

# St. John's United Church of Christ

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.  
10 A.M. Worship      November 26, 2023

## *Christ the King Sunday Totenfest*

### WE GET READY FOR THE WORD

#### **Prayer of Preparation**      *from Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley*

We thank you, for you are our God, and God of our fathers and mothers forever. You are the Refuge of our life, the Shield of our help from generation to generation. May we thank you and count your praises – evening, morning, and noon – for our lives which are committed into your hand, for our souls which are entrusted to you, for your miracles which are with us every day, for your wonder and goodness at all times. O Good One, your compassion does not fail. O Merciful One, your lovingkindness never ceases. Forever we hope in you.

#### **Welcome and Announcements**

*(Please note the \* indicates when you should stand.)*

#### **\* Passing of the Peace**

**“Peace be with you!”**

#### **Prelude**

*“You Are My King”*

**Foote arr. Larson**

#### **\*Call to Worship**

One: Come, God is seeking to gather us together. Like a shepherd searching for lost sheep, God calls us.

**All: Something or someone has summoned us here. Dare we believe that God knows and welcomes us?**

One: God reaches out to rescue all who have strayed. Scattered, weak, and injured ones are drawn to God.

**All: We come, in need of healing, seeking a blessing. Our faith draws us here, in spite of our doubts.**

One: Come, above all else, to worship and give thanks. Make a joyful noise to the Creator of all worlds.

**All: God's steadfast love becomes real to us here. We are reminded of God's immeasurable greatness.**

#### **\* Opening Prayer (In Unison)**

God we know your care, and we flourish in your compassion. You search for us and find us. You, Holy One, surround us with the power of your abundant love and utmost care. Be present among us as we praise your name, bring our burdens, and give thanks for all that you are and all that you do. Amen

## 452 Open the Eyes of My Heart

O - pen the eyes of my heart, Lord. O - pen the eyes of my heart;

I want to see you; I want to see you;

to see you high and lift - ed up,

shin - ing in the light of your glo - ry. Pour out your

pow - er and love as we sing "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly."

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, I want to see you.

**Prayer for Transformation and New Life (In Unison)**

Sovereign God, transform us in your image. Your reign is just and righteous. We go our own way and live according to our own will. Make us ambassadors of your kingdom. Let us represent you through words and actions. May we release our need for anything that creates a barrier to loving you and our neighbor. May we know and bear witness that we are all neighbors. Amen.

**Words of Grace**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

**Special Music**

*"Reverie"*

**Debussy**

**Time for the Child in us All**

**Pastor Lisa**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Invitation to Give Generously**

*(Thank you for being so generous in your care of St. John's UCC and its mission, through your participation and giving. Your stewardship makes a difference. You may make your offering several ways including in church, online, by text at 833-502-0657, or mail. We are grateful for your support.)*

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts:  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication *(In Unison)***

**God of steadfast love, receive our expressions of thanks for the glorious inheritance entrusted to us. We enlist ourselves and our resources toward the realization of your eternal purpose for all humanity. May this congregation become more and more a source of hope for each of us and for all we meet. Amen.**

**Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46**

**One:** Here ends the reading. May God add blessings to the reading and hearing of the scriptures.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Message**

**\* Hymn**

*"Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun"*

**#95 verses 1, 3, 5**

**Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
does its successive journeys run;  
his love shall spread from shore to shore  
till moons shall wax and wane no more.**

**People and realms of every tongue  
dwell on his love with sweetest song;  
and infant voices shall proclaim  
their early blessings on his name.**

**Let every creature rise with song;  
honor and praise to Christ belong;  
angels descend with songs again,  
and earth repeat the loud amen!**

## TOTENFEST

**Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-23**

**Prayer:**

**One:** God of darkness and light, we come before you this day to honor those who have gone before us. We come before you this day to ask your blessing on the spirits of dear ones we continue to miss, whose absence we still feel. We light candles to remind us of the light they shared with us.

**Many:** **We remember ancestors, those in our families who came before us, whose stories continue to be told around our dinner tables and at our gatherings. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve. Bless them now and forever.**

**One:** We remember parents and grandparents who are no longer with us. We remember their warmth, their laugh, their touch, their voices. We remember all the ways in which they made us better people, and brought us closer to you. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve. Bless them now and forever.

