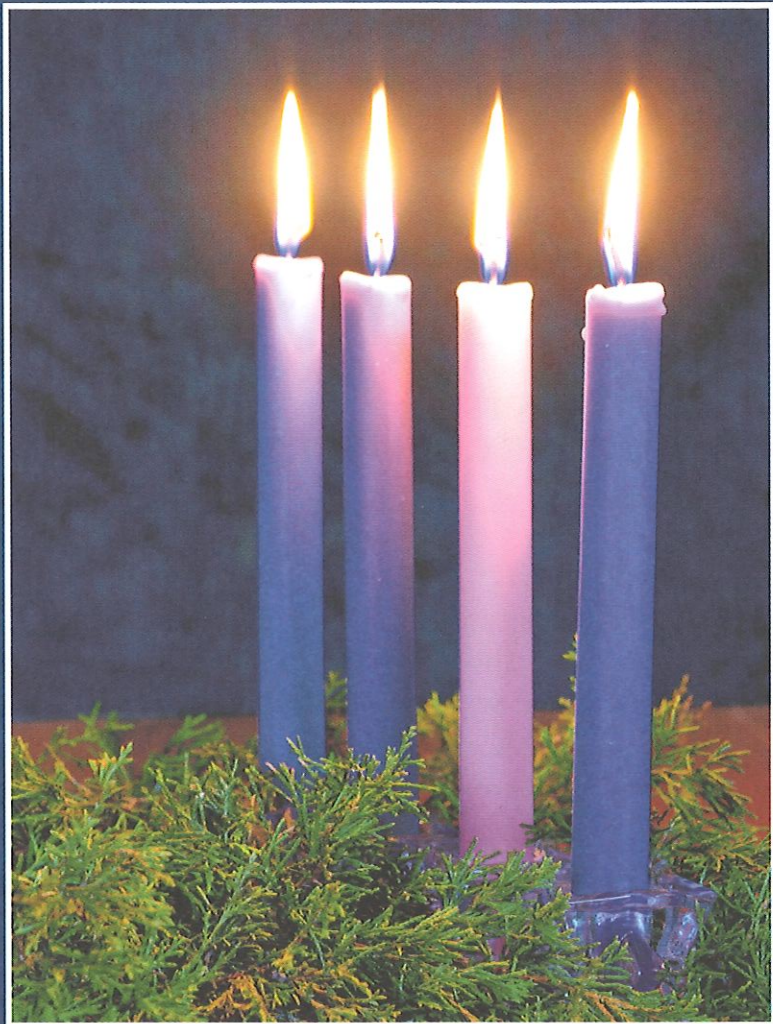


# LOVE



*But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...  
from you shall come...  
one who is to rule in Israel*

# WELCOME TO WORSHIP

December 19, 2021

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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:** “I like to compare the holiday season with the way a child listens to a favorite story. The pleasure is in the familiar way the story begins, the anticipation of familiar turns it takes, the familiar moments of suspense, and the familiar climax and ending.” – Fred Rogers

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

### PRELUDE

### CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Before the majesty of God, we gather to worship;  
In quiet expectation, we come to hear God’s promises.

**ALL: This is where we belong; here we are warmly greeted.**  
**Surely God will feed our deepest hunger.**

ONE: Before God’s strength and power, we bow down;  
In hesitant anticipation, we listen for God’s judgment.

**ALL: This is our home, where our lives are directed.**  
**Surely God will show us new ways to live.**

ONE: Before the mercy of God, we lift our hearts;  
In humble imagination, we welcome a new visitation.

**ALL: This day God is present with us; we feel it.**  
**Surely God is preparing for us a time of joy.**

**\*HYMN**

*All Earth is Hopeful*

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## LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE - LOVE

### ADVENT SONG

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.

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.

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.

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.

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## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Merciful God, when we sense who you are, we are ashamed. How do you tolerate our pettiness? The abundance you have given us has made us proud more than thankful. We act as if our accomplishments were all our own doing. We seldom acknowledge your generosity or let you rule our lives. We go through the forms of worship, but we try to keep you at a safe distance. We fill our lives with status-producing activity that blocks out your call and limits our response. O God, we need to change. Will you help us? Amen.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

## GLORIA PATRI

### SCRIPTURES:

Micah 5: 2-5a

Hebrews 10: 5-10

Luke 1: 39-55

### HYMN

### *My Soul Proclaims with Wonder*

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## INVITATION TO OFFERING

## OFFERTORY MUSIC

### 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*)

Thank you, God, for your mercy and protection, for feeding us physically and spiritually, for caring for us like a shepherd. We present our offerings as an act of gratitude. What we can never repay we pause to appreciate. In the name of generosity we cannot match, we seek to be generous toward others. May these offerings do far more than support our church. We dedicate ourselves and these gifts to honor Christ through ministry in the world. 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.*

## SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

### HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem* 180

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**Sunday School:** Jingle Bells  
**Sunday School:** Twinkle, Twinkle Christmas Star  
**Sunday School:** Go Tell it on the Mountain  
**Sunday School:** Happy Birthday

### HYMN *The Birthday of a King* 224

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## BENEDICTION

\* **POSTLUDE HYMN** *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* **INSERT**

### SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person Kevin Hollis  
Accompanist Melissa Taylor

### IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

**St. John's:** Ella Boggy and Celeste Short  
**St. Jacob:** Peggy Bohnenstiehl, Ross Busher, Cheryl Byrnes, Carol Casperson, Gail Miller, Ronald Rujawitz, Carol Zweck and the family of Austin McEwen

## CHURCH ATTENDANCE Sunday, December 12, 2021

St. John's – 19

St. Jacob – 41

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### CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Secretary's office hours: Tuesday & Thursday: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

St. Jacob Phone: 618-644-2142 / St. Jacob E-mail: [stjucc@hometel.com](mailto:stjucc@hometel.com)

Web-site: [stjacobucc.org](http://stjacobucc.org)

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

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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:

#### Churches & Pastors

-Brighton St. John's UCC

-Cahokia Bethel UCC, Pastor Karen Pepmeier

#### Retired Pastors

- Rev. Paul Thompson, Jr., Red Bud, IL

#### UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS:

Tiffany Duncan, December 19

Cameron Woods, December 19

Carol Casperson, December 20

Lauren Gansmann, December 22

Zach Mueller, December 25

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## CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Today:** Christmas caroling, immediately following service

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

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

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### **UCC CHRISTMAS FUND DONATION TODAY**

The UCC's Christmas Fund is the last of the 5 denominational special offerings each year. For more than 100 years the fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ. It provides for emergency grants as well as supplementing retirement benefits and health insurance premiums to our lower-income retirees.

Offering envelopes are in today's bulletin or you may donate online at: [www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org).

### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING TODAY**

Please join us for Christmas caroling, immediately following service at St. Jacob, today. 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.

### **PASTOR PHIL VACATION**

Pastor Phil will be on vacation from Dec. 27 – Jan. 2. Pastor Nancy will serve as our supply pastor Sunday, Jan. 2.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTIFICATION**

In Case of inclement weather, we have implemented the following procedure: No later than 8 a.m. on 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 Facebook and Channel 5.

### **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!

**DECEMBER 19, 2021**

**(C)**

**FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

**FIRST LESSON. Micah 5:2-5a**

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

**SECOND LESSON. Hebrews 10:5-10**

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

**GOSPEL. Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." (And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.")

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