

**St. John United Church of Christ**  
**“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”**

February 23, 2025

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany (C)

Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor

David R. Ekstrand, Dir. of Music

9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship

9:30 Sunday School for Children

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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**

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH A SMILE AND WAVE

\*SUNG RESPONSE<sup>1</sup> ***“His Name Is Wonderful”*** #102

***His name is Wonderful, his name is Wonderful,  
his name is Wonderful, Jesus, my Lord;  
he is the mighty King, Master of everything,  
his name is Wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.  
He’s the great Shepherd, the Rock of all ages,  
Almighty God is he;  
bow down before him, love and adore him,  
his name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Genesis 45:3-11, 15  
Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, who you sold into Egypt...” (vs. 4)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*His Eye Is on the Sparrow*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER<sup>2</sup>

In these uncertain times, we come together, searching for peace.

***We will be still before the Lord and wait patiently.***

We will open our hearts and minds, that the Lord may show us mercy.

***When we trust the Lord, we can do good things  
and live with one another in peace and security.***

The Lord is our refuge in times of trouble.

In God, we find forgiveness, mercy, and love.

***We will be still before the Lord and wait patiently.***

And so, we pray together:

***Lord God, we come to you as imperfect creatures. Like Joseph's brothers, we're afraid of the past and are wary of the future. Yet, we yearn to feel your warm embrace. We long to touch your love and forgiveness, despite our shortcomings. Ease our journey toward mercy, as we grow in faith and love. Help us bless those who curse us and to pray for those who mistreat us. This is your direction for our lives, and we will follow as we are able. Amen.***

God's love and mercy are freely available to all. When we trust and delight in God's mercy, we are better able to show this mercy to those around us. Because God can do this, we can do it. We can do it together!

\*HYMN

***"You Call Us, Lord"***

#583

\*RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

Do not fret because of the wicked;

do not be envious of wrongdoers,

***For they will soon fade like the grass  
and wither like the green herb.***

Trust in the Lord and do good;

live in the land and enjoy security.

***Take delight in the Lord,  
and he will give you the desires of your heart.***

Commit your way to the Lord;

trust in him, and he will act.

***He will make your vindication shine like the light  
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.***

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him;

do not fret over those who prosper in their way,

over those who carry out evil devices.

***Refrain from anger and forsake wrath.***

***Do not fret—it leads only to evil.***

For the wicked shall be cut off,

but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

***Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;  
though you look diligently for their place,  
they will not be there.***

But the meek shall inherit the land  
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

***The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord;  
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.***

The Lord helps them and rescues them;  
he rescues them from the wicked and saves them  
because they take refuge in him.

### WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE LESSON 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 pg. 166

ANTHEM *Ring!* Glockenspiel

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 6:27-38 pg. 60

REFLECTION

### WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

\*HYMN *"I Then Shall Live"* #372

PASTORAL PRAYER & 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 *Pass It On*

\*RESPONSE<sup>3</sup> *"All Things Are Yours!"* Vss. 1 & 2 #687

***All things are yours! We make that true  
when we return our gifts to you.  
And so we give, and so we share,  
in Christ's strong name expressing care.***

***"Give out of love," your Word commands.  
We are your head, your heart, your hands.  
Your Word you underscore with deeds  
by using us to answer needs.***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION<sup>2</sup>

***Holy God, we bring this offering of our money, prayer, and labor to advance your work of mercy. We willingly and joyfully celebrate your generosity, by sharing our abundance with the church, our community, and the world. Bless these gifts, as they go forth to do good in your world without judgment or prejudice. Amen.***

\*HYMN

***“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”***

#72

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

***Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart***

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We thank **Connie Ahlers** for serving as liturgist, and **George Cochran** for serving as greeter.

**The bulletins are given in celebration of the life of Emily Anne Douglas by Mom & Dad.**

**Altar Flowers:** “Remembering our beautiful Emily Anne on her February 22nd birthday by Mom, Dad, Josh, Acacia, Milo, Charlie and Desmond.”

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Becky Kriegel at (618) 772-8149**. Flower Emporium offers \$25 (small), \$30 (medium), or \$35 (large) arrangements. If you would like to **sponsor a bulletin**, please call the **Church Office at (618) 877-6060**. The following dates are currently available; February 23, 2025, May 4 & 11, 2025, July 6, & 13, 2025, August 31, 2025, October 19, 2025, & November 30, 2025.

### **FEBRUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH**

The February mission of the month is financial donations to the Illinois South Conference DuBois Center. Please be sure to designate envelopes or checks so that the counters know where to direct the offerings correctly. Thank you.



