

*They charged at him, threw him out of the city,
and began to stone him.*



*Falling to his knees, he shouted,
“Lord, don’t hold this sin against them!”*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

MAY 7, 2023

We welcome all who are visiting with us today.

It is good to have you in worship with us. Please introduce yourself to
Pastor Phil this morning and let us know if there is any way
we might be of service to you or your family.

Silent Reflection: "In the Father's house we shall meet Buddhists and Jews, Muslims and Protestants – even a few Catholics too, I dare say ... We should be more humble about people who, even if they have never heard of the name of Jesus Christ, may well be more Christian than we are." ~ Catholic Archbishop Hélder Câmara

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Gaze into heaven and see the glory of God.

Lift up your eyes to behold the risen Christ.

ALL: God is our rock of refuge, a strong fortress.

Christ leads us and guides us every day.

ONE: Indeed, you have tasted the goodness of God.

You have known the presence of Christ, God's chosen one.

ALL: Every day we long for pure spiritual milk.

Each day, we are inspired by the living Christ.

ONE: Then let us lay our troubles at Christ's feet.

Let us enter the sanctuary God prepares for us.

ALL: We have come to find the way, the truth, and the life.

We are here to ask and to receive and to serve.

Bulletin Cover Attribution:

The Stoning of Stephen, Kölner Dom - Cologne, Germany. From Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54257>.

Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Koelner_Dom_-_Bayernfenster_02.jpg.

CALL TO CONFESSION**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*unison*)

We confess that sometimes we have covered our ears so we cannot hear your word. Of judgment, holy God. We seek to isolate ourselves from a world in pain. We become enemies and persecutors of Christ, who identified with poor, needy, and oppressed people. We reject the One you sent as the way, the truth, and the life. We do not pray, as Jesus prayed, trusting that you hear and respond. O God, deliver us from ourselves. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON**GLORIA PATRI****A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US****Prayer for the children** (*unison*):

We send blessings upon our children for all God's love,
all Christ's friendship and all the caring of the
Holy Spirit. Amen.

Song Response

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

SCRIPTURES:

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

John 14:1-14

HYMN*Be Still My Soul*

451

Jane Laurie Borthwick | Jean Sibelius | Katharina Amalia von Schlegel © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain *For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com* CCLI License # 20849486

SERMON**INVITATION TO OFFERING****GIVE THANKS:**

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. And now let the weak say, "I am strong," Let the poor say, "I am rich," because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*unison*)

We commit ourselves to you, gracious God, as we dedicate material gifts that represent our labor. When we ponder the amazing wonder of life, we are filled with awe. When we remember Jesus as the cornerstone of the spiritual house you are seeking to build in our midst, we are eager to help. Let your face shine on us and on this offering that your mighty acts may be proclaimed to all the world. Amen.

HYMN*As We Gather at Your Table*

695

Benjamin Franklin White | Carl P. Daw Jr. | Jack Schrader © Words: 1989 Hope Publishing Company Music: 1992 Hope Publishing Company *For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com* CCLI License # 20849486

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION (*insert*)**PRAYERS OF OUR CHURCH/SILENT PRAYERS/LORD'S PRAYER****PRAYER RESPONSE****Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

*** HYMN***They'll Know We are Christians***INSERT**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

ONE: Jesus said: I am the bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger; you who believe in me shall never thirst.

ALL: In company with all who hunger for spiritual food, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the sharing of this life-giving bread.

COMMUNION PRAYER

ONE: God be with you

ALL: And also with you

ONE: Lift up your hearts

ALL: We lift them to God.

ONE: Let us give thanks to the God Most High.

ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

ONE: Holy God, our loving Creator, you are as close to us as our breathing and you are as distant as the farthest star. We thank you for your constant love for all you have made. We thank you for all that sustains life, for all people of faith around the world and of every generation who have given themselves to your will, and especially for Jesus Christ, who you sent from your own being as our Savior. We praise you for Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection, and for the calling forth of your church for its mission in the world. Gifted by the presence of your Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves to you as we unite our prayers with the entire family of your faithful people, everywhere and in every time:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the Highest!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the Highest!

ONE: Merciful God, as sisters and brothers in faith, we recall anew these words and acts of Jesus Christ. We remember that Jesus ate and drank with the poor and with the wealthy, with the sinful and righteous alike. When he saw the multitude that followed him with nothing to eat, he took some loaves of bread, and a few fish, and after giving thanks to you he divided the bread and gave it to the multitude. And all ate and were filled. When his arrest seemed near, Jesus sat at table in an upper

room, with his closest friends and disciples. As he had done so many times before, he took the bread and after giving thanks to you he shared it among the disciples, vowing to continue his work in spite of the risk. He said, "I will not eat this again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Do this in remembrance of me." Likewise, after the meal, he took the cup and after giving thanks he gave it to them saying, "Truly I tell you, I will never drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God." Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For a time it seemed that all was lost. Jesus was executed by the authorities, and his disciples scattered in fear and despair. But at an evening meal in Emmaus, and at a breakfast campfire by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus once more took the bread, and after giving thanks to you he divided it and gave it to his disciples, opening their eyes, binding up their wounds, continuing the meal, and revealing plainly that your steadfast love is stronger even than death, and your labor with us continues, for the sake of your realm.

Therefore, let us proclaim the mystery of our faith.

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

ONE: Holy one, pour out your blessings on this food we have gathered. May it be multiplied like the loaves and fishes at Galilee and feed and bless your people.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on this bread and cup, and on us, your children. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Christ died.

