



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

November 12, 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: “Story, as it turns out, was crucial to our evolution -- more so than opposable thumbs. Opposable thumbs let us hang on; story told us what to hang on to.” ~ Lisa Cron, *Wired for Story*

ANNOUNCEMENTS RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

- ONE: Put away the things you have substituted for God.
Let your worship of the one true God be genuine.
- ALL: **We seek to know God and rejoice before our Creator.
We know that God is beyond all our false images.**
- ONE: God is not deceived by our solemn assemblies.
Our empty festivals do not impress our God.
- ALL: **We want to give joyous expression to a growing faith.
We choose to serve the God whom Jesus revealed.**
- ONE: Our hope is in God’s grace beyond all judgment.
Our trust is in God’s love, greater than our feeble imitation.
- ALL: **We welcome the light God promises us.
We seek to respond with faithful service.**
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Bulletin Cover Attribution:

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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

If sin means cutting ourselves off from you and being unprepared to respond to your presence, surely we have sinned. Our lamps are not trimmed; our lives are not ready for your trumpet call. We have not listened well or encouraged one another in the faith. The distraction of many things has kept us from meditation and prayer. We are witnesses against ourselves, for we have vowed our loyalty and then have gone our own way. Merciful God, we see your forgiveness. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

GLORIA PATRI

TOTENFEST: We Gather to Remember (*insert*)

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.

SCRIPTURE:

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

Psalm 78:1-7

Matthew 25:1-13

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 set our hopes in you, God of all ages, and seek to serve you through our offerings and our efforts to encourage and equip one another for ministry. Help us decide daily to live according to your will, preparing ourselves for the opportunities and challenges you give us. May your rule shape our lives in ways that introduce many to the joys of eternity in the midst of time. 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.*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person	Ty Gansmann
Liturgist	Kay Guse
Accompanist	Melody Hollis

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Don Koenig, Cindy Roll, Roy Roll and Margie Foxworthy's son Sean and stepson Dustin

St. Jacob: Sandy Autry, Carol Casperson, Lori Foley, Kathy Gindler, Carolyn Masterson, Gail Miller, Ronald Rujawitz, Jane Schmidt, Jerry 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

-Lenzburg St. Peter's UCC, Rev. Earl (Johanna) Crecelius

-Maeystown St. John UCC, Rev. Patrick (Kathy) Poole

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Herbert & Bennie Schafale, Freeburg, IL

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Rachel Schmidt Stopka, Nov. 15
Sharon & Don Koenig, 55 years, Nov. 16

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, November 5, 2023

St. John's – 18 St. Jacob – 28

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

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

As we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, the need for food assistance always grows. In preparation for this holiday season, below are updated lists of items needed by our local food pantries. Donation baskets are in the sanctuary at St. John's & St. Jacob.



Requested items for St. John's (For Lebanon Matthew 25:40 Ministries): Canned goods including: vegetables, fruit, beans, soups, stews, pasta, chili, and tuna. Boxed goods including: pasta & noodles, rice, mashed potatoes, cereal, oatmeal, stuffing, and mac & cheese. Other pantry staples including: flour, sugar, peanut butter, jelly, pasta sauce, BBQ sauce, ramen, cake mix, jello, and pudding. Non food items including: trash bags, storage bags, paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap, toiletries.

Requested items for St. Jacob (Ministries Unlimited): Jiffy corn muffin mix, yams, pie filling, Jiffy pie crust mix, peanut butter, pasta, chili beans, instant potato packets, rice 1-pound bags, & instant rice

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CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDNESDAY: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

NOVEMBER 21: St. John's Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

ON-LINE GIVING OPTION

An on-line giving option has been added to St. Jacob's web site. Currently you may select this option by visiting the web site at: <https://stjacobucc.org/> and clicking on "RESOURCES" and then "DONATE." In the future, there will be an option to choose to donate on the main banner/page as well.

HOYLETON'S HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS DRIVE

St. Jacob: This year we are providing gifts for children in residential care and foster care through Hoyleton. On the table in the Narthx you will find a basket with slips. Each slip lists one gift and has a number at the top. There is a sheet next to the basket with the same number on it. Please put your name next to the slip you take. Gifts are due back to church by, Nov. 26, and we will get them to Hoyleton that week. Please include the top half of the slip with the child's name on the gift.

