

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

August 16, 2026

12th Sunday after Pentecost (A)

Will Layman

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

*RESPONSE ***“Sweet Hour of Prayer” v.3*** #478

***Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, your wings shall my
petition bear to him whose truth and faithfulness engage the
waiting soul to bless. And since he bids me seek his face,
believe his Word, and trust his grace, I'll cast on him my every
care, and wait for you, sweet hour of prayer.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Psalm 139:14

¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

[And also with you.]

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

Draw Me Close to You

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER

One: Come, for God's table is wider than we imagine.

Many: We come, trusting that there is room for us.

One: Come, for God's grace reaches beyond the boundaries we create.

Many: We come, ready to open our hearts and widen our welcome.

One: Come, for Christ calls us to listen to voices we may have overlooked.

Many: We come, ready to listen, learn, and be changed.

One: Come, for there is enough grace, enough mercy, and enough love for all.

Many: We come to worship the God whose love knows no boundaries and makes room for everyone.

*HYMN

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

#106

*OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, you are the One whose love is always bigger than we expect. You welcome those we overlook. You listen to those whose voices have been silenced. You cross the boundaries that we so often build. Open our hearts this morning, O God. Helps us to recognize the places where we have closed ourselves off from others. Remind us that your table is wide, your mercy is abundant, and your grace is enough. May our worship stretch our hearts, deepen our faith, and send us into the world ready to make room for others. In the name of Jesus Christ, who welcomes us all, we pray. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC *It is No Secret* praise by George and Kiki Cochran

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 15: 21-28 NRSVue

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

REFLECTION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN

"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

#96

PRAYER CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

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.

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

For the Healing of the Nations

*RESPONSE *"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"* #34

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

praise him, all creatures here below;

praise him above, ye heavenly host:

praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, you have given us more than we could ever earn and more love than we could ever measure. Receive these gifts that we bring today. Use them to widen the welcome, strengthen the work of your church, care for those in need, and bring hope to places where hope feels scarce. May everything we offer become part of your work of making room- of building bridges, healing divisions, and reminding the world that there is a place for everyone here. Bless these gifts and bless those who will receive them. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

*HYMN¹

"They'll Know We Are Christians"

#595

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

God You Spend the Whirling Planets

¹"They'll Know We Are Christians" Words and Music: Peter Scholtes (1938-). Used with permission CCLI License #133401.