**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| September 3, 2023 | 14th Sunday after Pentecost (A) |
| Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor | Dave Ekstrand, Dir. Of Music |
| 9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship | 9:30 Sunday School for Children |
| 2901 Nameoki Road | Granite City, IL 62040 |
| [E-stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com](mailto:E-stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com)  Web-stjohnuccgranitecity.com | (618) 877-6060  Instagram: @stjohnucc2901gc |

YouTube: gcstjohnucc Facebook: Search St. John UCC Granite City

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 AND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*GREETING ONE ANOTHER “Peace be with you!”

\*SUNG RESPONSE ***“Let There Be Peace on Earth”*** #614

***Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;***

***let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.***

***With God our creator, children all are we.***

***Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.***

***Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.***

***With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:***

***to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.***

***Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.***

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Romans 12:18

“If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*I Sing Praises* MacAlomon

CENTERING THOUGHT1

*God speaks from burning bushes and souls on fire. May God grant us eyes to see and ears to hear, as we worship this day.*

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CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER From Psalm 105:1-6

O give thanks to the Lord; call on his name;

***Make known his deeds among the peoples.***

Sing to him, sing praises to him;

***Tell of all his wonderful works.***

Glory in his holy name;

***Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.***

Let us praise the Lord and pray together.

***O Lord, we seek you and your inspiring strength in this time of worship, and your continuous presence in all of life. We remember the wonderful works and good you have done, and the blessings you bestow. We recall both your miracles of compassion and your judgments of expectations for your people. Generation to generation, you send servants in your name to lead the way to Life as you intend. Receive our thanks and praise as we worship you, now and forever. Amen.***

\*HYMN  ***“Gather Us In”*** #649

\*RESPONSIVE EPISTLE READING Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good;

***Love one another with mutual affection;***

***outdo one another in showing honor.***

Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord.

***Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction;***

***persevere in prayer.***

Contribute to the needs of the saints;

pursue hospitality to strangers.

***Bless those who persecute you;***

***bless and do not curse them.***

Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.

***Live in harmony with one another;***

***do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly;***

***do not claim to be wiser than you are.***

Do not repay anyone evil for evil,

but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

***If it is possible, so far as it depends on you,***

***live peaceably with all.***

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Beloved, never avenge yourselves,

but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written,

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.”

***Instead, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them;***

***if they are thirsty, give them something to drink,***

For by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.”

***Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.***

\*SUNG RESPONSE ***“I Then Shall Live”*** Vs. 1 #372

***I then shall live as one who’s been forgiven;***

***I’ll walk with joy to know my debts are paid.***

***I know my name is clear before my Father;***

***I am his child, and I am not afraid.***

***So greatly pardoned, I’ll forgive another;***

***the law of love I gladly will obey.***

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON Exodus 3:1-15 pg. 48

SPECIAL MUSIC *People Need the Lord* Chancel Choir

GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 16:21-28 pg. 17

REFLECTION

SUNG RESPONSE ***“I Then Shall Live”*** Vs. 2 #372

***I then shall live as one who’s learned compassion;***

***I’ve been so loved that I’ll risk loving, too.***

***I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges;***

***I dare to see another’s point of view.***

***And when relationships demand commitment,***

***then I’ll be there to care and follow through.***

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

PASTORAL PRAYER

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

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

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OFFERTORY *Pass it On* Kaiser

\*SUNG RESPONSE ***“I Then Shall Live”*** Vs. 3 #372

***Your kingdom come around and through and in me,***

***your power and glory, let them shine through me;***

***your hallowed name, oh, may I bear with honor,***

***and may your living kingdom come in me.***

***The Bread of Life, oh, may I share with honor,***

***and may you feed a hungry world through me.***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION1

***God of new beginnings, receive the gifts of our hands, that hospitality might be extended to those in need. Bless today’s offering, that the hungry may be fed and the thirsty may be satisfied. May these gifts seal our commitment to do what is just and honorable in your sight. Amen.***

INVITATION1

Great I AM, you come to us in unexpected ways.

***Excite our curiosity, that we might turn aside***

***and realize we are standing on holy ground.***

Appear to us in fire and wonder, and in bread and cup,

that we might see worlds beyond the reaches of our imaginations. Reveal the glory of your kingdom—

***Where love is genuine,***

Were evil is forsaken,

***Where mutual affection abides,***

And hospitality is shown to strangers,

***Where all are made one. Amen.***

Jesus invites us to set our minds on divine things, to give our lives again for the sake of following him. Together we celebrate this Sacrament, a gift given for all, and are renewed to live life to its fullest with him.

