

## FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 22, 2026

John 11:1-45

### Breath of Hope

The first sermon that ever made tears roll down my cheeks was heard in a New York City church in my early 30s. I was a single Manhattan editor facing the proverbial fork in the road of life, not knowing which way to go. Even worse, was that I had no desire to take any step in any direction. I was stuck in what felt like a dank cave of gloom.

The preacher began talking about poor, dead Lazarus. Lazarus' sisters had sent word to Jesus about his friend being ill, urging him to come quickly. Jesus took his time, though. When he arrived, Lazarus had been wrapped in burial cloth and placed in a tomb for a couple of days. Jesus cried but then wiped his tears and called to his dead friend to come out.

This is when the preacher got dramatic, standing in the middle of the chancel and looking into an invisible tomb, shouting, "Come out! Live!"

The words reverberated from every corner of the sanctuary. The preacher then turned away from the imagined tomb and looked at us, the worshippers, and with an urgent, quieter plea, he begged for us to, "Come out! And finally live!"

The first tear ran down my cheek. Then the second. Then came the deluge, for I had realized I had been wrapped in my own burial clothes of fear. I had allowed the stone of depression to seal me from the hope that was still around.

That day I didn't hear a dramatic preacher preach. I heard Jesus himself cry to me, "Come out! There is still so much life to be lived. Remove the cloths of fear wrapped around you. Step out of the dark tomb of death and into the light of life — new life filled with God's promises of an amazing future."

Truthfully, I didn't hear the rest of the preacher's sermon. I was too excited to start living again.

On this Sunday in Lent when we are so close to the cross, when soon we will be hearing another resurrection story — THE resurrection of all resurrections, that of Jesus — we are reminded that God can and will revive us as well. Jesus is standing this day outside of whatever door you have slammed shut and he is breathing hope back into your lifeless world. It's time to come out of your tomb of grief, hopelessness, despair or indecision, and do something radical: Live!

*Loving God, You know all too well how we often give up when things don't go our way or when we seem to have hit a dead end. But You see that this is not the end for us — or of us. There is still more to experience and to learn. May this day we heed Jesus' words to "Come out and finally live." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

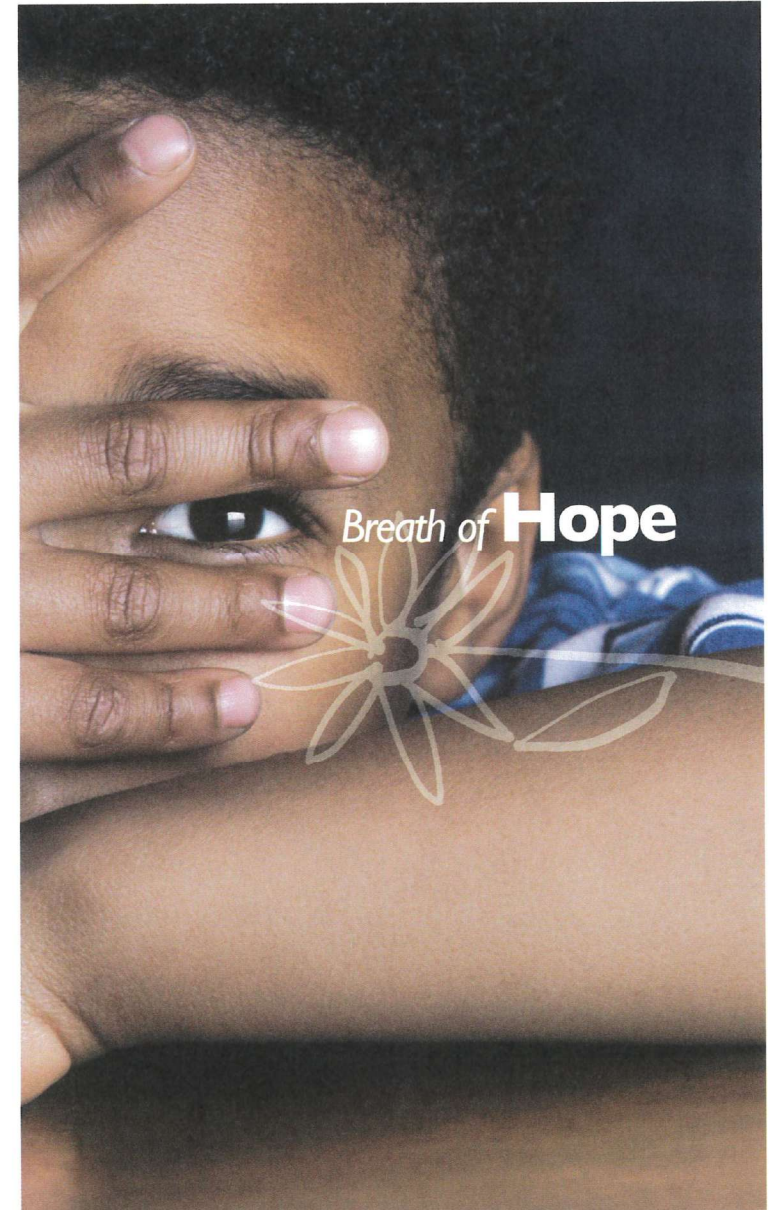
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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BUL0304





