



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

MARCH 1, 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: "What good does it do me if Christ was born in Bethlehem once if he is not born again in my heart through faith?" ~ **Origen**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: In this season of discipleship God calls us to leave our comfortable lives,

ALL: To journey, like Abraham and Sarah, into that unknown country called faith.

ONE: On sleepless nights and in fear's shadows, we toss and turn with doubt's questions,

ALL: Hoping, like Nicodemus, to find Jesus and to listen willingly to his responses.

ONE: Reluctant to deny ourselves, and convinced that everything depends upon us,

ALL: We struggle to affirm, as Paul did, that everything is in God's hands, and we can let go of all to which we cling.

Portions reprinted [or adapted] by permission of United Church Press from *Taught by Love: Worship Resources for Year A* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1998.

Portions reprinted [or adapted] by permission of Thom M. Shuman from *Playing Hopscotch in Heaven: Lectionary Liturgies for RCL Year A* by Thom M. Shuman. Copyright 2013.

CALL TO CONFESSION**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*unison*)

We want to brag about how good we are, and all the good we do, but you don't want to hear it, Generous God. You know how easily we slip off the paths of discipleship, as we come near the distractions of the world. You watch as we try to control the Spirit, so it blows when and where we choose, rather than trusting you're leading. Forgive us and fill us with new faith, O God. Help us listen to you, that we may know your ways. Help us to know your ways, that we may go to others to proclaim the gospel. And help us proclaim the gospel through our words and deeds, that we may bear witness to the One who came to save not only us, but all the world. 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:

Genesis 12: 1-4a

Romans 4:1-5; 13-17

John 3:1-17

HYMN*To God Be the Glory*

66

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)*

Thank you, God, for glimpses of eternity in the daily experiences of life. We are grateful for encounters that lift the horizons of our vision. We rejoice in the teaching and care you have provided to us. Bless now the gifts we return to you for the programs and outreach of the church. We want to share our faith with the world. We pray for trustful relationships among all your children. We rejoice together in the saving ministry of Jesus that inspires us to give our best. Amen.

HYMN

We Meet as Friends at Table

704

© Words: 1996 Hope Publishing Company; Music: 1996 Hope Publishing Company

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION – Insert

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

PRAYER RESPONSE Make Me a Servant

576

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

When Peace Like a River

428

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Cover Attribution: Miller, Mary Jane. A Mother's Love Holds the World, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59655>.

Original source: <https://www.millericons.com/>

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: May the God of faith journeys be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: People of God, offer your hearts to the One who keeps them.

ALL: We lift our hearts to the God who watches our nights and days.

ONE: Sing praises to the One who transforms despair into hope.

ALL: We join in the glad chorus of joy to the One who keeps our lives in every moment.

ONE: Holy God, in that moment when time began, you took life by the hand, bringing it out of chaos' night, to be a blessing to all creation. You lifted mountains we could climb, puddles in which we could play, trails on which we could walk with you. But we became star-struck by the performances of sin and death, believing their lies to be words of truth, trusting their boasts of success and power. You called the prophets to show us how to find our way back to you but our feet kept skipping after those who would destroy us. So out of your great love for us and all of creation, you sent Jesus who came by your light to save us.

Therefore, we lift up our voices with Abraham and Sarah, Paul and all the saints of every place and every time, singing to the One who watches over us:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy are you, God who calls all things into existence. All creation lifts its eyes to you. Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is the One who comes to redeem all the families of the earth. Hosanna in the Highest!

ONE: Holy are you, Watcher of our nights, and blessed is your son Jesus Christ.

He came to teach us wonders we could never imagine. He came to show us that grace is not something we earn, but is hope given to all. He came to silence the boasting of sin and death, by being lifted to the cross, lowered to the grave, and raised to new life – for us and for all of the world. As we sing of your help which comes in every moment, as we remember that life which graces us forever, we testify to the mystery of our faith.

ALL: Christ died that we might be saved.
Christ rose to keep our lives.
Christ will come again to lead us in grace and love.