COMMUNION PRAYER

BREAKING, POURING AND PARTAKING

All confessing Christians are welcome to the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please hold each element when served in the pews so all may partake together. The inner circle of cups contains white grape juice. The outer circles have wine.

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\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING3

***We give thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.***

\*HYMN & NOISY OFFERING FOR CEMENT STEPS

***“You Call Us, Lord”*** #583

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE  *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* Anonymous

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Welcome. As we transition from summer to fall, God leads us, steady in love and care, even as our seasons change. Let us worship.

The **bulletin** is given in celebration of the 34th birthday of Lydia (Totten) Huff by Mom & Dad.

The **altar centerpiece** is in memory of our mothers, Elda Sturman and Dorothy Johanningmeier by Dennis and Linda Sturman.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Christie Roth** (618-931-6194). Flower Emporium offers $25 (small), $30 (medium), or $35 (large) arrangements. If you would like to sponsor the **bulletins**, please call the **church office** at (618) 877-6060. The next available date to sponsor the bulletin is October 29th.

Thank you to **Melissa Lane** for serving as liturgist and to **Rae-Ellen Vogeler** for greeting.

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**THIS WEEK**

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

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

Communion & Noisy Offering

Monday: **OFFICE CLOSED**

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

Begin bringing items for the Rummage Sale

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m.

Food Box Packing, 9:00 a.m.

Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday: Cemetery Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday: **Food Box Distribution, 10:00 a.m. (8:30 set-up)**

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

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

**THANK YOU**

Thank you to everyone who sent me get well cards while I was in the hospital. It was very kind and it meant a lot to me. -Ruth Hubbard

**EVENING GUILD & BROTHERHOOD POTLUCK**

The annual Evening Guild and Brotherhood joint potluck will be held on Monday, September 11th at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish to share. There will be a presentation by the Honor Flights program.

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

The September MOM is collecting children’s socks, undergarments, leggings, etc. to donate to the local school district’s social workers to distribute to district children in need. A list of items needed will be available soon.

**SCRIP**

School has started but not too late to express good wishes for a great year to your favorite student with a gift card. Time for a treat or extra school supplies may also be needed. Scrip orders will be submitted the third Sunday of September and third Sunday of October (sausage dinner day) then the schedule changes to the second Sunday in November and December due to holiday business closures. December 10th will be the deadline to order in time for Christmas delivery. Master list of vendors and St. John “favorites” order forms are on the table in the blue folder in the Narthex. Give order form and check payable to St. John UCC to Betty Meszaros at any time. Cash is also accepted but only if giving order to Betty in person. You can still participate in the

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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 the church. Contact Melissa Lane 618-666-3336 or Betty Meszaros 618-451-1968 questions.

**TRIVIA NIGHT**

The planning committee (George Cochran, Karla Frost, Chuck Hasse, Melissa Lane and Betty Meszaros) extends a huge THANK YOU to all those who participated in the trivia night.  The successful event would not have been a reality without the players, volunteers, those who donated attendance prizes or purchased 50-50 or raffle tickets. Gift card donations for the raffle and the purchase of chances were overwhelming. Member of our congregation Bev Partney was the winner of the Great Gift Card Giveaway “basket”.  Eleven tables competed with the Gaines table coming in first and the Roth table a close second. Both of those tables and the winner of the 50-50 drawing donated their winnings back. Proceeds of $2,575 will be split evenly between the church to purchase new computer equipment and the cemetery to purchase chairs for the chapel.

**ANNUAL FALL MUM SALE**

Thank you to everyone who placed pre-orders in the Annual Fall Mum Sale. The pickup dates will be announced soon, but will either be the weekend of the 16th or the weekend of the 23rd.

**FOOD BOX DISTRIBUTION**

On Wednesday, September 6th, we will need help packing the food boxes beginning at 9:00 a.m. The distribution of those boxes will be the following Saturday, September 9th. We will also need volunteers on Saturday starting at 8:00 a.m. for set up, with distribution beginning at 10:00 a.m.

**3RD GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATIONS**

Any of our children entering 3rd grade next August may receive a special Bible on Sunday, September 17, during 9:30 a.m. worship. Please call the church office at 618-877-6060 to give name and address for letters to be sent inviting them to participate.

