

## Gathering

Words of Welcome

Prelude

*O Splendor of God's Glory*

Graham

\* Call to Worship & Candle Lighting

Jesus says: I am coming soon  
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**

We light these three candles  
as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
As the Lord has promised, in the days to come...

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
**like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.**

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

\* Prayer of the Day

\* Hymn 88

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, vv. 1, 2, 3, & 7*  
*1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,*  
*and ransom captive Israel,*  
*that mourns in lonely exile here*  
*until the Son of God appear.*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel*  
*shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*2 O come, thou Wisdom from on high,*  
*who orderest all things mightily:*  
*to us the path of knowledge show;*  
*and teach us in her ways to go.*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel*  
*shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might,*  
*who to thy tribes on Sinai's height*  
*in ancient times didst give the law*  
*in cloud and majesty and awe.*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel*  
*shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*7 O come, Desire of nations, bind*

*all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, we confess that,  
in the midst of your glorious creation,  
we have neglected our role in its care.  
We ignore the cries of the hurting and the lonely,  
those on the margins  
and those who are oppressed.  
We focus on our own desires,  
while forgetting the needs of our neighbors.  
We have not prepared a way for the Lord,  
through either our words or our deeds,  
neither through our actions nor our thoughts.  
Grant us your mercy in forgiveness;  
and lead us to act with compassion and justice,  
guided by your glorious light...**

Assurance of Forgiveness

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

\* Response Hymn 79    *Light Dawns on a Weary World, verse 1*  
*Light dawns on a weary world*  
*When eyes begin to see all people's dignity.*  
*Light dawns on a weary world:*  
*The promised day of justice 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

Old Testament

*Zephaniah 3:14-20*

<sup>14</sup>Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! <sup>15</sup>The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. <sup>16</sup>On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. <sup>17</sup>The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing <sup>18</sup>as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. <sup>19</sup>I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. <sup>20</sup>At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Anthem

*Advent Celebration*

Paige

Gospel

*Luke 2:25–35*

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." <sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon 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 <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Sermon

The Canticle of Simeon

Rev. Daniel Ervin

## Responding

\* Affirmation of Faith

*From the Confession of 1967*

**Out of Israel,  
God in due time raised up Jesus.**

**His faith and obedience were the response  
of the perfect child of God.  
He was the fulfillment  
of God's promise to Israel,  
the beginning of the new creation,  
and the pioneer of the new humanity.  
He gave history its meaning and direction  
and called the church to be his servant  
for the reconciliation of the world. Amen.**

\* Hymn 545

*Song of Simeon*

*1 Lord, bid your servant go in peace;  
your word is now fulfilled.  
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn,  
this child so long foretold.*

*2 This is the Savior of the world,  
the Gentiles' promised light,  
God's glory dwelling in our midst,  
the joy of Israel.*

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 primarily through our partners at Riverbend Family Ministries. Checks for offering are processed on the second and fourth Mondays of each month.*

Prayer of Dedication

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Sung call to Prayer

Wait for the Lord

Hymn 90

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near  
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

Prayers of 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 837

*What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine*

*1 What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
leaning on the everlasting arms;  
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*Refrain:*

*Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;  
leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*2 O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,  
leaning on the everlasting arms;  
O how bright the path grows from day to day,  
leaning on the everlasting arms. (Refrain)*

*3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
leaning on the everlasting arms. (Refrain)*

\* Charge & Benediction

\* Postlude

*On This Glad Day*

Scarlatti/Smith

## 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.

### **Christmas Potluck, Dec. 15 After Worship**

Join us for our Christmas Potluck after worship. We should have plenty of food – so join us even if you couldn't bring anything this time.

 **Necessi Tree:** The Necessi Tree in the Narthex will collect items for the Warming Center. Anything necessary to keep warm this winter plus necessity items like socks and underwear. We need a variety of

sizes for women, men and children. We also need hats, scarves, gloves, small blankets, etc. that are necessary for warmth.

### **Stewardship Campaign: The Glory Belongs to God!**

Thanks to everyone who has submitted a pledge so far. If you have not yet pledged, we invite you to join us in committing to God's ministry at LoveJoy United in the next year. You can return your pledge card to the church office, offering plate, or pledge online at [lovejoyupc.org/pledge](http://lovejoyupc.org/pledge).

### **Adult Christian Education on Sunday Mornings at 9 AM**

- **Sunday Morning Live**, led by Rev. Dr. Mark Russell, is an informal, conversational class that seeks to connect scripture, theology, and faith to our lives and world. They meet in the Love Room and on Zoom.
- **The Gospel of John Class**, led by Rev. Dr. Linda Shugert began on Dec 1. They meet in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom..

### **Advent and Christmas at LoveJoy United**

- **Canticles of Christmas:** Our scriptures on the Sundays in Advent will focus on the canticles (songs in scripture) that appear in the Christmas story in Luke's Gospel.
- **The Longest Night Service - Saturday, December 21 at 6 PM:** This service on the winter solstice (the longest night of the year) is a space for worship and community for those who are experiencing grief, doubt, illness, or pain this season. All, however, are welcome to attend. Please contact the church office if you'd like to arrange a ride for the service.
- **Christmas Cantata - Sunday, December 22 at 10:15 AM:** Our choir will lead us in worship with their cantata.
- **Christmas Eve Service - Tuesday December 24 at 6:30 PM.** The church doors will be open at 5:30 for coffee, hot chocolate, and good fellowship.

### **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, John Gremlí & the Gremlí Family, Connor, JoAnn Lamar, Trans folks in KY, TN, FL, MO, ID, Mason Inlow, Kenny Slayden, Connie, Ched, Mark Carter, Kathy Walker (Jack & Dottie Kleinert's daughter), Abby Cotter, Tom and his father Ralph and his daughter Jupiter, Kristi Doering, Shelly Devore (Brenda and Deb's niece), Brittany, Bill Lester, Lanny Harris, Paula Blair, John Kennedy, Renee Lynn, Kathie Luke (Julie Spurgeon's Sister), Eugene Sackett - lung cancer (The King's nephew), Forrest, Jim Caffrey (cancer), June Blankenship (tumors), David Hemphill, Jo Ellen Gillooley (Relative of the Henson's), Michael & Robert Musgrave-Perkins.

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

Integrity Healthcare, Wood River – Herbert Peel  
The Cottages of Carlinville, Carlinville – Shirley Martin  
Villa Rose, Bethalto – Beth Forrester  
Cedarhurst, Bethalto – Mary Barnes  
Liberty Village, Jerseyville – Shirley Burris  
Villas of Holly Brook – Jeane Slayden



**NEXT STEPS  
& SIGNUPS**

## LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church

2550 Rock Hill Rd, Wood River, IL 62095

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Ann French, Director of Music

Joshua Bryant, Custodian & Groundskeeper