

*St. John United Church of Christ  
301 S. Market Street  
New Athens, Illinois 62264*



**See what love the  
Father has given us,  
that we should be  
called children of God.**

**1 John 3:1, NRSV**



In today's scripture, the author of 1 John urges us to act like who we already are—children of God.

**The Third Sunday  
of Easter**

**April 15, 2018**

**Worship and Grow Today**

*Traditional Worship  
8 am*

*Contemporary Worship  
9:15 am*

*Sunday School Classes, 9 am*

*Learn More About Us*  
*[stjohnuccnewathens.com](http://stjohnuccnewathens.com)*

*Contact Our Staff*

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***Please fill out and tear off*** your Attendance/Prayer Concern slip before worship begins. Pass it to the center aisle while the church calendar is being discussed. Our ushers will collect it there.

***Please note that large print bulletins and hearing assistance devices*** are available from our ushers.

***New members are welcome and received regularly*** at St. John's. If you or someone you know is interested in joining our worshiping family, speak to Pastor Koch as you leave today, or check the appropriate box on your attendance card.

***If this is a Communion Sunday*** (generally the first Sunday of each month) we invite all Christians welcome at Christ's table in their own family of faith to join us here. The inner circle in each tray of glasses contains grape juice.

***Children are always welcome*** in worship at St. John's. Live closed circuit TV broadcasts of our services are available in the foyer fellowship room, though, for parents who may decide that their child needs a break from worship temporarily.

***Pastor Koch*** is always available to help those seeking answers, comfort, or guidance. He is usually in his office all day Monday, and at various other times throughout the week. If you'd like to see him, feel free to stop by, or call the church office at 475-2947 to make an appointment.

***We cordially invite all members and guests*** to participate in the on-going ministries of St. John church. If you have any questions, feel free to contact our church office, which is open Tuesday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. till Noon and 1 p.m. till 3 p.m. It is staffed through the week by Deb Scherle, the St. John office coordinator.

***Please join us*** for coffee, juice, and doughnuts in the foyer after our 8 and 9:15 am services.

***Altar flowers*** are given to the glory of God and

***Bulletins this week*** are sponsored by

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## *Gathering Together*

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### PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

"Living for Jesus" (Vs. 1)

*Beginning five minutes prior to worship*

Pew Booklet, pp. 28-29

### THE CHURCH CALENDAR

*(Please pass your Attendance/Prayer Concern slips to the center aisle.)*

### THE MORNING PRELUDE, CALL OF THE BELL

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## *Seeking God's Presence*

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### CALL TO WORSHIP

*(From Psalm 4)*

Answer my prayers, Righteous God, the One who makes me right.

**I was hopelessly surrounded, and You rescued me.**

Once again hear me; hide me in Your favor;

**bring victory in defeat and hope in hopelessness.**

Crowds of disheartened people ask, "Who can show us what is good?"

**Let Your brilliant face shine upon us, O LORD,**

**that we may know the undeniable answer.**

You have filled me with joy and happiness has risen in my heart, great delight and unrivaled joy, even more than when bread abounds and wine flows freely.

**I'll sleep soundly tonight on a bed of peace because I trust You.**

**You alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.**

### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

The elder who wrote 1 John spoke to a church in crisis, holy God.

Disputes had splintered the community.

Persuasive arguments played on people's doubts

as well as their weaknesses and drew them away from the gospel.

Worse yet, many forgot they were your children

and came dangerously close to falling under evil's grip.

As we gather for worship, we see much of ourselves

in the struggles of those long-ago Christians.