**PLASTIC BOTTLE CAP COLLECTION**

We are collecting plastic bottle caps to assist Eleanor Reynolds in her Girl Scout bench project. Bottle caps should be put in the tub in the Narthex.

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**RUMMAGE SALE**

If sorting & cleaning are in your plans, this will be the perfect time to hold aside items to donate to the all-church rummage sale. The event

will be held **September 28th & 29th** this year and items can be brought to the stage in Fellowship Hall between September 5th and September 27th. No large electronics or heavy items please. General rule of thumb: If you would have to pay for it to be recycled, item cannot be accepted. This sale is sponsored by the Evening Guild with assistance appreciated from family and friends. All proceeds are given to church projects or local charitable organizations. Please mark the following important dates on your calendar. **Volunteers are especially needed during Set Up and Pricing**:

Tuesday, September 26th – 9:00 a.m. Set up

Wednesday, September 27th – 9:00 a.m.

Pricing

**Thursday, September 28th – 8:30 a.m. to**

**3:00 p.m. Open for Shoppers**

**Friday, September 29th – 8:30 a.m. to 12:00**

**p.m. Open for Shoppers**

**SAUSAGE DINNER**

The Annual Sausage Dinner is right around the corner! It will be held on Sunday, October 15th from 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and will be available for both dine in and carry out. Pricing is as follows:

**Dine In:** (all you can eat)

Adults - $15.00

Children 6-12 - $10.00

Children under 6 - Free

**Carry Out:**

All ages - $15.00

All dinners will include sausage, sauerkraut, applesauce, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, and dessert.

For those who can volunteer to help, there will be a sign up board in the back of the church for you to register.

**ATTENTION EVERYONE!!!!**

Yes, believe it or not, that time is rapidly drawing nearer! The Sausage Dinner and Country Store is just over a month away! It isn’t too early to start making the items you would love to make for the “Big Day” October 15th. Featured in the Country Store every year have been Christmas Items, quilts, afghans, craft items, candy, jams, jellies, home canned goods, and other baked goods. Put your best foot forward and

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roll up your sleeves so you can make this year’s Sausage Dinner and Country Store a Huge Success!

Thank you, Donna Brandes, Chairperson 618-802-1072

Nancy Jacobs, Co-Chairperson 314-712-6388

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

Earl Buenger, Marcia Buenger, Ruth Buer, Myra Cook, Hilde Few, Ruth Hubbard, JoAnn King, Karen Luddeke, Marjorie Schmidt, and Jerry Shonk.

**At Home**

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

**Illinois South Conference**

Farina Friedens UCC. Fairview Heights St. John UCC, Rev. Rosemary Captain. Retired Pastor, Rev. Russell and Doris Miller, Metropolis, IL

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Exodus 3:1-15**

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness and came to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. **2**There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. **3**Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up.” **4**When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” **5**Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” **6**He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. **7**Then the Lord said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their

taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, **8**and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. **9**The cry of the Israelites has now come to

me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. **10**Now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of

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Egypt.” **11**But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” **12**He said, “I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.” **13**But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say

to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” **14**God said to Moses, “I am who I am.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’ ” **15**God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’: This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

**Matthew 16:21-28**

**21**From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. **22**And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” **23**But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

**24**Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25**For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. **26**For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

**27**“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. **28**Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

**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. **Qr code

   Description automatically generatedAim 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!**

***“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.***

***“You Call Us, Lord”***

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***You call us, Lord, to be***

***A people set apart***

***To feel with thoughtful mind***

***And think with tender heart.***

***Thus chosen, now, O Lord, we ask***

***For faith in your unfailing grace***

***To make us equal to the task.***

***You call us, Lord, to care***

***For self and neighbor too,***

***To take the risk, and dare***

***To show what love can do.***

***Thus chosen, now, O Lord, we ask***

***For faith in your unfailing grace***

***To make us equal to the task.***

***You call us, Lord, to be***

***Good stewards of the earth;***

***To tend it as a place***

***Of blessedness and worth.***

***Thus chosen, now, O Lord, we ask***

***For faith in your unfailing grace***

***To make us equal to the task.***

***You call us, Lord, to serve:***

***To die that we may live,***

***To know we best receive***

***When joyfully we give.***

***Thus chosen, now, O Lord, we ask***

***For faith in your unfailing grace***

***To make us equal to the task.***

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