

## Gathering

Words of Welcome

Prelude                      Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence                      Wilson

\* Call to Worship                      Jesus says: I am coming soon.  
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Hymn #84 v. 1                      *Creator of the stars of night,  
Your people's everlasting light,  
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,  
We pray you hear us when we call.*

Prayer

\* Hymn 82                      *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.

2 Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit  
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Prayer of Confession

**God of mercy,**  
**when the world seems to be falling apart around us,**  
**we confess that we do not remember to hope.**  
**And without hope:**  
**We live in fear.**  
**We turn on one another.**  
**We put in danger the world entrusted to our care.**  
**Forgive our forgetfulness and restore our hope, O God.**  
**Remind us again who you are:**

**You make trees sprout in the desert.  
You cause water to spring from a rock.  
You bring life out of death.  
Help us to trust again in your goodness.  
Help us to hope...**

## Assurance of Forgiveness

\* Passing of the Peace    May the Peace of Christ be with you!  
**And also with you!**

\* Hymn 79 v. 3            *Hope blooms in a weary world  
when creatures, once forlorn,  
find wilderness reborn.  
Hope blooms in a weary world:  
the promised green of Eden comes.*

*The trees shall clap their hands;  
the dry lands, gush with springs;  
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!  
We shall go out in joy,  
and be led forth in peace,  
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.*

## Word

### Time with the Children

### Prayer for Illumination

First Reading            Mark 13:24–37

24 “But in those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26 Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. 27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

28 “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he[a] is

near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

#### The Necessity for Watchfulness

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert;<sup>[b]</sup> for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Anthem

Looking for the Light

Schram

Second Reading

Isaiah 64:1–12

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

**2**

<sup>[a]</sup> as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

**3**

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

**4**

From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.

**5**

You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.<sup>[b]</sup>

**6**

We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

**7**

There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered<sup>[c]</sup> us into the hand of our iniquity.

**8**

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;

we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

**9**

Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

**10**

Your holy cities have become a wilderness,  
Zion has become a wilderness,  
Jerusalem a desolation.

**11**

Our holy and beautiful house,  
where our ancestors praised you,  
has been burned by fire,  
and all our pleasant places have become ruins.

**12**

After all this, will you restrain yourself, O LORD?  
Will you keep silent, and punish us so severely?

Sermon

Hope Remembered

Rev. Daniel Ervin

\* Affirmation of Faith

*from the Iona Community*

**We believe that God is present  
in the darkness before dawn;  
in the waiting and uncertainty  
where fear and courage join hands,  
conflict and caring link arms,  
and the sun rises over barbed wire.  
We believe in a with-us God  
Who sits down in our midst  
to share our humanity.  
We affirm a faith  
That takes us beyond the safe place  
into action, into vulnerability.  
and into the streets.  
We commit ourselves to work for change  
and put us on the line;  
to bear responsibility, to take risks,  
live powerfully and face humiliation;  
to stand with those on the edge;  
to chose life  
and be used by the Spirit  
for God's new community of hope.  
Amen**

\* Hymn 785

*In Deepest Night*

1 In deepest night, in darkest days,  
when harps are hung, no songs we raise,  
when silence must suffice as praise,  
yet sounding in us quietly  
there is the song of God.

2 When friend was lost, when love deceived,  
dear Jesus wept, God was bereaved;  
so with us in our grief God grieves,  
and round about us mournfully  
there are the tears of God.

3 When through the waters winds our path,  
around us pain, around us death,  
deep calls to deep, a saving breath,  
and found beside us faithfully  
there is the love of God.

## Responding

### Announcements

### Offering our Gifts

*Give at [lovejoyupc.org/give](http://lovejoyupc.org/give)*

*Loose cash offerings benefit our Good Samaritan fund, which helps our neighbors with essential needs on an emergency basis.*

### Sharing of Joys and Concerns

### The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### Sanctus Hymn 552

*Holy, Holy, Holy*

*1 Holy, holy, holy Lord,*

*God of power and might,*

*heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

*Hosanna in the highest.*

*2 Blessed is he who comes*

*in the name of the Lord.*

*Hosanna in the highest,*

*hosanna in the highest.*

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever.  
Amen.**

Communion

*Please come down the center aisle and receive a piece of bread and a cup of juice. If you wish to receive bread in your pew, the servers will assist you. If you're joining us online, please have bread and juice/wine available to celebrate with us. All who wish to know Jesus more deeply are invited to the table.*

Communion Meditation    Cantilena

Lackey

Prayer After Communion

## Sending

\* Hymn 353

*My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

1 My hope is built on nothing less  
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
all other ground is sinking sand;  
all other ground is sinking sand.

