



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

December 31, 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: “Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto man His Son hath
given; While angels sing with tender mirth, A glad new year to all the earth.”

~ Martin Luther

ANNOUNCEMENTS RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from heaven! Praise God on the heights!

ALL: Sun and moon, praise God!

You highest heaven, praise God!

ONE: Let all of these praise these praise the Lord’s name,

Because God gave the command and they were created!

ALL: Praise the Lord from the earth and ocean depths,

Mountains and hills, animals of the land and of the sky!

ONE: Let all the people of the world praise God’s name!

CAROL *Away in a Manger* 203

CAROL *O Holy Night* 187

Music Arr. © 1989 Hope Publishing Company

Bulletin Cover Attribution:

Opie, John, 1761-1807 ; Bromley, William, 1769-1842. The Macklin Bible -- The Presentation in the Temple, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-image/act-image-link.pl?RC=54060>

FIRST READING Luke 2:22-40

CAROL *Come and Hear the Joyful Singing* 197

Words: 1986 Michael Perry - The Jubilate Group (Admin. by Jubilate Hymns Ltd, sub to Hope Publishing for various regions); Music: 1992 Hope Publishing Company

CAROL *The First Noel* 229

SECOND READING Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

CAROL *We Three Kings of Orient Are* 233

CAROL *Go, Tell It On the Mountain* 218

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*)

With joyous praise, we return to you a portion of all you have given to us. We give thanks for the ways you have touched our lives with holiness. We are grateful for the witness of the shepherds, for the gifts of the magi, for the coming of your son, Jesus Christ. You have given so much to us, receive our lives as we dedicate them, and these gifts, to your service. 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 Kevin Hollis

Liturgists Kevin Hollis, Donna Lowe, Audrey Yann, Don Yann, Kay Guse

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,
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

-Okawville St. Peter's UCC, Rev. Jeffrey Schwab

-Okawville St. Paul UCC

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Linda and Bob Coulson, Palm Coast, FL

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Jane Noeltner, January 2

Alex Schreiber, January 2

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, Christmas Eve, 2023

St. Jacob 4:00 PM – 45

St. John's 7:00 PM – 18

St. Jacob 10:00 PM – 41

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

Even after the holidays, the need for food assistance continues.

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): mixed vegetables, carrots, spam, canned ham, macaroni and cheese, pasta, paper towels, shampoo, body wash, and toilet bowl cleaner

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CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

TUESDAY: Pastor Phil Returns from Vacation

JANUARY 7: Holy Sunday, St. John's & St. Jacob

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

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.

ST. JACOB 2023 ENVELOPE BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

The St. Jacob 2023 envelope booklets are available for you to pick up on the table in the Narthx.

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.

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!

INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTIFICATION

In case of inclement weather, we have implemented the following procedure: No later than 8 a.m., Sunday morning there will be a message on the church answering machine (618-644-2142) stating whether church will be cancelled. Also, the cancellation of service will be posted on our Facebook page and Channel 5.

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



FIRST LESSON: Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their ritual cleansing, in accordance with the Law from Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (It's written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord.") They offered a sacrifice in keeping with what's stated in the Law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was righteous and devout. He eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn't die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Led by the Spirit, he went into the temple area. Meanwhile, Jesus' parents brought the child to the temple so that they could do what was customary under the Law. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He said,

"Now, master, let your servant go in peace according to your word, because my eyes have seen your salvation.

You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples.

It's a light for revelation to the Gentiles and a glory for your people Israel."

His father and mother were amazed by what was said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "This boy is assigned to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that generates opposition so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your innermost being too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who belonged to the tribe of Asher. She was very old. After she married, she lived with her husband for seven years. She was now an 84-year-old widow. She never left the temple area but worshiped God with fasting and prayer night and day. She approached at that very moment and began to praise God and to speak about Jesus to everyone who was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Mary and Joseph had completed everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown, Nazareth in Galilee. The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.

SECOND LESSON: Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

There's a season for everything

and a time for every matter under the heavens:

- a time for giving birth and a time for dying,
- a time for planting and a time for uprooting what was planted,
- a time for killing and a time for healing,
- a time for tearing down and a time for building up,
- a time for crying and a time for laughing,
- a time for mourning and a time for dancing,
- a time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,
- a time for embracing and a time for avoiding embraces,
- a time for searching and a time for losing,
- a time for keeping and a time for throwing away,
- a time for tearing and a time for repairing,
- a time for keeping silent and a time for speaking,
- a time for loving and a time for hating,
- a time for war and a time for peace.

What do workers gain from all their hard work? I have observed the task that God has given human beings. God has made everything fitting in its time, but has also placed eternity in their hearts, without enabling them to discover what God has done from beginning to end.

I know that there's nothing better for them but to enjoy themselves and do what's good while they live. Moreover, this is the gift of God: that all people should eat, drink, and enjoy the results of their hard work.