**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

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| January 2, 2022 |  2nd Sunday after Christmas (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

A STORY FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:…a time to seek, and a time to lose…”

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *On This Glad Day* Scarlatti

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER Adapted from *Lighting the Flame*

Life is full of passages,

***Full of moving on to new stages of life,***

Full of leaving behind the old and familiar;

***The passing from one year into another.***

And each stage is pregnant with possibilities,

 ***Possibilities of triumph and joy, or defeat and sorrow,***

Wonderful possibilities, frightening possibilities.

 ***But onward into the possibilities we must go.***

Always remembering, though, that through every passage, into each new stage of life, our God goes with us,

 ***Quietly pointing the way to wholeness,***

Patiently finding us when we get lost,

 ***Lovingly lifting us when we fail and fall.***

So, let us prepare for the possibilities of tomorrow by worshipping God today.

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Let us pray together.

 ***O Lord, our days and years often get so bogged down by little things that we can’t see the path of possibilities that you offer us. May your Word today be a sparkling ray of light, grabbing our attention, that we might lift our heads and open our hearts to go with you into this new year. Amen.***

\*HYMN  ***“God of Our Life”*** #409

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PROMISE

 Adapted from *Lighting the Flame*

Lord, we often think of this sanctuary as your home, and in some ways it is, but we know that you do not live here.

***We know that your true home is the hearts of those who love you.***

So many times, we forget that.

***We think that six days a week we are alone in the world.***

So, we run away when we ought to stand tall; we turn our backs on the young man who needs a hand-up; we chastise the mother with unruly children; we hoard the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love; as we weakly give in to the worldly attitudes of “me first” and “I know best.”

***O Lord, remind us this morning that when we leave this sanctuary, you go with us into the new week and year.***

And each time we face the difficult challenge of living as Christians in this world, remind us that your strength lives in us,

***That we might be beacons of light and your love in the world’s darkness and fear. Amen.***

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 60:1-6 pg. 649

SPECIAL MUSIC *God Be with You Till We Meet Again*

 Ritch Alexander & Karla Frost

GOSPEL LESSONS John 1:1-5 & Matthew 2:1-12 pgs. 86 & 1

REFLECTION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“The First Noel”*** #229

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & SUNG LORD’S PRAYER

 ***The Lord’s Prayer*** (One Amen) #740

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *Three Holy Kings* Gliere

 \*RESPONSE ***“We Three Kings of Orient Are”*** Vss. 1 & 5 #233

***We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.*** ***O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

***Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice; Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.***

***O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

 ***God of power and glory, make present in us and these gifts the light that came into the world when Jesus was born. Make us shine like stars, lighting the way into the new year with your presence wherever we journey, in Jesus’ holy name. Amen.***

INVITATION All confessing Christians are invited to partake.

COMMUNION PRAYER

BLESSING AND PARTAKING

 Congregation will be told when to open each element.

\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

 ***Gracious God, we give thanks for the gifts of this Holy Meal, and for all that you promise. Help us celebrate the mystery of your presence in all the days and years of life. Help us joyfully spread the good news that Jesus offers to everyone, and fill us with your Spirit to shine your love in all the world. Amen.***

\*HYMN & NOISY OFFERING  ***“As with Gladness”***  #236

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\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE  *Give Thanks, All Ye People* Muhlenburg

As the shepherds and magi worshiped the Word-made-flesh, we too gather to worship the Lord. Welcome, one and all.

The **bulletin** is given in loving memory of the birthday of Herb Bischoff by Herb and Jeanie Bischoff, Jennifer, Britt, Alex and Nick.

The **altar vases** are given in memory of the January 4th birthday of Anni Schaefer by Leonard Schaefer.

The **altar centerpiece** is given to wish a happy birthday to Nancy on her December 27th birthday from The Family.

The **altar centerpiece** in front of the pulpit is given to wish a happy birthday to Deena on her January 2nd birthday from the Family.

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 **Kiki Cochran** for serving as liturgist today

**THIS WEEK**

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

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

 Communion & Noisy Offering

Monday: **OFFICE CLOSED**

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

 Bible Study, 12:30 p.m.

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

 Bell Choir, 6:00 p.m.

 Chancel Choir, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday: Cemetery Meeting, 5:00 p.m.

Saturday: Removing Christmas Decorations, 9:00 a.m.

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

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

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

Our January Mission of the Month is designated for UCC Disaster Ministries. Donations will be used to provide housing, food and meals, and family needs for those who were affected by the storms that caused devastation in parts of the Midwest on December 10, 2021.

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**JANUARY FOOD BOXES**

On **January 22, 2022**, the church will be sponsoring a community food giveaway for those in need. One hundred and seventy-five boxes will be packed with nonperishable and fresh food items. Scout organizations have been asked to help fill these boxes, but church volunteers will be needed as well, especially the day the boxes are distributed. Specific dates and times for packing will be decided and announced at a later date. This is a new mission, endeavor, and challenge for giving by our church and its congregation.

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing & Assisted Living**

Ruth Buer, Hilde Few, Carol Hildebrand, JoAnn King, Mary Lee Krohne, and Karen Luddeke.

**Hospital**

David Oliver Jr. is at Christian Hospital.

**At Home**

Ritch Alexander, Isabella Boyer, Marlene Brokaw, Myra Cook, Randy Fischer, Bonnie Fornaszewski, Mary Franz, Luitgard Fries, Lou Hasse, Norman Hente, Gayle Lindsay, Bill McAmish, Sandy Mueller, Cliff Robertson, Merle Rose, Marge Schmidt, June Stille, Trish Stromlund, Janice Weeks, and Don Young.

**Illinois South Conference**

Carlyle Immanuel UCC, Pastor Ken (Barbara) Schafer. Central City Zion UCC, Rev. Nancy Peebles. Retired Pastor, Rev. Gary and Joyce Kniepkamp, St. Jacob, IL.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. **2**For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. **3**Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. **4**Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses’ arms. **5**Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. **6**A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

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**John 1:1-5**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2**He was in the beginning with God. **3**All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being **4**in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. **5**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

**Matthew 2:1-12**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, **2**asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” **3**When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4**and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. **5**They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: **6**‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” **7**Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8**Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” **9**When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10**When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11**On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12**And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