**Many:** **We remember children, those who grew to adulthood, and those who did not. We remember their energy, their humor, their curiosity, their smiles. We remember all the un-lived potential they represent. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve. Bless them now and forever.**

**One:** We remember those lost to violence, to abuse, to war, to conflict. We remember those who were taken too soon. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve. Bless them now and forever.

**Many:** **We remember the saints of this church, all of those who have sung and prayed and learned and heard and loved within these walls. We remember their perseverance and hard work. We remember their faith and their commitment to your way. We celebrate their lives, even as we continue to grieve.**

|                            |                      |            |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| <b>David Thomason</b>      | Born to Life Eternal | 12/06/2022 |
| <b>Dennis Richter</b>      | Born to Life Eternal | 12/13/2022 |
| <b>Mel Storch</b>          | Born to Life Eternal | 1/08/2023  |
| <b>Betty Gschwind</b>      | Born to Life Eternal | 7/02/2023  |
| <b>Shirley Carmack</b>     | Born to Life Eternal | 7/20/2023  |
| <b>Betty Jo Kiefer</b>     | Born to Life Eternal | 7/22/2023  |
| <b>Harold Frieberger</b>   | Born to Life Eternal | 9/29/2023  |
| <b>Jerry Gaddy</b>         | Born to Life Eternal | 10/12/2023 |
| <b>Jennifer Spenader</b>   | Born to Life Eternal | 11/11/2023 |
| <b>Owen John Heitmeyer</b> | Born to Life Eternal | 11/03      |

Pastor: Comforting God, be with us as we continue to grieve those we can no longer see. Be with us as we continue to carry our grief. Be with us as we navigate our lives without those we have loved. Bless our broken hearts. Bless our pain. We ask all this in the name of the one who brought light into the darkness, Jesus Christ. Amen

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

\* Hymn

*"Give Thanks for Life"*

#649

Give thanks for life,  
the measure of our days;  
mortal, we pass through beauty that decays,  
yet sing to God our hope, our love, our praise:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Give thanks for those  
who made their life a light  
caught from the Christ-flame,  
bursting through the night,  
who touched the truth,  
who burned for what is right,  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

And for our own, our living and our dead,  
thanks for the love by which our life is fed,  
a love not changed by time or death or dread:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Give thanks for hope,  
that, like the wheat, the grain  
lying in darkness does its life retain,  
in resurrection to grow green again:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Benediction

**The Lord's Prayer** (*In Unison*)

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.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Postlude

*"We Belong to God"*

arr. Raney

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Preaching: **Pastor Lisa Hart**

Director of Music: Ministry: **Ruth Notch**

Liturgist: **Susie Pisoni**

Usher Team: **Phil Difani**

Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**

Fellowship & Lockup: **Carol Tindira**

Flautist: **Jennifer Adams**

Songleaders: **Kathy & Mike Scherr**

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## *Announcements*

**Global Ministries** requests that we pray with xxx this week

**12/03/23 Service**

Liturgist: **Carolyn Golfin**

Usher Team: **Ken Ruff**

Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**

Fellowship & Lockup: **Carol Tindira**

Special Music:

**12/10/23 Service**

Liturgist: **Todd Armstrong**

Usher Team: **Jim Pisoni**

Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**

Fellowship & Lockup: **Carol Tindira**

Special Music:

We pray for

**Ava Baumann, June Evers, Elizabeth Hart, Sue Kinnaman, Shwetha Notch,  
Margie Paul, Barbara Tretter, Amy Tucker and Paul Van Driest**

Please let us know your prayer concerns

The St. John's search committee is asking you to **save the** following important **dates** to meet our recommended candidate for pastor and attend the worship service.

**Saturday, December 2, 10:15** am in the Fellowship Hall to **meet the candidate** and family. **Lunch** follows from 11:00 to 12:00. Also, please consider staying for about an hour for cleanup and **hanging of the greens** after lunch.

**Sunday, December 3**, candidating worship service at **10:00** am. We're asking all members to attend this most important event for St. John's. There **will be a vote** immediately **following** the **worship service** and a celebration **luncheon**.

