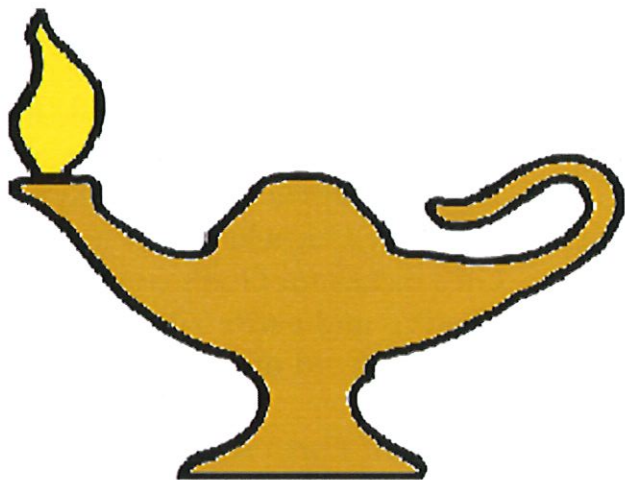


*But nobody knows
when that day or
hour will come...*

Therefore stay alert!

*Don't let him show up
when you weren't
expecting and find
you sleeping.*



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

December 3, 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: "The Kingdom of God is the already but not yet".
~ R. Alan Woods, *The Journey Is The Destination: A Photo Journal*

ANNOUNCEMENTS RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Awake, people of God, and stay alert for Christ's coming.
Grace to you and peace from God who sent Jesus to us.

ALL: Make your ways known to us, O God.
Show us once more your awesome presence.

ONE: We are all God's people; no one is excluded.
Come together as God's family for worship and prayer.

ALL: Let the mountains quake before you, mighty God.
Let the nations tremble in awe and reverence.

ONE: Praise the One who grants us the gift of life.
Give thanks for God's continuing faithfulness.

ALL: Heaven and earth will pass away,
But the Word of God is true for all times and places.

* HYMN *All Earth is Hopeful*

163

Words and Music © 1993 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica (Admin. OCP Publications Words Tr. © Madeleine Forell Marshall (Admin. Ausburg Fortress)

THE ADVENT WREATH – HOPE

Lighting the Candle

Advent Song

1. Light the advent candle, one: Now the waiting has begun;
We have started on our way, time to think of Christmas day.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
Candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.

Copyright: © 1998 Mary Lu Walker ...

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Awesome God, we confess the sin of our separation from you. We have blamed you for hiding from us, rather than admitting we have failed to see you in the thousands of ways you are revealing yourself every day. We have not called on you, and we have not listened for your call to us. Without you, we have become tiny islands of self-concern. Our links with the rest of your children are stretched and broken. O God, we long for that loving community in which your reign is acknowledged and your purposes are served. Move us to that place, we pray. 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.

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

HYMN *Like a child*

162

© 1993 Hope Publishing Company

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)*

Gracious God, we give our best to you, not out of guilt or fear, but with gratitude and faith. You have been our support in times of need. Every breath we take is a gift from you. We would be awake and watchful for opportunities to make a difference, to help others be alert for your presence, to value life in all its fullness, and to learn to care. We dedicate these symbols of thankfulness and all the days of our lives to those purposes. Amen.

HYMN *As We Gather at Your Table*

695

Words: 1989 Hope Publishing Company; Music: Public Domain

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.

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: Source of Light and Life, we are the work of your hands, we are all your people.

ALL: Restore us, O God; make your face shine so that we can be saved.

ONE: You, O God, are faithful and have given us grace and light through Jesus Christ. But we turned away; we sinned before you.

ALL: Restore us, O God; make your face shine so that we can be saved.

ONE: Meet us, Holy One, in this meal that we may be restored to right relationship with you. Join us together as the body of your beloved son, Jesus Christ. Keep us wide-eyed for the day of your coming, that we may know your salvation. Shine through us and on the food we have gathered for your people and upon these gifts of bread and cup you give to us. Transform us into a people of hope, love and justice for your world.

