**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

March 16, 2025 2nd Sunday in Lent (C)

Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor David R. 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 (618) 877-6060

Web-stjohnuccgranitecity.com 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 WITH A SMILE AND WAVE

\*SUNG RESPONSE ***“Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”***

 Vs. 1 #252

***Lord, who through-out these forty days for us did fast and pray,***

***Teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

[God] brought [Moses] outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then [God] said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And [Moses] believed the Lord, and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Vss. 5-6)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *I Come to the Cross*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND CONFESSION1 Adapted from Genesis 15,

 Psalm 27, Philippians 4 & Luke 13

God, our light and our salvation, calls us to worship.

 ***We gather in faith, confidence, and praise.***

Come; seek the face of God.

***God’s face shines upon us with grace and love.***

Be strong, my friends, for God is here.

***Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift.***

And so, we pray together:

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***Mighty God, we come into your presence from many different places and situations. Calm our hearts, focus our thoughts, and strengthen our faith, for we often feel scattered and lost, separated from you and from one another. Gather us in. Comfort us in our loneliness. Dispel our fears. Correct our wayward feet so we hear your voice, trust your promises, and stand firm in your ways. In your light and love, we pray. Amen.***

Be strong and take heart.

 ***God is with us here and now.***

Christ’s love is saving us, now and always.

\*HYMN ***“Gather Us In”*** Vss. 1, 2 & 4 #649

\*RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING Verses from Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

***The Lord is the stronghold of my life;***

***of whom shall I be afraid?***

One thing I asked of the Lord; this I seek:

***To live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.***

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;

***He will conceal me under the cover of his tent;***

***he will set me high on a rock.***

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

***Do not turn your servant away in anger,***

***you who have been my help.***

Do not cast me off; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

 ***Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path.***

Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;

 ***Wait for the Lord!***

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

EPISTLE LESSON Philippians 3:17-4:1 pg. 187

SPECIAL MUSIC *Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone*

 David R. Ekstrand

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 13:31-35 pg. 72

REFLECTION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“Lead On, O King Eternal”*** #508

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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 *Be Still My Soul*

\*RESPONSE2  ***“Holy, Holy, Holy Lord”***  #738

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,***

***heaven and earth are filled with your glory:***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;***

***hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION1

 ***Mighty God, bless these gifts that they might bring strength to our faith, love to your world, and comfort to the forsaken. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“Leaning on the Everlasting Arms”*** #496

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE *Let There be Peace on Earth*

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2 Music: American Melody; arr. Jack Schrader (1942- ) © 1995 Hope Publishing Company. Used by permission CCLI License #1334401

We thank **Rachel and Benjamin Reynolds** for serving as liturgists, and **Bev Partney** for serving as greeter.

The **altar vases** are given **in celebration of the 45th wedding anniversary on March 15th of Ron and Christie Roth** by Ron and Christie Roth.

The **altar centerpiece** is given **in honor of the March 12th birth of Rilo Lux Seibold**, parents Patrick and Keeley Seibold, grandparents MaryJo and Mike Seibold.

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The **bulletins** are given **in memory of Denise McGee** by Dennis and Linda Sturman.

The **bulletins** are also given **in honor of Conyr Fischer’s 14th birthday on March** **14th** by his family.

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; May 4 & 11, 2025, July 13, 2025, August 31, 2025, October 19, 2025, & November 30, 2025.



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

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

 Fellowship Hour by Tuesday Bible Study

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

 Happy St. Patrick’s Day!

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

 Girl Scouts, 6:15 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: GCC Band, 6:15 p.m.

Friday: GCC Band Concert, 7:00 p.m. at 1st United Presbyterian

Saturday: Ham & Bean Dinner, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

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

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

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Noon Lenten Service & Lunch – Wednesday, March 26th

Spring Vendor/Craft Fair – Saturday, March 29th

Brotherhood Meat Sale Pick Up – April 11th & 12th

Spring Spruce-Up – Saturday, April 12th

Maundy Thursday Service – Thursday, April 17th

Easter Sunday – Sunday, April 20th

Spring BBQ – Saturday, May 3rd

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**LENT AND HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE**

Wednesday, March 26: Noon Lenten Service & Lunch,

Here, 12:00 p.m.(Noon)

Sunday, March 30: One Great Hour of Sharing,

worship & Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.

