**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

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| --- | --- |
| April 2, 2023  |  Palm/Passion Sunday (A) |
| Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor |  Chris McMillan, 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

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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 ON PALM SUNDAY**



PRE-SERVICE MUSIC, WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *The King Rides In*  Smith

CENTERING WORDS1

On the back of a donkey, Jesus came to save us. On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus came to heal us. In the joy of laughing children and the shouts of loud hosannas, Jesus came to show us the way, then and today.

***May all glory, laud and honor now surge from our lips and hearts!***

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN ***“All Glory, Laud and Honor”*** #265

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\*CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER1 From Psalm 118

This is the day that the Lord has made.

 ***Let us rejoice and be glad in it.***

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

 ***God’s steadfast love endures forever.***

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

***This is the Lord’s doing.***

***It is marvelous in our eyes.***

Line the festival procession with branches.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

 ***Let us rejoice and be glad in it.***

Let us pray together:

***Blessed one, our hearts sing with the children when we see you ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. Our lips shout your praises, as you empty yourself to become servant of all. Open our hearts to the depth of your love, that we might walk faithfully with you during the long week ahead, and forever. Amen.***

ANTHEM *The Palms* Chancel Choir

**WE HEAR, SHARE AND CELEBRATE GOD’S GIFTS**



EPISTLE LESSON Philippians 2:5-11 pg. 186

PASTORAL PRAYER

SUNG RESPONSE ***“The Lord’s Prayer”*** (One Amen) #740

INVITATION TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERTORY  *Praise!* Martin

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\*RESPONSE ***“Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”*** Vs. 3 #267

***“Hosanna in the highest!” That ancient song we sing,***

***for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven our King.***

***O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,***

***and in his blissful presence eternally rejoice!***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION1

 ***Thank you, O God, for coming to us in Christ Jesus. Work through these gifts, that the world might know the breadth of your mercy and your grace. Bless our lives, that we might be faithful disciples and stewards of your love. With gratitude and joy, we pray. Amen.***

INVITATION TO CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT

 (Silent Confession)

COMMUNION PRAYER

BREAKING, POURING AND PARTAKING OF THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

\*HYMN ***“Breathe on Me, Breath of God”*** #461

**THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION—FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**



INVITATION AND QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The U.C.C. Doxology of Faith

Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

***We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,***

***God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,***

***and to your deeds we testify:***

***You call the worlds into being,***

***create persons in your own image,***

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***and set before each one the ways of life and death.***

***You seek in holy love to save all people***

***from aimlessness and sin.***

***You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.***

***In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth,***

***our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us***

***and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.***

***You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,***

***creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,***

***binding in covenant faithful people***

***of all ages, tongues, and races.***

***You call us into your church***

***to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,***

***to be your servants in the service of others,***

***to proclaim the gospel to all the world***

***and resist the powers of evil,***

***to share in Christ’s baptism and eat at his table,***

***to join him in his passion and victory.***

***You promise to all who trust you***

***forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,***

***courage in the struggle for justice and peace,***

***your presence in trial and rejoicing,***

***and eternal life in your realm which has no end.***

***Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.***

PRAYER OF THE CANDIDATES

*O God, my God, known to me in Jesus Christ, I give myself to you as your own, to love and serve you faithfully all the days of my life. Amen.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

ACT OF CONFIRMATION AND PRAYER

**BAYLEE RAYANN FISCHER** Matthew 5:14a, 16

*You are the light of the world…In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

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**CONYR THOMAS FISCHER** John 3:16

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

**ALLISON ELISE REYNOLDS** John 14:15, 17

*“If you love me, you will keep my commandments…Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”*

**ELEANOR ELIZABETH REYNOLDS** Matthew 6:33

*“Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

QUESTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION

By your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We celebrate your presence in this household of faith. Do you promise to participate

in the life and mission of this family of God’s people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

 *I promise, with the help of God.*

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT

Let us, the members of St. John United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

***We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God’s knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.***

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE & PRAYER

 Kiki Cochran, Council President

\*HYMN  ***“Lift High the Cross”***  #287

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**WE DEPART TO FOLLOW JESUS ON PASSION SUNDAY**



\*GOSPEL READING Matthew 27:24-26, 32-37, 45-50 pg. 30

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE *“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”* arr. Smith

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Hosanna in the highest! Welcome as we bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

The **bulletin** is given in celebration of my wonderful family and their birthdays: Mom, Dad, Dave, Andrew, and Kelly, from Karen.

