



SERVICE OF THE WORD
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
St. James & St. Mark's United Church of Christ
July 30, 2023

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz
Rev. Kim Henning, Guest Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist Jacob Grunwald, Reader

Meditative Music
Bells Ring
Prelude Gathering for Word:

To God Be the Glory

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Greetings to you in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

When Jesus of Nazareth came into our midst, he announced the coming of God's Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God is like a banquet to which all nations would be invited.

The Kingdom of God is like yeast growing in a loaf of bread.

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that is planted in a field, it is the smallest of all seeds but when it is grown---it is the greatest of all shrubs.

The Kingdom of God is like a precious pearl which a merchant searched the world to buy.

The Kingdom of God is like a sturdy vine that gives forth branches weighed down with grapes.

Let all who have ears--listen.

I invite you to pray with me.....

Most wonderful God, we approach you with our small lives and our tiny minds, but also our purest longings and our grandest hopes. We are here to worship you, yet we know that without your Holy Spirit we will fail in this our holiest endeavor. Therefore we pray, bless our community's effort to glorify your name and to practice the art of selfless living. We pray this prayer through Christ who is our breath, our life, and our hope. Amen.

HYMN:

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

Insert for St. James; #347 Worship & Rejoice

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

We come to you with this prayer of confession O God because we cannot live with the weight of our sin. We know how vain this world can be with its infatuation with power and wealth. And yet we too seem to mirror those values. We love things. We love control. We love being right. Have mercy upon us, O God. We know the vanity of these and yet we are ever lured by them. By the power of your Holy Spirit, enter our hearts and transform our thinking. Release us from the powers of this world until finally we are at one with you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

Friends in Christ, believe the Gospel. Christ came to love, to heal, and to forgive. His journey to the cross formed a path that offers hope to all who call upon his name. Trust the Gospel, in Christ we are saved. Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE:

Let us take a moment to greet one another with, "The peace of Christ be with you," and "Also with you."

PSALM 86:5-16

(At first glance, the most important thing to take notice of in this psalm is that it is a prayer spoke to God. We are not talking to each other. We are not engaged in a conversation between one person and a second. We dare to speak to the Holy One of heaven and earth.)

*For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.*

***Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.***

*In the day of my trouble I call on you,
for you will answer me.*

***There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.***

*All the nations you have made shall come
and bow down before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.*

***For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.***

*Teach me your way, O Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.*

***I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name for ever.***

*For great is your steadfast love towards me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.*

***O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.***

*But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.*

***Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving-maid.***

THE GOSPEL:

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

(Jesus began his ministry in Matthew (3:2) with the words, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” Jesus made it clear that the kingdom of heaven was so present and powerful, that the only fit response was to repent. Today, we will listen to five of Jesus’ parables that further describe the kingdom of heaven.)

He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’

‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

THE NEW TESTAMENT:

Romans 8:12-25

(In a letter to the church in Rome, the Apostle Paul writes about the power of the Gospel and its ability to instill hope within believers.)

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself

will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²*We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now;* ²³*and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.* ²⁴*For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen?* ²⁵*But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*



YOUNG AT HEART:

Worry! What If.....

HYMN: #370, The Hymnal
#549, Worship & Rejoice

*O God of Earth and Altar
I Love Your Kingdom, Lord*

SERMON:

A Conviction Worth Living For

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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.

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:

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Something Worth Living For

DOXOLOGY:

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

We know the joy of receiving and we know the joy of giving. As people of faith, we know that we have received from God priceless gifts like that of salvation, love, mercy, and hope into eternity. As we give these offerings, we announce that there is joy also in sharing with others. Help us, O God, to celebrate the joy of being benefactors of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMN:

#272, The Hymnal; #358 , Worship & Rejoice

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION:

Thank you for your attendance this morning. At this time, Rev Henning will present information concerning a new campaign sponsored by the UCC Conference.

POSTLUDE:

Postlude March

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 is on summer break ~

St. Mark's UCC

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

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

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.stmstjucc.org

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in Our Church office stmstjoffice@gmail.com

Staying Close, Staying Connected

Our Church Celebrations!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO:

July 30th – Wayne Grunwald

31st – Grace Schultz

Aug. 1st – Larry Heling, Linda Rozmarynowski

2nd – Rhonda Krause

3rd – Sadie Koenig, Jay Sommer, Emmett Vogel

5th – Charlie Mohr, Emma Russart, Davie Lorraine Vogel

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY THIS WEEK TO:

Aug. 2nd – Allen & Eunice Stolzmann

4th – Charlie & Ruth Ann Kolb

St. Marks U.C.C. & St. James U.C.C.

Invite you to

POLKA & POTLUCK

Come for an afternoon of good friends, good
food and good ol' fashioned dancing.

Featuring Carl Laack

Please bring a dish to pass. You can sign up at your
church or online using this QR code.



DAY
AUG. 26
TIME
2PM

Spring Hope Barn
11424 Spring Lake Rd
Kiel, WI 53042



SPECIAL MEETING TODAY AT ST. MARK'S FOLLOWING THE WORSHIP SERVICE.

RURAL YOUTH VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT at noon TODAY at Bethlehem.

The COMMUNION WORSHIP SERVICE will take place on Sunday, Aug. 13th instead of the 6th.

HS YOUTH TRIP TO REINS, FRI., AUG. 11, 1:00-3:00 to be volunteer assistants in a horse-riding class for the disabled.

VBS -9am-noon August 15, 16, 17.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/STMSTJ-VBS2023>

WELCOME!

To the parents of young children:

Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress those wiggles in God's house.

- ❖ *Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to engage.*
- ❖ *Quietly explain the parts of the service and the actions of the pastors, musicians and leaders.*
- ❖ *Sing the songs, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behaviors by mimicking you.*
- ❖ *If you have to leave the Worship Center with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."*