**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| December 12, 2021 |  Third Sunday of Advent (C) |
| Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor | Ritch Alexander, Organist |
| 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

**Currently face masks are REQUIRED for all.**

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, WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks* Hayes



**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING1**

READINGS BY PASTOR AND LITURGIST

UNISON PRAYER

 ***Dear God, You are the light of the world. In you, there is no darkness at all. There are no outcasts, no one who is not good enough. As we continue on our journey through Advent, help us remember that those who the world says do not belong, you welcome with open arms. In Jesus’ name, Amen.***

SONG ***Light a Candle Bright and Tall*** Verse 3

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 ***Light a candle bright and tall***

 ***For the Joy this season brings.***

 ***Joy like fountains brimming full.***

 ***Through our world now let it ring!***

 ***Shine within our hearts today***

 ***Come, O Joy, to us, we pray.***

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER

 Adapted from Philippians 4:4-7 and Isaiah 12:2-6

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

***“Surely God is my salvation;***

***I will trust, and will not be afraid,***

***for the Lord God is my strength.”***

Paul declared: “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

***We give thanks to the Lord***

***and make known his deeds among the nations.***

Paul promised that the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard all hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

 ***“Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;***

 ***let this be known in all the earth.”***

Let us pray together.

 ***Holy One, we prepare our hearts with joy, for you are in our midst this Advent Season and always. We prepare with hope and peace, even when there is injustice and suffering in the world, because we know your love is greater than evil. Help us open our hearts and minds and hands to bring the light of your salvation and gift of joy to all. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”*** #153

**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN SHOW THE WAY**

CHILDREN’S PROGRAM  *We are Going on a Christmas Journey*

\*HYMN ***“O Come, All Ye Faithful”*** Vss. 1 & 2 #182

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE & MUSIC**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Micah 5:2-5a pg. 815

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AMENZ ***Sing We Now of Christmas***

 ***Were You There on that Christmas Night***

 George Cochran, Jack Dawson, & John Nitchman

GLOCKENSPIEL ***Ding, Dong, Merrily on High***

 Connie Ahlers, Kiki Cochran, Jessie Curran,

 Karla Frost, Christie Roth, & Kara Wright

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:8-14 pg. 54

SOLO ***O Holy Night*** Joshua Douglas

WOMEN’S QUARTET ***Gesu Bambino***

Kiki Cochran, Veronica Douglas, Rebecca Kriegel, & Linda Mizell

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:15-20 pg. 55

ENSEMBLE ***Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming***

***Joy in Judea***

 George Cochran, Kiki Cochran, Jack Dawson,

 Veronica Douglas, Rebecca Kriegel, & Linda Mizell

PIANO DUET ***Away in a Manger***

 ***Angels We Have Heard on High***

 Ritch Alexander & Karla Frost

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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 *Il est ne, le divine enfant* Lasky

 \*RESPONSE ***“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”*** Vs. 3 #154

***O come, thou Wisdom from on high,***

***And order all things, far and nigh;***

***To us the path of knowledge show,***

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***And cause us in her ways to go.***

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

***Shall come to thee, O Israel!***

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

 ***We rejoice to bring our gifts, O Lord, as we share hope, peace, and joy with all. Bless the babies and families who receive these layettes. Bless the hungry who receive our TWIGS food bags. Bless the retired or hurting pastors and families who receive our Veterans of the Cross support. Bless our church and all the ministries we do together, as we serve in Jesus’ name and to your glory. Amen***

\*HYMN ***“What Child Is This”***  #184

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE  *There’s a Song in the Air* Warner

**1**http://storage.cloversites.com/imagodeichristiancommunityhawaii/documents/Advent\_Candle\_Readings-2011.pdf

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The prophet Zephaniah declares: “rejoice and exult with all your heart. ... The King of Israel, the Lord is in your midst” (3:14-15, ESV). Welcome to worship.

The **bulletin** is given in loving memory of the December 11th birthday of Leon Stromlund by Trish Stromlund.

The **altar centerpiece** is given in memory of my loving husband Daryl, and sons Lamar and George by Hilde Few.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up Monday, please call **Patty Bade** at 618-610-0350. If you would like to sponsor the **bulletins**, please call the **church office** at 877-6060.

Thank you to **Connie Ahlers** for serving as liturgist today. Thank you to **Ritch Alexander** and **Kathy Morris** for directing our

special music. And thank you to **Donna Brandes** and **Caslyn Brandes** for directing the children’s program.

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**THIS WEEK**

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

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

 Special Music & Sunday School Program

Monday: Al-Anon, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

 Brotherhood Christmas Party, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

 Hilltoppers Christmas Party, 12:30 p.m.

