**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| December 4, 2022 | Second Sunday of Advent (A) |
| Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor | Chris McMillan, Guest 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 RECOMMENDED**

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

  *Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring*  Bach

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE**



ADVENT LITURGY AND SCRIPTURE

SUNDAY SCHOOL LIGHTING OF THE SECOND BLUE CANDLE

UNISON PRAYER

 ***Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years you have given peace to your people. Help us to have your peace in our lives. We pray that in this Advent season, we may, by what we do, show your presence to the sick, to the***

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***hungry, and to the lonely, so that they too may have peace. Amen.***

HYMN ***Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*** Verse 2 #153

CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER Adapted from Isaiah 11:1-10

The prophet declared: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

***The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.***

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

***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 little child shall lead them.***

The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den.

***They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge or the Lord.***

Let us pray together.

***Holy One, we pray for your peace to wash over the earth as your kingdom come. May all the peoples hear your prophets’ calls for righteousness and peace. As we are drawn together by your Spirit to worship in unity and diversity, may we find hope and peace, through Jesus the Savior of the world. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”*** #155

\*RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING Adapted from Psalm 72

 May the king judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice, O God.

***May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.***

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give

deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

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 ***In the king’s days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.***

May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

***May the kings of the world bring gifts, may all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.***

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

***Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.***

**INSTALLATION OF 2023 COUNCIL AND ALTAR GUILD**

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

EPISTLE READING Romans 15:4-13 pg. 153

ANTHEM *Only a Baby Came* Chancel Choir

GOSPEL READING Matthew 3:1-12 pg. 2

MEDITATION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”***

Vss. 1, 4 & 5 #156

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND SUNG RESPONSE

 ***“The Lord’s Prayer”***  (1 amen) #740

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* Varner

\*RESPONSE ***“The First Noel”*** Vs. 5 #229

***Then entered in those wise men three,***

***full reverently upon their knee,***

***and offered there in his presence***

***their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.***

***Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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 ***We have heard the prophets’ calls to justice and righteousness, to compassion and generosity. May these tithes and offerings represent our commitment and share hope and peace, in Jesus’ name. Amen.***

INVITATION

This is the second Sunday in Advent, the time of preparing for the coming of Christ our Savior. Advent is a time to wait, to wonder what is yet to come.

***Today we have lit the first two Advent candles as signs that we wait with hope and peace—we wait for God’s new age, we wait for Christ to be reborn in our hearts; we wait for our prayers to be answered.***

Yet while we wait, we do not sit idly by. We participate in the preparations. We partake of the peace that comes from knowing our hearts are made ready. In this Holy Sacrament, we receive spiritual strength and peace for our wait.

 ***O come, O come, Emmanuel, come to us we pray. Amen.***

COMMUNION PRAYER WITH CONFESSION

PREPARING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

(The United Church of Christ practices “Open Communion”, inviting all to partake.)

\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

 ***In this Holy meal we have met you, the Holy One. And now we pray that we might have hope and peace with one another and with all creation. Guide us to your coming glory, so that all the peoples may rejoice together, in the holiness of your righteousness. Amen***

\*HYMN AND NOISY OFFERING FOR GOOD SAMARITAN HOUSE ***“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”*** #190

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE *Festive Postlude* DeCou

Welcome to the promise of Advent: Amid barren trees, Isaiah announces spring growth – a “shoot” representing new life. (11:1)

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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 honor of Marilyn & Cliff Robertson’s 65th wedding anniversary by their family.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Karen Orr** at (618) 558-4192. If you would like to sponsor the **bulletins**, please call the **church office** at (618) 877-6060.

Thank you to **Rev. Charles Preston** for serving as the advent candle reader, to **Eleanor Reynolds** for serving as liturgist, to **George & Kiki Cochran** for greeting, and to **Chris McMillan** for serving as guest organist today.



**THIS WEEK**

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

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

 Communion & Noisy Offering

 Installation of Council & Altar Guild

 Fellowship Hour by Marilyn Robertson

 Confirmation, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m.

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

 Evening Guild, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m.

 Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.

 Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday: Rehearsal for Poms in Fellowship, 9:00 a.m.

Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

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

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

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

 Music Sunday

 Confirmation, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

 Scrip Order Deadline

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**THANK YOU**

Dear St. John UCC Church Family,

 Thanks cannot express how much I appreciate your outpouring of love for Ritch and myself during these past few weeks. All the flowers were lovely and I will place the stone in my garden next spring and will remember how much you all loved him. God’s blessing to all of you,

 Love,

 Nancy Alexander

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

Our December Mission of the Month includes the Veterans of the Cross offerings, Kindercottage, and the Layette program. Our Christmas Eve offerings are designated to the General Fund.

**EVENING GUILD**

The Evening Guild Christmas potluck will be **tomorrow, December 5th**, at 6:00 p.m. Remember to bring a side dish to share. There will be no meeting in January.

**BROTHERHOOD**

The Brotherhood is having their Christmas Dinner& Bunko **next Monday, December 12th** at 6:30 p.m. Reservations are required, please RSVP by **Monday, December 5th**.

**SCRIP**

If purchasing gift cards is part of your Christmas shopping list, please consider the convenience of ordering through the program at church plus our church receives an automatic rebate to the general fund. December 11th will be the last time orders will be submitted in 2022. Shipment will hopefully arrive for distribution the following week. Order forms of “favorites” and the master list of vendors are located on the table in the narthex. Give your order form along with your check payable to St. John UCC to Betty Meszaros at any time. It will be held until December 11th. If you mail your order to the church office, please give Betty a quick call to alert her as mail delivery is unpredictable. If you do not have an order form, just include a note of what you want to purchase. Cost is face value of card with no tax or service fee. Saves you shopping time and gasoline. No orders will be submitted in January. Contact Melissa Lane 314-575-7627 or Betty Meszaros 618-451-1968 for additional information.

**CEMETERY**

Christmas is upon us and if you haven’t yet purchased your loved ones grave pieces there are still some available. Christmas Blankets,

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Pillows, Wreaths, Bouquets, and Children’s Blankets are available for purchase through the Cemetery Office. If your loved one is at one of the St. John Cemeteries we will be more than happy to place them once they are purchased on your loved one’s grave(s). If your loved one is at a different cemetery, pieces can be picked up from the Maryville Office. To order your florals just give us a call at 618-876-5811.

A BIG THANK YOU to Kiki Cochran, Jack Dawson, Dave Douglas, Garret Garner, Chuck Hasse, Mike Walker, and Jim Watson for all their assistance in placing the Christmas Grave Decorations. A special thank you to Betty Meszaros for the yummy desserts she provided for lunch that day.

**SHOP WITH A COP**

On **December 18th** we will be hosting a luncheon in Township Hall which will service over 100 people who participate in the shop with a cop program. We will need volunteers to serve the food! Please contact Mike Seibold (618-792-4301) or the church office to sign up.

**YOUTH FELLOWSHIP**

Our Youth Fellowship is once again sponsoring a child from Uni-Pres Kindercottage of East St. Louis. This year’s child is a boy named Ayden Murray who is 2 years old. In the past, some congregation members have wanted to contribute to our mission project, so we are including the following information if you are interested.

The following are Ayden's sizes:

     Clothes Size – 3T

     Shoe Size – 8c

     Underwear Size – 3T

He also likes any age appropriate toy for 2 year olds.

If you choose to purchase item(s) for Ayden you will need to drop off items(s) wrapped (Note: in years past they always wanted everything unwrapped, but this year they are asking for the item(s) to be wrapped) to the church office no later than Sunday, December 11, 2022. Here are additional ways to help Uni-Pres Kindercottage during Christmas with the following donations:

Cleaning Supplies – Bleach, Disinfectant, Vanish, Comet, Bathroom Tub & Tile Cleaner, and Clorox Wipes

Paper Products – Paper Towels, Napkins, Bathroom Tissue, and Styrofoam Plates.

PPE Supplies: Masks for Adults and Children, Latex Gloves Size L, and financial donations are always welcomed.

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You may also send a donation to Uni-Pres Kindercottage, 564 Veronica Avenue, East St. Louis, IL 62205 and they will do your shopping for the child sponsored or donation of supplies. Just make a check payable to Uni-Pres Kindercottage and write in the memo section “Child’s Christmas Gifts or cleaning supplies, etc.” and a set of Santa’s Elves will go out shopping for you. If you have any further questions you may contact Sharon O’Toole at 314-420-1548. Thanks in advance for your help! -Youth Advisors, Sharon O’Toole & Kelly Gaines, and Youth Fellowship.