A **centerpiece** is given in honor of Allison Elise Reynolds with love from Mom, Dad, and Benjamin.

A **centerpiece** is given in honor of Eleanor Elizabeth Reynolds with love from Mom, Dad, and Benjamin.

A **centerpiece** is given in honor of the Confirmation of Baylee Fischer from Mom, Dad, Brayden, and Grandma Pam.

A **centerpiece** is given in honor of the Confirmation of Conyr Fischer from Mom, Dad, Brayden & Grandma Pam.

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. The next available dates to sponsor the bulletin are April 16th, 30th, and May 7th.

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Thank you to **Greg Young** for serving as liturgist, to **Conyr Fischer** for serving as acolyte, to **Mike Seibold** for greeting, 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.

 Communion & Noisy Offering

 Confirmation

 Fellowship by Confirmands’ Prayer Partners

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

 ESOS, 5:30 p.m.

 Evening Guild, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Policy & Procedures, 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

 **Election Day Voting Here**

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m.

 Lenten Service at Nameoki UMC, 12:00 p.m.

 Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.

 Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday: **Maundy Thursday Worship, 7:00 p.m.**

Friday: **Good Friday**

 Sanctuary Open for Prayer, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Saturday: Altar Guild Easter Decorating

Next Sunday:  **Easter Sunday**

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

 Sunday School for Children Gather in Front Pews to Open Worship 9:30 a.m.

 Communion

 Fellowship by Council

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

Our April Mission of the Month is “Random Acts of Kindness” - helping people or places in need.

**EVENING GUILD**

Our next meeting is tomorrow, April 3rd at 6:30 p.m. We will be hosting a guest speaker from Good Samaritan House.

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**LENTEN, MAUNDY THURSDAY, AND EASTER**

 **SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

This year the Council has designated our Lenten special envelope and Maundy Thursday offerings to Kindercottage to help with necessary playground and groundskeeping updates. Kindercottage has a wonderful ministry with families of young children to help them be safe, healthy, and successful as they grow and to know they are beloved children of God. If you have computer access, check out their website at https://www.unipreskindercottage.org/.

**SCRIP**

Mother’s Day is coming soon and a gift card might be your solution of what to give to a special lady in your life. Please consider ordering a hanging basket from the church and tucking in a gift card for perhaps a store to purchase a shepherds hook or other decorative yard items. Lowes and Home Depot are participating vendors to assist in your springtime gardening needs. Master list of vendors and St. John “favorites” order forms are on the table in the narthex. Give order form and check payable to St John UCC to Betty Meszaros at any time. Cash is also happily accepted but only if giving order to Betty in person. Orders will be held until the third Sunday of each month and submitted then. Exception if total order does not cover shipping cost which is currently $10.50 per order. You can still participate in the program if not attending in-person worship. Just drop off or mail your check to the church with a note of cards you are ordering. Cost is face value of the card with no tax or service fee. Rebate is automatically sent to church. Contact Melissa Lane at 314-575-7627 or Betty Meszaros at 618-451-1968 if any questions.



**HANGING BASKET SALE**

We are selling hanging baskets once again. Order forms are available on the website under the events tab and are also available in the Narthex. Orders are due on Tuesday, April 11th so the grower can have an estimate of how many baskets we’ll need. However, we can accept orders until April 23rd. Because of various conditions, colors of flowers cannot be guaranteed. Pickup will be Friday, May 5th, and Saturday, May 6th, just in time for Mother’s Day that Sunday! So these baskets would be a great gift for mom on her special day!

