**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| December 5, 2021 | Second Sunday of Advent (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

*Variation on “Veni Emmanuel”* Lasky

Diagram

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**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING1**

READINGS BY PASTOR AND LITURGIST

UNISON PRAYER

***Dear God, You are our heart’s home. Your home is safe, loving, and eternal. But, so many of your children are trapped in homes that are not safe. Or they are forced to leave homes that are—for nightmares they barely escape.***

***You chose to incarnate yourself into a family that had little else but love on the night you were born. Rescue us from the danger of being obsessed with ourselves so that we can see both the needs, and the hope, around us.***

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***Draw us closer to your light as we draw closer to Christmas. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.***

SONG ***Light a Candle Bright and Tall*** Verse 2

***Light a candle bright and tall***

***For the Peace we wish to know.***

***Peace on earth for great and small***

***God’s Good News to us bestow.***

***Shine within our hearts today;***

***Come, O Peace, to us, we pray.***

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER Adapted from Philippians 1:3-16

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: “I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you.”

***We, too, hold God’s people in our heart and prayers.***

Paul prayed that their love might overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight, so that in the day of Christ they might be pure and blameless.

***We also seek to determine what is righteous, and to do what is best.***

Paul encouraged the faithful to proclaim the Gospel of Christ with goodwill and love,

***Which we do, to the glory and praise of God.***

Let us pray together.

***Thank you, O God, for drawing us to worship this day. Inspire our thoughts and prayers to hold genuine hope for peace among all. Help us lead the way with righteousness that shines your light and announces your mercy, as we prepare again this Advent season. Amen.***

\*HYMN  ***“Prepare the Way, O Zion”*** #152

\*UNISON AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(Adapted from John 1 and the Nicene Creed)

***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.***

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***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 LESSON Malachi 3:1-4 pg. 838

SPECIAL MUSIC *Silent Night*  Ritch Alexander, arr.

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 1:68-79 pg. 54

REFLECTION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates”*** #176

INSTALLATION OF 2022 COUNCIL & ALTAR GUILD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & SUNG LORD’S PRAYER

***The Lord’s Prayer*** (One Amen) #740

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *Fanfare on Angels We Have Heard on High* Gray

\*RESPONSE ***“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”*** Vs. 2 #154

***O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer***

***our spirits by thine advent here;***

***Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,***

***and death’s dark shadows put to flight.***

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

***As we prepare our lives for Christmas joy, we rejoice to give offerings that tell of our love for you, O God. May these gifts shine your light everywhere, so that hope and peace are known by all, through Jesus our Savior. Amen***

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INVITATION All confessing Christians are invited to partake.

COMMUNION PRAYER

BLESSING AND PARTAKING

Congregation will be told when to open each element.

\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

***In this Holy meal our hearts have been touched by your love, Holy One, and we thank you. And now, we pray that your light brings peace on earth, goodwill to all, as prophets have proclaimed and angels sung. Our hearts are prepared, and our hands are ready to serve. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.***

\*HYMN & NOISY OFFERING

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

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE  *Steadfast in Faith* Arneston

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

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“Blessed be the Lord God [who] has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them” (Luke 1:68, NRSV). We gather for worship as the redeemed of the Lord. Welcome.

The **bulletin** is given in celebration of the December 4th Birthday of my Daughter Sarah and in loving memory of the December 8th Birthday of my Mother Dorthea Kirksey by Denise McGee.

The **altar centerpiece** is given in memory of the 82nd Birthday of Leon Stromlund on December 11th. Love, Trish.

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.

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**Thank you** to Connie Ahlers for serving as liturgist today.

**Thank you** to those who helped with the cemetery decorations: Karen Gaines, David Gaines, Mike Walker, Leroy Schaefer, Bob Hollenbeck, Jack Dawson, Bob Jacobs, and Roger Kriegel. Your work is greatly appreciated.

**THIS WEEK**

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

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

Communion & Noisy Offering

Fellowship Hall Reserved, 11:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Installation of Council & Altar Guild

Monday: Al-Anon, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Evening Guild Christmas Potluck, 6:30 p.m.

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.

Thursday: Council Meeting, 5:00 p.m.

Granite City Community Band Rehearsal, 6:45-

9:30 p.m.

Friday: Church Women United Christmas Party, 11:30 a.m.

Saturday: Children’s Program Rehearsal, 9:30 a.m.

Cemetery Christmas Party, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

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

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

Special Music & Sunday School Program

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We extend our Christian sympathy to the family of Loretta Cook, who passed from this life on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. A graveside funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 6, 2021 at Sunset Hills Cemetery.May the peace and comfort that come from God sustain her loved ones during this time of grief.

