



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

DECEMBER 21, 2025

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: "Though our feelings come and go, God's love for us does not."
~ C. S. Lewis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: We gather for it is time to prepare:

ALL: Angels are about to burst forth into song,
singing of the peace and hope we need.

ONE: We gather with expectation for our guest:

ALL: For joy is inviting us to join in the dance
of the shepherds around the night fire.

ONE: We gather as people eager to begin the celebration:

ALL: People longing to reach Bethlehem; eager to kneel at the manger;
Ready to cradle the Babe; hoping to be made whole.

* HYMN

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

160

Words and Music © 1983 GIA Publications

Portions reprinted [or adapted] by permission of United Church Press from *Taught by Love: Worship Resources for Year A* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1998.

Portions reprinted [or adapted] by permission of Thom M. Shuman from *Playing Hopscotch in Heaven: Lectionary Liturgies for RCL Year A* by Thom M. Shuman. Copyright 2013.

Toda la Tierra Espera: Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2025 by Lisa Hancock used with permission.
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/toda-la-tierra-espera-advent-candle-lighting-liturgy-2025>.

THE ADVENT WREATH – LOVE *(Insert)*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(unison)*

With the songs of angels in our ears, we cannot hear the way we speak words of hurt and anger to others. Looking for the shepherds to arrive, we do not see the neighbors in need just outside our doors. Waiting to sit down at a fine feast, we ignore those whose cup is filled only with lost dreams. Come to us, O Savior, and forgive us and heal us. Melt our hearts with your tears, open our eyes to see the needs of all of your children, and lead us to lives of service. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

GLORIA PATRI

734

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

HYMN

To a Maid Whose Name Was Mary

171

© 1984 Hope Publishing Company

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)*

Loving God, you have granted us life with such abundant possibilities that we can never do enough to express our gratitude. You have honored us by calling us saints and apostles. Therefore, we offer ourselves and our abundance in the confidence that you will continue to provide for us in whatever circumstances we face. Use us as ministers of your grace. Amen.

PRAYERS OF OUR CHURCH/SILENT PRAYERS/LORD’S PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE	<i>Make Me a Servant</i>	576
<i>Make me a servant, humble and meek, Lord let me lift up those who are weak; And may the prayer of my heart always be: Make me a servant, make me a servant, make me a servant today.</i>		

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

SONG	O Little Town of Bethlehem (2 verses)	180
SONG	Away in a Manger (2 verses)	203
SONG	Angels We Have Heard on High (2 verses)	188
SONG	O Come, All Ye Faithful (2 verses)	182
SONG	Joy to the World! (2 verses)	179
SONG	We Wish You a Merry Christmas	

1. We Wish You a Merry Christmas!
We Wish You a Merry Christmas!
We Wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
2. We Wish You Joy.
We wish you good cheer.
We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
3. We Wish You a Merry Christmas!
We Wish You a Merry Christmas!
We Wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

BENEDICTION

SONG	Happy Birthday
------	----------------

THE ADVENT WREATH – LOVE

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.
2. Light the advent candle, two Think of humble shepherds, who
filled with wonder at the sight of the child of Christmas night.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
Candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.
3. Light the advent candle, three: Think of heavenly harmony;
Angels singing “Peace on earth” at the blessed Savior’s birth.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.
4. Light the advent candle, four: Think of joy forevermore;
Christ Child in a stable born, gift of love that Christmas morn.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, December 14, 2025

St. John's – 8 St. Jacob – 29

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor's office hours: Tuesday through Thursday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person

Dian/Ty Gansmann

Liturgist

Holden & Bennett Seger

Accompanist:

Melissa Anderson Taylor

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Kenzie Barker, Nancy McCaw, and Sean and Dustin,
sons of Margie & Wally Foxworthy, and the family of Bobby Mikeals

St. Jacob: Carol Casperson, Rich Erwin, Lori Foley, Norma Logsdon,
Jackie Miller, Vernon Mendrip, Joanne Meyer, Kathy Ritter,
and Olin 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