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

 Bell Choir, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday: Staff Christmas Party, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

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

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

 Baptism, 9:30 a.m.

 Fellowship Hour Sponsored by Evening Guild

 Fellowship Hall Reserved 12:00-8:00 p.m.

**SCRIP (GIFT CARDS)**

Please see Betty Meszaros in Fellowship Hall today after worship to pick up cards you ordered or to give her a new order. Check payable to St. John UCC or cash payment requested with your order. Orders submitted today will hopefully arrive for delivery next Sunday. If shipment is delayed, Betty will contact you to coordinate delivery arrangements. TODAY is the last day to order in 2021. Consider stocking up for last-minute gifts or for your own use. Contact Betty 618-451-1968 or cell 618-670-5267 or Melissa Lane at 314-575-7627 if questions. Taking a break in January. Thank you for supporting this fund-raising project for the church.

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

In Advent, which began November 28, we are again using TWIGS Advent Calendars and collecting specified food items for the take-home bags for children in the area.

We will also once again collect baby gifts for the Church Women United layette program. Today, December 12, is the special collection day, but gifts may be brought throughout December and placed under the Christmas tree.

December is also the month for the annual UCC Veterans of the Cross-Christmas Fund special offering. This offering is used

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through the national setting of the UCC Pension Board to assist retired clergy and spouses with very low pensions, as well as lay workers and those with special emergency needs in individual circumstances. Special envelopes were attached to the Herald and are available in the pews for this offering. Please put your regular offering envelope number on the Christmas Fund envelopes to help our counters give proper credit.

Thank you for your heartfelt mission donations to serve God’s beloved family.



**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP**

This year, we will offer a Christmas Eve Candlelight worship service which will begin with pre-service organ music. The lighting of the Christ Candle will occur at 11:00 p.m. and we will close with the traditional candlelight *Silent Night*.



**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing & Assisted Living**

**Cedarhurst of Edwardsville**, 7108 Marine Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025

 Carol Hildebrand, Room B18

**Cedarhurst of Granite City, Memory Care**, 3432 Village Lane, Granite City, IL 62040

 JoAnn King, #215,

**The Fountains of West County**, 15826 Clayton Rd, Ellisville, MO 63011

Ruth Buer, #215

**Granite Nursing & Rehab**, 3500 Century Dr, Granite City, IL 62040

 Karen Luddeke

**Meridian Village**, 27 Auerbach Pl., Glen Carbon, IL 62034

Mary Lee Krohne, #611 (Call Linda Nitchman for updates)

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**University Care Center**, 1095 University Dr, Edwardsville, IL 62025

 Rose Marie Bauer, Room A3

**Villas of Holly Brook**, 121 S. Bluff Rd, Collinsville, IL 62234

 Hilde Few, #208

**At Home**

Ritch Alexander, 2243 Cleveland, G.C., IL 62040

Isabella Boyer, 4722 S. Hazel, Edwardsville, IL 62025

Marlene Brokaw, 112 Summit Rdg., Maryville, IL 62062

Myra Cook, 4034 Stearns Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Randy Fischer, 2517 Edison Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Bonnie Fornaszewski, 200 Carlson Ave., Apt. 17D, Washington, IL 61571

Mary Franz, 3117 Willow Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Lou Hasse, 2689 Westmoreland Dr. Unit 2, G.C., IL 62040

Norman Hente, 3708 Joyce St., G.C., IL 62040

Bill McAmish, 3320 Colgate Pl., G.C., IL 62040

Sandy Mueller, 308 Warson Ln., G.C., IL 62040

David Oliver Jr., 2716 Dale Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Cliff Robertson, 2336 O’Hare Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Merle Rose, 2447 Waterman Ave., G.C., IL 62040

Marge Schmidt, 4857 Danielle Court, G.C., IL 62040

June Stille, 49 Riviera, G.C., IL 62040

Janice Weeks, 2650 Iowa, G.C., IL 62040

Don Young, 112 Summit Rdg., Maryville, IL 62062

**Illinois South Conference**

Breese St. John’s UCC. Biddleborn Trinity UCC. Retired Pastors, Revs. Robert Goddard and Jan Dashner, O’Fallon, IL.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Micah 5:2-5a**

**2**But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. **3**Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall

return to the people of Israel. **4**And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of

the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; **5**and he shall be the one of peace.

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**Luke 2:8-14**

**8**In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9**Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10**But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: **11**to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12**This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” **13**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, **14**“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

 **Luke 2:15-20**

**15**When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” **16**So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. **17**When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; **18**and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **19**But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. **20**The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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Everyone is invited to join the children in Fellowship Hall after worship for a celebration and visitor.