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**SCRIP (GIFT CARDS)**

Please see Betty Meszaros in Fellowship Hall today after worship to pick up cards that were ordered before Thanksgiving or to give her a new order. Complimentary cardholders while supply lasts. Orders submitted today will hopefully arrive for delivery next Sunday, Orders will also be accepted on 12/12 with again hopeful delivery on the following Sunday. If you are not attending worship in person and want to order gift cards, you can send a note with your check payable to St. John UCC to the church office. Delivery

arrangements will be coordinated. If you mail to the office next week, please let Betty know so she can include with the 12/12

order in case the postal service is delayed. Her telephone numbers are 618-451-1968 or cell 618-670-5267 and email

blmesz@yahoo.com. Contact Betty or Melissa Lane at 314-575-7627 if questions.

**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 will also once again collect baby gifts for the Church Women United layette program. December 12, when we have the Special Music and Sunday School program, is the special collection day, but 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 are attached to the Herald and will be 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.

**CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

There will be a rehearsal for the Children’s Christmas Program on December 11th at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

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**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP**

This year, we will offer a Christmas Eve Candlelight worship service which will begin with pre-service organ music. The

lighting of the Christ Candle will occur at 11:00 p.m. and we will close with the traditional candlelight *Silent Night*.

**EVENING GUILD**

Want to join the TOW Club? Not another roadside assistance plan, but Together On Wheels for members or guests wanting to

attend an Evening Guild meeting the first Monday of a month at 6:30 PM. If you are no longer comfortable driving at night or if you would be willing to give someone else a ride, please contact Evening Guild member Betty Meszaros @ 618-670-5267. Matchups will be arranged if possible. The December 6th Meeting is a potluck Christmas party. Great food and a fun evening! No meeting in January.

**BROTHERHOOD**

St. John Brotherhood will be hosting their Christmas Party on Monday, December 13th. All are welcome to join for a fun evening! The meal will be catered by Maggie’s Catering and we have fabulous bunko prizes in store! Tickets are $12.00 and reservations are **required** and should be made no later than **December 9th.** To make a reservation, please call the church office 618-877-6060.

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing & Assisted Living**

**Cedarhurst 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,

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**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

**Hospital**

Rose Marie Bauer is at St. Louis University Hospital.

**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 **(Lou has been transferred to Rehabilitation Institute of St. Louis, 4455 Duncan Ave.)**

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

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**

Belleville St. Paul UCC, Rev. Michelle (Aaron Brent) Torigian. Belleville Trinity UCC, Pastor Tim (Shea Powers) Reed. Retired Pastors, Rev. Donald and Anne Sabbert, Crestwood, MO.

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**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Malachi 3:1-4**

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. **2**But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is

like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; **3**he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. **4**Then the offering of Judah and

Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Luke 1:68-79**

**68**“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. **69**He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, **70**as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, **71**that we

would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. **72**Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, **73**the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us **74**that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, **75**in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. **76**And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, **77**to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. **78**By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, **79**to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

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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

***“Prepare the Way, O Zion”***

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***Prepare the way, O Zion,***

***Your Christ is drawing near!***

***Let every hill and valley***

***A level way appear.***

***Greet One who comes in glory,***

***Foretold in sacred story.***

***Oh, blest is Christ that came***

***In God’s most holy name.***

***He brings God’s rule, O Zion;***

***He comes from heaven above.***

***His rule is peace and freedom,***

***And justice, truth, and love.***

***Lift high your praise resounding,***

***For grace and joy abounding.***

***Oh, blest is Christ that came***

***In God’s most holy name.***

***Fling wide your gates, O Zion;***

***Your Savior’s rule embrace.***

***His tidings of salvation***

***Proclaim in every place.***

***All lands will bow before him,***

***Their voices will adore him.***

***Oh, blest is Christ that came***

***In God’s most holy name.***

***“Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates”***

***Lift up your heads, O mighty gates:***

***Behold, the King of glory waits!***

***The King of kings is drawing near,***

***The Savior of the world is here.***

***Fling wide the portals of your heart:***

***Make it a temple set apart***

***From earthly use for heaven’s employ,***

***Adorned with prayer and love and joy.***

***Redeemer, come! I open wide***

***My heart to you: here, Lord, abide!***

***Let me your inner presence feel:***

***Your grace and love in me reveal.***

***So come, my sovereign, enter in!***

***Let new and nobler life begin!***

***Your Holy Spirit guide us on,***

***Until the glorious crown be won.***

***“The 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.***

***“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, good-will 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.***