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

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

 JoAnn King, #113,

**Eden Village**, 200 S. Station Rd., Glen Carbon, IL 62034

 Earl & Marcia Buenger, Apt 9219

**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)

Leonard Schaefer, #475

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

 Hilde Few, #208

**At Home**

Chloe Affolter, 577 Newhart Dr., G.C., IL 62040

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

Carol Braundmeier, 2228 Nevada, G.C., IL 62040

Marlene Brokaw (hospice), 112 Summit Rdg., Maryville, IL 62062

Christopher Clark, 2223 Lincoln Ave., G.C., IL 62040

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

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

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

Luitgard Fries, 4117 Old Alton Rd., G.C., IL 62040

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

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

Chuck King, 3258 Kilarney Dr., G.C., IL 62040

Cindy Meyer, 2206 Lynch Ave., G.C. IL 62040

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Sandy Mueller, 308 Warson Ln., 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

Nancy Wilson, 4062 Sarah St. Apt 81, G.C., IL 62040

**Illinois South Conference**

Fieldon UCC, Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo. Floraville St. Paul UCC, Pastor Matt (Laura) Friz. Retired Pastors, Revs. Earl Menchhofer and Pamela Smith, Conyers, GA.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Romans 15:4-13**

**4**For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. **5**May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, **6**so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **7**Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. **8**For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors **9**and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, “Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name”; **10**and again he says, “Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”; **11**and again, “Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”; **12**and again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope.” **13**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Matthew 3:1-12**

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, **2**“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” **3**This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ” **4**Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. **5**Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, **6**and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

**7**But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to

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flee from the coming wrath? **8**Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, **9**and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. **10**Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. **11**“I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12**His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

**Try our QR code! This little square will take you directly to our secure MyVanco website where you can contribute to any of our various funds. Just follow three simple steps:**

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1. **Open your smart phone’s camera app**
2. **Aim the camera at the black and white square below and a link will appear on your screen.**
3. **Click the link and you’ll be directed to our donations website. From there, you can select a fund to which you’d like to make a contribution. Thank you!**

***“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”***

***Born thy people to deliver,***

***Born a child and yet a king,***

***Born to reign in us forever,***

***Now thy gracious kingdom bring.***

***By thine own eternal Spirit***

***Rule in all our hearts alone;***

***By thine all sufficient merit***

***Raise us to thy glorious throne.***

***“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”***

***“Comfort, comfort now my people;***

***Tell of peace!” so says our God.***

***Comfort those who sit in darkness***

***Mourning under sorrow’s load.***

***To God’s people now proclaim***

***That God’s pardon waits for them!***

***Tell them that their war is over;***

***God will reign in peace forever!***

***For the herald’s voice is crying***

***In the desert far and near,***

***Calling us to true repentance***

***Since the Kingdom now is here.***

***Oh, that warning cry obey!***

***Now prepare for God a way!***

***Let the valleys rise to meet him,***

***And the hills bow down to greet him!***

***Straight shall be what long was crooked,***

***And the rougher places plain!***

***Let your hearts be true and humble,***

***As befits his holy reign!***

***For the glory of the Lord***

***Now on earth is shed abroad,***

***And all flesh shall see the token***

***That God’s word is never broken!***

***“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”***

***On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry***

***Announces that the Lord is nigh:***

***Awake and listen for he brings***

***Glad tidings of the King of kings.***

***To heal the sick, stretch out your hand,***

***And make the fallen sinner stand;***

***Shine out, and let your light restore***

***Earth’s own true loveliness once more!***

***To you, O Christ, all praises be,***

***Whose advent sets your people free;***

***Whom with the Father we adore***

***And Holy Spirit evermore!***

***“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.***

***“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”***

***Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming***

***From tender stem hath sprung,***

***Of Jesse’s lineage coming***

***As saints of old have sung.***

***It came, a floweret bright,***

***Amid the cold of winter,***

***When half-spent was the night***

***Isaiah ‘twas foretold it,***

***The Rose I have in mind;***

***With Mary we behold it,***

***The virgin mother kind.***

***To show God’s love aright***

***She bore to us a Savior,***

***When half-spent was the night.***

***This flower, whose fragrance tender***

***With sweetness fills the air,***

***Dispels with glorious splendor***

***The darkness everywhere.***

***True man yet very God,***

***From sin and death he saves us***

***And lightens every load.***