



The
kingdom
of
heaven
has come near

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

December 4, 2022

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: "Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means
by which we arrive at that goal." ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Rejoice together, people of God.

Let all the earth praise our Creator.

ALL: We have gathered to honor our God.

In awe and reverence, we seek God's Word.

ONE: Welcome one another as Christ welcomes you.

Let each other know of Christ's presence.

ALL: Surely Christ has come to change us.

Christ is coming still to redirect us.

ONE: This is a time to take delight in the Spirit.

This is the hour to seek knowledge and counsel.

ALL: We are ready to learn what the Spirit teaches.

We are awakening to the Spirit's gifts.

* HYMN

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

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THE ADVENT WREATH – PEACE

ONE: Praise be to our God!

ALL: For our Lord has done marvelous things!

ONE: Praise be to God's glorious name forever!

ALL: May the whole earth be filled with God's glory.

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.

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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Awesome God, we have disregarded your Word, failing to inquire after your will for us. We have ignored the needy, defended our advantages, and neglected our prayers. We have not appreciated or witnessed to your sustaining love. Instead we destroy the resources of the earth with little regard for those who follow us. We value our prosperity more than the harmony you envision for your people. O God, we do not like ourselves this way. Deliver us, 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.

SCRIPTURES:

Isaiah 11:1-10

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

HYMN

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

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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*)

What a joy to give! What a delight to join our efforts to your purposes, amazing God! You inspire us to oppose wickedness, to stand up for the oppressed, to work for harmony among all your children. Lead us, together, to your holy mountain, where all are valued and no one is excluded. May our offerings spread the knowledge of your ways across this earth, widening the circle of inclusion to embrace all your children, in Jesus' name. Amen.

HYMN

Break Now the Bread of Life

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SACREMENT 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: Holy God, our loving Creator, close to us as breathing and distant as the
farthest star, we thank you for your constant love for all you have made.
We thank you for all that sustains life, for all people of faith around the
world and of every generation who have given themselves to your will, and
especially for Jesus Christ, who you sent from your own being as our Savior.
We praise you for Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection, and for the
calling forth of your church for its mission in the world.
Gifted by the presence of your Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves to you as we
unite our prayers with the entire family of your faithful people, everywhere
and in every time:

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, as sisters and brothers in faith, we recall anew these words and acts of Jesus Christ.

At his final meal with his disciples, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Jesus did the same with the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. 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: 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.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE

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.

SACREMENT 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.*

* HYMN

Let There Be Peace on Earth

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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person

Kevin Hollis

Accompanist

Melissa Taylor

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Ella Boggy, Wally Foxworthy, Margie Foxworthy's son Sean,
Cindy Roll, Jeffrey Thornton, and to the family of Mary Kay Richter

St. Jacob: Ross Busher, Carol Casperson, Erica Kynion, 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

-Fieldon UCC, Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo

-Floraville St. Paul UCC, Pastor Matt (Laura) Friz

Retired Pastors

-Revs. Earl Menchhofer and Pamela Smith, Conyers, GA

CHURCH ATTENDANCE Sunday, November 27, 2022

St. John's – 14

St. Jacob – 31

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

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Roger Baer, Dec. 8

John & Donna Lowe, 38 years, Dec. 8

Ty & Dian Gansmann, 27 years, Dec. 8

Sam Frey, Dec. 9

Peggy Bohnenstiehl, Dec. 10

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.

Requested items for St. John's (Lebanon Matthew 25:40 Ministries Food Pantry): Canned stew, canned meat (tuna & chicken), canned chili, Manwich (sloppy joe), Hamburger Helper, pie crust mix, evaporated milk, juice, beans (pork & beans or kidney), sugar (small), Zip-lock bags, & feminine hygiene products

Requested items for St. Jacob (Ministries Unlimited): Toilet paper, paper towels, peanut butter, jelly, baked beans, crackers, peas, canned potatoes, canned yams, pasta sides, rice sides, mac-n-cheese, Ramen noodles, Hamburger Helper, & cake mixes

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CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dec. 14: ELFs meeting, 10 a.m.

Dec. 18: Christmas caroling, following service, St. Jacob

Dec. 24: **Christmas Eve** services -- 4 p.m. and 10 p.m., St. Jacob

Dec. 24: **Christmas Eve** service -- 7 p.m., St. John's

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Please join us for Christmas caroling, immediately following service at St. Jacob UCC, Dec. 18. Everyone is welcome to participate. We will be caroling at nursing homes, and to shut ins. If you have someone you would like us to carol to, please let Dawn Mersinger know, or contact the church office at 618-644-2142, or e-mail: stjucc@hometel.com with their name and location/address.



BLESSING BOX INSTALLED AT ST. JACOB

Dalton Mersinger recently installed a “Blessing Box” on the East side of St. Jacob UCC for his Eagle Scout project. Anyone can donate items to the “Blessing Box,” recommended items include non-perishable food, hygiene products, and other items that could bless someone in need. Items are anonymously given and received. Please consider donating to help others in our community, and if you are in need, please feel free to stop by.

VOLUNTEER LITURGISTS AT ST. JACOB

We are looking for volunteers willing to read scripture during Advent, no long-term commitment, just one Sunday at a time. Everyone from the congregation is invited to take part in helping lead worship. There is a sign-up sheet for anyone interested located on the table in the Narthx.

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** (January - February) magazines are available on the table in the Narthx at St. Jacob UCC.

FIRST LESSON. Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

SECOND LESSON. Romans 15:4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL. Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'"

