

Gathering

Words of Welcome

Prelude

* Call to Worship

We come to rejoice
We come to sing
We come to celebrate
Christ the King

Prayer of the Day

* Hymn 109

Blest be the God of Israel

1 Blest be the God of Israel,
who comes to set us free;
who visits and redeems us,
who grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy,
of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill that promise
and bring the people peace.

2 God from the house of David
a child of grace has given;
a Savior comes among us
to raise us up to heaven.
Before him goes the herald,
forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation,
the harbinger of day.

3 On those who sit in darkness
the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness
upon the sinner's eyes.
God guides the feet of pilgrims
along the paths of peace.
O bless our God and Savior
with songs that never cease!

Prayer of Confession

We confess in some and many ways we are glad it is all over with for another year. We are glad that the worries are gone. But then we confess that we are sorry to see another Christmas come and go. We confess our confusion and our delight in this season. We confess the hurt we gave others by ignoring them or not loving them enough. We confess that we still carry with us some of the hurt from long ago and just a few days ago. O Lord, help us

give up our hurt and instead find healing. O Lord, help us give up our anxiety and instead help us replace it with true confidence in You. After all Lord, you have promised to make all things right. We pray in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

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

* Hymn 582

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

*1 Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.*

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

2 World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Word

Time with the Children

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10–62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

11

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

62

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

2

The nations shall see your vindication,

and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

3

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Second Reading

Galatians 4:4–7

4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. **6** And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our^[a] hearts, crying, “Abba!^[b] Father!” **7** So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Anthem

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:22–40

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), **24** and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon;^[a] this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.^[b] **27** Guided by the Spirit, Simeon^[c] came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, **28** Simeon^[d] took him in his arms and praised God, saying, **29** “Master, now you are dismissing your servant^[e] in peace, according to your word;

30 for my eyes have seen your salvation,

31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.”

33 And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. **34** Then Simeon^[f] blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed **35** so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

36 There was also a prophet, Anna^[g] the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, **37** then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and

prayer night and day. **38** At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child^[h] to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. **40** The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Sermon

Pastor Mike Paddock

* Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

* Hymn 274

You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd

1 You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd.

You, Lord, are both prince and slave.

*You, peace-maker and sword-bringer
of the way you took and gave.*

You, the everlasting instant;

you, whom we both scorn and crave.

2 Clothed in light upon the mountain,

stripped of might upon the cross,

shining in eternal glory,

begged by a soldier's toss,

you, the everlasting instant;

you who are both gift and cost.

3 You, who walk each day beside us,

sit in power at God's side.

You, who preach a way that's narrow,

have a love that reaches wide.

You, the everlasting instant;

you, who are our pilgrim guide.

4 Worthy is our earthly Jesus!

Worthy is our cosmic Christ!

Worthy your defeat and victory;

worthy still your peace and strife.

You, the everlasting instant;

you, who are our death and life.

Responding

Announcements

Offering our Gifts

Give at 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

Sung call to Prayer

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Hymn 469

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.

The Prayers for the People

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.

Sending

* Hymn 126

Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child

Jesus, Jesus, O what a wonderful child.

Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek and mild;

new life, new hope the child will bring.

Listen to the angels sing:

"Glory, glory, glory!"

Let the heavens ring.

* Charge & Benediction

* Postlude

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.



Food Pantry

The food pantry needs canned soups and chili. Your donations are always appreciated.

Administrative Announcements

Please turn your 2023 Annual Reports into Tabitha at admin@lovejoyupc.org by Friday, January 19.

Tabitha will be printing the 2024 Directory in the next few weeks. Please let the office know if any changes are needed to the directory, or you may log in to the online directory and make changes to your address if you prefer.



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").

Sewing and Craft Circle - is taking a break for the holidays and will resume on January 10.

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 (Bible Study, Lunch Bunch, etc) resume on January 10

PRAYER CONCERNS

JoAnn Moss, Pat Fletcher, Katie Davis, Jessica Elledge, Terry French, John Gremli & the Gremli Family, 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), Wendy Shugert (John and Linda Shugert's Sister-in-Law), Jack Jenkins (Friend of Linda Allen - Surgery).

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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Ann French, Director of Music

Lisa Hemphill, Custodian