



St. John's United Church of Christ
First Sunday of Lent
February 18, 2024



* Please stand as it is comfortable to do so. L=Leader, P=People

PRELUDE

CHURCH BELLS

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

* CHORAL INTROIT # 263 *Surely the Presence of the Lord*

*GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP (responsively)

L: In these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance that in this pilgrimage of prayer, we might learn to be your people once more. In fasting and service, you bring us back to your heart.

P: You open our eyes to your presence in the world and you free our hands to lead others to the radiant splendor of your mercy.

L: Be with us in these journey days, for without you we are lost and will perish.

P: To you alone be dominion and glory, forever and ever.

* OPENING HYMN #207 *In the Cross of Christ I Glory* (v.1 & 2)

* WE CONFESS OUR SIN (unison)

Catch us, O God, in our aimless scurrying from you and others and hold us in this Lenten season. Hold our hearts to the beat of your grace and create in us a resting place, a kneeling place, a tiptoe place where we can listen for your whispered summons and be attentive to your healing love. In the name of the Holy One of Nazareth. Amen.

*GOD FORGIVES US (responsively)

L: Know that God always goes with us. Know that God is always there to lead us, guide us, forgive us, comfort us, and encourage us. Know that God is always near to us, now and forever.

P: Thanks be to God.

*RESPONSE #33 *How Great Thou Art* (chorus only)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children come forward during *Jesus Loves Me*)
Meet Scarlett
Locking up the "A" Word
(children leave: *Jesus Loves the Little Children*)

OFFERING INVITATION

L: We give our whole selves — our talents and material possessions — to the Church with the expectation that they be used to further God's dream for our world. Please commit yourself and give as you're able.

*DOXOLOGY #46

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

P: **Loving God, you have blessed us beyond measure, and you have called us to worship. May our gifts today flow from hearts of worship to the One who provides all we need. May we never forget that all we have is yours. Take it and use it according to your will. Amen.**

ANTHEM *Carry the Light* Paris

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)
Congregational Response #180 *Lord, Jesus, Who through Forty Days* (v.3)

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: Psalm 51: 10-12
New Testament: Matthew 4:1-11

L: This is the Word of God P: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE: This Lenten Road: *The Road to the Wilderness*

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Communion Prayer

God be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to God.**
Let us give thanks to God Most High.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Words of Institution, Consecration of the Elements

Sharing of the Elements

Thanksgiving Prayer (unison)

We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known best the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #180 *Lord,, Who Throughout These Forty Days* (vs. 1 & 2)

*BLESSING (responsively)

Go forth now. Begin the journey of Lent. Go forth, following the ministry and teachings of Jesus. Go forth now, always in confidence and hope, always filled with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 445

Go In Peace

* POSTLUDE



You are encouraged to keep this copy of the liturgy to take home for your personal / family devotions and prayer.





ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

- **Continuing Prayer Requests: Bruce Deckard, Don Osborne, Jr., Dale Linneweber, and Gary Meyer and family. For the silent trials and struggles everyone is carrying, let's include all in our prayers.**

Addresses for Shut-ins and Others

Norma Meyer, Colonial Assisted Living, - Room 142, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Susie Milligan, Colonial Assisted Living, - 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Leona Conway, Willow Manor, -request correspondence be sent to 2009 Forbes Rd. Vincennes IN

Marge Beamon, Remains in rehab. Please send cards and notes to, 1401 Ritterskamp Avenue.

Franklyn Schroeder, Oak Village Health Care Center – 200 4th Street, Oaktown, IN 47561

Home
Alexander Family
Bruce Deckard



If you have a caregiving need such as a hospital stay, a visit or desire communion, please contact the church office, Janet Goodman (co-chair of Caregivers) or any caregiver listed below. We would appreciate your help and want to make sure everyone is blessed by St. John's when you need it! St. John's UCC Caregivers- Ed and Brenda Cummings, Cindy Deckard (co-chair), Connie and Dan Coulter, Peggy Meyer, Ray Pieper, Terry and Janet Goodman, Lonny Vieck, Larry and Betsy Marchino.

