**St. John United Church of Christ**

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

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| April 30, 2023  |  4th Sunday of Easter (A) |
| Rev. Charles Preston |  Dan Comer, Music Technician |
| 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

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 I Peter 2:19-25

For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. (Vs. 25)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

 *Surely Goodness, Surely Mercy* Shane & Shane

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER1

The doors are open; the good shepherd calls.

Come in to find a place of comfort and safety.

 ***We turn away from our weariness and fear;***

 ***We leave behind our anxiety and cares.***

There is bread here to feed our every need;

There are still waters to refresh our souls.

 ***We would devote ourselves to learning and praying.***

 ***We seek to live in genuine community.***

There are tasks for all of glad and generous heart.

Find strength in this hour to follow Jesus’ steps.

***Praise God for this time together;***

***Praise God for refreshment and renewal.***

Let us pray together:

***Let us hear your voice today, O Shepherd. Call our names and claim us as your own. Lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Comfort those who suffer pain and loss. Assure all who are afraid. Lead us in right***

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***paths for your name’s sake. We have known your goodness and mercy in so many times and places. We open ourselves now to receive these gifts again. Unlock within us the barriers that keep us from recognizing and appreciating all the evidence of your love that surrounds us. Amen.***

\*HYMN ***“Trust and Obey”*** #443

\*RESPONSIVE READING2

Wonders and signs were all around

when the apostles prayed and served.

***All who believed let love abound,***

***meeting the needs that they observed.***

With glad and generous hearts they shared

goods held in common God to praise.

 ***Daily they showed the world they cared,***

 ***seeking to follow Jesus’ ways.***

We have been called to follow, too,

striving to do what’s good and right.

. ***As Christ was ever faithful, true,***

 ***we, in Christ’s service, now unite.***

We know the voice of One who calls,

Jesus, our Shepherd, strong and brave,

 ***And so we vow, whate’er befalls,***

 ***we want to give as Jesus gave.***

**WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Acts 2:42-47 pg. 112

ANTHEM  *Easter Medley* Glockenspiel

GOSPEL LESSON John 10:1-10 pg. 97

REFLECTION

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

\*HYMN ***“All the Way My Savior Leads Me”*** #505

PASTORAL PRAYER & UNISON LORD’S PRAYER

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 ***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.***

INVITATION TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERTORY *Gentle Shepherd* Gaithers.

\*RESPONSE ***“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”***

Traditional Doxology pg.#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 DEDICATION2

 ***Thank you, God, for the abundant life we enjoy, not in the things we possess but in the relationships you offer and the opportunities for sharing that you provide. May all that we here dedicate to you be distributed in ways that meet need and offer praise to you. Extend our outreach beyond our vision, that we may live in awe and wonder before you, marveling before your goodness and mercy. Amen.***

\*HYMN  ***“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”***  #440

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE *Sheep May Safely Graze* Bach

1Adapted and Reprinted, with permission, from *Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Book 2* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1992 by The Pilgrim Press.

2 Reprinted by permission of United Church Press from *Taught by Love* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1998 by United Church Press.

Jesus, Good Shepherd, as you lead, help me know your voice better each day and eagerly follow you.

The **altar centerpiece** is given in loving memory of Christy Dawson on her April 30th birthday by Mom, Dad, and Josie.

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The **centerpiece in front of the pulpit** is given in memory of Cotton Johannigmeier by Linda & Dennis Sturman.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Karen Orr** at (618) 558-4192. If you would like to sponsor the **bulletins**, please call the **church office** at (618) 877-6060. The next available dates to sponsor the bulletin are April 30th and May 7th.

Thank you to **Connie Ahlers** for serving as liturgist, to **Justin Gibson** for greeting and to **Dan Comer** for serving as music technician.

**THIS WEEK**

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

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

 5th Sunday Cash Plate for DuBois Center

 Game Night, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

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

 Evening Guild Spring Gathering, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday: Quilters, 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday: TOPS, 9:00 a.m.

 Bell Choir, 5:30 p.m.

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

 Granite City Community Band, 6:15-9:45 p.m.

Friday: Granite City Community Band Concert at SWIC, 7:00-

 9:00 p.m.

Saturday: **Church Barbecue, 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. or sold out**

Story Time at the StoryWalk, 11:00 a.m.

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

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

 Communion & Noisy Offering

**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

Our April Mission of the Month is “Random Acts of Kindness” - helping people or places in need.

**EVENING GUILD**

Tomorrow, May 1st, Evening Guild is hosting their Spring Gathering. All ladies of the church are welcome to attend. There will be a dinner and a bible story quilt program by Nancy Eisenhauer. The cost is $15.00 per person.

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**GRANITE CITY COMMUNITY BAND: FREE SPRING CONCERT**

Join us in celebrating our 35 years of providing free concerts on **Friday, May 5th, 7-9 p.m. at SWIC Commons**, Southwestern Illinois College, located at 4950 Maryville Road, Granite City. Featured selections include: *America Exultant March, Curtain Call, A Trumpeter’s Lullaby, A Symphony of Sitcoms, Emperata Overature, Broadway!,* and more!

