



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

July 23, 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: "Jesus came to announce to us that an identity based on success, popularity and power is a false identity - an illusion! Loudly and clearly he says: 'You are not what the world makes you; but you are children of God.'"

~ Henri Nouwen

ANNOUNCEMENTS RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God has searched us and knows us.
God knows when we sit down and when we rise up.

ALL: God searches out our path and our lying down.
God is acquainted with all our ways.

ONE: Before a word is on our tongues, God knows it.
God's hand is ever available to guide us.

ALL: Such knowledge is a wonder to us.
It is beyond anything we can attain.

ONE: We cannot escape from God's spirit.
There is nowhere to flee from God's presence.

ALL: Darkness is as light to our God.
God illuminates the way before us.

Bulletin Cover Attribution:

Swanson, John August. Dream of Jacob, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56541>. Original source: Estate of John August Swanson, <https://www.johnaugustswanson.com/>.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Search us and test us, that all wickedness may be purged from us, O Creator. Save us from our futile striving after our own advantage. Reshape our will to conform with your intentions for us. We confess that we have allowed weeds to grow in our lives. Our focus has drifted from the harvest you intend to the fears and greed that hold us hostage. Release us from the bondage to decay that we may grow in likeness to Jesus Christ. We want to bear fruit for you. Turn us to the brightness of a new day. 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:

Genesis 28:10-19a

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

HYMN

We are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

INSERT

SERMON

HYMN

On Eagle's Wings

438

Michael Joncas Words and Music © 1979 New Dawn Music

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*)

Thank you, God for the rich heritage of faith we have received from our ancestors. We are grateful that your Spirit is ever with us, assuring us of your acceptance and love. May our offerings share this good news with other children of God who have not yet discovered their identity. May all of us grow in righteousness that we might together experience the reality of your realm in our daily lives, here and now and for all eternity. Amen.

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

The Church's One Foundation

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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person John Zweck
Accompanist Melody Hollis

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Judy Chapman, Wally Foxworthy, Cindy Roll,
Jeffrey Thornton, and Margie Foxworthy's son Sean

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

-Collinsville St. John UCC, Rev. Jennifer Sowell-Glover

-Collinsville St. John UCC, Rev. Katie Jo Bielke

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Hugh and Bo Fitz, Mascoutah, IL

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Beth & Bruce Frank, 30 years, July 24

Sanderson (Sandy) Autry, July 25

Kylie Bloemker, July 25

Nancy Autry, July 28

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, July 16, 2023

St. John's – 9

St. Jacob – 24

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

INTERGENERATIONAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

There are still two dates left for St. Jacob UCC and Troy Friedens UCC Intergenerational Vacation Bible School – it will be held from 6 to 8 p.m., July 27 at Tri-Township Library and Aug. 3 at Tri-Township Park. This Intergenerational Vacation Bible School is for everyone ages of 1-100-

plus, and we will explore the theme of the Greatest Commandment: *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,"* and *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* You can register on-line at: <https://forms.gle/1kkGSY9uLLuPDiET9>, or if you prefer, there are registration forms available on the table in the Narthx and in the church office.

HEART July 20
St. Jacob Park
Heart Healthy Activities- kid's yoga, cornhole, adult kickball
Heart Healthy Mission- packing lunches for the summer lunch program

MIND Thursday Nights @6p-8p
Tri-Township Library
Mind Enriching Activities- kid's puppet show and library tour, adult book club conversation

SOUL August 3
Tri-Township Park
Soul Feeding Activities- Cultural music and dance performance
Soul Feeding Mission- Decorating pillowcases to be donated to Sleep in Heavenly Peace

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" -Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Activities listed are tentative. Be on the lookout for more information soon!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR

The flowers on the altar are to the Glory of God and in honor of our precious granddaughter Kylie as she celebrates her 17th birthday on July 25, from Grandpa Charlie and Grandma Carol Kynion.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

A men's fellowship organizational meeting will be held at 7 p.m., **TODAY** at Heritage Hall. Anyone interested in starting a men's fellowship group is encouraged to attend.

SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM NEEDS VOLUNTEERS, DONATIONS

-**St. John's UCC** is accepting monetary donations to purchase needed lunch supplies. Lunches are provided each weekday from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and can be picked up at the Summerfield Fire Department.

