST CANDLE LIGHTING1**

READINGS BY PASTOR AND LITURGIST

CAROL ***“O Little Town of Bethlehem”*** Vss. 1 & 2, #180

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER Adapted from Isaiah 11 & Luke 2

Today, we come to worship in the spirit of God’s peace, proclaimed long ago, yet for all of time. Isaiah said,

***“The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a child shall lead them.”***

What high expectations for a leader in those days, and eventually for the Prince of Peace.

***It is the Prince of Peace’ lowly and wondrous birth we celebrate once again.***

Luke tells us that when Jesus was born, the spirit of God’s peace seemed hidden by oppressors and decrees, yet peace would come in Bethlehem of Judea. As required, Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to be registered, and;

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***“While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child…and she laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”***

Because Jesus was born, the world could never be the same. No powers could destroy God’s peace. No blows of fate could crush God’s love. Hope came into the world as never before. And so, today, there is room in every home and heart.

 ***Jesus is born! The spirit of God’s peace is ours forever!*** Let us pray together:

***Be near us, Lord Jesus; we ask you to stay, close by us forever. We pray with thankfulness that you love us, and ask you to bless us, and all the children of the world, with your tender care. We welcome you into our lives, and we promise to honor you not only this Christmas season, but every day, as we join the angels to offer praise and glory, and to rest in your peace forever. Amen.***

\*CAROL ***“O Come, All Ye Faithful”***  #182

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

 (Adapted from John 1 and the Nicene Creed)

Let us affirm our faith together:

***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing was created. The life that was in him became light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.***

***We believe in the one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.***

***Let your light shine in us and through us. O Child of Bethlehem, come to us. Amen.***

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 9:2-7 pg. 600

CAROL ***“Joy to the World”*** Vss. 1 & 2 #179

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FIRST GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:1-7 pg. 54

CAROL ***“Away in a Manger”*** #203

SECOND GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:8-20 pg. 54

REFLECTION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”*** #191

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & UNISON LORD’S PRAYER

 ***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

OFFERTORY *Lift Up Your Heads* Lani Smith, Arr.

\*RESPONSE ***“What Child Is This”*** Vss. 1 & 3 #184

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,**

**while shepherds watch are keeping?**

**This, this is Christ the King,**

**whom shepherds guard and angels sing;**

**haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,**

**come peasant, king, to own him;**

**the King of kings salvation brings,**

**let loving hearts enthrone him.**

**Raise, raise the song on high, the Virgin sings her lullaby;**

**joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

 ***These gifts represent our joy as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and honor our commitment to serve in his name. Let us join the shepherds in returning home, glorifying and***

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***praising God to everyone. And like Mary, may we treasure the promise of salvation in our heart forever. Amen.***

THE LIGHTING OF OUR CANDLES

(Please tip your unlit candle into the flame of the lit candle. Watch Pastor Frost, who will lead us when we’re ready to begin singing.”

HYMN ***“Silent Night”*** #186

(We will sing the first verse in German

followed by the entire carol in English.)

***Stille nacht! Heilige nacht!***

***Alles schlaft, einsam wacht***

***Nur das traute, hoch heilige Paar***

***Holder Knab’ im lockigen haar,***

***Schlaf in himmlischer ruh,***

***Schlaf in himmlischer ruh.***

***Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright***

***Round yon virgin, mother and child.***

***Holy infant so tender and mild.***

***Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.***

***Silent night! Holy night!***

***Shepherds quake at the sight;***

***Glories stream from heaven afar,***

***Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;***

***Christ, the Savior, is born!***

***Christ, the Savior, is born!***

***Silent night! Holy night!***

***Son of God, love’s pure light,***

***Radiant beams from thy holy face,***

***With the dawn of redeeming grace,***

***Jesus, Lord, at thy birth; Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.***

BENEDICTION AND EXTINGUISHING OF CANDLES

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\*POSTLUDE  *Joy to the World* Franklin Ritter, Arr.

**1**http://storage.cloversites.com/imagodeichristiancommunityhawaii/documents/Advent\_Candle\_Readings-2011.pdf

Welcome to worship as we continue to revel in the Christmas season. Friends, we’re glad you’re here!

The **bulletin** is given in memory of Geno Smart by Karen & Michael Smart.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up Monday, please call **Patty Bade** at 618-610-0350. If you would like to sponsor the **bulletins**, please call the **church office** at 877-6060.

Thank you to **Karen Gaines** for serving as liturgist today and to **Chris McMillan** for serving as guest organist.

**THIS WEEK**

Today: In-person and Zoom Worship, 9:30 a.m.

