



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

April 28, 2024

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: "To love is divine because love first comes from God and unites us to Christ and each other." ~ Arthur David Canales

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Come to worship God whose love was revealed in Jesus.

Let all the ends of the earth turn to our God.

ALL: We will worship the Almighty and sing praises.

We will proclaim good news to others.

ONE: Beloved, we are called to love as God loves us.

We are to love one another as sisters and brothers.

ALL: Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

We seek to let God's love be perfected in us.

ONE: Remember that you have been baptized.

God claims you and has high expectations of you.

ALL: Christ is the vine; we are the branches.

We will bear fruit when we abide in the vine.

Bulletin Cover Attribution:

Jesus Mural of Faith, Hope, Love, and Peace - Chicago, IL, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56412>. Original

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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

O God, we have ignored our origin in you and denied your rule over the nations. We have pursued illusions of self-interest rather than abiding in your love. We have turned away from brothers and sisters as if they were enemies to be hated. We are afraid to love those who differ from us or who have the power to harm us. We hesitate to take the risks of caring for fear that we may be hurt. Discipleship seems too demanding. O God, release us from our fears and failures to trust your love and live with bold generosity. 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:

Acts 8:26-40

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

HYMN *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*

520

SERMON

HYMN *I Need Thee Every Hour*

476

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 give, gracious God, because we are grateful. Your love has sustained us through many trials and temptations. We are thankful for those who have guided our attempts to understand the scriptures. Your loving judgment has provided the pruning our lives require in order to bear fruit. We give in order to extend to others the blessings we have received and to continue the ministry we need as we seek to abide together in your love. 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.*

*** HYMN** *There's a Wilderness in God's Mercy*

61

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person/Liturgist
Accompanist

Kay Guse
Melissa Anderson Taylor

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

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

St. Jacob: Sandy Autry, Peggy Bohnenstiehl, Carol Casperson, Marvin Docter, Lori Foley, Carolyn Masterson, 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

- New Baden Zion UCC Rev. Stephen (Molly) Stark
- Columbia St. Paul UCC Rev. Jonathan (Sharon) Bangera
- Pastor of Visitation & Youth, Rev. Julie Kies

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Dr. Don (Nancy) Wagner Marissa, IL

UPCOMING BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY

Darren Schmitt, May 1
Tiffany & Vic Duncan, 22 years, May 4

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, April 21, 2024

St. John's – 12 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

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.

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: vegetables, fruit, beans, soups, stews, pasta, chili, sloppy Joe, beef, sausage, chicken, salmon, 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.

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

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY: Strawberry Festival committee meeting, following 10:15 a.m., worship

MAY 5: First Sunday of the month communion

MAY 5: Holy Sunday fellowship: St. John's (following worship)
& St. Jacob (before worship – starting at 9:30 a.m.)

MAY 19: **Strawberry Festival**, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Jacob Township Park

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL RAFFLE TICKETS

There are envelopes labeled for each family with Strawberry Festival raffle tickets in the Narthex for you to pick up. If you have family members who are not here, but you could drop off the envelope to them, it would be greatly appreciated, as it will help save on postage. Thank you for your support!

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

We are preparing for our 40th anniversary Strawberry Festival and are seeking volunteer workers for preparations on Saturday, May 18th and for the event on May 19 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Jacob Township Park. Sign-up forms are located on the table in the Narthex. For more information contact a festival committee member or call the church office at 618-644-2142.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL T-SHIRTS FOR SALE

The deadline to order T-Shirts for our 40th anniversary Strawberry Festival has been extended to **TUESDAY**. Order forms are located on the table in the Narthex and may be dropped on the offering plate, or you may call the church office at 618-644-2142 to order.



STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL FLYERS

We are preparing for our 40th annual Strawberry Festival and we could use your help in getting the word out. There are flyers located on the table in the Narthex, please take a few and get them posted on bulletin boards at area businesses. The event will be held May 19 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Jacob Township Park.

FIRST LESSON: Acts 8:26-40

An angel from the Lord spoke to Philip, "At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.) So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. The Spirit told Philip, "Approach this carriage and stay with it."

Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you really understand what you are reading?"

The man replied, "Without someone to guide me, how could I?" Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. This was the passage of scripture he was reading:

Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent so he didn't open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was taken away from him. Who can tell the story of his descendants because his life was taken from the earth?

The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Is he talking about himself or someone else?" Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. As they went down the road, they came to some water.

The eunuch said, "Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?" He ordered that the carriage halt. Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Lord's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. Philip found himself in Azotus. He traveled through that area, preaching the good news in all the cities until he reached Caesarea.

SECOND LESSON: 1 John: 4:7-21

Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love. This is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins.

Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God remains in us and his love is made perfect in us. This is how we know we remain in him and he remains in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the savior of the world. If any of us confess that Jesus is God's Son, God remains in us and we remain in God. We have known and have believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who remain in love remain in God and God remains in them. This is how love has been perfected in us, so that we can have confidence on the Judgment Day, because we are exactly the same as God is in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. We love because God first loved us. Those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters are liars. After all, those who don't love their brothers or sisters whom they have seen can hardly love God whom they have not seen! This commandment we have from him: Those who claim to love God ought to love their brother and sister also.

GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. He removes any of my branches that don't produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can't produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can't produce fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can't do anything. If you don't remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples.