**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

May 18, 2025 Fifth Sunday of Easter (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

\*RESPONSE1 ***“Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing”*** Vs. 5 #312

***Christ is alive and comes to bring***

***good news to this and every age;***

***till earth and sky and ocean ring***

***with joy, with justice, love, and praise.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Acts 11:1-18

“‘What God has made clean, you must not call profane’…The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:9b, 12)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*Give Thanks*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYERS 2

Revelation 21, John 13, Acts 11, Psalm 139

Wipe away our tears, O God,

***For we are weary of weeping at the injustices of the world.***

You restore our lives and claim us as your beloved children.

***Dwell among us,***

***that we may love one another as you have loved us.***

Train our eyes to see, Holy One,

***As you would have us see.***

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For we yearn to love without prejudice

***And accept others without judgment.***

Make your home among us,

***For we long to be made one and whole.***

Let us continue in prayer:

***You who made heaven and earth are with us, bringing love and life. You are among us now, renewing us in faithful love. And so, we look with the eyes of our hearts enlightened, seeing one another as you see us. And we join the psalmist is praying: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.” Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“Search Me, O God”*** #385

\*RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING Psalm 139:1-14

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

***You know when I sit down and when I rise up;***

You discern my thoughts from far away.

***You search out my path and my lying down,***

***and are acquainted with all my ways.***  
Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord,

you know it completely.

***You hem me in, behind and before,***

***and lay your hand upon me.***  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
  ***Where can I go from your spirit?***

If I ascend to heaven, you are there;

if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

***If I take the wings of the morning***

***and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,***

Even there your hand shall lead me,

and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
     ***If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,***

***and the light around me become night,”***

Even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.  
     ***For it was you who formed my inward parts;***

***you knit me together in my mother’s womb.***

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
    ***Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.***

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**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Revelation 21:1-6 pg. 244

ANTHEM  *My Lord* Chancel Choir

GOSPEL LESSON John 13:31-35 pg. 102

REFLECTION Karen Gaines

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“Help Us Accept Each Other”*** #596

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 *Thank You, Lord*

\*RESPONSE3 ***“Alleluia No. 1”***  #291

***Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord,***

***Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name!***

***Jesus is Lord of all the earth.***

***He is the King of creation.***

***Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord,***

***Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name!***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION John 13:34-35 & John 15:12

***We believe that you dwell among us, O God, and promise us a life of blessedness as we learn to love as you have loved us. May the gifts we bring before you this day be a sign of our commitment to love one another well. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“This Is My Father’s World”*** #21

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE *I Will Sing of My Redeemer*

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We thank Karen Gaines for serving as liturgist and Rae Ellen Voegler for serving as greeter.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Rae Ellen Voegler at 618-373-8804.** 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; 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 Children’s Sunday School Families

Restructure Committee table talks (Q&A) after service

Mental Health Sunday

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

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Headstart, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.

Thursday: Church Women United, 9:30 a.m.

Brownies, 6:15 p.m.

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

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

Game Night, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.