WHAT'S NEW?

Most of us have been Christians a long time. We are familiar with everything about the church. It's comfortable. We know what to expect. There are no surprises. Now imagine you have never been inside a church before and come to worship for the first time. Sound unbelievable? Unfortunately, it is very common. We have at least 1 ½-2 generations who are all but missing from the church. I can't tell you the number of weddings I've performed where a member of the bridal party will enter the sanctuary and say something like, "Wow, this place is beautiful. What do you do here?" Usually, they have never been inside a church. Sounds crazy to us but it is true.

So how can we be more welcoming in our worship? The first is to make our order of worship more understandable. Those who are unfamiliar with worship often feel as though they don't "fit in" or unwelcome because they don't understand the "secret, coded, language of the church. They have no idea what is an "Invocation," "Benediction," "Gloria Patri" or "Doxology." They don't understand so they don't come back. They don't feel welcome, so they don't come back.

One of the easiest changes to make is to rephrase some of our worship language. An Invocation is labeled, "We Invite God to Worship." The Call to Worship becomes, "God Calls us to Worship," thereby explaining what is happening at that point. The Benediction becomes the "Blessing" and the Sermon becomes the "Message." All simple, low-threatening changes that help newcomers understand and feel more welcomed. Take note of the bulletin this morning and you will see some of this put into practice. Can we accept the changes if they mean newcomers might better accept Christ as their Savior?

ST. JOHN'S UCC STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

Pastor	Pastor Debbie Jo Atkins
Liturgist	Darcie Bahr
Head Usher	Jill Doggett
Organist	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist	Becky Brockman
Children /Family Ministry Coordinator	Will Meyer
Nursery Attendant	Darcie Bahr
Projection	Jana Vieck
Sound	Lonny Vieck
Church Secretary	Angie Robinson
Church Board President	Jana Vieck
Greeters	Don Black Family



Virtual Worship Service is still available on the church website, myucc.org.
Worship Services are also "Live Streamed" on the Church's FACEBOOK page



THIS WEEK in the Life of St. John's

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Sunday School 9:15 am

Worship 10:30am

MONDAY, February 19

Presidents Day Office Closed

Preschool Closed

BABE Store 12-5:30

Worship Comm 6pm

Church Board 7 pm

FRIENDS 5-6:15pm

TUESDAY, February 20

Preschool Closed

WEDNESDAY, February 21

Choir 7pm

THURSDAY, February 22

Technology 11am

LAM Banquet 6pm (see pg. 3)

FRIDAY, February 23

Grandparents Day Preschool

LOOKING AHEAD

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Sunday School 9:15 am

Worship 10:30am

Celebrating our preschool, Presentation form Preschool

MONDAY, February 26

BABE Store 12-5:30

FRIENDS 5-6:15pm VU Bowling Cntr.

TUESDAY, February 27

Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30pm

WEDNESDAY, February 28

Laundry Love 6-8pm

Choir 7pm

THURSDAY, February 29

Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30pm

Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm

Laundry Love



What Is Laundry Love Mission?

Laundry Love takes place at the Vincennes Laundromat, (1815 North 6th street). On the last Wednesday of each month from 6-8 pm, volunteers from St. John's pay for up to 5 loads of laundry for any family that evening and 3 loads of laundry for those who are single.



How Can I Help?

Laundry Love relies on the support of individuals from St. John's UCC.

- An Extra Donation In Your Pledge Envelope Marked "Laundry Love"
- Cash Donation Placed In The Laundry Love Containers Located In The Back Of The Church
- Volunteer At The Laundromat



HOURS OF OPERATION

Last Wednesday Of Each Month

**Contact
Jana Vieck
812-882-8720**