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**FREE CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN CONCERT**

The church will host a FREE Contemporary Christian and Southern Gospel concert on Saturday, April 29th at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. The name of the group is “Unbroken”. Their music is fabulous and those who attend will be impressed with their program. Prior to the concert, a casual dinner will be available in Fellowship Hall for $15.00. Reservations are required for the dinner and should be made no later than Monday, April 24th. You do NOT need to attend the dinner in order to attend the concert. Contact the church office (618-877-6060), Kiki Cochran (618-503-3608), or Mike Seibold (618-792-4301) to make your dinner reservations.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The Sunday School is in need of candy for their Easter Egg Hunt. Candy can be dropped off at the church office before next Saturday, April 8th. Thank you!

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

Earl Buenger, Marcia Buenger, Ruth Buer, Hilde Few, JoAnn King, Karen Luddeke, Leonard Schaefer, Marjorie Schmidt, and Jerry Shonk.

**At Home**

Chloe Affolter, Isabella Boyer, Carol Braundmeier, Christopher Clark, Myra Cook, Bonnie Fornaszewski, Mary Franz, Luitgard Fries, Melba Grady, Lou Hasse, Norman Hente, Chuck King, Mina McBrian, Cindy Meyer, Sandy Mueller, Cliff Robertson, Merle Rose, June Stille, and Nancy Wilson.

**Illinois South Conference**

Okawville St. Paul UCC. Okawville St. Peter’s UCC, Rev. Jeffrey (Sara) Schwab. Ohlman St. Paul’s UCC, Rev. Dr. Steve (Debbi) Nance. Retired Pastors, Rev. Earl and Johanna Crecelius, Freeburg, IL.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Philippians 2:5-11**

**5**Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, **7**but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, **8** he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. **9**Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, **10**so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and

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on earth and under the earth, **11**and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Matthew 27:24-26**

**24**So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the

crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” **25**Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” **26**So he released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified.

**Matthew 27:32-37**

**32**As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. **33**And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), **34**they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. **35**And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; **36**then they sat down there and kept watch over him. **37**Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

**Matthew 27:45-50**

**45**From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. **46**And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” **47**When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “This man is calling for Elijah.” **48**At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. **49**But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” **50**Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

**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:**

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!**

***“All Glory, Laud and Honor”***

***All glory, laud and honor***

***To you, redeemer King,***

***To whom the lips of children***

***Made sweet hosannas ring.***

***You are the King of Israel,***

***And David’s royal Son,***

***Now in the Lord’s name coming,***

***Our King and blessed One!***

***All glory, laud and honor***

***To you, redeemer King,***

***To whom the lips of children***

***Made sweet hosannas ring.***

***The company of angels***

***Are praising you on high,***

***Creation and all mortals***

***In chorus make reply:***

***All glory, laud and honor***

***To you, redeemer King,***

***To whom the lips of children***

***Made sweet hosannas ring.***

***The people of the Hebrews***

***With palms before you went;***

***Our praise and prayer and anthems***

***Before you we present:***

***All glory, laud and honor***

***To you, redeemer King,***

***To whom the lips of children***

***Made sweet hosannas ring.***

***To you, before your passion,***

***They sang their hymns of praise;***

***To you, now high exalted,***

***Our melody we raise:***

***All glory, laud and honor***

***To you, redeemer King,***

***To whom the lips of children***

***Made sweet hosannas ring.***

***As you received their praises,***

***Accept the prayers we bring,***

***For you delight in goodness,***

***O good and gracious King!***

***“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.***

***“Breathe on Me, Breath of God”***

***Breathe on me, breath of God,***

***Fill me with life anew,***

***That I may love whate’er you love,***

***And do what you would do.***

***Breathe on me, breath of God,***

***Until my heart is pure,***

***Until with you I will one will,***

***To do and to endure.***

***Breathe on me, breath of God,***

***So that your will is mine,***

***Until this earthly part of me***

***Glows with your fire divine.***

***Breathe on me, breath of God,***

***So shall I never die,***

***But live with you the perfect life***

***Of your eternity.***

***“Lift High the Cross”***

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***Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim***

***Till all the world adore his sacred name.***

***Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,***

***Our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God.***

***Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim***

***Till all the world adore his sacred name.***

***All newborn servants of the Crucified***

***Bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.***

***Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim***

***Till all the world adore his sacred name.***

***O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,***

***Your death has brought us life eternally.***

***Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim***

***Till all the world adore his sacred name.***

***So shall our song of triumph ever be:***

***Praise to the Crucified for victory.***