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

Host 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, FEBRUARY 22, 2026

St. John's – 14 St. Jacob – 22

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	Angela Imming
Liturgist	Kay Guse
Accompanist:	Melissa Anderson Taylor

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Roger Baer, Kenzie Barker, Wally Foxworthy, Nancy McCaw, Lisa Pier, and Sean & Dustin, sons of Margie & Wally Foxworthy

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

- St. Peter's UCC, Okawville - Rev. Jeffrey Schwab
- United in Faith Church, Pana - Rev. Leon (Kay) Goff

Retired Pastors

- Rev. Michael (Elizabeth) Marx

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Margie Foxworth, March 1
Sarah King, March 2
Marsha & Jason Shirley, 21 years, March 5

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDNESDAY: Lenten Bible Study, 7 p.m., Heritage Hall

MARCH 8: Daylight Saving Time begins (2 a.m.)

MARCH 11: Every Ladies Fellowship meeting, 10 a.m., Heritage Hall

MARCH 16: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

MARCH 19: St. John's Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

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.



ON-LINE GIVING OPTION

An on-line giving option is available on St. Jacob UCC's web site (<https://stjacobucc.org/>). There are two ways to access the on-line giving option: the first is the "DONATE" button located on the top-right corner of the "Home Page," and the second is by clicking on "RESOURCES" and then "DONATE." If you have any issues using the on-line giving option, call the church office at (618) 644-2142.

VOLUNTEER LITURGISTS AT ST. JACOB

We are looking for volunteers willing to read scripture, 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 located on the table in the Narthex.

SNOW SHOVELING

We still need volunteers at St. Jacob UCC to shovel the church sidewalks. 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.

BEST CHOICE LABEL COLLECTION

The ELF's organization is collecting Best Choice labels/UPC portion (proof of purchase). There is a box on the table in the Narthex to place the labels.

ST. JACOB UCC WORSHIP VIDEO STREAMING ISSUE

Due to video streaming issues, St. Jacob UCC worship service is temporarily unavailable to view on-line.

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):

March Shopping list: Pancake mix, fruit juice, pancake syrup, canned fruit, cereal, mac & cheese, oatmeal, canned chili, laundry detergent, & dryer sheets

April Shopping list: Canned tuna/chicken/beef, Rice-a-Roni, peas, green beans, mashed potatoes, hamburger/tuna/cheesy helper, toilet bowl cleaner, toilet paper

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: Genesis 12:1-4a

The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your land, your family, and your father’s household for the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, those who curse you I will curse; all the families of the earth will be blessed because of you.” Abram left just as the Lord told him, and Lot went with him.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

So what are we going to say? Are we going to find that Abraham is our ancestor on the basis of genealogy? Because if Abraham was made righteous because of his actions, he would have had a reason to brag, but not in front of God. What does the scripture say? *Abraham had faith in God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.* Workers’ salaries aren’t credited to them on the basis of an employer’s grace but rather on the basis of what they deserve. But faith is credited as righteousness to those who don’t work, because they have faith in God who makes the ungodly righteous.

The promise to Abraham and to his descendants, that he would inherit the world, didn’t come through the Law but through the righteousness that comes from faith. If they inherit because of the Law, then faith has no effect and the promise has been canceled. The Law brings about wrath. But when there isn’t any law, there isn’t any violation of the law. That’s why the inheritance comes through faith, so that it will be on the basis of God’s grace. In that way, the promise is secure for all of Abraham’s descendants, not just for those who are related by Law but also for those who are related by the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all of us. As it is written: *I have appointed you to be the father of many nations.* So Abraham is our father in the eyes of God in whom he had faith, the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that don’t exist into existence.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a Jewish leader. He came to Jesus at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one could do these miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him.”

Jesus answered, “I assure you, unless someone is born anew, it’s not possible to see God’s kingdom.”

Nicodemus asked, “How is it possible for an adult to be born? It’s impossible to enter the mother’s womb for a second time and be born, isn’t it?”

Jesus answered, “I assure you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, it’s not possible to enter God’s kingdom. Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. Don’t be surprised that I said to you, ‘You must be born anew.’ God’s Spirit blows wherever it wishes. You hear its sound, but you don’t know where it comes from or where it is going. It’s the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nicodemus said, “How are these things possible?”

“Jesus answered, “You are a teacher of Israel and you don’t know these things? I assure you that we speak about what we know and testify about what we have seen, but you don’t receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you don’t believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Human One. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won’t perish but will have eternal life. God didn’t send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.