



# WELCOME TO WORSHIP

September 29, 2024

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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.

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**Silent Reflection:** "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." ~ Nelson Mandela

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

## PRELUDE

## CALL TO WORSHIP

**ONE:** We will walk this day with you, O God,  
and you will walk with us.

**ALL:** Gathering us into a community  
to pray for one another in all things.

**ONE:** We will walk this day with you, O Christ,  
and you will walk with us.

**ALL:** Calling us to follow you,  
helping us to set aside all which holds us back.

**ONE:** We will walk this day with you, O Spirit,  
and you will walk with us.

**ALL:** Sending us out, side by side,  
to serve those cast aside by the world.

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### Bulletin Cover Attribution:

Armitage, Edward. The Festival of Esther, 1865. Royal Academy of Arts. <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-festival-of-esther-148490>.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

God of unity, we live in a world where our lives move between inclusivity and exclusivity. We often move toward the latter, trying to oust from our circles those who do not think like us, act like us, or look like us. Forgive our need to reject and to always be on the lookout for those things that make us different. Allow us to see one another as our Teacher sees us, as one people loved unconditionally by you. 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:

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Psalm 124

Mark 9:38-50

## SERMON

## UCC STATEMENT OF FAITH – INSERT

### HYMN      *What Gift Can We Bring*

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## INVITATION TO OFFERING

### WE GIVE:

*We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.*

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*unison*)

Without the gifts of your Spirit, generous God, we would be unable to worship you by word and work, but you enable our service as we are obedient to the prompting of the Spirit. Use our offering for your work in the world.

## 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      *Thanks to God for My Redeemer*

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## BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

## SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person	Dian Gansmann
Liturgist	Kay Guse
Accompanist	Melody Hollis

## IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

**St. John's:** Brian Bielong, Wally Foxworthy, Don Koenig, Sharon Koenig, Christy Lanning, Fred Lanning, Cindy Roll, Roy Roll, and Sean and Dustin, sons of Margie & Wally Foxworthy

**St. Jacob:** Carol Casperson, Marvin Docter, Lori Foley, Norma Logsdon, Jackie Miller, Kathleen Ritter, Jane Schmidt, Carol Zweck and the family of Gail Miller

**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. Paul UCC

- Pana United in Faith Church- Rev. Leon (Kay) Goff

### Retired Pastor

- Rev. Linda (Bob) Coulson

## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Don Yann, Sept. 29  
Gina & Robert Willie, 26 years, Sept. 29  
Stephanie & Todd Rehg, 27 years, Oct. 4



## CHURCH ATTENDANCE, September 22, 2024

St. John's – 17 St. Jacob – 27

### 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](mailto:stjucc@hometel.com)

Website: [stjacobucc.org](http://stjacobucc.org)

Pastor Phil Barbier: Phone: 314-312-2347 / E-mail: [pastor@hometel.com](mailto: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: 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

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## CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TODAY:** Following Worship - Christian Education Discussion at Heritage Hall, St. Jacob UCC

**OCTOBER 6:** DuBois Center Fall Festival, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**OCTOBER 6:** Pastor Phil will be working at DuBois Center Fall Festival. Eric Bosaw will provide pulpit supply for both St. John's and St. Jacob

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### **FREE FLU IMMUNIZATION CLINIC OCT. 24**

St. Jacob Township annual free flu immunization clinic will be held from 3 to 6 p.m., Oct. 24 at Heritage Hall. The clinic is **only for residents of St. Jacob village and township**, and you must be 18 years or older (proof of residency is required). For more information contact Diane Frey at (618) 644-9319.

### **DUBOIS FALL FESTIVAL SWEET SHOP DESSERT DONATIONS**

The Sweet Shop staff requests donations of desserts, snacks, breads, cookies, trail mix, etc., for the DuBois Fall Festival Oct. 6. All proceeds go to the DuBois Scholarship Fund, to help cover camp fees for our young campers needing financial assistance. The Sweet Shop will be in Oak Lodge again this year. If you get your goody donations to the St. Jacob UCC by 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, Pastor Phill will take them with him. Otherwise, there will be a drop-off location close to the entrance of the DuBois Center that morning. If you have any questions, contact Joyce Kniepkamp at 618-567-6276.