-**St. Jacob UCC:** So far this year we are providing lunches to almost twice as many kids as in years past and could use monetary donations and additional volunteers. Volunteers are needed from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays to allow time to assemble lunches, as well as clean-up afterward. A sign-up sheet is located on the table in the Narthx. For more information, or to volunteer call Judy Bolton at 618-830-0526, or Audrey Yann at 618-567-8013.

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 28:10-19a

Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. He reached a certain place and spent the night there. When the sun had set, he took one of the stones at that place and put it near his head. Then he lay down there. He dreamed and saw a raised staircase, its foundation on earth and its top touching the sky, and God's messengers were ascending and descending on it. Suddenly the Lord was standing on it and saying, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will become like the dust of the earth; you will spread out to the west, east, north, and south. Every family of earth will be blessed because of you and your descendants. I am with you now, I will protect you everywhere you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done everything that I have promised you."

When Jacob woke from his sleep, he thought to himself, The Lord is definitely in this place, but I didn't know it. He was terrified and thought, This sacred place is awesome. It's none other than God's house and the entrance to heaven. After Jacob got up early in the morning, he took the stone that he had put near his head, set it up as a sacred pillar, and poured oil on the top of it. He named that sacred place Bethel.

(continued from inside cover)

SECOND LESSON: Roman 8:12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation, but it isn't an obligation to ourselves to live our lives on the basis of selfishness. If you live on the basis of selfishness, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the actions of the body, you will live. All who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons and daughters. You didn't receive a spirit of slavery to lead you back again into fear, but you received a Spirit that shows you are adopted as his children. With this Spirit, we cry, "Abba, Father." The same Spirit agrees with our spirit, that we are God's children. But if we are children, we are also heirs. We are God's heirs and fellow heirs with Christ, if we really suffer with him so that we can also be glorified with him.

I believe that the present suffering is nothing compared to the coming glory that is going to be revealed to us. The whole creation waits breathless with anticipation for the revelation of God's sons and daughters. Creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice—it was the choice of the one who subjected it—but in the hope that the creation itself will be set free from slavery to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of God's children. We know that the whole creation is groaning together and suffering labor pains up until now. And it's not only the creation. We ourselves who have the Spirit as the first crop of the harvest also groan inside as we wait to be adopted and for our bodies to be set free. We were saved in hope. If we see what we hope for, that isn't hope. Who hopes for what they already see? But if we hope for what we don't see, we wait for it with patience.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like someone who planted good seed in his field. While people were sleeping, an enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat and went away. When the stalks sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared.

"The servants of the landowner came and said to him, 'Master, didn't you plant good seed in your field? Then how is it that it has weeds?'

"'An enemy has done this,' he answered.

"The servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go and gather them?'

"But the landowner said, 'No, because if you gather the weeds, you'll pull up the wheat along with them. Let both grow side by side until the harvest. And at harvest time I'll say to the harvesters, "First gather the weeds and tie them together in bundles to be burned. But bring the wheat into my barn.'"

Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

Jesus replied, "The one who plants the good seed is the Human One. The field is the world. And the good seeds are the followers of the kingdom. But the weeds are the followers of the evil one. The enemy who planted them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the present age. The harvesters are the angels. Just as people gather weeds and burn them in the fire, so it will be at the end of the present age. The Human One will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that cause people to fall away and all people who sin. He will throw them into a burning furnace. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Those who have ears should hear."

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

African-American spiritual

Gen. 28:10-17

1 We are climb-ing Ja-cob's lad-der, we are climb-ing Ja-cob's lad-der,
 2 Ev-ery round goes high-er, high-er, ev-ery round goes high-er, high-er,
 3 Rise, shine, give God glo-ry, rise, shine, give God glo-ry,

we are climb-ing Ja-cob's lad-der, bear-ers of the cross.
 ev-ery round goes high-er, high-er, bear-ers of the cross.
 rise, shine, give God glo-ry, bear-ers of the cross.

Like many spirituals, this one uses a story from the Hebrew scriptures as its starting point and the element of the ladder as a creative device to draw us into the narrative. In like manner, the following twentieth-century adaption of the song by Carole Etzler employs the story of Sarah, the matriarch of the Hebrew people, and extends the direction of the pilgrimage from the upward climb of the ladder to the outward embrace of a circle.

Tune: JACOB'S LADDER 8.8.8.5.
African-American spiritual