 Sunday School for Children, 9:30 a.m.

 Game Night, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Monday: **OFFICE CLOSED**

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

 Bell Choir, 6:00 p.m.

Friday: **New Year’s Eve, OFFICE CLOSED AT NOON**

Saturday: **New Year’s Day**

Next Sunday: In-person and Zoom Worship, 9:30 a.m.

 Sunday School for Children, 9:30 a.m.

 Communion & Noisy Offering

**SCRIP (GIFT CARDS)**

Thank you to all who ordered gift cards thorough the scrip program. Because of YOUR support, the 2021 calendar-year contribution to the general fund was $418.80. This is only a drop in the bucket when you analyze the entire year’s budget, however, even small amounts make a difference! No further orders this year and taking a break for the month of January. Plans are to resume the program in February with orders

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submitted to the vendor company the third Sunday of each month.

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

In Advent, which began November 28, we are again using TWIGS Advent Calendars and collecting specified food items for the take-home bags for children in the area.

We are collecting baby gifts for the Church Women United layette program. Gifts may be brought throughout December and placed under the Christmas tree.

December is also the month for the annual UCC Veterans of the Cross-Christmas Fund special offering. This offering is used through the national setting of the UCC Pension Board to assist retired clergy and spouses with very low pensions, as well as lay workers and those with special emergency needs in individual circumstances. Special envelopes were attached to the Herald are available in the pews for this offering. Please put your regular offering envelope number on the Christmas Fund envelopes to help our counters give proper credit.

Thank you for your heartfelt mission donations to serve God’s beloved family.

In **January**, our Mission of the Month will be designated for UCC Disaster Ministries. These donations will be used to provide housing, food and meals, and family needs for those who were affected by the storms that caused devastation in parts of the Midwest on December 10, 2021.



**JANUARY FOOD BOXES**

On January 22, 2022, the church will be sponsoring a community food giveaway for those in need. One hundred and seventy-five boxes will be packed with nonperishable and fresh food items. Scout organizations have been asked to help fill these boxes, but church volunteers will be needed as well, especially the day the

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boxes are distributed. Specific dates and times for packing will be decided and announced at a later date. This is a new mission, endeavor, and challenge for giving by our church and its congregation.

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing & Assisted Living**

**C****edarhurst of Edwardsville**, 7108 Marine Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025

 Carol Hildebrand, Room B18

**Cedarhurst of Granite City, Memory Care**, 3432 Village Lane, Granite City, IL 62040

 JoAnn King, #215,

**The Fountains of West County**, 15826 Clayton Rd, Ellisville, MO 63011

Ruth Buer, #215

**Granite Nursing & Rehab**, 3500 Century Dr, Granite City, IL 62040

 Karen Luddeke

**Meridian Village**, 27 Auerbach Pl., Glen Carbon, IL 62034

Mary Lee Krohne, #611 (Call Linda Nitchman for updates)

**Villas of Holly Brook**, 121 S. Bluff Rd, Collinsville, IL 62234

 Hilde Few, #208

**At Home**

Ritch Alexander, 2243 Cleveland, G.C., IL 62040

Isabella Boyer, 4722 S. Hazel, Edwardsville, IL 62025

Marlene Brokaw, 112 Summit Rdg., Maryville, IL 62062

Myra Cook, 4034 Stearns Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Randy Fischer, 2517 Edison Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Bonnie Fornaszewski, 200 Carlson Ave., Apt. 17D, Washington, IL 61571

Mary Franz, 3117 Willow Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Lou Hasse, 2689 Westmoreland Dr. Unit 2, G.C., IL 62040

Norman Hente, 3708 Joyce St., G.C., IL 62040

Bill McAmish, 3320 Colgate Pl., G.C., IL 62040

Sandy Mueller, 308 Warson Ln., G.C., IL 62040

David Oliver Jr., 2716 Dale Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Cliff Robertson, 2336 O’Hare Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Merle Rose, 2447 Waterman Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Marge Schmidt, 4857 Danielle Court, G.C., IL 62040

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June Stille, 49 Riviera, G.C., IL 62040

Janice Weeks, 2650 Iowa, G.C., IL 62040

Don Young, 112 Summit Rdg., Maryville, IL 62062

**Illinois South Conference**

Carbondale Church of the Good Shepherd, Rev. Kim (Dr. Aaron Newcomb) Magwire. Carlinville, Rev. Katrina Palan. Retired Pastor, Rev. Jack Spratte and Barbara VanAusdall, Mascoutah, IL.

