

E A S T E R D A Y

April 5, 2026

John 20:1-18

Easter

There has always been something powerful about Mary's lonesome walk to the tomb that first Easter morning as each grief-filled step leads to renewed hope. And the beauty is that while we know what awaits her — not a lifeless body, but rather the Risen and Resurrected Lord — she doesn't.

In her pre-dawn funeral march, she has no clue that with just a few more difficult steps she will understand how God's promises are true. She will be awed to see how death doesn't get the victorious last word. She will hear the blessed new hellos that come after the heart-breaking good-byes.

Whenever I find myself moving in slow motion and the weight of loss makes it hard to take even one tiny shuffle forward, I take my side next to Mary. I imagine walking with her to the tomb of death that will be revealed as the tomb of life. I walk with her noticing how the darkness gradually changes color. One step forward and the black sky turns to gray. Another step forward and the gray lightens with twinges of pink. Yet another step and the pinks give way to dazzling golden hues. Each step, a step of faith. Each step, a step of promise. Each step leading to the promise of a resurrected life.

It happened to Mary, and it can happen to you on this day, the Resurrection of Our Lord Sunday!

Remember Mary and find the courage in your losses of life to keep stepping forward, for those are the steps leading to hope and healing. Those are the steps that will reveal to us the loving compassion of our Risen Lord and Friend.

God of Resurrection Hope, we praise You for the new day dawning. In Jesus, our hopes are renewed. In Jesus, grief will turn into joy. In Jesus, our tombs will indeed be made empty. May the steps of faith we take be strengthened by Your Love and may we never step moving forward toward Your beautiful promises. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

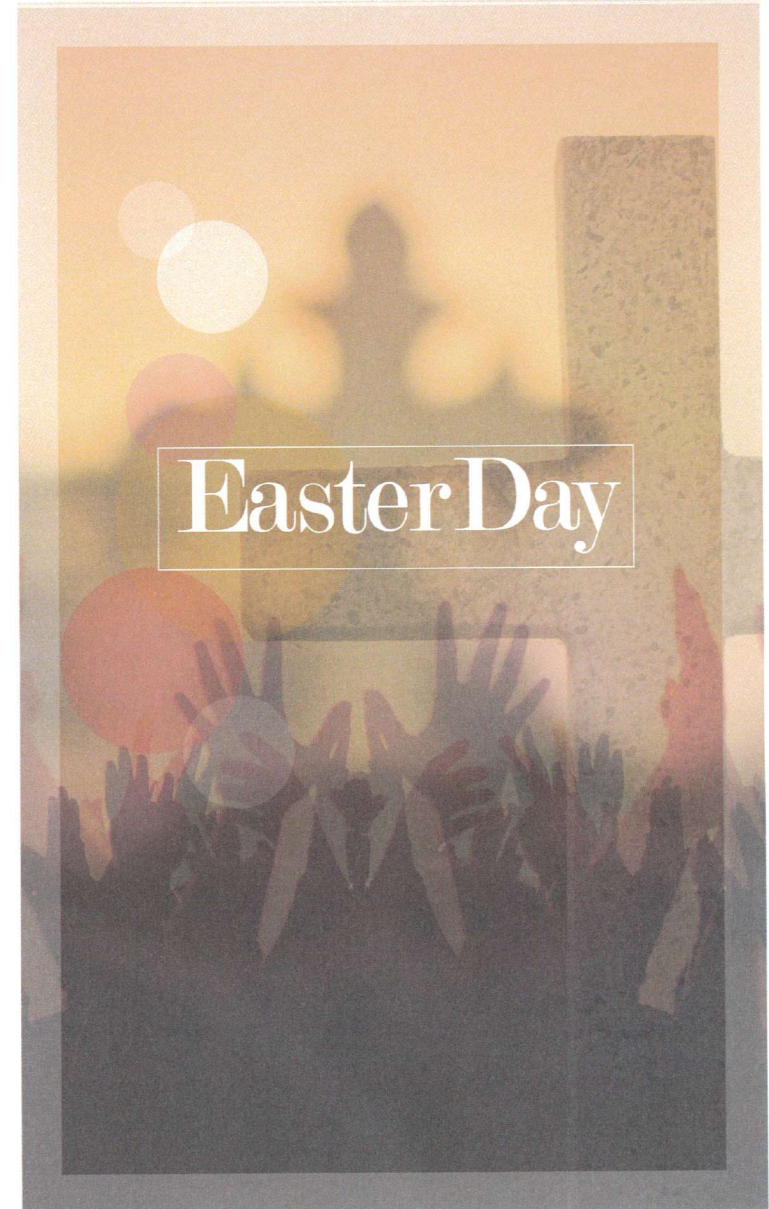
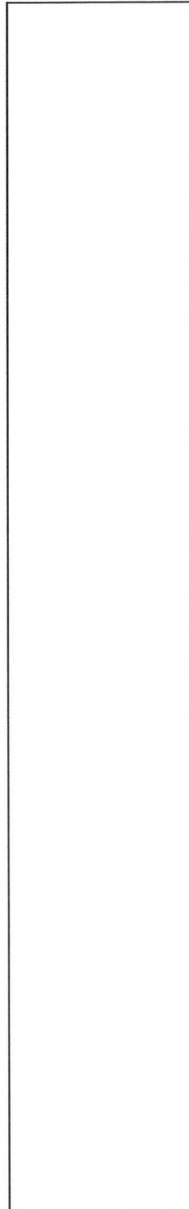
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



