

✚ Gathering

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Meditation on a French Carol

Parks

Advent Candle Lighting

...even in the dark.
God is here.

Prayer of the Day

* Hymn 347

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

*1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.*

*2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.*

*3 Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish
as the shadows clear away.*

*4 At his feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
“Alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, Lord most high!”*

Prayer of Confession

**Emmanuel, God-with-us,
there is nowhere we can go from your presence.
And yet—that does not keep us from trying.
We fear what we do not understand, so we shy away from your**

mystery, your majesty, and your holiness.

We fear what we cannot control, so choose to follow our own path instead of your way of faithful obedience.

Forgive us, O God of grace.

**Surround us with the strange beauty of your ways,
that we may walk in darkness without fear,
to trust where you lead,**

And to accompany others as you accompany us...

Assurance of Forgiveness

* Passing of the Peace

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

* Hymn 670

From the Rising of the Sun

*From the rising of the sun
to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
From the rising of the sun
to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
So praise ye the Lord.
Praise ye the Lord.
From the rising of the sun
to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.*

✦ Word

Time with the Children

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading

Luke 1:26-38

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' [a] 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' 34 Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' [b] 35 The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born [c]

will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36 And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God.' 38 Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Anthem

Carol for Advent

Besig

Amber Blackmon, flute

Second Reading

Exodus 20:18-21

18 When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid[a] and trembled and stood at a distance, 19 and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.' 20 Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.' 21 Then the people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Sermon

✦ Responding

* Affirmation of Faith

From Col 1:15–20

**Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation;
in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible.
All things have been created through him and for him.
he himself is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.
He is head of the body, the church;
he is the beginning,
the firstborn of the dead,
so that he might come to have first place in everything.
For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.**

* Hymn 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

*I My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.*

Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain:

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring,
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.*

*2 Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)*

*3 From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)*

*4 Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. (Refrain)*

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 Joys and Concerns

Hymn 168

*Within Your Shelter, Loving God vv. 1, 4
Within your shelter, loving God, my refuge and my tower,
I safely walk by day and night beneath your guiding power.*

*As often as I call to you, you kindly hear my prayer.
In times of trouble and distress I rest in your own care.*

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 850

In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness

*1 In a deep, unbounded darkness,
long before the first light shone,
you, O God, beyond all merit
worked a wonder faith makes known:
in your mercy, in your mercy,
you embraced us as your own,
evermore and evermore.*

*2 Though our world is ever-changing,
you are constant, firm, and sure,
faithful to your covenant promise.
Trusting you, we live, secure:
singing praises, singing praises,
long as heart and breath endure,
evermore and evermore.*

*3 Joy transforms our lips to boasting
only in your matchless grace,
sending Christ to dwell among us,
Word made flesh in time and space:
Friend and Savior, Friend and Savior,
in whose life we glimpse your face,
evermore and evermore.*

*4 God of Hagar, God of Sarah,
God of nomad Abraham;
God of Miryam, God of Moses,
Fiery Pillar, great I am:
lead us homeward, lead us homeward,*

*to the love-feast of the Lamb,
evermore and evermore.*

* Charge & Benediction

* Postlude

Prelude and Fugue in G Major

Bac

h

✚ 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.

 **Joy In Giving: Stewardship for 2026** As our church leaders plan for our ministries next year, we invite you to consider how God is calling you to give. Please return a pledge card in the offering basket, church office, or submit your pledge online at lovejoyupc.org/pledge.

 **Learn more about LoveJoy United** – Today after worship. Interested in learning more about the congregation? Considering joining as a member? Join pastor Daniel and a couple of others as we share more about our life of faith together and answer any questions you may have. Please let Daniel know you're interested: daniel@loveoyupc.org.

Memorial Service: There will be a memorial service for our friend Herbert Peel at **LoveJoy UPC at 1pm on Saturday, December 20th**. A Memorial Reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall.

Christmas Potluck Dinner: On Sunday, December 21, the Fellowship Committee is sponsoring a Christmas Pot Luck Dinner after worship. Sign up sheet is available in the narthex. We will have an ugly sweater contest with prizes!

Longest Night Service - Dec 21 at 4 PM This service, held on the winter solstice, is for all those experiencing pain, doubt, or grief this season. We know that the holidays are not cheerful and joyful for everyone. You're not alone. Please join us and invite others who could use the company of God's people this season.

A Place of Grace Walk to Bethlehem - November 30 - December 24

On the first Sunday of Advent, we will embark on our annual trip to Bethlehem with the practice of embodied prayer. Each day, you'll receive a meditation by email or in the private Facebook Group. You are asked to report your mileage each day with 2000 steps equaling one mile or 20 minutes of movement equaling one mile. Collectively, our goal will be to get to Bethlehem by Christmas morning. RSVP by 11/29!

 **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. Each Sunday at 9:00, they meet in the Love Room and on Zoom. They relate current events to Scripture to create thought-provoking discussions via [The Wired Word](#).
- **Bible Class: New Advent Sunday School Series starts November 30 at 9AM**, The Rev. Dr. Linda Shugert lead us as we begin a series called "Through the Wilderness: Healing for a Weary World." Join us as we hear the prophet Isaiah speak into our own weary world.

Wednesdays at LoveJoy United

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

PRAYER CONCERNS

JoAnn Moss, Pat Fletcher, John Gremler & the Gremler Family, Connor, JoAnn Lamar, Trans folks, Kenny Slayden, Connie, Ched, Mark Carter, Tom and Jupiter, Kristi Doering, Shelly Devore (Brenda and Deb's niece), Brittany, Bill Lester, Lanny Harris, John Kennedy, Renee Lynn, Kathie Luke (Julie Spurgeon's Sister), Forrest, David Hemphill, Linda Duncan, JoJo, Terrye Mock (Valerie Freeman's Sister-In-Law), Gary Chappell and Laurie Chappell (Edie Chappell's son and her daughter-in-law), Cathy Lister (Karen Auston's sister), Barb (Linda Smith's daughter), Paula Blair, Jeane Slayden, Mike Carnes, Eli (The Paddock's grandson), David Norris, Jo Carter, Julie Spurgeon, Becky & Rich Davis and Ray Bently (Friends of Linda Allen).

NURSING & RETIREMENT HOME RESIDENTS

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

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

Tabitha Nail, Admin | admin@lovejoyupc.org

Ann French, Director of Music

Joshua Bryant, Custodian & Groundskeeper