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, Jesus taught us that when we see the tender, new leaves of the fig tree we know summer is near. We again see the signs of Advent and know that our celebration of Christ's birth draws near. As sisters and brothers in faith, we seek to stay alert, remembering the words and acts of Jesus Christ. 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."

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 for your people. May it be multiplied like the loaves and fishes at Galilee and feed and bless them and bring them closer to you.

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 Kevin Hollis
Accompanist Melissa Anderson Taylor

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

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

St. Jacob: Sandy Autry, Carol Casperson, Lori Foley, 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

-Marion Zion UCC, Rev. John (Sara) Holst

-Moro St. John's UCC at Midway, Rev. Lori (Wayne) Schafer

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Dr. Richard and Johann Ellerbrake, Lebanon, IL

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Loretta Tague, Dec. 3

Jenni Schreiber, Dec. 7

Roger Baer, Dec. 8

Dian & Ty Gansmann, 28 years, Dec. 8

Donna & John Lowe, 39 years, Dec. 8

Sam Frey, Dec. 9

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, November 26, 2023

St. John's – 6 St. Jacob – 36

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. Nonfood 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

Portions reprinted [or adapted] by permission of United Church Press from *Gathered by Love* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1994 by United Church Press.

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY: Holy Sunday, St. John's & St. Jacob

DEC. 13: ELFs meeting, 10 a.m.

DEC. 13: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

DEC. 19: St. John's Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

TRIP TO TILLES PARK CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY DEC. 10

There are still a few seats available for our trip to Tilles Park Dec. 10 to see the Winter Wonderland light display. St. Jacob UCC arranged for a 37-passenger bus to transport us to the drive-through display. The bus departs at 3 p.m., with a stop for dinner at Fitz's, South County prior to driving through the light display. Sign-up sheet is located on the table in the Narthx, or you may call 618-644-2142. There is no charge for transportation, however, the cost for dinner is not included.

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.

ST. JACOB NEEDS COUNCIL MEMBERS

St. Jacob needs members to serve on the church council. Currently we have only 10 of the 12 positions filled. Three of those 10 members will finish their term at the end of this year, which will leave us with five positions vacant for 2024. Please consider volunteering, it's really a small commitment of your time, as the council meets just once a month for about an hour, and then serves as the council person for one month to assist at worship. The success of our church depends on volunteers like you. For more information call the church office, 618-644-2142.

SNOW SHOVELING

Winter weather will be here before you know it. Please volunteer to shovel the church sidewalks. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthx. Thank you!

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

FIRST LESSON: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Shepherd of Israel, listen! You, the one who leads Joseph as if he were a sheep. You, who are enthroned up-
on the winged heavenly creatures.

Show yourself before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh! Wake up your power! Come to save us!

Restore us, God! Make your face shine so that we can be saved!

Lord God of heavenly forces, how long will you fume against your people's prayer?

You've fed them bread made of tears; you've given them tears to drink three times over!

You've put us at odds with our neighbors; our enemies make fun of us.

Restore us, God of heavenly forces! Make your face shine so that we can be saved!

Let your hand be with the one on your right side – with the one whom you secured as your own – then we will
not turn away from you!

Revive us so that we can call on your name. Restore us, Lord God of heavenly forces! Make your face shine so
that we can be saved!

SECOND LESSON: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always for you, because of God's grace that was given to you in Christ Jesus. That is, you were
made rich through him in everything: in all your communication and every kind of knowledge, in the same way
that the testimony about Christ was confirmed with you. The result is that you aren't missing any spiritual gift
while you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also confirm your testimony about Christ until
the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, and you were called
by him to partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

"In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won't give its light.
The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. Then they will see
the Human One coming in the clouds with great power and splendor. Then he will send the angels and gather
together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

"Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know
that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he's near, at the
door. I assure you that this generation won't pass away until all these things happen. Heaven and earth will
pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

"But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the
Father knows. Watch out! Stay alert! You don't know when the time is coming. It is as if someone took a
trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the
door-keeper to stay alert. Therefore, stay alert! You don't know when the head of the household will come,
whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. Don't
let him show up when you weren't expecting and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!"