Monday, April 7: Evening Guild Lenten Quiet Hour,

salad & bread, communion, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 12: Spring Spruce Up, inside and

outside facilities workday, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 13: Palm/Passion Sunday,

worship and Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 17: Maundy Thursday, worship

 with readings and communion, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 20: Easter, worship with communion

and Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., followed by Fellowship Hour

**COMMUNITY NOON LENTEN SERVICES AND LUNCHES**

March 19—First United Presbyterian Church

March 26—St. John United Church of Christ

April 2—Rooted Community Church

April 9—Mt. Zion Baptist Church

**BROTHERHOOD**

Brotherhood spring meat sale ordering is 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.

**YOUTH GROUP & SUNDAY SCHOOL REQUEST**

The Youth Group and Sunday School are asking for donations of plastic Easter eggs and non-chocolate Easter candy in small sizes that can fit into the plastic eggs. You can drop off the plastic eggs and non-chocolate candy to the church office until Sunday, April 13th. The Youth Group and the Sunday School will be filling the eggs on Saturday, April 19th.

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**HAM & BEAN DINNER**

**THIS SATURDAY**, March 22nd our annual Ham & Bean dinner returns! Tickets are $12 for adults, $6 for kids aged 6-10, and children 5 & under eat free. All carry-outs are $12 regardless of age. When you dine-in it is all you can eat! Dinner includes Ham and beans, corn bread, dessert, condiments including pickles, onions, banana peppers, and ketchup. Drinks are also covered and include coffee, tea, and lemonade. Event will take place from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR FRÜHLING** **MARKET**

Mark your calendars! Our annual Frühling Market will take place on Saturday, March 29, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Vendors have already begun signing up and the Easter bunny will be hopping by for pictures. Pets are welcome for pictures as well! Keep an eye out on our socials for vendor highlights and more information. If you are looking for specific information you are also welcome to call the office at 618-877-6060.

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

**ANNUAL SPECIAL OFFERING**

On the Fourth Sunday of Lent, which is March 30 this year, the United Church of Christ and our Ecumenical Partners join together for the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. “When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you deploy resources to people in need all around the world, and in our own communities. When man-made or natural disasters strike, love responds. Not just for the immediate future, but for the long haul. When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you are working alongside families to restore not only structures, but hope. Your giving ensures that no matter how difficult the situation, ***Love remains***.” Be sure to clearly label offerings so the counters can properly credit them or use the special envelopes. Please add your offering envelope number to them.

**HANGING BASKETS**

No need to be ‘impatiens’; it is time to order your hanging baskets! 10” premium hanging baskets will be available in 6 different flower options. There are 3-5 different colors available per variety. However, colors cannot be guaranteed and will be picked based on what is available at the time. Cost is $17.50 each and proceeds will go toward the food box distribution in September. Order forms are due by April 6th and pick up will be May 8th – 10th and can be turned in to Mike & Mary Jo Seibold or the office. Be sure to get those order forms in because time will ‘begonia’ before you know it!



**Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

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

**At Home**

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

**Illinois South Conference**

Hamel Immanuel UCC, Rev. Paul (Rev. Cherie Hambleton) Burden; Hecker Friedens UCC; Retired Pastor, Rev. Fred (Shirley) Wehrenberg.

**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

**MARCH MISSION OF THE MONTH**

The March mission of the month is Lenten financial donations to Kindercottage. Please be sure to use special envelopes or designate checks so that the counters know where to direct the offerings correctly. Thank you.

**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.

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**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Philippians 3:17-4:1**

**17**Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. **18**For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. **19**Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. **20**But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. **21**He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. **4 1**Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

**Luke 13:31-35**

**31**At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” **32**He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. **33**Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ **34**Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! **35**See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

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**DEADLINE to order lilies is March 31, 2025**.

Plants will cost **$14.00** each. Please fill in the order exactly as you wish it to appear in the bulletin, (i.e., Mr., or Mrs., or Miss, etc.)

Please attach payments to this form and place either in the offering plate or bring it to the church office by March 31, 2025.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

IN LOVING MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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OR

IN HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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OR

IN GRATITUDE FOR \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

BY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adress:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# OF LILIES ORDERED:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: St. John United Church of Christ