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

Bulletin artwork and backpage stories copyright © 2026 United Church of Christ

BUL0306





St. John's United Church of Christ
Easter Celebration
 April 5, 2026



* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold Print=Everyone**

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER
UNLOCKING THE "ALLELUIA" - CHORAL RESPONSE
PRELUDE

CHURCH BELL (the bell calls us to worship)

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

The long night of darkness is over.

The stone is rolled away, the tomb is empty,

The sun begins to shine. The Son has risen!

It's a morning of glory, Of love overcoming death,

Of women spreading Good News, of men turning from despair.

It's a morning of joy, for Easter has come again.

Love is stronger than death,

And we lift our voices in song.

***OPENING HYMN** *Christ the Lord is Risen Today* #216
 With Butterfly Processional

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

Loving God, as the day begins to brighten, shine your light into our lives.

Chase the corners of sadness, expose our fears and bring us to the light of new hope, the dawn of possibility. Open us to your resurrection power that knows no boundaries. Fill us with incredible joy, everlasting peace and unquenchable hope this day and always. Amen.

***RESPONSE** *Christ Arose (v.1)* #22

RECOGNITION OF DARCIE BAHR

ANTHEM *See What a Morning*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children 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** *In the Garden (v.1)* #227

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Gracious God, you have given us the ultimate gift in the death and resurrection of your Son. We humbly offer these gifts to you. Consecrate them to your use — that the ministry of this congregation might serve as a witness to those who still doubt. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: John 20: 1-18 NRSVUE & GEN Z Bible
 The Word of God for the People of God **Thanks be to God**

SERMON Being Jesus

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion Hymn *The Strife is O'er (with Alleluias)*

***CLOSING HYMN** *Thine is the Glory* #218

***BLESSING** (responsively)

The stone has been rolled away and the tomb is empty! Go forth from this house of worship filled with amazement at the miracle God has performed! Alleluia! **We will sing and dance for joy! We will spread the word that Christ has been raised! Alleluia! Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *He Lives (chorus only)* #226

* **POSTLUDE**

**You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myucc.org and clicking on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

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!

Church Office will be closed on Monday, April 6th. For the staff to recover from Holy Week and Easter.

NUREMBERG is our next movie on April 12th 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.

COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S UCC is open to EVERYONE, no matter their age, church affiliation or non-affiliation, Confirmed or not. If you belong to Christ, you are welcome at the table. It is God's table, not ours. No one should be denied God's grace through the sacrament.

THANKS TO Darcie Bahr for her dedicated service as our Nursery Attendant for the past nine years. Your hard work is appreciated by all and we are grateful for your devotion to the children of our congregation.

THANKS TO Korbin Alexander and Harper Coomes for sharing the Easter story according to the Gen Z Bible with us in worship today.

NEXT SUNDAY is Holy Humor Sunday so come prepared to have a FUN time as we celebrate God's ultimate joke over Satan—death has lost its sting and we have eternal life through Christ!



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 or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1

LENTEN SELF-DENIAL OFFERINGS may be included in your Easter offerings. Don't forget to finish your 40 days of Giving and bring in the results. Converting it all to cash or check would be appreciated but we'll take all the change as well. Thank you for participating in this Lenten discipline

DINNER & CONVERSATION: This week's dinner will be at Dragon 2000 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.

THANS TO EVERYONE who helped make last week's **MESSY CHURCH** such an awesome event of Easter Joy!

Prayers Posts

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Ellen Riggs, Bobby Bahr, Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), John Mineo, Brenda Fillingim, Cindi Gilmore, Andrew Anson, family of Martin Dale Smith and Kim Godare's daughter Mallory.

Shut-in Addresses:

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

This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, April 05

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

Tuesday, April 07

Girl Scouts 4:30-6:00pm

Thursday, April 09

Tech Meeting @ 10am
Dinner & Conversation
6pm @ Dragon 2000

Monday, April 06

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Friends 5:30-6:15pm
Evang./Mem. @ 6:30pm

Office Closed

Wednesday, April 08

Christian Education 6pm
Choir @ 7pm

Friday, April 10

Looking Ahead In April 2026

Sunday, April 12

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am
Holy Humor
Nuremberg @ 4pm

Tuesday, April 14

Thursday, April 16

Outreach & Benevolence @ 11am
Dinner & Conversation
6pm @ CoCo's

Monday, April 13

BABE Store 12-5:30pm

Wednesday, April 15

Choir @ 7pm

Friday, April 10



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Secretary	Kim Butler
Church Board President:	Sandra Lange
Organist:	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist:	Becky Brockman
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Head Usher:	Allison Cummins
Projection:	Sandra Lange
Sound:	Jonathan Lange
Liturgist:	Ed Cummings

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.