

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

April 19, 2026

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter (A)

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

\*RESPONSE                    ***“The Day of Resurrection!”***                    Vs. 3 #298

***Now let the heavens be joyful! Let earth its song begin!***

***The world resound in triumph, and all that is therein;***

***Let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend;***

***For Christ the Lord has risen, our Joy that has no end.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

1 Peter 1:17-23

...love one another deeply from the heart. (Vs. 22b)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*Open My Eyes*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER<sup>1</sup>

Even if we feel abandoned and alone,

***Christ meets us here.***

Even when we become lost and disoriented,

***Christ rescues us in our need.***

Even when our hearts are touched by a chill,

***Christ warms our spirits.***

Even when all light has faded to darkness,

***Christ illumines our Way.***

Here in this house of worship we enter, rejoice, and come home.

Let us unite in prayer.

**Lord of life, you meet us on the road of life and lift us from our pain and grief. Heal our hearts so we may love deeply, and open our minds to your presence and kingdom. During times of suffering and doubt, help us grow strong and true through your words to us. May we share your presence as we show hospitality to strangers and break bread with your blessing. Amen.**

\*HYMN

**“Christ Is Alive”**

#312

\*RESPONSIVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH<sup>2</sup>

We believe in an Easter God, who transforms darkness into light, hatred into tolerance, despair into hope.

**We believe God is always working for good, changing every Good Friday nightmare into an Easter dream of new possibility.**

We believe in the risen Christ, who befriends us on our roads of searching and worry; who touches us through song and silence, word and gesture; who calls us by name to enter the dance of life.

**We believe in the Spirit, the hidden presence behind every resurrection, who beckons us to leave tomblife safety and trust the gracious invitation to live joyfully.**

We believe the Spirit is always renewing the church and making us a people who practice kindness, encourage beauty and work for justice and freedom.

**We believe we are an Easter people, a sign that with God all things are possible.**

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON      Acts 2:14a, 36-41      pg. 111

ANTHEM      *Magnify the Lord*      Chancel Choir

GOSPEL LESSON      Luke 24:13-35      pg. 84

MEDITATION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN

**“Break Now the Bread of Life”**

#665

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.***

**DEDICATION OF CHRISTMAS TREE OF MEMORIES,  
DIGITAL SIGN, & ELEVATOR UPGRADES**

INTRODUCTION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 127:1-2

Matthew 7:24-27

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

We give thanks for the foundation of rock-solid faith upon which this building is built.

***We give thanks that it is more than a building of stone and glass; its foundation is God's love to be shared with all.***

We give thanks for those who have gone before us to establish and raise this church for faithful ministries.

***We give thanks for their labors and for their financial support that continues to uplift the church.***

We give thanks for those who envisioned an upgraded elevator, an informative sign, and a beautiful tree of memories for everyone to share.

***We give thanks for those who guided and completed the projects for their extended use in our ministries.***

We give thanks for the generations to come who will in turn give thanks for these projects as building blocks for their future.

***We give thanks for all God's blessings as we move forward, inviting and welcoming all to enter and make memories in God's house.***

Let us be in a spirit of prayer: Holy One, we have heard your call to faithfulness in every generation, and we do respond. In times of trouble from tornado, fire, and threatened flood, this church has been built on the firm foundation of your love. Thus, we have memories to share of recovery and perseverance, of joys and celebrations, of missions accomplished and visions of what is yet to come. Today we dedicate these projects to your glory and to the use of all your people—young and old, abled and limited, newcomers and multi-

generations. May all find welcome and shared opportunities to rise as disciples of Jesus, in whose name we serve and pray. Amen.

HYMN RESPONSE **“God of the Ages, History’s Maker”**

Vss. 1 & 4 #78

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *Blessed Assurance*

\*RESPONSE **“Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven”** Vs. 2 #289

***Alleluia, alleluia! Glory be to God on high:  
Alleluia to the Savior who has gained the victory;  
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity!  
Alleluia, alleluia to the Triune Majesty!***

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION<sup>1</sup>

***Loving God, you come to us in moments of grief or when we don’t know the way forward. Receive our thanks for meeting us on the road of life and raising our spirits. May the gifts we bring before you now reflect our gratitude for the healing of our hearts. May they become our sharing of your love with all those in need of mercy and grace in every generation. Amen.***

\*HYMN **“They Did Not Build in Vain”** #542

\*POSTLUDE *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026*. Copyright © 2025 by Abingdon Press.

<sup>2</sup>Adapted from *Sourcebook of Worship Resources, Volume 2*. Copyright © 1996 by Communication Resources, Inc.

We thank Mike Seibold for serving as liturgist, and George and Kiki Cochran for serving as greeters.