St. John's United Church of Christ  
**Fifth Sunday of Lent**  
 March 22, 2026



\* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold Print is for all People**

**WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER** (be seated)

**PRELUDE**

**CHURCH BELL** (the bell invites us to worship)

\* **GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP** (responsively)

Lift up your voice and call out to God.

**We cry out, believing that God hears us.**

Come together and wait for God.

**We come together, trusting that God is still speaking.**

Surely God's presence is here with us now.

**We wait in hope, for God's steadfast love lifts our hearts.**

Come, worship the Lord.

**We celebrate the power of God that restores us.**

\* **OPENING HYMN** *In the Bulb, There is a Flower* #638

\* **WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

**Holy God, Creator of Life, you call us out of our dark places, offering us the grace of new life. When we see nothing but hopelessness, you surprise us with the breath of your spirit. Call us out of our complacency and routines, set us free from our self-imposed bonds, and fill us with your spirit of life, compassion and peace. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

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

**ANTHEM:** *Always There*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** (children please come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

**OFFERING INVITATION**

God is so good and we are richly blessed. Let us give back to God with gratitude and thanksgiving.

\* **RESPONSE** *Lord, Jesus, Who through Forty Days* (v. 3) #180

\*\* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

**We come to this familiar place and give in gratitude for all which we have received. We give not because we pledged to, and not because we have to. We give because we can. We give in response to the life of Christ, given for us. We give in joy because of love, overflowing and unconditional. O God, let it be so. Amen**

**WE GATHER IN PRAYER**

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response *Lord, Jesus, Who through Forty Days* (v.3) #180

**SCRIPTURE:**

Luke 11:1-45

This is the Word of God **Thanks be to God**

**SERMON** *A Tomb with a View*

\* **CLOSING HYMN** *Be Thou My Vision* (vs. 1 & 2) #595

\* **BLESSING** (responsively)

May the power and blessing of Almighty God go with each of you as you go now to minister to a weary world; remembering to make good and holy choices to channel love, compassion, and the presence of God to those around us.

**And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us and those we love. Amen.**

\* **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *God, Dismiss Us* (v.1) #439

\* **POSTLUDE**

## Announcements

\*\* You may place your offerings in the designated basket or online at myucc.org and click on the *contribution* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

**Never put a period where God has put a comma, God is still speaking!**

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDY** final session this Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. based on the musical, *Hamilton*.

**EGG HUNT:** Please pick up some empty Easter Eggs, fill and return by April 3rd. for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 4th. From 4:00-5:30 PM.

**MESSY CHURCH** on April 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:30-7:00 will celebrate *Easter Joy!* Activities include an egg strength demonstration; a "Will it rise" experiment, painted rocks, Easter scavenger hunt, crafts, making a doughnut tomb and more. Families welcome. Bring your friends and join us.

**RESIGNATION:** It is with sadness that we accept the resignation of Darcie Bahr, our Nursery Attendant. Darci has faithfully served in this position for nine years. Her last Sunday is March 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your dedicated service with the children and families of our congregation.