**Strengthen us, renew us, and remind us who we are. Amen.**

### \*OPENING HYMN

"God Is Love; His Mercy Brightens"

Hymnal, No. 76

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## *Asking God's Forgiveness*

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### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

Time of Silent Confession

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*Together*

The writer of 1 John told early Christians to remember that they were your children, holy God, people of hope with an as yet unknown but still glorious future before them. If they stayed true to their spiritual heritage, he said, their lives would reflect it. If not, he warned, they risked falling away from you and coming under evil's power. We confess that, like some in the early, conflict-riddled church, we sometimes forget who and whose we are. Our witness to the good news and to our risen Lord is often halting and half-hearted, prone to division and disagreement, to selfishness and sin. Forgive us. Strengthen us that our lives may reflect both who we are as your children and who Christ is as our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon  
Gloria Patri  
Passing the Peace

Hymnal, No. 493

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## *Hearing God's Word*

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### **THE MORNING COLLECT**

*Together*

Today's reading from 1 John is a challenging mix of hope and judgment, gracious God. The struggles that prompted it are still part of our world and our lives. Guide us, as you guided those early Christians, through the challenges that come with living faithful lives in an often faithless world. Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE LESSON**

1 John 3:1-10

### **CHILDREN'S TIME**

### **THE SERMON**

"Family Resemblance"

### **\*OUR UCC STATEMENT OF FAITH**

*Together, Words on Screen*

### **HYMN**

Pew Booklet, p. 38

"Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling"

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## ***Responding With Our Prayers***

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### **JOYS AND CONCERNS OF OUR WORSHIPING FAMILY**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you.

**And with you also.**

Let us pray....

Pastoral Prayer, Silent Prayer

Our Lord's Prayer

*Together, Words on Screen*

#### **RESPONSE**

"Hear Our Prayer"

Hymnal, No. 501

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## ***Responding With Our Gifts***

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### **MORNING MISSION MOMENT, OFFERTORY**

#### **\*DOXOLOGY**

Hymnal, No. 551

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

If our lives reflect our spiritual DNA, generous God, then our gifts should as well.  
Bless our offerings, and use them to share the good news  
of one who came not just to destroy the works of evil,  
but to open to all your children  
a future of hope, promise, and eternal life. Amen.

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## ***Responding With Faithful Service in the World***

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### **BENEDICTION**

#### **HYMN**

"We're Children of God"

Bulletin, p. 6

#### **POSTLUDE**

## ***We're Children of God***

*Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2013*

*(Tune: "O Worship the King")*

We're children of God; we're welcomed and claimed.  
We're given new birth, renewed and renamed.  
The world may not know yet to whom we belong,  
But we are God's children and love is our song.

We're children of God who takes away sin.  
In Christ we abide; our life is in him.  
We offer forgiveness, seek justice and peace,  
And reach out to others, that love may increase.

We're children of God and so our delight  
Is living the life that's good in God's sight.  
One day we'll be like him, transformed from above  
To sing for eternity God's song of love.

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***New Beginnings is hosting its annual book fair*** in the foyer this Sunday. Stop by and check out the selection!

***All women of the church are invited to a retreat at DuBois Center April 20 and 21.*** Enjoy shared meals and snacks, crafts, games, devotional time and more! A sign up sheet is in the foyer.

***Our monthly parents' night out***, whose proceeds benefit the general fund, will be held from 6-10 pm April 28. Cost is \$10 per child (ages 2-12), which includes hot dogs, popcorn, movies, and fun! Please make reservations with Katie Main (795-3813) by April 26.

***Our annual chicken dinner will be held May 6.*** Sign up sheets for chicken dinner desserts and workers are now in the foyer. Volunteer today!

***The all town yard sale will be held on May 12.*** The daycare will NOT be collecting "treasures" this year. Parking spaces and indoor tables are available to rent for \$5 and \$10, respectively.

***We'll gather down at the Bullpen on Sunday, June 10,*** to congratulate our former student pastor Jason Eisele on his recent approval for ordination. A sign up sheet is in the foyer.

***Mark your calendars now for our August 25 baseball-themed fundraiser*** at the Bullpen and Okaw Valley Park! Hunt for a home run ball with your flashlight, enjoy a ballpark-themed buffet, and watch a classic baseball film as well. Tickets for this event will be limited; be sure to make your reservations early. There will be a silent auction as part of the evening's festivities. If you or your organization would be willing to prepare a basket for the silent auction, please sign up in the foyer.