### **QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER E-MAIL OPTION**

With the rising cost of postage, printing and mailing our quarterly newsletter, we encourage you to consider having it e-mailed, instead of using traditional mail to send the paper copy. If you would like to have our newsletter e-mailed, please provide us with your preferred e-mail address at: [stjucc@hometel.com](mailto:stjucc@hometel.com) Also, if you currently receive our newsletter, and are no longer interested in receiving it, please let us know, either by e-mailing us at: [stjucc@hometel.com](mailto:stjucc@hometel.com) or by calling the office at: 618-644-2142, and we will remove you from our newsletter mailing list.

**FIRST LESSON: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22**

When the king and Haman came in for the banquet with Queen Esther, the king said to her, "This is the second day we've met for wine. What is your wish, Queen Esther? I'll give it to you. And what do you want? I'll do anything – even give you half the kingdom."

Queen Esther answered, "If I please the king, and if the king wishes, give me my life – that's my wish – and the lives of my people too. That's my desire. We have been sold – I and my people – to be wiped out, killed, and destroyed. If we simply had been sold as male and female slaves, I would have said nothing. But no enemy can compensate the king for this kind of damage."

King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is this person, and where is he? Who would dare do such a thing?"

Esther replied, "A man who hates, an enemy – this wicked Haman!" Haman was overcome with terror in the presence of the king and queen.

Harbona, one of the eunuchs serving the king, said, "Sir, look! There's the stake that Haman made for Mordecai, the man who spoke up and did something good for the king. It's standing at Haman's house – seventy-five feet high."

"Impale him on it!" the king ordered. So they impaled Haman on the very pole that he had set up for Mordecai, and the king's anger went away.

Mordecai wrote these things down and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces, both near and far, of King Ahasuerus. He made it a rule that Jews keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as special days each and every year. They are the days on which the Jews finally put to rest the troubles with their enemies. The month is the one when everything turned around for them from sadness to joy, and from sad, loud crying to a holiday. They are to make them days of feasts and joyous events, days to send food gifts to each other and money gifts to the poor.

**SECOND LESSON: Psalm 124**

If the Lord hadn't been for us – let Israel now repeat! – if the Lord hadn't been for us, when those people attacked us then they would have swallowed us up whole with their rage burning against us! Then the waters would have drowned us; the torrent would have come over our necks; then the raging waters would have come over our necks!

Bless the Lord because he didn't hand us over like food for our enemies' teeth! We escaped like a bird from the hunters' trap; the trap was broken so we escaped!

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

**GOSPEL: Mark 9:38-50**

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone throwing demons out in your name, and we tried to stop him because he wasn't following us."

Jesus replied, "Don't stop him. No one who does powerful acts in my name can quickly turn around and curse me. Whoever isn't against us is for us. I assure you that whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will certainly be rewarded.

"As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and to be thrown into the lake. If your hand causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It's better for you to enter into life crippled than to go away with two hands into the fire of hell, which can't be put out. If your foot causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It's better for you to enter life lame than to be thrown into hell with two feet. If your eye causes you to fall into sin, tear it out. It's better for you to enter God's kingdom with one eye than to be thrown into hell with two. That's a place where worms don't die and the fire never goes out. Everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? Maintain salt among yourselves and keep peace with each other."



## THE UCC STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

Amen.

## 445 God, How Can We Forgive

1 God, how can we for - give when bonds of love are torn?  
 2 When we have missed the mark, and tears of an - guish flow,  
 3 Who dares to throw the stone to damn an - oth - er's sin,

How can we rise and start a - new, our trust re - born?  
 how can you still re - lease our guilt, the debt we owe?  
 when you, while know - ing all our past, for - give a - gain?

When hu - man lov - ing fails and ev - ery hope is gone,  
 The o - cean depth of grace sur - pass - es all our needs.  
 No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.

your love gives strength be - yond our own to face the dawn.  
 A priest who shares our hu - man pain, Christ in - ter - cedes.  
 As you, O God, for - give our sin, may we for - give.

This text reflects both the struggle to deal with a deep personal hurt and a keen awareness of biblical language and content. The opening line of stanza two, for example, draws on the root meaning of the Greek word for sin, and the beginning of stanza three alludes to John 8:3-8.