### **HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE:**

**Palm Sunday (3/29):** Children's Palm Processional 10:30 am.

**Maundy Thursday (4/2):** Service of Holy Communion in Chapel at Noon.

**Good Friday (4/3):** Tennebrae Service of Darkness & Shadows at 7 pm.

**Holy Saturday (4/4):** Easter Egg Hunt 4-5:30 pm.

**Easter (4/5):** Butterfly Processional, Unlocking the "A" word.

**Celebrate!**

**NUREMBERG is our next movie on April 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.** Based on the 2013 book *The Nazi and the Psychiatrist* by Jack El-Hai, the film follows U.S. Army psychiatrist Douglas Kelley (Rami Malek) seeking to carry out an assignment to investigate the personalities and monitor the mental status of Hermann Göring (Russell Crowe) and other high-ranking Nazis in preparation for and during the Nuremberg trials. Colin Hanks (son of Tom) is also featured. We are beginning early due to the run time and dinner will NOT be provided. Bring your snacks and join us for a very gripping historical drama.

**KEY INVENTORY:** If you have a key to the outside church doors, please call, text or email Kim in the office so she can compile a list. Thank you for your cooperation.

**DINNER & CONVERSATION:** This week's dinner will be at El Corral at 6:00 pm on Thursday night. Please sign the list in the back of the sanctuary so we can reserve a large enough table.

If you would like to donate a Easter Flower in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, please leave them in Memorial Hall by 12:00 noon on Friday, April 3. Don't forget to complete the donor form including the label to attach to your Easter Flower. A list of donors will be included in the May newsletter.

**March Youth Dates:** 03/29 (Sunday) Youth Group 11:30 am-1pm Lunch Provided

## Prayers Posts

**We ask for continuing prayer requests for:** Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Tony Riley and Ellen Riggs, Bobby Bahr and Mark Schutter. Prayers for Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), Ryan Viecke, John Mineo, Brenda Fillingim, Davissyn Brown, brother of Daxton Brown (preschooler), Lynne Simmons and Bonnie Shelton.

### **Shut-in Addresses:**

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Leona Conway - Aperia Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501

### **At Home:**

Gary Meyer

Mike Lankford

**Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Pastor Debbie during the evening/weekend.**  
Email: [st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com) or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1

## This Week in the Life of St. John's

### Sunday, March 22

Adult SS Class 9:30am  
Worship 10:30am

### Tuesday, March 24

Final Hamilton Bible Study @ 11 & 6:30p  
Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm

### Thursday, March 26

Ministerial Alliance @ noon  
Dinner & Conversation  
El Corral @ 6pm

### Monday, March 23

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

### Wednesday, March 25

April Newsletter Items Due  
Laundry Love 6-8pm  
Choir @ 7pm

### Friday, March 27

Pastor Debbie is Off

## Looking Ahead In March/April 2026

### Sunday, March 29 (Palm Sunday)

Adult SS Class 9:30am  
Worship 10:30am

### Tuesday, March 31

Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm  
Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30pm

### Thursday, April 02

Maundy Thursday Communion  
@ noon in the Chapel  
Sandy's Pantry 11-12:30  
Dinner & Conversation  
Gasthoff @ 6pm

### Monday, March 30

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

### Wednesday, April 01

Messy Church 5-7:30pm  
Choir @ 7pm

### Friday, April 03

Good Friday Tenebrae @ 7pm

### Saturday, April 04

Easter Egg Hunt 4-5:30



## Staff and Volunteers

<b>Pastor:</b>	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
<b>Secretary</b>	Kim Butler
<b>Church Board President:</b>	Sandra Lange
<b>Organist:</b>	DeEtta Welte
<b>Music Director, Pianist:</b>	Becky Brockman
<b>Children &amp; Family Ministry Coordinator:</b>	Will Meyer
<b>Nursery Attendant:</b>	Darcie Bahr
<b>Head Usher:</b>	Allison Cummins
<b>Projection:</b>	Jana Vieck
<b>Sound:</b>	Lonny Vieck
<b>Liturgist:</b>	Sandra Lange

## **Did You Know?**

St. John's Sunday Morning Worship Services are streamed **LIVE** on our church's Facebook page, "**St. John's United Church of Christ Vincennes.**"

**Or**, you can watch the Worship Service at your convenience by going on the church website, "**myucc.org**" and clicking on "Worship Service" for a particular date.

You can also download a copy of each monthly **church newsletter** from our church website to keep up with all the activities.