2 When darkness seems to hide his face,  
I rest on his unchanging grace;  
in every high and stormy gale,  
my anchor holds within the veil. (Refrain)

3 His oath, his covenant, his blood  
support me in the whelming flood;  
when all around my soul gives way,  
he then is all my hope and stay. (Refrain)

4 When he shall come with trumpet sound,

O may I then in him be found,  
dressed in his righteousness alone,  
faultless to stand before the throne. (Refrain)

\* Charge & Benediction

\* Postlude "The President's Hymn" Muhlenberg/Spong


## Worship Notes

Ann French is our Director of Music. Thanks to Michael & Robert Musgrave-Perkins and Alice Buzzard for their technology gifts. Thanks also to our liturgist for the day. Parts of today's service are adapted from *The Book of Common Worship* and *Call to Worship*.

## Land Acknowledgment

The LoveJoy United community gathers on the traditional land of the Tamaroa People, who have been its faithful stewards for generations. We acknowledge and honor the past, present, and future of the Tamaroa and other Indigenous peoples who have been displaced from their ancestral homelands.

## Announcements

Announcements marked with  are opportunities that relate to our Matthew 25 commitment.

### **Bake Sale: Candies, Cookies, Breads, & Pies! Saturday, Dec. 9 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

We are bringing back our Annual Bake Sale! The proceeds of this sale will benefit our Good Samaritan Fund, which directly helps our neighbors during times of crisis. Come and shop for some wonderful treats! You can also bring some baked goods. Simply sign up on the table in the Narthex.

### **Let Your Light Shine - Stewardship Season**

God has given each of us incredible gifts and resources to reflect God's light into the world: time, talent, and treasure. Please prayerfully consider how your giving can support God's ministry at LoveJoy United in the upcoming year. A pledge is an estimate of what you hope to give, which help our church leaders plan responsibly for the future of our church's ministries. **We encourage everyone to pledge by filling out a pledge card, calling the church office, or pledging online at [lovejoyupc.org/pledge](https://lovejoyupc.org/pledge).** When each of us gives generously, we shine more brightly as God's church.

### **Christmas Food Box**

Our food pantry is providing a Christmas box to our patrons on Monday, Dec. 11. We will purchase ham or turkey, but we would like to collect a few extra items for their box. We have about 25 families. We need: 5lb bags of potatoes, Boxed Stuffing Mix, Onion Topping, Mushroom Soup, Canned Green Beans, Cranberry Sauce, Dinner Rolls, Butter. Monetary donations are also welcome. Please talk to Brenda Donohoo or Marilyn King if you have questions.

### **Warm and Fuzzy Tree**

In December, we be collecting various warm and fuzzy items and donating them to the Overnight Warming Center in Alton. We will collect hats, scarves, gloves, socks, blankets, etc. Anything that will bring warmth! Thank you for your donations.

### **Sunday Morning Live (Adult Christian Education), Sundays at 9 AM in-person and on Zoom.**

Pour yourself a cup of coffee and join a group of adults in an informal conversation around the themes of Christian Practices. Join in the Fellowship Hall or via Zoom (<https://lovejoyupc.org/live> and click "connect via Zoom").

**Lyceum Book Club's** current book is DAEMON COPPERHEAD by Barbara Kingsolver. ZOOM on 12/20 7:15p. Our next book is THE COVENANT OF WATER by Abraham Verghese. It is a 2-month read therefore we ZOOM half of it on 01/20 @ 7:15p.



### **Food Pantry Requests**

The Food Pantry is collecting items for the Christmas Food Boxes. Please see the display in the narthex if you are interested in donating. Your donations are always appreciated.

### **Sewing and Craft Circle**

Join our new social gathering on Wednesday afternoons from 2–4 p.m. We have a lot of talented people in our church. Let's get together and work on our projects in a relaxing environment. You can bring your own drink and snacks if desired. If you have any questions, ask Paula Blair or Janet Barringer. We'll be moderating this fellowship time to make sure we don't get off track.



### **Wednesdays at LoveJoy United**

- **Lectionary Bible Study In-Person or Zoom at 10:15 AM** - Join pastor Daniel and a number of others as we discuss the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday.
- **Lunch Bunch gathers on Wednesdays at 11:30 AM**
- **Zoom Evening Prayer at 7 PM**

### **PRAYER CONCERNS**

JoAnn Moss, Pat Fletcher, Katie Davis, Jessica Elledge, Terry French, John Gremling & the Gremling Family, Jeanie McCoy, Connor, JoAnn Lamar, Trans folks in KY, TN, FL, MO, Mason Inlow, Kenny Slayden, Connie, Ched, Carol Foraker, Shelly Devore, Landon Stockhoff, Annabel Gibson, Mark Carter (Alice Carter's husband, back surgery), Scott Blass (Henson's Nephew, recent kidney transplant recipient), Spencer Slayden (Jack and Dottie Kleinert's grandson, Scott and Kelly Slayden's oldest son, deployed to Middle East).

### **NURSING & RETIREMENT HOME RESIDENTS**

**Integrity Healthcare, Wood River** – Herbert Peel  
**The Cottages of Carlinville, Carlinville** – Shirley Martin  
**Villa Rose, Bethalto** – Beth Forrester  
**Cedarhurst, Bethalto** – Shirley Burris and Mary Barnes



**NEXT STEPS  
& SIGNUPS**

## **LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church**

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