

WALK IN THE LIGHT

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

JANUARY 4, 2026

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: "We must reflect the light of Christ through lives of prayer and joyful service to others." ~ **Pope John Paul II**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: However far we have wandered from God:

ALL: **God comes to find us and gather us in generous love.**

ONE: However broken we have become:

ALL: **God comes to heal us and make us whole in hope.**

ONE: However empty our spirits may be:

ALL: **God comes to feed us until we are filled to the brim with grace.**

* HYMN

Go Tell It On the Mountain

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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(unison)*

In the winter of our lives, Tender God, our passion for following Jesus wilts in the chill of indifference. We could walk in the light, but we instead tiptoe through the shadows of missed chances. We could look for you glory in others, but we instead gaze in the mirror of selfishness. We could gather the broken of the world to our side, but we instead hold them at arm's length from us. Forgive us, O God. Jesus brought life and hope to all people and calls us to follow in grace and truth. Filling us with peace, he gathers us up and brings us home to you.
Amen

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

GLORIA PATRI

734

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US *(Skip if no children are in attendance)*

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:

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:1-18

HYMN

O Splendor of God's Glory Bright

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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)*

How good you have been to us, wondrous God! You turn mourning into joy and give gladness for sorrow. We are radiant with thankfulness when we remember the glory of your Word made flesh. In response to your grace, we dedicate this offering to extend your will among us. May we be a part of your plan for the fullness of time. Amen.

HYMN

We Come as Guests Invited

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SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION – *Insert*

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

PRAYER RESPONSE

Make Me a Servant

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*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.*

* HYMN

Joy to the World

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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SACRAMENT 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, you are as close to us as our breathing, and you are as 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. We remember that Jesus ate and drank with the poor and with the wealthy, with the sinful and righteous alike. When he saw the multitude that followed him with nothing to eat, he took some loaves of bread, and a few fish, and after giving thanks to you he divided the bread and gave it to the multitude. And all ate and were filled. When his arrest seemed near, Jesus sat at table in an upper room, with his closest friends and disciples. As he had done so many times before, he took the bread

and after giving thanks to you he shared it among the disciples, vowing to continue his work in spite of the risk. He said, "I will not eat this again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Do this in remembrance of me." Likewise, after the meal, he took the cup and after giving thanks he gave it to them saying, "Truly I tell you, I will never drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God." Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For a time it seemed that all was lost. Jesus was executed by the authorities, and his disciples scattered in fear and despair. But at an evening meal in Emmaus, and at a breakfast campfire by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus once more took the bread, and after giving thanks to you he divided it and gave it to his disciples, opening their eyes, binding up their wounded hearts, continuing the meal, and revealing plainly that your steadfast love is stronger even than death, and your labor with us continues, for the sake of your realm.

Therefore, let us proclaim the mystery of our faith.

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

ONE: Holy one, pour out your blessings on this food we have gathered for your people. May it be multiplied like the loaves and fishes at Galilee and feed and bless them and bring them closer to you.

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.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

Hosts are gluten free.

Juice in the center ring and wine in the outer rings.

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.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, December 28, 2025

St. John's – 7 St. Jacob – 32

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

Patti Woods

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

St. Jacob: Carol Casperson, Rich Erwin, Lori Foley, Norma Logsdon,
Jackie Miller, Vernon Mendrip, Joanne Meyer, Taylor Ostrander,
Kathy Ritter, David Schmidt 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

- Rev. Chance Beeler (Christopher Guelbert), Chaplain at HSHS-O'Fallon
- St. Peters UCC, Linzburg - Rev. Earl (Johanna) Crecelius

Retired Pastors

- Rev. Charles Preston (Rev. Karla Frost)

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Hill, Jan. 8
Brian Meyer, Jan. 9

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY: “Degreening” following worship, St. Jacob

JANUARY 14: Every Ladies Fellowship meeting, 10 a.m., Heritage Hall

JANUARY 15: St. John’s Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

JANUARY 18: St. John’s annual meeting, noon, lunch following

JANUARY 19: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

FEBRUARY 1: St. Jacob annual meeting, following worship, lunch following

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

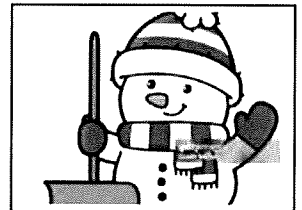
This year’s Lenten Bible Study will be held each Wednesday, Feb. 25 – March 25 at 7 p.m., meeting in Heritage Hall.

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 2026 ENVELOPE BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

The St. Jacob 2026 envelope booklets are available for you to pick up on the table in the Narthex.

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.

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: Jeremiah 31:7-14

The Lord proclaims: Sing joyfully for the people of Jacob; shout for the leading nation.

Raise your voices with praise and call out: "The Lord has saved his people, the remaining few in Israel!"

I'm going to bring them back from the north; I will gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the disabled, expectant mothers and those in labor; a great throng will return here. With tears of joy they will come; while they pray, I will bring them back. I will lead them by quiet streams and on smooth paths so they don't stumble. I will be Israel's father, Ephraim will be my oldest child.

Listen to the Lord's word, you nations, and announce it to the distant islands: The one who scattered Israel will gather them and keep them safe, as a shepherd his flock. The Lord will rescue the people of Jacob and deliver them from the power of those stronger than they are. They will come shouting for joy on the hills of Zion, jubilant over the Lord's gifts: grain, wine, oil, flocks, and herds. Their lives will be like a lush garden; they will grieve no more. Then the young women will dance for joy; the young and old men will join in. I will turn their mourning into laughter and their sadness into joy; I will comfort them. I will lavish the priests with abundance and shower my people with my gifts, declares the Lord.

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 1:3-14

Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ. You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

A man named John was sent from God. He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light.

The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. The light was in the world, and the world came into being through the light, but the world didn't recognize the light. The light came to his own people, and his own people didn't welcome him. But those who did welcome him, those who believed in his name, he authorized to become God's children, born not from blood nor from human desire or passion, but born from God. The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John testified about him, crying out, "This is the one of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is greater than me because he existed before me.'"

From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace; as the Law was given through Moses, so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made God known.

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