Thank you, Your St. John's Search Team

### ***A Look Ahead***

|            |                                  |                                                                                                                              |
|------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11/19      | 11:00 AM                         | Cemetery Board Meeting                                                                                                       |
| 11/20      | 6:30 PM                          | Council Meeting                                                                                                              |
| 11/20      | 1:30 PM                          | Personnel Committee Meeting (zoom)                                                                                           |
| 11/21      | 7:00 PM                          | Joint Thanksgiving Service at St. John's                                                                                     |
| 11/23 & 24 | Thanksgiving (office/ECC closed) |                                                                                                                              |
| 11/26      | 9:00 AM                          | Advent Bible Study (library)                                                                                                 |
| 11/26      | 9:15 AM                          | Loaves & Fishes                                                                                                              |
| 11/26      | 10:00 AM                         | Totenfest                                                                                                                    |
| 11/26      | 11:00 AM                         | Mission Meeting (library)                                                                                                    |
| 11/27      | 6:00 PM                          | Visioning Committee                                                                                                          |
| 11/28      | 8:00 AM                          | Giving Tuesday ( <a href="https://www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org/drafts">https://www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org/drafts</a> ) |
| 11/28      | 6:30 PM                          | Bunko Women's Fellowship                                                                                                     |
| 11/30      | 6:00 PM                          | Table Fellowship                                                                                                             |
| 12/2       | 10:15 AM                         | Meet and Greet, Pastor candidate                                                                                             |
| 12/2       | 11:00 AM                         | Lunch followed by Hanging of the Greens                                                                                      |
| 12/3       | 9:00 AM                          | Advent Bible Study (library)                                                                                                 |
| 12/3       | 10:00 AM                         | Communion Sunday                                                                                                             |
| 12/3       | 10:00 AM                         | First Sunday of Advent                                                                                                       |
| 12/3       | 10:00 AM                         | Candidating Worship Service & Vote                                                                                           |
| 12/3       | 10:00 AM                         | No Sunday School                                                                                                             |
| 12/3       | 11:00 AM                         | Poinsettia Orders Due                                                                                                        |
| 12/4       | 1:30 PM                          | Personnel Committee Meeting (zoom)                                                                                           |
| 12/10      | 9:00 AM                          | Advent Bible Study (library)                                                                                                 |
| 12/10      | 10:00 AM                         | Second Sunday of Advent                                                                                                      |
| 12/10      | 11:00 AM                         | Ted Gottlieb "Medicare 101"                                                                                                  |
| 12/16      | 8:00 AM                          | Habitat Build                                                                                                                |
| 12/17      | 9:00 AM                          | Advent Bible Study (library)                                                                                                 |
| 12/17      | 9:15 AM                          | Loaves & Fishes                                                                                                              |
| 12/17      | 10:00 AM                         | Third Sunday of Advent                                                                                                       |
| 12/17      | 10:00 AM                         | Christmas Program                                                                                                            |
| 12/17      | 11:00 AM                         | Mission Meeting (library)                                                                                                    |
| 12/18      | 6:30 PM                          | Council Meeting                                                                                                              |
| 12/24      | 10:00 AM                         | Christmas Fund Offering                                                                                                      |
| 12/24      | 10:00 AM                         | Fourth Sunday of Advent                                                                                                      |
| 12/24      | 10:00 AM                         | No Sunday School                                                                                                             |
| 12/24      | 4:00 PM                          | Christmas Eve Service                                                                                                        |
| 12/24      | 7:00 PM                          | Christmas Eve Candle Light Service                                                                                           |
| 12/31      | 10:00 AM                         | No Sunday School                                                                                                             |

more at <https://www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org/fellowship>

Please check your News Notes/Website for specific information around upcoming activities

Join us on Sundays

**9:00 a.m. - Fellowship in Fellowship Hall**

**10:00 a.m. – Sunday School**

**10:00 a.m. – Worship**

**In-Person, Facebook Live, or Virtual**

St. John's United Church of Christ

**15370 Olive Blvd. Chesterfield MO 63017**

**(636) 532-0540**

***stjohnsucconolive@gmail.com***

***www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org***