**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

October 18, 2020 20th Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Karla J. Frost Organist: Ritch Alexander

9:30 Worship (618) 877-6060

2901 Nameoki Rd. Granite City, IL 62040

E-stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com Web-stjohnuccgranitecity.com

**WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD**

**To follow safety guidelines**

**please keep social distance, masks up, and do not sing.**

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

[The Pharisees] sent their disciples to [Jesus] along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.” Matthew 22:16

PRELUDE *Exultate Deo* Williams

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER Psalm 99 adapted

The Lord is king; let the peoples tremble!

He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

 ***The Lord is great in Zion;***

 ***he is exalted over all the peoples.***

 Let them praise your great and awesome name. Holy is he!

 ***Mighty King, lover of justice,***

 ***you have established equity;***

 You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

 ***Extol the Lord our God;***

 ***worship at his footstool!***

Let us pray:

 ***Holy and Mighty God, we worship you with honor and***

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***praise. You alone are God; your goodness and mercy are great. Speak to us in your Spirit’s power, so we may know your wisdom and obey your commands. Forgive our rebellious ways and draw us close to you. Help us live as good examples of your justice and love. As disciples of Jesus, may we do works of faith and labors of love, for the good of your people in every time and place. Amen.***

HYMN ***“O Worship the King”***

***O worship the King, all glorious above,***

***O gratefully sing his power and his love;***

***our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,***

***pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.***

***O tell of his might, O sing of his grace,***

***whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.***

***His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,***

***and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.***

***Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite?***

***It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;***

***it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,***

***and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.***

***Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,***

***in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;***

***thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,***

***our Maker, Defender, Redeemer and Friend.***

RESPONSIVE READING OF COMMITMENT

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Mighty and compassionate God, you have extended to us promises of presence and forgiveness, grace and understanding. Through all of history, these promises have been kept with a steadfastness that inspires faithfulness and nurtures belief. So it is with grateful hearts that we pray.

***Help us to be enthusiastic participants in the ongoing campaign to do your will on earth as in heaven. You***

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***have shown us what is good. Grant us the courage to let our lives be shaped by the goodness you reveal.***

In a world of energy-sapping frustrations and diversions from noble goals, guide us by the power and direction of your Spirit.

***Enable us to convey the brightness of joy to persons in grief or despair, to bring healing to those suffering illness or abuse, to make peace in the midst of tensions or conflict.***

Inspire us to perform well those things you require of us—doing justice and loving kindness and walking humbly upon your way.

***You ask us to commit our lives fully to your service and care. Therefore, strengthen us in spirit and faith. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.***

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Exodus 33:12-23

SOLO  *The Old Rugged Cross*

EPISTLE READING 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, LORD’S PRAYER & RESPONSE

 ***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 & BLESSING

 ***Holy One, we give thanks for your call to serve, and pray that our gifts may be multiplied to make the Gospel known in all the world. Bless them to comfort the hurting, to challenge the unjust, and to encourage the faithful. Be present in the ministry they do, and in each of us, as we serve in Jesus’ name. Amen.***

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HYMN ***“We Praise You, O God”***

***We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;***

***in grateful devotion our tribute we bring;***

***lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;***

***we bless your holy name: glad praises we sing.***

***We worship you, God of our fathers and mothers;***

***through life’s storm and tempest our guide you have been;***

***when perils o’ertake us, you never forsake us,***

***and with your help, O Lord, our battles we win.***

***With voices united our praises we offer,***

***our songs of thanksgiving to you we now raise;***

***your strong arm will guide us, our God is beside us,***

***to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!***

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Postlude* Kern

**Please remain seated until an usher dismisses each pew beginning from the back of the Sanctuary.**

We gather as one body, with Christ as the head. Each of us brings unique abilities and contributions to our worship and ministry. Thank you, and welcome to worship.

The bulletins are given in honor of **Mina McBrian’s** October 14th birthday, and in memory of Diana Schaefer’s Mom, **Myrtle Gee’s** October 18th birthday, by Leroy and Diana Schaefer.

The altar vases are given in loving memory of our parents and grandparents, **Leonard and Augusta Ohm** by Kara, Aaron, Christine, Genny and Drew Wright.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please call Denise McGee at 618-920-5846. To give bulletins, please call the church office at 877-6060. Available dates are Nov. 15 and Nov. 29.

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Our October **Mission of the Month** is flour for the Community Care and Salvation Army pantries, and the United Church of Christ Neighbors in Need Offering. Please clearly designate any gifts or use the special NIN envelopes.

Today we give extra thanks to our Carry-Out Sausage Dinner organizers**,** **Donna Brandes, Bob and Nancy Jacobs, and Dave and Karen Gaines**, and to **all the workers** who are making this a modified but successful event. We also thank everyone who buys dinners and supports this continuing tradition.

The **Covid Response Committee** will meet on Wednesday, October 21, at 2:00 p.m. in the All Purpose Room.

**Building and Grounds Committee** will meet on Wednesday, October 21, at 6:30 p.m. in the All Purpose Room.

The **Herald deadline** is Wednesday, October 21. Please email or bring articles to the church office—stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com.

**Annual Reports** were due last Thursday, October 15. Please email or bring any late reports to the church office in preparation for our November 15 Annual Meeting.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Exodus 33:12-23**

**12**Moses said to the Lord, “See, you have said to me, ‘Bring up this people’; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ **13**Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” **14**He said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” **15**And he said to him, “If your presence

will not go, do not carry us up from here. **16**For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.”

**17**The Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” **18**Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” **19**And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, ‘The Lord’;[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+33%3A12-23&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-2493a)] and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious,

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and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. **20**But,” he said, “you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.” **21**And the Lord continued, “See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; **22**and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; **23**then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.”

**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

**1**Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. **2**We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly **3**remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. **4**For we know, brothers and sisters[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Thessalonians+1&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-29548a)] beloved by God, that he has chosen you, **5**because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. **6**And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, **7**so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. **8**For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. **9**For the people of those regions[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Thessalonians+1&version=NRSV&interface=print#fen-NRSV-29553b)] report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, **10**and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.