

HOWEVER, I CONSIDER MY LIFE WORTH
NOTHING TO ME; MY ONLY AIM IS TO

FINISH THE RACE

AND COMPLETE THE TASK THE LORD JESUS HAS GIVEN ME—
THE TASK OF TESTIFYING TO THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S GRACE.



ACTS 20:24

Sunday, February 23, 2025
St. James and St. Mark's United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist
Jacob Grunwald, Reader

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Come, Now Is the Time to Worship with O Worship, the King

Call to Worship:

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! With laughter and songs of joy.

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! For that is what we know.

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! With hearts heavy with grief.

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! Distracted and exhausted.

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! Eager and enthusiastic!

God calls us to worship,

AND WE COME! As God's dearly loved children, we bring all our joy and pain, hurt and hope into this sacred space of Spirit-given grace and love.

Good and gracious God, our most glorious Creator, we greet you this morning and see life blossoming all around us! In the first red-breasted robins of the season; in the fresh blossoms of the daffodil and crocus; in the laughter and tears of the newborn child; and in the resurrection of our Lord. We praise you this morning and give thanks for our gathering. *Amen.*

Hymn:

St. James (#45 - Binder)

St. Mark's (#515)

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Affirming Our Faith:

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him.

Amen.

Young at Heart:



Prayer of Confession:

In the act of confession, we acknowledge how we have missed the mark, and we call upon God to save us from the destruction of sin and turn us back toward life. Let us now confess our sin before God and one another.

We confess that we have not loved you as you command us to love.

We have not relied on you as our refuge, choosing instead to seek comfort in busyness and distractions.

We have not trusted that only when we put ourselves in your hands can we find peace, the peace we crave.

We confess that we have not loved our neighbors as you command us to love.

We buy into the myth that it's every person for themselves.

We ignore the pain of those around us.

We refuse your call to care for the poor and the marginalized.

We confess that we do not answer your call to steward creation.

We look upon the earth as something to consume instead of tend.

We point fingers at others instead of doing what is ours to do.

We choose comfort over responsibility.

Let your face shine upon us; save us in your steadfast love.

A Moment of Silence:

Words of Assurance:

When we call, God inclines an ear to us and comes quickly to help us. God's love is steadfast to rescue us and redeem us. In the name of Jesus Christ, I am forgiven! In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen.

Hymn:

St. James (#253)
St. Mark's (#408)

*Take My Life
I Am Thine, O Lord*

Scripture Reading:

ACTS 20:17-24 ESV

Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. And when they came to him, he said to them:

"You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Message:

If Only I May Finish My Course and Ministry

Dr. Patrick Schultz

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.

Offering:

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Jesus, Lover of My Soul

Doxology: ~ *The offering is brought to the altar ~*

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

Holy and loving God, you treat us not like the stern disciplinarian but like the forgiving parent who runs to embrace us when we've rebelled or disappointed. Your mercy gives us the opportunities to try again, to return into your grace, to pick ourselves up and brush ourselves off. You forget how many strikes we have against us but invite us back into the inheritance you desire for us. May our offering this day reflect our gratitude. In Christ, we pray, *amen*.

Hymn of Sending:

St. James (#474)

St. Mark's (#424)

*I've Found a Friend
How Can I Keep From Singing?*

Benediction:

May you go forth carrying the joy that is yours as a child of God and an heir to resurrection life through Christ. May that joy fill you up and fuel your journey as we share the good news of Jesus Christ and live out the mission he has set us on. *Amen*.

Postlude:

Great Is The Lord

COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS!

St. James UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

~Sunday School at St. James 9-10am ~

St. Mark's UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

10:30am Services on our YouTube channel: St. Mark's & St. James UCC

Like us on Facebook: St Marks & St James UCC

Join our prayer team, email: stmstjoffice@gmail.com

Staying Close, Staying Connected

Our Church Celebrations!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO:

February 24th – Shelia Hemb

25th – Myron Hickman, Jason Riesterer, Bill Roelse

26th – Rieck Beiersdorf, Amy Summers

27th – Karie Ladwig

28th – Poppy Binversie, Theodore Sibley

29th – Eunice Stolzmann, Walter Taylor

March 1st – Eric Grotegut, Katy Grunwald

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

February 26th – Bill & Laurie Heckmann

TODAY!

ST. JAMES CHOIR PRACTICE –
Tues., Feb. 25th, 6:30pm

ST. JAMES VISION OF HOPE –
Tues., Feb. 25th, 6:30pm.

ST. JAMES CONSISTORY – will meet
at 6:30pm Tues., March 4th

ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY – will meet
at 6:00pm Thurs., March 6th



TOURNAMENT!

ST. JAMES UCC
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd
1:00pm

*Open to Men & Women of
St. James & St. Mark's UCC*

St. James

13312 Pioneer Road, Spring Valley
Newton, WI 53063



Chili Dinner

Drive-Thru

Hosted by St. Mark's / St. James' Youth Fellowship

Sunday, March 2nd, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

Carry Out Only!!

Quart of Chili: \$10.00

Gallon of Chili: \$25.00

All carry outs will include chili, crackers, fresh bread, cheese, and a dessert!

The Youth Group is looking for baked goods donations for the chili dinner. You may bring your baked goods to St. James on Saturday, March 1st from 8:30-10:30.



Welcome To **Rooted in Faith Reaching Out with Love**

Welcome! We offer Christ-centered worship services and an open invitation to all to share in Holy Communion. We've been yoked congregations...

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Visit our new church Website:

<https://www.stmarksstjamesucc.org>