St. John's: Again this year the council will be coordinating the purchase of gifts for the children in residential care and foster care through Hoyleton through their Amazon wish-list. Please place your donation in the envelope on the bulletin board.

FIRST LESSON: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders of Israel, its leaders, judges, and officers. They presented themselves before God. Then Joshua said to the entire people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates. They served other gods. Among them was Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor. I took Abraham your ancestor from the other side of the Euphrates.

"So now, revere the Lord. Serve him honestly and faithfully. Put aside the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and serve the Lord. But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord."

Then the people answered, "God forbid that we ever leave the Lord to serve other gods! The Lord is our God. He is the one who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. He has done these mighty signs in our sight. He has protected us the whole way we've gone and in all the nations through which we've passed. The Lord has driven out all the nations before us, including the Amorites who lived in the land. We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God."

Then Joshua said to the people, "You can't serve the Lord, because he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He won't forgive your rebellion and your sins. If you leave the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn around and do you harm and finish you off, in spite of having done you good in the past."

(continued from inside cover)

Then the people said to Joshua, “No! The Lord is the one we will serve.”

So Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the Lord.”

They said, “We are witnesses!”

“So now put aside the foreign gods that are among you. Focus your hearts on the Lord, the God of Israel.”

The people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God and will obey him.”

On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people and established just rule for them at Shechem.

SECOND LESSON: Psalm 78:1-7

Listen, my people, to my teaching; tilt your ears toward the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth with a proverb. I'll declare riddles from days long gone – ones that we've heard and learned about, ones that our ancestors told us.

We won't hide them from their descendants; we'll tell the next generation all about the praise due the Lord and his strength – the wondrous works God has done.

He established a law for Jacob and set up instruction for Israel, ordering our ancestors to teach them to their children.

This is so that the next generation and children not yet born will know these things, and so they can rise up and tell their children to put their hope in God – never forgetting God's deeds, but keeping God's commandments—

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten young bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. Now five of them were wise, and the other five were foolish. The foolish ones took their lamps but didn't bring oil for them. But the wise ones took their lamps and also brought containers of oil.

“When the groom was late in coming, they all became drowsy and went to sleep. But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Look, the groom! Come out to meet him.’

“Then all those bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. But the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out.’

“But the wise bridesmaids replied, ‘No, because if we share with you, there won't be enough for our lamps and yours. We have a better idea. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were gone to buy oil, the groom came. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding. Then the door was shut.

“Later the other bridesmaids came and said, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us.’

“But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don't know you.’

“Therefore, keep alert, because you don't know the day or the hour.”

Together We Serve 767

Capo 3: (G) (D) (Em) (Bm7)
 B^b F Gm Dm7

1 To - geth - er we serve, u - nit - ed by love,
 2 We seek to be - come a bea - con of hope,
 3 We wel - come the scarred, the wealth - y, the poor,
 4 To - geth - er, by grace, we wit - ness and work,

(C) (G) (Am7) (Dsus) (D)
 E^b B^b Cm7 Fsus F

in - vit - ing God's world to the glo - ri - ous feast.
 a lamp for the heart and a light for the feet.
 the bus - y, the lone - ly, and all who need care.
 re - mem - ber - ing Je - sus, in whom we grow strong.

(G) (D) (C) (Bm)
 B^b F E^b Dm

We work and we pray through sor - row and joy,
 We learn, year by year, to let love shine through
 We of - fer a home to those who will come,
 To - geth - er we serve in Spir - it and truth,

(G) (C) (G) (Am) (D7) (G)
 B^b E^b B^b Cm F7 B^b

ex - tend - ing God's love to the last and the least.
 un - til we see Christ in each per - son we meet.
 our hands quick to help, our hearts read - y to dare.
 re - mem - ber - ing love is the strength of our song.

The first three words of this text appear in the website address for First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo, California, for whose centennial the hymn was commissioned. The text draws on Ephesians 4:11-16, a passage describing the many gifts and ministries within the body of Christ.

