

✦ Gathering

Words of Welcome

Prelude

* Call to Worship

O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.
I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.
O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.
I will lay sinews on you, and you shall live.
O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.
I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live.

* Prayer of the Day

* Hymn 314

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

*1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.*

*Refrain:
Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

*2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice. (Refrain)*

*3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed. (Refrain)*

*4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. (Refrain)*

5 Many the gifts, many the people,

*many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come. (Refrain)*

Prayer of Confession

**Life-giving God,
We confess that we are dry bones in a valley of dry bones.
We thirst for your Spirit,
but we try to quench our thirst
with things that will never bring us life.
We have put our trust in rulers, money, and power,
and we are still just a pile of rattling, dry bones.
God, have mercy on us.
Send your Spirit-breath to bring life to us.
Knit us together again with the sinews of hope.
Clothe us again with the flesh of compassion.
Set us up on our feet again so that we may walk in your way...**

Assurance of Forgiveness

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

* Hymn 447 *We Are Forgiven*
We are forgiven.
We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.
Thanks be to God.

✠ Word

Time with the Children

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading Ezekiel 37:1-14

37 The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on

you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.”⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them.⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD.

Anthem

Gospel

John 3:1-8

³ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.”³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?”⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Sermon

Rev. Daniel Ervin

✦ Responding

* 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 at 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 286

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

*1 Breathe on me, Breath of God;
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.*

*2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.*

*3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.*

*4 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.*

Announcements

Offering our Gifts

*Give at 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

Be Still and Know That I Am God

Hymn 414

*Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.*

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 738

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

*1 O Master, let me walk with thee
in lowly paths of service free;
tell me thy secret; help me bear
the strain of toil, the fret of care.*

*2 Help me the slow of heart to move
by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay,
and guide them in the homeward way.*

*3 Teach me thy patience, still with thee
in closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
in trust that triumphs over wrong.*

*4 In hope that sends a shining ray
far down the future's broadening way;
in peace that only thou canst give,
with thee, O Master, let me live.*

* 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.

Lenten Supper Church: pLENTiful: Tending to the Book of Nature

Starting on Wednesday, March 12, join us at 6:30 pm on Wednesdays during Lent for a shared meal, worship, and conversation, as we explore connections between faith, creation, and spiritual renewal. Through scripture, reflection, and hands-on practices, we will learn how tending to God's earth deepens our faith and invites us into God's abundance.

Garden Survey and Signup

Help us decide what to plant in our garden this year and consider donating a little time to tend the garden and nurture your spirit. The survey is online at lovejoyupc.org/nextsteps and click "Garden Survey."

Spring Adult Bible Class

On Sunday, March 2, the adult Bible class will begin "Embracing Life." The spring quarter will begin with a study of the Beatitudes during Lent, and the theme of Living Water will take us through the Easter Season. The study leader for spring will be Sandy Monroe. Join us at 9:00 a.m. in fellowship hall, and bring your Bible!

 **Food Pantry Needs:** Canned Vegetables, your donations are always appreciated.

Adult Christian Education on Sunday Mornings at 9 AM

- **Sunday Morning Live** 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. They are currently talking about The Revelation of John.
- **The Gospel of John Class**, led by Rev. Dr. Linda Shugert begins on Dec 1. Still time to sign up at lovejoyupc.org/nextsteps. They meet in Fellowship Hall.

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 (lovejoyupc.org/live)

PRAYER CONCERNS

JoAnn Moss, Pat Fletcher, Katie Davis, John Gremler & the Gremler Family, Connor, JoAnn Lamar, Trans folks, Kenny Slayden, Connie, Ched, Mark Carter, Abby Cotter, Tom and 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), Forrest, David Hemphill, Linda Duncan, JoJo, Terrye Mock (Valerie Freeman's Sister-In-Law), Dottie Kleinert.

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

www.lovejoyupc.org | (618) 254-5880

Rev. Daniel Ervin, Pastor | daniel@lovejoyupc.org

Tabitha Nail, Admin | admin@lovejoyupc.org

Ann French, Director of Music

Joshua Bryant, Custodian & Groundskeeper