**“THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS” STORY**

An unproven legend tells that the song “The Twelve Days of Christmas” was written in England long ago to secretly teach the tenets of Catholic faith when it had been outlawed. According to this story, the hidden meanings include “true love” representing God, “me” representing every baptized believer, and the “partridge in a pear tree” representing Jesus.

The other symbols include:

2 Turtle Doves for the Old and New Testaments

3 French Hens for the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity

4 Calling Birds for the four Gospels or Evangelists

5 Golden Rings for the first five books of the Old Testament called the Pentateuch

6 Geese A-laying for the six days of creation

7 Swans A-swimming for the seven gifts of the Spirit and the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church

8 Maids A-milking for the eight beatitudes

9 Ladies Dancing for the nine fruits of the Spirit

10 Lords A-leaping for the ten commandments

11 Pipers Piping for the eleven faithful apostles

12 Drummers Drumming for the twelve points of doctrine

in the Apostles’ Creed

It is more likely, however, that this Christmas song was simply created as a fun memory game song with the repetitions carried through each verse.

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**CALL FOR INFORMATION**

Bell Choir – Talk to Kathy Morris, 618-210-6095

Cemetery - Talk to Kathy Montgomery, 618-876-5811

Chancel Choir – Talk to Ritch Alexander, 618-451-5092

Council – Talk to Karen Orr, President, 618-558-4192

Caslyn Brandes, Vice-President, 618-802-1152

Dine to Donate – Talk to Bev Meyer, 618-451-6849

Evening Guild – Talk to Christie Roth, 618-931-6194

Financial Reports – Talk to Mike Seibold, Treasurer, 618-792-4301

Angela Potter, 618-877-6060 church office

Heavenly Stars – Talk to Betty Meszaros, 618-451-1968

Karen Gaines, 618-288-0845

Herald – Talk to Angela Potter 618-877-6060 church office

Hilltoppers – Talk to Dee Roethemeyer, 618-876-6860

Historian – Talk to Sandy Dawson, 618-931-3467

Men’s Brotherhood – Talk to Chuck Hasse, 618-876-0936,

Dave Douglas, 618-452-3336

Quilters – Talk to Sandy Dawson 618-931-3467

Doris Peterson 618-877-1606

Sausage Dinner – Talk to Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072

 Nancy Jacobs, 618-931-0673

Scrip Orders – Talk to Melissa Lane, 314-575-7627 or Betty Meszaros 618-451-1968

Sunday School – Talk to Donna Brandes, 618-802-1072

Youth Fellowship – Talk to Sharon O’Toole, 618-797-1802

***“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”***

***Come, thou long-expected Jesus,***

***Born to set thy people free;***

***From our fears and sins release us;***

***Let us find our rest in thee.***

***Israel’s strength and consolation,***

***Hope of all the earth thou art;***

***Dear Desire of every nation,***

***Joy of every longing heart.***

***Born thy people to deliver,***

***Born a child and yet a king,***

***Born to reign in us forever,***

***Now thy gracious kingdom bring.***

***By thine own eternal Spirit***

***Rule in all our hearts alone;***

***By thine all sufficient merit***

***Raise us to thy glorious throne.***

***“O Come, All Ye Faithful”***

***O come, all ye faithful,***

***Joyful and triumphant,***

***O come ye, O come ye***

***To Bethlehem;***

***Come and behold him,***

***Born the King of angels;***

***O come let us adore him,***

***O come let us adore him,***

***O come let us adore him,***

***Christ, the Lord.***

***Sing, choirs of angels,***

***Sing in exultation,***

***Sing, all ye citizens***

***Of heaven above;***

***Glory to God, all***

***Glory in the highest;***

***O come let us adore him,***

***O come let us adore him,***

***O come let us adore him,***

***Christ, the Lord.***

***“What Child Is This”***

***What child is this, who laid to rest,***

***On Mary’s lap is sleeping?***

***Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,***

***While shepherds watch are keeping?***

***This, this is Christ the King,***

***Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;***

***Haste, haste to bring him laud,***

***The babe, the son of Mary!***

***Why lies he in such mean estate***

***Where ox and ass are feeding?***

***Good Christian, fear: for sinners here***

***The silent Word is pleading.***

***Nails, spear shall pierce him through,***

***The cross be borne for me, for you;***

***Hail, hail the Word made flesh,***

***The babe, the son of Mary!***

***So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,***

***Come peasant, king, to own him;***

***The King of kings salvation brings,***

***Let loving hearts enthrone him.***

***Raise, raise the song on high,***

***The Virgin sings her lullaby;***

***Joy, joy for Christ is born,***

***The babe, the son of Mary!***