

# Nothing

not foreign invasions,

persecutions

not the challenges of today

or the uncertainties of tomorrow

can thwart God's plans.

**Sunday, December 28, 2025**

**St. James United Church of Christ**

**St. Mark's United Church of Christ**

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor

Kathy Jurk, Organist      Jacob Grunwald, Reader

*Our Mission is to help others deepen their relationship with God, become faithful followers of Christ, and to share the message of Christ's love with others.*

Hymn Sing

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

*He Is Born, The Holy Child*

## Call To Worship:

How beautiful on the mountaintops are the feet of those who declare peace!  
**How beautiful the one who brings good news, who proclaims God's liberation.**

Listen! Those who have watched and waited so long are shouting for joy as God enters the land.

**The Word has become flesh! God lives among us, now and forevermore.**

## Opening Prayer:

**We have welcomed the Lord Jesus Christ into this world. We have raised our voices in song and prayer. Hear us O Holy One, as we give ourselves over to you and eagerly anticipate the glory of your return. In Jesus name, Amen.**

### ♪ Hymn:

St. James (#105)

St. Mark's (#188)

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

## Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, 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 Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: the communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And the life everlasting. *Amen.*

## Prayer of Confession:

Ever-present God, you became our Savior in all our distress.

In all the ways we hurt, and all the ways we hurt others,  
in all the ways we feel neglected and all the ways we neglect others,  
in all the ways we cry out and all the ways we cause others to cry,  
you are with us, comforting us and holding us to account.

In your love, redeem us once again. Lift us up and grant us your mercy,  
as you have throughout the generations.

**Christ came into this world for us to forgive us all our sins.**

**Thanks be to God! In excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

## Young at Heart:



### ♪ Hymn:

St. James (#118)

St. Mark's (#229)

*The First Noel (vs 1, 3, 5, 6)*

### Scripture Reading:

*Matthew 2:13-18 ESV*

*Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."*

*Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:*

*"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
weeping and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."*

### Message:

*What Evil Lurks in the Hearts of Men*

*Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz*

### ♪ Hymn:

St. James (#107)

St. Mark's (#191)

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

### People's Prayer:

Come to us, O God, as we gather together and pray in the name of Jesus:  
**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**

### Offertory Music:

*~ The offering is brought to the altar ~*

*The Cradle Song*

## Doxology:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heav'ly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

Lord of abundance, we give today not out of obligation, but out of joy. May these gifts be seeds of Your Kingdom—growing into acts of mercy, justice, and compassion. Use them to feed the hungry, comfort the brokenhearted, and proclaim the good news of Christ to all. *Amen.*

## ♪ Hymn:

St. James (#120)

St. Mark's (#179)

*Joy To The World!*

## Benediction:

Beloved Children of God, be renewed in spirit, at one with the Lord, and prepared to share the Good News of Jesus with all whom you meet.

Go to love and serve the Lord  
in all that you are,  
and all that you do,  
and all you will be. *Amen.*

## Postlude:

*O Thou Joyful, O Thou Wonderful*

Services are recorded and available on our church YouTube channel:  
St. Mark's & St. James UCC

Like us on Facebook 

Check out our Website: [www.stmarksstjamesucc.org](http://www.stmarksstjamesucc.org)

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in our Church office: [stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com)



## Our Church Celebrations!

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO:**

*December 28<sup>th</sup> - Tim Russart*

*29<sup>th</sup> - Scott Kafka*

*31<sup>st</sup> - McKenna Jo Fitzgerald, Galen La Duke*

*3<sup>rd</sup> - Karen Krause*

### **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY THIS WEEK TO:**

*December 28<sup>th</sup> - Mike & Amy Summers*

*31<sup>st</sup> - Jeremy & Karie Ladwig*

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THE FINANCIAL BOOKS FOR 2025 FOR BOTH CHURCHES CLOSE TOMORROW, MONDAY, DECEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>. Contact Sheila Hemb at St. James or Judy Steinbeck at St. Mark's for more information.

ST. MARK'S GREETER SIGN UP is in the entryway. You may also sign up Online at: <https://bit.ly/greeter2026>

ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING - Thursday, Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>, 6pm.

ST. JAMES CONSISTORY MEETING - Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

## ANNUAL REPORT ITEMS DUE:

ST. MARK'S, YOUR REPORTS ARE DUE FRIDAY, JAN. 2<sup>ND</sup>  
ST. JAMES, YOUR REPORTS ARE DUE FRIDAY, JAN. 9<sup>TH</sup>.  
Email your group's annual reports to Karen at:  
[stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com)

ANNUAL  
REPORTS  
DUE!

## CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING DATES:

ST. MARK'S: JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
ST. JAMES: JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>



## 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 every Sunday.

### St. Mark's UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.  
2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.