On Saturday, May 6th, we will be hosting a church barbecue. The menu includes the following:

 Pork Steak Dinner w/ 2 sides: $12.00

 Bratwurst Dinner w/ 2 sides: $12.00

 Hotdog Dinner w/ 1 side: $6.00

Desserts will be available for an additional cost. The barbecue will run from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. or until we sell out. Tickets for your meal can be purchased from Kiki Cochran (618-503-3608). Please call the church office (618-877-6060) if you have any questions.

**STORY TIME AT THE STORYWALK**

On Saturday, May 6th, St. John UCC is sponsoring Story Time at the StoryWalk through Six Mile Regional Library District. The walk will start at Worthen Park (2599 Parkview Drive) and a story about Mother’s Day will be read while attendees walk the path. Consider bringing Mom to the park for a special day to celebrate her! The walking path is great for all ages, and after the StoryWalk, you can stop by the Church Barbecue here at St. John for lunch!

**OUR PRAYERS**

**Nursing, Assisted, & Independent Living**

Earl Buenger, Marcia Buenger, Ruth Buer, Hilde Few, JoAnn King, Karen Luddeke, Marjorie Schmidt, and Jerry Shonk.

**At Home**

Chloe Affolter, Isabella Boyer, Carol Braundmeier, Christopher Clark, Myra Cook, Bonnie Fornaszewski, Mary Franz, Luitgard Fries, Melba Grady, Lou Hasse, Norman Hente, Chuck King, Mina McBrian, Cindy Meyer, Sandy Mueller, Cliff Robertson, Merle Rose, June Stille, and Nancy Wilson.

**Illinois South Conference**

Staunton St. Paul UCC, Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins. Stone Church St. Peter’s UCC. Retired Pastor, Rev. P. Jerry Bennett, Highland, IL.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Acts 2:42-47**

**42**They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **43**Awe came upon everyone

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because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. **44**All who believed were together and had all things in

common; **45**they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. **46**Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, **47**praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**John 10:1-10**

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. **2**The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3**The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4**When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. **5**They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” **6**Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

**7**So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. **8**All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. **9**I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. **10**The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

**Try our QR code! This little square will take you directly to our secure MyVanco website where you can contribute to any of our various funds. Just follow three simple steps:**

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1. **Open your smart phone’s camera app**
2. **Aim the camera at the black and white square below and a link will appear on your screen.**
3. **Click the link and you’ll be directed to our donations website. From there, you can select a fund to which you’d like to make a contribution.**

**Thank you!**

***“Trust and Obey”***

***When we walk with the Lord in the light of his Word,***

***What a glory he sheds on our way!***

***While we do his good will, he abides with us still,***

***And with all who will trust and obey.***

***Trust and obey, for there’s no other way***

***To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

***Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,***

***But our toil he will richly repay;***

***Not a grief nor a loss, not a frown nor a cross,***

***But is blest if we trust and obey.***

***Trust and obey, for there’s no other way***

***To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

***But we never can prove the delights of his love***

***Until all on the altar we lay;***

***For the favor he shows and the joy he bestows***

***Are for them who will trust and obey.***

***Trust and obey, for there’s no other way***

***To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

***Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at his feet,***

***Or we’ll walk by his side in the way;***

***What he says we will do, where he sends we will go -***

***Never fear, only trust and obey.***

***Trust and obey, for there’s no other way***

***To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

***“All the Way My Savior Leads Me”***

***All the way my Savior leads me;***

***What have I to ask beside?***

***Can I doubt his tender mercy,***

***Who through life has been my guide?***

***Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,***

***Here by faith in him to dwell,***

***For I know, whate’er befall me,***

***Jesus doeth all things well;***

***For I know, whate’er befall me,***

***Jesus doeth all things well.***

***All the way my Savior leads me,***

***Cheers each winding path I tread,***

***Gives me grace for every trial,***

***Feeds me with the living bread;***

***Though my weary steps may falter,***

***And my soul a-thirst may be,***

***Gushing from the rock before me,***

***Lo! A spring of joy I see;***

***Gushing from the rock before me,***

***Lo! A spring of joy I see.***

***All the way my Savior leads me;***

***O the fullness of his love!***

***Perfect rest to me is promised***

***In my Father’s house above;***

***When my spirit, clothed immortal,***

***Wings its flight to realms of day,***

***This my song through endless ages,***

***Jesus led me all the way;***

***This my song through endless ages,***

***Jesus led me all the way.***

***“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”***

***Savior, like a shepherd lead us,***

***Much we need thy tender care;***

***In thy pleasant pastures feed us,***

***For our use thy folds prepare:***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Thou hast bought us, thine we are;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Thou hast bought us, thine we are.***

***We are thine, do thou befriend us,***

***Be the guardian of our way;***

***Keep thy flock, from sin defend us,***

***Seek us when we go astray:***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Hear, O hear us when we pray;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Hear, O hear us when we pray.***

***Thou has promised to receive us,***

***Poor and sinful though we be;***

***Thou hast mercy to relieve us,***

***Grace to cleanse, and power to free;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Early let us turn to thee;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Early let us turn to thee.***

***Early let us seek thy favor,***

***Early let us do thy will;***

***Blessed Lord and only Savior,***

***With thy love our bosoms fill;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Thou hast loved us, love us still;***

***Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,***

***Thou hast loved us, love us still.***