- Congregational UCC, Godfrey
- Peace UCC, Jerseyville - Rev. Debbie Lawson

Retired Pastors

- Rev. David (Kathryn) Riebeling

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Gansmann, Dec. 21
Zach Mueller, Dec. 25
Melissa Anderson Taylor, Dec. 26
Jack Bittle, Dec. 26

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER 24: Christmas Eve worship, 4 p.m., St. Jacob & 7 p.m., St. John's

JANUARY 1: "Degreening" starting at 10:30 a.m., St. John's

JANUARY 4: "Degreening" following worship, St. Jacob

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

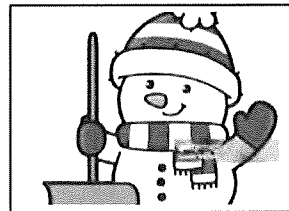
This year's Lenten Bible Study will be held each Wednesday, Feb. 25 – March 25 at 7 p.m., meeting in Heritage Hall.

ST. JACOB UCC WORSHIP VIDEO STREAMING ISSUE

Due to video streaming issues, St. Jacob UCC worship service is temporarily unavailable to view on-line.

SNOW SHOVELING

We still need volunteers at St. Jacob UCC to shovel the church sidewalks. Currently, we don't have any volunteers. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthex. 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.

ST. JACOB UCC SUNDAY SCHOOL HELD 2ND & 4TH SUNDAYS

St. Jacob UCC Sunday School will be held from 9-10 a.m. every second and fourth Sunday. All children pre-K to 5th grade are invited to join the fun. To register, fill out the online form at: <https://forms.gle/eW6KTtPzSm4DkVtx5> or call 618-644-2142.

ON-LINE GIVING OPTION

An on-line giving option is available on St. Jacob UCC's web site (<https://stjacobucc.org/>). There are two ways to access the on-line giving option: the first is the "DONATE" button located on the top-right corner of the "Home Page," and the second is by clicking on "RESOURCES" and then "DONATE." If you have any issues using the on-line giving option, contact the church office at (618) 644-2142.

WALK WITH GOD

Come join our St. Jacob UCC walking group, called "Walk with God." Anyone who likes to take walks, be in nature and share in unity is encouraged to join us. We hope to get members of the church together a couple times a week to walk and be visible in the community. We will meet at the church and decide from there where we would like to walk. Days and times are to be determined by the participants. If you're interested in participating or for more information, contact the church office at 618-644-2142.

***** THE UPPER ROOM** (January-February) magazines are available on the table in the Narthex at St. Jacob.

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.

Items for St. John's (For Lebanon Matthew 25:40 Ministries): Canned goods including: green beans, corns, carrots, mixed vegetables, stew, chili, soup, fruit, spaghetti sauce, diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, potatoes (boxed/bags), Rice a Roni, macaroni and cheese, pasta, Ramen noodles, Jello, pudding, peanut butter, jelly, cereal, oatmeal, powdered sugar, brown sugar, oil, Crisco, dish soap, laundry detergent (quart bottles/sheets/pods), dryer sheets, paper towels, toilet paper, baggies (sandwich/qt./gal.) plastic wrap, toilet bowl cleaner, and cleaning solution

Items for St. Jacob (Ministries Unlimited): Pop-tarts, oatmeal, cheese cracker sandwiches, beef jerky, fruit cups, Vienna sausages, ketchup, mustard, broth, cooked ham, pasta sauce, jelly, pancake mix, & syrup

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.

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 upon 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: Romans 1:1-7

From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for God's good news. God promised this good news about his Son ahead of time through his prophets in the holy scriptures. His Son was descended from David. He was publicly identified as God's Son with power through his resurrection from the dead, which was based on the Spirit of holiness. This Son is Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we have received God's grace and our appointment to be apostles. This was to bring all Gentiles to faithful obedience for his name's sake. You who are called by Jesus Christ are also included among these Gentiles.

To those in Rome who are dearly loved by God and called to be God's people.

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

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel.*

(Emmanuel means "God with us.")

When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he didn't have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.