ALL: Through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Council Person | Audrey Yann |
| Liturgist | George Anderson |
| Accompanist | Melissa Anderson Taylor |

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Ella Boggy, Wally Foxworthy, Margie Foxworthy's son Sean, and Jeffrey Thornton

St. Jacob: Ross Busher, Carol Casperson, Gail Miller, Ronald Rujawitz, Jane Schmidt, Carol Schmitt, and Carol Zweck

IL South Conference: Each week the churches of the Illinois South Conference are asked to pray for congregations and their pastors and other ministries of the UCC. This week we are asked to pray for:

Church & Pastors

-Summerfield St. John UCC, Rev. Philip (Kate) Barbier

-Tower Hill St. Paul UCC, Pastor Neil Kaiser

Retired Pastor

-Revs. Pamela Smith and Earl Menchhofer, Conyers, GA

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Pat & Steve May, 47 years, May 8

Ann Becker, May 8

Carla & Darik Zobrist, 14 years, May 9

Harvey Steinkoenig, May 10

Grace Leder, May 11

Ann & Ryan Becker, 11 years, May 12

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, APRIL 30, 2023

St. John's – 13

St. Jacob – 42

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor's office hours: Tuesday through Thursday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
(Mondays by appointment)

Secretary's office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

St. Jacob Phone: 618-644-2142 / St. Jacob E-mail: stjucc@hometel.com

Website: stjacobucc.org

Pastor Phil Barbier: Phone: 314-312-2347 / E-mail: pastor@hometel.com

BLESSING BOX LOCATED AT ST. JACOB UCC

The "Blessing Box" (located on the east side of St. Jacob UCC) can use donations of non-perishable food, hygiene products, and other items for those in need. Anyone can donate -- items are anonymously given and received. Please consider blessing our neighbors in need, and if you are in need, please feel free to stop by.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

With the inflation these past few months, use of local food pantries has been high, and donations have been low. To help our communities we have a donation tub/box for food pantry donations in the sanctuary at St. John's and St. Jacob.

Requested items for St. John's (Lebanon Matthew 25:40 Ministries Food Pantry): Long shelf-life fresh produce: apples, oranges, celery, onions, potatoes, and carrots, etc.

Requested items for St. Jacob (Ministries Unlimited): Manwich, scalloped potatoes boxed, cereal bars, canned spinach, canned sauerkraut, pasta sides, black-eyed peas (dried/canned), canned ham, Rotel tomatoes, Vienna sausages, pepperoni, pizza crust mix, dish detergent, coffee, & snack foods (chips, peanuts, etc)

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDNESDAY: ELF's meeting, 10 a.m.

MAY 16: St. John's Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

MAY 17: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

MAY 20: Berry cleaning and Strawberry Festival setup, 8 a.m.

MAY 21: **Strawberry Festival**, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL PLANNING NEARING COMPLETION

We are in the process of finalizing the planning for the Strawberry Festival, but there are still a few things we need before the 21st.

- 5 Yellow Cakes
- 6 Pie Crusts
- A side-by-side or golf cart for food & miscellaneous transport from church
- Volunteers
 - Cleaning Berries on the 20th (lunch provided)
 - Help with food delivery to assisted living centers in Highland
 - 2-3 more people to help in the food pavilion for each shift (Shift 1: 10:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., and Shift 2: 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

If you are able to fulfill any of these needs, please reach out Jane Noeltner (618-977-8063) or Pastor Phil (618-644-2142) or stop by the final Strawberry Festival planning meeting in the Heritage Hall after worship today.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL FLYERS

Request your help in publicizing our Strawberry Festival – there are two flyers in the Narthx, one with general information, and one listing our sponsors. Please pick up a few of each and take them to any place you feel might be appropriate to post.

LAWN MOWING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please volunteer to mow the church lawn. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthx at St. Jacob.

***** THE UPPER ROOM** (May-June) magazines are available on the table in the Narthx at St. Jacob.

FIRST LESSON: Acts 7:55-60

But Stephen, enabled by the Holy Spirit, stared into heaven and saw God's majesty and Jesus standing at God's right side. He exclaimed, "Look! I can see heaven on display and the Human One standing at God's right side!" At this, they shrieked and covered their ears. Together, they charged at him, threw him out of the city, and began to stone him. The witnesses placed their coats in the care of a young man named Saul. As they battered him with stones, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, accept my life!" Falling to his knees, he shouted, "Lord, don't hold this sin against them!" Then he died.

SECOND LESSON: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

I take refuge in you, Lord. Please never let me be put to shame. Rescue me by your righteousness! Listen closely to me! Deliver me quickly; be a rock that protects me; be a strong fortress that saves me! You are definitely my rock and my fortress. Guide me and lead me for the sake of your good name! Get me out of this net that's been set for me because you are my protective fortress. I entrust my spirit into your hands; you, Lord, God of faithfulness – you have saved me.

My future is in your hands. Don't hand me over to my enemies, to all who are out to get me! Shine your face on your servant; save me by your faithful love!

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

"Don't be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. My Father's house has room to spare. If that weren't the case, would I have told you that I'm going to prepare a place for you? When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too. You know the way to the place I'm going."

Thomas asked, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you have really known me, you will also know the Father. From now on you know him and have seen him."

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us."

Jesus replied, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don't speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works. Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. I assure you that whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. They will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father can be glorified in the Son. When you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.