**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

February 21, 2021 First Sunday in Lent

9:30 a.m. Worship (618) 877-6060

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PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Psalm 25:1-10

The Lord leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. (Psalm 25:9)

PRELUDE *My Song Is Love Unknown*  Callahan

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Adapted from *Worship Services for Lent* produced by the United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership © 1992.

Today is the first Sunday in Lent. During this Lenten season, we will recall how God has journeyed with men and women over thousands of years.

***We recall God’s yearning for a creation that would live justly and love mercifully.***

We recall the floods that washed over the face of the earth, taking away those who did evil, making way for a new creation.

***We recall God’s covenant with Noah and with us and see signs of this covenant in the beauty of the rainbow.***

Let us worship God. God is pouring out a way for you and me to live in God’s new realm.

***We come, bringing all that we are. We are open to being the individuals God will make us. In this spirit of giving and openness, we worship God.***

Let us pray together.

***Holy, Holy, Holy God, you bring new life and provide signs of hope, even in bleak and daunting places. As your presence in days of old guided Noah and his loved ones***

***to a new creation, so guide our worship with your***

-2-

***presence that we may be called forth into the new life you***

***offer each one of us. Free us to let go of all feeling and fears, hurts and hopelessness, reservations and resentments that keep us from springing into the future you offer us. Trusting in your power, your presence, and your steadfast love, we offer you ourselves; we offer you our worship. Amen.***

HYMN ***“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”***

***What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!***

***O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!***

***Have we trials and temptations! Is there trouble anywhere?***

***We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer!***

***Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer!***

***Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge—take it to the Lord in prayer! Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!***

***In his arms he’ll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.***

RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING Psalm 25:1-10

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust;

 ***Do not let me be put to shame;***

 ***do not let my enemies exult over me.***

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;

 ***Let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.***

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

 ***Lead me in your truth, and teach me,***

 ***for you are the God of my salvation;***

 ***for you I wait all day long.***

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,

for they have been from of old.

-3-

 ***Do not remember the sins of my youth***

 ***or my transgressions;***

According to your steadfast love remember me,

for your goodness’ sake, O Lord!

 ***Good and upright is the Lord;***

 ***therefore he instructs sinners in the way.***

He leads the humble in what is right,

and teaches the humble his way.

 ***All the paths of the Lord***

 ***are steadfast love and faithfulness,***

For those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON Genesis 9:8-17

SOLO *He Is God* Roni Douglas

GOSPEL LESSON Mark 1:9-15

REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE 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.***

RESPONSE *Adoration* Guilmant

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION & BLESSING PRAYER

 ***Holy God, we are in covenant with you, and are glad to be faithful in every way. Our offerings are one sign of our faithfulness. We give them with joy because we believe the Good News of your steadfast love for all. Bless our gifts to spread your love night and day. Amen.***

HYMN ***“Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights”***

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***Throughout these Lenten days and nights***

***we turn to walk the inward way,***

-4-

***where, meeting Christ, our guide and light,***

***we live in hope till Easter Day.***

***The pilgrim Christ, the Lamb of God,***

***who found in weakness greater power,***

***embraces us, though lost and flawed,***

***and leads us to his Rising Hour.***

***We bear the silence, cross and pain***

***of human burdens, human strife,***

***while sisters, brothers help sustain***

***our courage till the Feast of Life.***

***And though the road is hard and steep,***

***the Spirit ever calls us on***

***through Calvary’s dying, dark and deep,***

***until we see the coming Dawn.***

***So let us choose the path of One***

***who wore, for us, the crown of thorn,***

***and slept in death that we might wake***

***to life on Resurrection Morn!***

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE SolennelleRheinberger

Welcome to worship. “Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his footstool; [for] he is holy.” (Psalm 99.5)

The altar flowers and bulletins are given in celebration of the life of **Emily Ann Douglas** by Mom, Dad, Josh, Acacia, Milo, and Charlie.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar, and pick them up Monday, please call Donna Streid at 877-7767. If you would like to sponsor the bulletins please call the church office at 877-6060. The next available dates are February 28, April 25, and May 2, 16, & 30.

Please use the Meeting ID: **842 0206 5327** and Passcode: **384480** on the **Wednesdays of Lent** at noon to Zoom in for a 15-minute devotional service. It will be a simple service of reading with scripture and prayer. Maundy Thursday service will be at 7:00 p.m. on April 1.

-5-



**Sunday School for children** **in the classroom by the nursery** resumes next Sunday, February 28, at 9:30 a.m. Please enter through the elevator entrance and follow all Covid19 procedures, including wearing masks at all times. No snacks will be offered. Older youth are encouraged to attend worship in the Sanctuary or on Zoom.

Our February Mission of the Month is financial donations to be divided between our **Brotherhood and Evening Guild**. Each of these organizations contribute gifts of time, talent, and treasure to the work of the church and to missions. Due to Covid19, though, they have not been able to hold their primary fundraisers. Our Mission of the Month gifts will give them the opportunity to continue serving in the ways they choose. Please clearly mark your gifts for Mission of the Month.

**THIS WEEK**

Today: Herald Deadline

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Zoom Bible Study, 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday: Zoom Wednesday Devotional Service, noon

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Sunday: Sunday School for children resumes, with Covid19 procedures, 9:30 a.m.

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

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing and Assisted Living**

Ruth Buer, Loretta Cook, Hilde Few, JoAnn King, Mary Lee Krohne, Karen Luddeke, and Nadine Ryan.

**At Home**

Ritch Alexander, Rose Marie Bauer, Isabella Boyer, Paul Boyer, Marlene Brokaw, Myra Cook, Randy Fischer, Bonnie Fornaszewski, Mary Franz, Norman Hente, Bill McAmish, Billie Meyer, Cliff Robertson, Valara Schorfheide, Merle Rose, June Stille, and Don Young.

**Illinois South Conference**

Addieville Zion UCC, Rev. Bill Groennert; Alhambra Salem UCC, Rev. Jeremy Wood, Sr. Pastor; Rev. John (Marilee) Mindrup, Associate Pastor; Retired Pastor Rev. Ivan (Vivian) Horn.

-6-

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Genesis 9:8-17**

**8**Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, **9**“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, **10**and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. **11**I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” **12**God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: **13**I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. **14**When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, **15**I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. **16**When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” **17**God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

**Mark 1:9-15**

**9**In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. **10**And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. **11**And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

**12**And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. **13**He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.**14**Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, **15**and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”