- 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: Al-Anon, 9:30 a.m.  
Restructure Committee, 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.  
Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.  
Building & Grounds, 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.  
Chancel Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday: Church Women United, 9:30 a.m.  
Brownies, 6:15 p.m.  
GCC Band, 6:15 p.m.
- Saturday: TCAAH, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Next Sunday: In-person and Zoom Worship, 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday School for Children, 9:30 a.m.  
Communion & Noisy Offering

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Cemetery Clean-Up – Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m., Nameoki Site
- Ash Wednesday - Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.
- Food Box Distribution – Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>
- Brotherhood St. Patrick's Day Party – Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>
- Day of Discipleship – Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>
- Ham and Beans Dinner – Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
- Noon Lenten Service & Lunch – Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>
- Spring Vendor/Craft Fair – Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup>
- Spring Spruce-Up – Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>
- Maundy Thursday Service – Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>
- Easter Sunday – Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>
- Spring BBQ – Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>

### **BUILDING & GROUNDS**

- Mark your calendars for the upcoming building & grounds meeting  
Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m in Fellowship Hall.

## **EVENING GUILD**

Television's "Antiques Roadshow" is coming to St. Louis in April. Evening Guild's "Antiques Roadshow and Tell" is coming to their March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting in fellowship hall. Members and guests are invited to bring an item or two – could be a family heirloom or something acquired at a yard sale. Owners will tell the history of their items. Meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. No reservations required. Contact President Christie Roth with any questions.

## **BROTHERHOOD**

Brotherhood spring meat sale ordering begins now thru April 1. Pickup will be April 11 and 12 between the hours of 9 am and noon. We will be selling bacon and link sausage at the Fruhling Market at church on March 29. We are also having a raffle for a half of ham beginning now until after April 13, Palm Sunday Service. Ticket prices are 1 ticket for \$1 dollar, 6 tickets for \$5 dollars, 12 tickets for \$10 dollars, and 25 tickets for \$20 dollars. Drawing will be held after Palm Sunday service on the 13th. Ham will be available anytime after the drawing. Winner does not have to be at the drawing to win the ham.

- St. John Brotherhood



## **Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

Bob Braundmeier, Marcia Buenger, Ruth Buer, Cletus Knobloch, Karen Luddeke, and Lucille Mangoff.

## **At Home**

Chloe Affolter, Dave Douglas, Luitgard Fries, Lou Hasse, Mina McBrian, Cindy Meyer, Rev. Allen Reiter, Dee Roethemeyer, Karen Smart, June Stille, Trish Stromlund, & Nancy Wilson.

## **Hospital**

Cheryl Lewis

## **Illinois South Conference**

Floraville St. Paul UCC, Pastor, Matt (Laura) Fritz; Freeburg St. Paul's UCC, Rev. Dr. Andrew (Brenda) Lovins; Retired Pastor, Rev. Earl (Rev. Pamela Gale Smith) Menchhofer.

## STEWARDSHIP

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.



## CALL FOR INFORMATION

Bell Choir – Kathy Morris, 618-210-6095  
Cemetery – Kathy Montgomery, 618-876-5811  
Chancel Choir – John Nitchman, President, 618-288-5297  
Chicken & Dumplings Dinner – Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072, or  
Nancy Jacobs, 618-931-0673  
Council – Donna Brandes, President, 618-802-1072 or  
Joan Mueller, Vice President, 618-830-0647  
Evening Guild – Christie Roth, 618-931-6194  
Financial Reports – Connie Ahlers, Treasurer, 618-910-8962,  
or Diane Gerdt, 618-877-6060 church office  
Heavenly Stars – Betty Meszaros, 618-451-1968, or  
Karen Gaines – 618-288-0845  
Herald – Katie Jones, 618-877-6060 (church office)  
Hilltoppers – Dee Roethemeyer, 618-931-0673  
Historian – Sandy Dawson, 618-791-8246  
Men's Brotherhood – Chuck Hasse, 618-876-0936, or  
Dave Douglas, 618-452-3336  
Quilters – Sandy Dawson 618-791-8246, or Doris Petersen, 618-791-  
0892  
Scrip Orders – Melissa Lane, 314-575-7627, or Betty Meszaros,  
618-451-1968  
Sunday School – Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072  
Youth Fellowship – Sharon O'Toole, 314-420-1548

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### **1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50**

<sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup> Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen and to each kind of seed its own body.

<sup>42</sup> So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a physical body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> But it is not the spiritual that is first but the physical and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As one of dust, so are those who are of the dust, and as one of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the one of dust, we will also bear the image of the one of heaven. <sup>50</sup> What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

### **Luke 6:27-38**

<sup>27</sup> "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. <sup>29</sup> If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup> "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup> If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. <sup>35</sup> Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

<sup>37</sup> "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup> give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."