Please continue to pray for the people who are dealing with tornado damage and the loss of family and friends.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Luke 2:1-7**

**2**In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2**This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3**All went to their own towns to be registered. **4**Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. **5**He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. **6**While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. **7**And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Luke 2:8-20**

**8**In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9**Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10**But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: **11**to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12**This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” **13**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, **14**“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” **15**When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem

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and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” **16**So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. **17**When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; **18**and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **19**But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. **20**The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



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**CALL FOR INFORMATION**

Bell Choir – Talk to Kathy Morris, 618-210-6095

Cemetery - Talk to Kathy Montgomery, 618-876-5811

Chancel Choir – Talk to Ritch Alexander, 618-451-5092

Council – Talk to Karen Orr, President, 618-558-4192

Caslyn Brandes, Vice-President, 618-802-1152

Dine to Donate – Talk to Bev Meyer, 618-451-6849

Evening Guild – Talk to Christie Roth, 618-931-6194

Financial Reports – Talk to Mike Seibold, Treasurer, 618-792-4301

Angela Potter, 618-877-6060 church office

Heavenly Stars – Talk to Betty Meszaros, 618-451-1968

Karen Gaines, 618-288-0845

Herald – Talk to Angela Potter 618-877-6060 church office

Hilltoppers – Talk to Dee Roethemeyer, 618-876-6860

Historian – Talk to Sandy Dawson, 618-931-3467

Men’s Brotherhood – Talk to Chuck Hasse, 618-876-0936,

Dave Douglas, 618-452-3336

Quilters – Talk to Sandy Dawson 618-931-3467

Doris Peterson 618-877-1606

Sausage Dinner – Talk to Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072

 Nancy Jacobs, 618-931-0673

Scrip Orders – Talk to Melissa Lane, 314-575-7627 or Betty Meszaros 618-451-1968

Sunday School – Talk to Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072

Youth Fellowship – Talk to Sharon O’Toole, 618-797-1802

***“O Little Town of Bethlehem”***

***O little town of Bethlehem,***

***How still we see thee lie!***

***Above thy deep and dreamless sleep***

***The silent stars go by.***

***Yet in thy dark streets shineth***

***The everlasting Light;***

***The hopes and fears of all the years***

***Are met in thee tonight.***

***For Christ is born of Mary,***

***And gathered all above,***

***While mortals sleep, the angels keep***

***Their watch of wondering love,***

***O morning stars, together***

***Proclaim the holy birth,***

***And praises sing to God the King,***

***And peace to all on earth.***

***“O Come, All Ye Faithful”***

***O come, all ye faithful,***

***Joyful and triumphant,***

***O come ye, O come ye***

***To Bethlehem;***

***Come and behold him,***

***Born the King of angels;***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***Christ, the Lord.***

***Sing, choirs of angels,***

***Sing in exultation,***

***Sing, all ye citizens***

***Of heaven above;***

***Glory to God, all***

***Glory in the highest;***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***O come, let us adore him,***

***Christ, the Lord.***

***“Joy to the World!”***

***Joy to the world! the Lord is come;***

***Let earth receive her King;***

***Let every heart prepare him room***

***And heaven and nature sing,***

***And heaven and nature sing,***

***And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.***

***Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;***

***Let all their songs employ;***

***While fields and floods, rocks hills and plains***

***Repeat the sounding joy,***

***Repeat the sounding joy,***

***Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.***

***He rules the world with truth and grace,***

***And makes the nations prove***

***The glories of his righteousness,***

***And wonders of his love,***

***And wonders of his love,***

***And wonders, wonders of his love.***

***“Away in a Manger”***

***Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,***

***The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;***

***The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,***

***The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.***

***The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,***

***But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.***

***I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky***

***And stay by my side until morning is nigh.***

***Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to say***

***Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.***

***Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,***

***And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.***

***“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”***

***It came upon the midnight clear,***

***That glorious song of old,***

***From angels bending near the earth***

***To touch their harps of gold:***

***“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,***

***From heaven’s all gracious King”:***

***The world in solemn stillness lay***

***To hear the angels sing.***

***Still through the cloven skies they come,***

***With peaceful wings unfurled,***

***And still their heavenly music floats***

***O’er all the weary world;***

***Above its sad and lowly plains***

***They bend on hovering wing,***

***And ever o’er its Babel sounds***

***The blessed angels sing.***

***For lo, the days are hastening on,***

***By prophets seen of old,***

***When, with the ever-circling years,***

***Shall come the time foretold,***

***When peace shall over all the earth***

***Its ancient splendors fling,***

***And all the world give back the song***

***Which now the angels sing.***